



XU Increases Undergraduate Tuition

Xavier University Board of Trustees agrees to a 5.23% increase in undergraduate tuition

BY JACKSON HARE

Campus Editor

The Xavier University Board of Trustees has approved a 5.25% increase in undergraduate tuition for the 2024-25 academic year.

This increase particularly affects the cost of full-time student tuition for 12 through 18 credit hours, which will see a \$1,257 increase in the next academic year.

Meanwhile, the cost of housing and meal plans will remain the same.

"Everyone at Xavier understands and appreciates the tremendous investment students and families are making to receive a Xavier education, and I share that appreciation," Provost and Chief Academic Officer Rachel Chrastil said, responding to the tuition increase.

"Xavier continues to offer a nationally-ranked education and personal support for each student. The value of a Xavier education will extend beyond these four years and well into the future. I know I speak for all of my colleagues when I say that we will continue to provide support for our students to have a high quality experience," Chrastil added.

Tuition last saw an adjustment for the 2022-23 academic year with a 6.01% increase from the year prior.

"We've seen the prices for education rise every year," junior Philosophy, Politics and the Public (PPP) major Edward Morrison said. "I think it's something that people are struggling with because now you see campus resources being cut back, but you're raising the prices."

Morrison specifically mentioned cleaning services and

Spectrum TV services being cut back. Additionally, Morrison, who is also a resident assistant, expressed concern that his efforts to obtain a more affordable education are still thwarted by tuition increases.

"They're not going to change the rate for housing and meal plans, which is nice, but for me, as an RA my housing and meal plan are paid for — on top of my merit scholarships — my cost goes up as well," Morrison said.

Additionally, the cost for yearly parking passes for commuter students, resident students, Village Apartments or Commons Apartment lots have all increased by \$25.

"I am glad I'm leaving when I am," senior PPP major Lizzy Roeding said. "I feel like the university is investing in programs that maybe the student body isn't actually

asking for. It may help them long term, but it's not helping the students who are currently here or students who are wanting to come here within the next few years."

In light of tuition increasing, Roeding also raised questions regarding why tuition was increased and where the money will be going.

"What are they going to do with that money? Where's that tuition going? Are you adding parking? Are you still gonna make us move spots for every single basketball game? Are you going to pave H lot so cars aren't getting ruined by the gravel that's over there," Roeding said.

Moreover, incoming students will now be charged a \$125 fee per semester to opt into Xavier's Day One textbook beginning next year with the class of 2029.

Through this program,

students' required textbook and materials costs are covered in their course fees, and the Day One Book Depot prepares each students' required materials for them to pick up in one stop.

The program will continue to not have an additional fee for current students as they have been grandfathered into the program, but the incoming classes will have to either pay the fee to opt into the program or source books independently.

This decision comes, in part, due to the varying costs of course materials across majors and the concern that students who take courses or who have a major that has less costly course materials are paying the same amount as students who need expensive textbooks and materials.

"We are committed to offering a quality, Jesuit Cath-

olic educational experience that delivers on our mission to prepare graduates for an increasingly diverse and complex world, while being mindful of costs for our students," Chrastil said in an email announcing the tuition increase.

"I'm a legacy student. My dad went to school here, my aunt went to school here, my grandpa did too, so I was raised with this vision of what Xavier is and what it's like to go to school here, and my dad speaks highly of the university. Everybody in my family that went here speaks highly of it. But, I think as my time here has gone on, I've kind of been let down by this image of what Xavier was," Roeding said.

"So am I grateful to get a college education? Yes. Am I unhappy with the direction that the university is going? Yes," Roeding said.



News wire photo by Daniel Bettz

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New Dispensary Opens Near Xavier

Queen City Cannabis opens a storefront just across from the All for One Shop

By **AUDREY ELWOOD**
Staff Writer

After Queen City Cannabis medical marijuana dispensary opened its doors on Jan. 22 across from the All for One Shop on Montgomery Road, Xavier administration has expressed concern about its possible impacts.

Currently Queen City Cannabis is only serving medicinal marijuana, but it plans to expand to recreational marijuana in fall of 2024 in light of its recent legalization in Ohio.

In the 2023 election, the state of Ohio voted to approve ballot initiative Issue 2, which legalized the sale and purchase of recreational marijuana and allows for adults who are 21 or older to use and possess it.

It is currently legal to sell and purchase medical marijuana in the state of Ohio. It has been legal since the passage of House Bill 523 on Sept. 8, 2016.

While marijuana is legal in the state of Ohio, this does not mean it is legal on federally funded campuses.

Medical and recreational marijuana is still illegal federally, and therefore any feder-

ally funded institutions must abide by federal law.

"The federal government still considers marijuana to be an illicit drug. Xavier must abide by federal laws, including the Drug-Free Workplace Act and the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act. If we fail to comply, Xavier could lose its eligibility for federal funding, including student financial aid programs and grants," Dean of Students' Office said in a statement following the passage of Issue 2.

Students who live off campus in non-university housing and are of age are held to the state standard.

However, if a student is on campus and is under the influence, they will be held to the university policy.

Law enforcement will intervene on any residence hall reports of marijuana use.

XUPD has been in talks with Residence Life about adding new policies and safeguards around marijuana usage in dormitories.

First-year Philosophy, Politics and the Public (PPP) and political science major Savannah Hugenber predicted that marijuana use on campus will increase due to the new dis-



Newswire photo by Daniel Betz

pensary.

"It's likely that there's going to be a lot more infractions on campus since getting weed will be a lot easier," Hugenber said.

"I also think because it's strictly a medical dispensary, there's going to be more people forging medical cards and doing illegal things to get marijuana," Hugenber said.

Sophomore PPP major and the Student Government Association's Student's Rights and Identities committee

Chair Emma Schwarz agreed.

"I think it's no coincidence that the dispensary decided to be up the street from Xavier," Schwarz said.

"We have discussed with both Dr. Kimberly Moore and XUPD about the implications that having a dispensary near campus would cause," Schwarz added.

The dispensary is now open for business. Schwarz urges students to proceed with caution.

"It's very important to

stress to other students that just because it's legal in Ohio, this does not automatically translate to campus," Schwarz said.

Vice President of Student Affairs Dr. Kimberly Moore echoed Schwarz.

"I really just want students to educate themselves — make sure that they know the nuances of the law and the nuances of the policy that applies to campus because those two things are different," Moore said.

Xavier Transitions to Paycor as New Payroll Service

By **MORGAN MILES**
Staff Writer

Cincinnati-based company, Paycor, has become Xavier's new vendor for campus employee payment.

Paycor is an Human Resources (HR) software company dedicated to modernizing people management and aiding a multitude of industries from healthcare to manufacturing to education.

The transition to utilizing Paycor's services has been in

the works to improve the efficiency and quality of payroll and HR functions at Xavier. Strengthening and streamlining payroll functions is predicted to reduce the risk of compliance issues with the Department of Labor and Internal Revenue Service.

Paycor will replace Xavier's current system: Ellucian's Banner Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP). ERP was originally implemented in 2004.

Paycor has a Human Cap-

ital Management (HCM) platform which modernizes management responsibilities, such as employee recruitment and retention. Productivity improvement, compliance regulation and mitigating errors with employee pay and benefits are key features of an HCM platform.

Paycor was recommended to Xavier after four months of analyzing and evaluating the company.

Potential vendors for Xavier's HR and payroll provid-

er were considered after the project team gathered requirements, attended product demonstrations, conducted research and met other higher education clients also using ERP.

The team designated to work on the project consists of HR, payroll, IT, the Provost Office, Controller's Office, Student Employment Office, Financial Aid Office and Internal Audit.

Members of the project team assisted in identifying, evaluating and recommending Paycor. During the selection process, the project team represented a cross-section of campus stakeholders.

Requirements for a new system included product functionality, ability to integrate existing systems, customer service and support, cost, digital accessibility and the vendor's overall support of the university.

The three vendor finalists were Paycor, Paylocity and Paycom.

Xavier, in a unanimous vote, selected Paycor as the winner due to its ability to meet HR and payroll requirements.

Paycor can diversify its functions by being involved in areas such as tracking federal work study funds for student employees.

"This project will require a significant commitment of Xavier staff resources and time," the payroll and HR

team said.

The software is expected to take at least six months to implement. To meet the constant needs of the campus, the software must be configured with Xavier's future expectations in mind.

Throughout the spring semester all employees will be asked to create a Paycor account and to familiarize themselves with the new software. By summer break, the payroll and HR team hope to have the campus community knowledgeable about Paycor.

"Implementing in the summer months provides Payroll the opportunity to conduct several pay runs prior to the beginning of the fall semester," the payroll and HR team said.

A communication plan has been developed for the campus community. The plan will provide employees with on-going information about the project's process and training opportunities.

Other elements of Paycor's software are the mobile app which will provide the same features as the desktop version, the approval process for timesheets and paid time of which will be easier, and only one system will be needed to assist employees from applicant to retiree.

At this time, Paycor is in the beginning stages of implementation. There is no working application for Xavier employees.



February 12, 2024 Student Government Association Meeting Recap

By **DOMINIC DEGRINNEY**
SGA Correspondent

- Sen. Thomas Wood met with Auxiliary Services Director Bill Moran about potentially extending building hours in Alter Hall among other buildings while also discussing with XUPD about security concerns.
- The Bull Market Shop in Smith Hall is expected to become a student-run smoothie shop next fall.
- Student activity fee budget meetings have begun. Budgets are above what is available to distribute, which is a 16% decrease in money that has been available to clubs since two years ago.

Jennifer Crumbley Found Guilty by Jury

Verdict marks first time that a parent was criminally responsible for a school shooting by a minor

BY LANEY KONZ
Staff Writer

Jennifer Crumbley, the mother of Michigan school shooter Ethan Crumbley, was found guilty on four counts of involuntary manslaughter on Feb. 6 for failing to stop her son from carrying out the fatal shooting, who was 15 at the time of the shooting but is now 17.

Each count represented each victim who was killed in the shooting at Oxford High School in Nov. 2021: Madisyn Baldwin, Tate Myre, Justin Shilling and Hana St. Juliana. The shooting wounded seven additional students.

The jury deliberated for roughly 11 hours before coming to their ultimate decision. Crumbley's sentencing is scheduled for April 9, where she faces up to 15 years in prison after being convicted on all four counts.

The conviction of Crumbley signals a shift in discussion surrounding school shooting prevention and overall steps toward protecting K-12 and college students, calling for parents of school shooters to take responsibility for their children's actions.

Crumbley's criminal charges were more severe, a decision that the Oakland County Prosecutor Karen D. McDonald made with difficul-



Photo courtesy of commons.wikimedia.org

Jennifer Crumbley, the mother of the teenager who killed four students and injured seven in a fatal 2021 shooting at Oxford High School in Michigan, was found guilty on four counts of involuntary manslaughter.

ty. The decision was made due to the Crumbley parents' perceived negligence in allowing their son to have a gun and ignoring warning signs about his mental state.

There were text messages shown in the trial between Ethan and Jennifer Crumbley that revealed her son's developing mental health issues, such as his suggestion that their home was being haunted by a demon. Similar texts were sent by Ethan Crumbley to his friends detailing his struggles with insomnia, paranoia and battling voices.

Prior to the shooting, Jennifer Crumbley took her son to a shooting range where Ethan practiced shooting a semi-automatic firearm that his father purchased for him as a gift. This firearm, a Sig Sauer 9mm pistol, was later used by Ethan Crumbley in the shooting.

The alleged negligence of the Crumbley parents is also being related back to a state law which states that Michigan minors are not allowed to possess guns, although there are limited exceptions. At the time, Michigan had no laws

requiring owners to keep their guns locked away and out of the reach of minors.

On April 13, 2023, Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer signed a new gun safety bill into law, which requires that guns be stored in a locked container or kept unloaded and locked with a trigger lock. The law also requires background checks to be conducted before an individual purchases firearms. This new law officially went into effect yesterday.

On the day of the shooting, Ethan Crumbley's parents

were called into the school by administration and the school counselor. He had written several words related to violence and suicidal thoughts on a math worksheet, which was then turned over to the school officials. The counselor shared concerns about Ethan Crumbley's mental state, but they decided to allow him to remain at school for the rest of the day. In his backpack, which went unsearched, was the pistol used in the shooting.

Crumbley's personal journal was examined in the trial. In it, he had drawn images depicting gun violence. The journal also contained a plan for causing bloodshed.

"My parents won't listen to me about help or a therapist," he wrote in it.

Shifting responsibility onto parents is a preventative measure being used by the judicial system in recent years. Several parents in other states have pleaded guilty to similar charges, which aim to hold parents accountable when they are suspected of enabling deadly violence committed by their children.

Ethan Crumbley was sentenced to life in prison without parole last year.

The father of the shooter, James Crumbley, will be tried separately in March, facing similar charges of involuntary manslaughter.

King Charles III Diagnosed with Cancer

BY WILL COFFMAN
Staff Writer

King Charles III, the current monarch of the United Kingdom (U.K.), has been diagnosed with cancer less than 18 months into his reign.

In a statement from Buckingham Palace announcing the diagnosis, no specific type of cancer was named. The palace announced that it is not prostate cancer, likely to rule out speculation regarding Charles's recent treatment on a benign prostate enlargement.

"His Majesty has today commenced a schedule of regular treatments, during which time he has been advised by doctors to postpone public-facing duties," Buckingham Palace said.

Charles has remained pos-

itive about his treatment. "It is equally heartening to hear how sharing my own diagnosis has helped promote public understanding and shine a light on the work of all those organizations which support cancer patients and their families across the U.K. and wider world," he said in a recent statement.

Charles made his first public appearance following the diagnosis last Sunday, where he greeted well-wishers as he left services at the St. Mary Magdalene Church near the royal family's Sandringham estate, north of London.

Buckingham Palace announced that the king is stepping back from public duties throughout the duration of his treatment but will continue conducting state business, such as signing papers.

Other duties are likely to be taken over by family members like Prince William, the heir to the throne, or Princess Anne. Prince Harry, the younger son of King Charles, traveled to London to visit the king but has since returned to the U.S.

The palace's disclosure of Charles's diagnosis also breaks the longstanding royal tradition in the U.K., which has historically kept the monarch's health secret.

Throughout her reign, Queen Elizabeth II avoided publicity regarding any serious health crises. King George VI, Charles's grandfather, died in 1952 due to lung cancer, but this health crisis was not disclosed to the public until after his death.

Reactions from Xavier students indicated a level of goodwill towards the royal family, even among those who do not necessarily see eye to eye with the monarchy as an institution.

"Although I don't agree with the idea of monarchy, I hope the king gets better," Drew Freeborn, a first-year Philosophy, Politics and the Public (PPP) major, said.

"I actually like the monarchy, it's not a bad system, I think it does have its pros, and I'm hoping the king gets better," Seth Banninga, a first-year PPP major, said.



Photo courtesy of commons.wikimedia.org



BY GAVIN STEELE
Staff Writer

A 38,000 balloon structure was created by artists Sze Tai "Wilson" Pang and Kun Lung Ho with the help of 60 volunteers in Hong Kong. The 137 ft. dragon set the Guinness World Record for the largest dragon balloon sculpture (Feb. 9).

Oklahoma district judge Traci Soderstrom resigned Friday after sending more than 500 texts during court. She was overseeing a murder trial in the killing of a two-year-old boy, and was found to be sending hundreds of texts from the bench to the bailiff, mocking the prosecutor and complimenting the defense attorney. She agreed to not seek judicial office in Oklahoma again under a proposed settlement agreement (Feb. 9).

Richard Plaud's attempt to set the Guinness World Record for the world's tallest matchstick sculpture, which was previously rejected for using materials too different from standard matchsticks, was accepted. His record-breaking model of the Eiffel Tower, which stands around 23.5 feet tall and more than 700,000 matchsticks, was unveiled last month to his Instagram followers (Feb. 9).



Photo courtesy of pexels.com

One for the Money, None for the Show

BY *Christian Cullen*
STAFF WRITER

I feel lucky to live in a golden era of sports. It's been felt in football, with players like Tom Brady and Aaron Rodgers duking it out every Sunday. In basketball, with a transition period in the NBA to the love of the three, Steph Curry hoists up another 40-footer that hits the net. A great era of college football — also in transition as it moved from the BCS to the playoff — has given us classics every week, especially with the SEC on CBS.

As a Cubs fan, I have been particularly fond of this era of baseball, as I got to see my team finally win it all. As I try to not be blinded by nostalgia, I cannot help but feel that these great eras are being tarnished. And they are being tarnished not by any on-field effort, in spite of what many think about defense in the NBA today, but instead by the love for money of those who run the differing professional and nominally amateur leagues.

My mind goes first to college football. A new round of realignment has created massive super conferences, with a whole lot of matchups that no one can really get excited about. Who is going to have a stake in Rutgers versus USC aside from students of those respective schools?

A large draw for college football was the regional nature of the games. It mattered when the games were played because it determined if you would get bragging rights over your rivals down the road. We are seeing a lot of rivalries dying this year. Bedlam may not survive realignment, as Oklahoma leaves their former rival in the Big-12 as they head on to greener pastures in the SEC.

The PAC-12 itself, a conference with an age in the triple digits, had to essentially fold. I noticed a lot of social media posts at the end of the year reminiscing on the current conferences with a somber tone about the coming

changes. I still do not think there are many people who are hyped up for this round of realignment.

So, who is?

TV executives. These new super conferences will bring in a massive amount of TV deals. For all the USC versus Rutgers games we will see, we are also going to get matchups like Michigan versus Washington or Oregon versus Ohio State. These matchups are exciting, but are they worth it in the end? I would say no.

These changes in college football will also reverberate through college basketball, but the realignment sets up another worry: the increasing price of tickets. Separate from controversy about people selling student tickets for the Crosstown Shootout last semester, ticket prices for quality games have risen way too far. It should not cost an arm and a leg to go see a good basketball game. For all the hubbub about people selling tickets at high prices, they were

selling them at market value. I know the root of the issue is that people were selling tickets they got for free, but it also highlights a major issue in college sports: The average fan may be priced out of seeing their favorite teams play.

The professional leagues are also dealing with ticket problems but in their own unique way. There are ticket issues, but the main source of greed tends to be in the area surrounding the team. We have witnessed a few different teams leave areas with rabid fan bases for reasons that essentially boil down to money.

John Fisher is taking the A's to Las Vegas, claiming lack of fan interest after purposefully torpedoing his team. When the A's did a "reverse boycott," aka a show of fan support, they were so loud the players had issues hearing each other on the field. The Spanos family moved the Chargers from San Diego to Los Angeles, becoming more known for their empty stadiums than anything

the team has done on the field. The Washington Wizards and Capitals may soon be heading for Arlington, out of the DC metro proper.

In all of these examples, you see owners pitching massive developments, with the goal of making the area a hub of a city. While that much remains to be seen, it has to be acknowledged that many of the relocation efforts in this decade remain focused on maximizing the bottom line.

I have hope for the next area of sports, but I do worry about the money involved. I hope to be able to afford to go to different games, whether it's college football, college basketball, the NFL, the NBA or whatever may rise up. But, for the time being, the trend indicates that going to see a good game is going to cost a good bit of money. And hopefully whoever is running your team doesn't see greener pastures on the horizon.



11:30 am on february 17th
clocktower lounge
refreshments provided

*Celebrating Xavier
Poetry*

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All inquiries should be directed to the Business Manager, Savanna Riley, by email at newswire@xavier.edu or at www.xaviernewswire.com

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Mission Statement

The Xavier Newswire is committed to reporting the news, as well as explaining its significance to readers. In addition, through publishing opposing viewpoints and opinions, the Newswire hopes to foster a dialogue on campus and among students, faculty and staff.



Leaf the Burning Off Campus

The world is on fire and so is our campus.

2023 was the warmest year in history, since we began globally keeping record of temperatures in 1850. In 2021, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released its climate report, a daunting reality check and reminder that we need to act now. Even then, our actions will not be enough to completely mitigate suffering. The IPCC warns that if we exceed a 1.5 degree Celsius global temperature increase (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit), we could experience apocalyptic weather events. Our world as we know it will be damaged beyond repair — much more than it already is.

I start with these stats not to deter people from action, as our work is not meaningless. But it is important that we understand the full scope of our reality. We cannot continue to move blindly through the world without understanding the consequences of our actions.

What I am saying is that we are directly responsible for the earth — our actions matter. However, Xavier's

supposed commitment to sustainability doesn't line up with its actions and funding. While walking around campus last week, I was struck by a burning smell. University staff were burning dead leaves that they had collected around campus.

First, I want to emphasize that any critique of leaf burning that I put forth is not directed at any physical plant employees. They were doing their job. I have come to know that many individuals that work at Xavier, including Physical Plant, are interested in creating a more sustainable campus. However, lack of funding inhibits our ability to fully commit to these efforts.

In 2021, President Hancz committed to the Laudato Si' Plan proposed by Pope Francis that includes goals of ecological education, sustainable lifestyles, ecological spirituality, community resilience and empowerment, care for our common home, promoting integral ecology and exercising social responsibility and moral leadership. Thus, Xavier created a Laudato Si' Steering Committee that has been given the responsibility

of creating a plan for aligning our campus with the goals laid forth by Pope Francis. However, real change requires action, not just words or plans put on paper.

We have proudly labeled ourselves a Laudato Si' university, but our university has not put in the effort to match this commitment. The Laudato Si' Action Plan has minimal funding — around \$5,000 for its entire budget, according to theology professor Dr. O'neil Van Horn, a member of the steering committee. To be frank, budgets are an indication of value, and I feel that our university has not put much value into ensuring we are committed to loving and caring for the creatures among us — this includes the neighborhoods around our campus, as well as the earth beneath our feet and the animals and critters living on the same land as us.

In the spirit of action-oriented words, I want to propose a path forward: We must establish a university-wide compost system. We do have a small compost at the NEX-US garden, but imagine the benefits of making it a larger

effort.

Burning dry leaves emits large amounts of particles — dust, soot and solid materials that should not be inhaled. This causes damage to our lungs that can lead to coughing, chest pain, shortness of breath and long-term respiratory problems — not to mention the effects leaf burning can have on people with respiratory conditions like asthma.

Moreover, burning organic matter releases a ton of carbon dioxide. Sometimes, when leaves are in a pile for long periods of time (with minimal access to oxygen), they release carbon monoxide when burned. Carbon monoxide is an extremely dangerous gas. When inhaled, it reduces the ability of our red blood cells to carry oxygen. It is also a greenhouse gas. Moreover, we saw this summer in Cincinnati just how dangerous fires can be when they get out of hand — our city was smokey for weeks from the Canadian fires.

If we commit to a university-wide compost system, we can avoid these issues. Leaves are used as brown matter for compost, which is vital in a

compost system as it reduces excess moisture.

A compost system would be beneficial as it is an opportunity for us to improve our community outreach by using the compost to feed gardens that could then feed university students and people in need around us. It will create jobs. The regenerative benefits of composting largely outweigh the convenience of burning leaves to make our campus more "aesthetically pleasing."

As a Jesuit Catholic university, we are meant to be stewards of the earth. Although our work may not fully halt the climate crisis, it can make real impactful change. More than that, this work fuels our soul.

As I have come to learn from Dr. Van Horn, slowing down — taking the time to be present — is a form of resistance against every instinct in our bodies that is telling us to give up. To bear witness to the damage done and to continue on despite the overwhelmingly disconcerting future of our planet is a form of hope. And now more than ever, we need to hope.

Table for One, Please

Valentine's Day is right around the corner, and with it, many couples are thinking about how to spend it. Going out to eat, giving flowers and chocolates, reading poetry, kissing — the whole shebang. There's nothing quite like a day to spend with your lover and celebrating your affection for one another! Hearts and kisses, Xs and Os all around!

Do you know what national holiday comes after Valentine's Day? National Singles Awareness Day! A day for all of the single people in the country to celebrate how there is no problem with being single. We can still enjoy our mid-February holiday in any way we like. Happiness doesn't come with finding a love of your life. It comes with things that actually bring you joy. If being single brings you happiness, that's fine.

I personally fall into the singles category. "Single as a Pringle," as they say. I have been single all my life, and no, inviting a girl to my

house on a playdate does not count. Do I think being single is much of a problem? No, not for me. And the thing is, I also say this as someone who isn't aromantic either.

Many companies such as Amazon, Kohl's, Sephora, Walmart and so many more in the retail business discount their products for the holiday most associated with love and relationships, but that doesn't mean the single people can't buy the products, too. If the product catches the fancy of you, whether you're single or in a relationship, it's there for you to purchase.

However, there is one reward that I always took advantage of every Valentine's Day that, as a single person, was "the thing" for every year. It was a prime example of taking advantage of my single status in order to get rewards from my purchases.

Back when I was in high school, I don't exactly remember who told me, but somebody told me that at Potbelly Sandwich Works,

if you joined the rewards program and you came in during Valentine's Day as a single person, you can get a free cookie with a discount code. When information about this got to my mother, she told me the mouthwatering truth that the Potbelly cookies are as big as your face. The way the reward at Potbelly works is that you make your order, usually on the website or the app and as long as your purchase features a cookie, you can use the discount code to get dollars off the cookie purchase. So, it felt like from their point of view, they were trying to say "Hey, you may not have a lover, but you DO have a free dessert, and that dessert is made with love from us!"

My first time using this reward was on Valentine's Day 2020, back when things in 2020 were still, well, normal, to put it loosely. This was also the thing that got me to join the rewards program, additionally as a way to make sure I never forgot my free cookie any other

year. Every single year since Potbelly's launch, I would figuratively mark my calendar, not for any romantic activities with a lover or anything like that, but to make sure I would not throw away my opportunity for that free cookie to get in my hands and then afterwards, my stomach!

As I reflect, it's kinda funny thinking about how a concept as silly as "Free Cookie for single people on Valentine's Day" was enough to get me to join a restaurant's rewards program, but I can say something for certain. As a single person, such a perk was hands down one of the best Valentine's Day gifts I have ever received!

Unfortunately, as time would move on, Potbelly would eventually drop this perk, which is very unfortunate to all of the single people like myself who took advantage of this perk every Valentine's Day they could. However, this doesn't mean that rewards members at Potbelly can't get free

cookies or desserts anymore, since they still have a free cookie or milkshake perk for whenever it is the birth month of the member.

However, reflecting on it I can say with gratitude that when it was around, it was something I can say that I miss very dearly. If it weren't for that one perk and me being single at just the right time to know about it, I would have never thrived to become a regular perks member at Potbelly back at home in Maryland and at the Rookwood location.

I speak this on behalf of various single people in this world who love Potbelly, thank you for the perk! Thank you for the Valentine's Day perk that helped single people not feel left out and still gave them an opportunity to get free products from your delicious restaurant. That's the best Valentine's Day gift I could ever ask for!



Goal-Oriented Muskies Start Season

XU lacrosse opened with West Coast road trip, will host Radford on Saturday

BY ROBBIE DZIERZANOWSKI
Staff Writer

The Xavier Women's Lacrosse team, the newest Division I sport on campus, opened their third season this past weekend at Arizona State where they dropped both games at the hands of Arizona State University and San Diego State University.

The Muskies, 0-2 this year, will be back in action at home this Saturday at Corcoran Field against Radford. The history of Radford University and the Muskies dates back to Xavier's first program win, a 15-14 victory that saw now-sophomore Lola Mancuso score a hat trick as the team's leading scorer in the game.

Later in the season, the Muskies will face Presbyterian University, The University of Akron, and The University of Detroit Mercy before taking on the crosstown foes the Cincinnati Bearcats on the soil at Corcoran Field. This rivalry, which is traditional for both schools and is a coveted bragging rights point between both universities, will see the women's lacrosse programs meet for the first time in both programs' history.

The Muskies then will open Big East against the Butler Bulldogs at home on Mar. 23. After facing a gauntlet including home games



Photo courtesy of Xavier Athletics

Sophomore Lola Mancuso (above) is the leading scorer among Xavier lacrosse's first cohort of recruits. The class of 2026 also features attacker Claire Slade, the program's leader in assists, and keeper Marina Pisczor, who leads the program in saves.

against Big East achievers Connecticut (April 6) and Marquette (April 20) before ending the regular season at currently fourth-ranked Denver University.

A notable aspect of this year's season is that the Musketeers will play host to the 2024 Big East Women's Lacrosse Tournament held on Xavier's campus at Corcoran Field from May 2-4, 2024.

Within their schedule for this season, the Muskies will play nine home games and seven road games, facing six new opponents in non-con-

ference play, from six different conferences across the United States.

Besides the new freshmen on the team, Head Coach Meg Decker added two transfers in graduate student Julia Frombach and senior Jordan Miller. Decker also added 14 freshman players during the offseason, including USA Lacrosse High School All-Americans Colby Wasson, Lydia Laney, Kirra Crowley and Michaela Henry.

Decker returns to her second season at the lead position in the program: head

coach. In the previous season, Decker brought in three post-season individual awards and three in-season awards, including 2023 Big East Freshman of the Week Mancuso.

An important piece to the program returning in her second season is Mancuso, who was the women's team leader in points, goals, free position goals, shots on goal, total shots, game-winning goals, man-up and man-down goals. She was the first Xavier player to be named the Big East Freshman of the Week and also bagged the highest

honor of Big East Freshman of the Year last season.

Another key piece to the Musketeer's success last season was sophomore Erin Berls. Berls was a member of both the 2022-2023 All-Big East Academic Team and 2023 All-Big East Second Team last season. Sophomore Kiera Armitage, last year's team leader in draw controls also returns.

The Muskies are back in action when they take on Radford this Saturday at Corcoran Field. First draw is scheduled for noon.



BY ROBBIE DZIERZANOWSKI
Staff Writer

- Xavier women's basketball hosts the fifteenth-ranked UConn Huskies tonight at 7 p.m. in Cintas Center.
- Basketball legends JP Macura ('18) and Trevon Bluiett ('18) were inducted into the Xavier Athletic Hall of Fame at Saturday's men's basketball game. They were joined by baseballer Rylan Bannon ('17), track and field star Tommy Kauffman ('11) and Big East tennis champion Syndey Liggins ('17). Also inducted was Phil Bucklew ('36) who lettered in football at Xavier and went on to become the "Father of Naval Special Warfare."
- Women's Tennis achieved victory at Boston College on Sunday. The doubles team of Imani Graham and Anna Roggenburk was named a member this week's Big East Honor Roll.
- Defending Big East champions Xavier baseball open the season with a three game series at Clemson University this upcoming Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

who's the athlete of your eye?



"Aaron Judge. I love a man in pinstripes."
-Sophomore Naomi Presler

"Dwayne Wade brings the Heat."
-Junior Sarah Stevens



"The Blob cures my blues."
-Sophomore April Cracraft

NHL Ent-ICED by Cincinnati Expansion

BY ADDISON BURKE
Staff Writer

Last week during a National Hockey League (NHL) press conference prior to the All-Star Game, NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman (pictured right) expressed interests in expanding the league. Some cities that have expressed interest in the possible expansion include Houston, Atlanta, Kansas City and Cincinnati.

"There seems to be an increasing and vibrant expression of interest in having an NHL team in places where there aren't," Bettman said.

"What's happening is, people are expressing an interest. We have no formal expansion process set up. We're not envisioning what we did in prior times ... we're listening to the expressions of interests," he added.

Currently, Cincinnati's interest in joining the league is "very preliminary," according to Bettman. Outside of Cincinnati, it is very likely that hockey fans will see a new NHL team in Utah before a second team in Ohio. In the same press conference, Bettman said that Utah is very excited at the potential of getting an NHL team, and at the governmental level, there has

been a high level of enthusiasm and expressed interest at the potential addition of a team.

Despite these talks of new teams, Bettman said that the NHL is not currently looking to expand or relocate teams.

If the expansion request was accepted for Cincinnati, this would bring a fourth professional sports team to the city alongside the Reds, Bengals and FC Cincinnati. One of the biggest inhibitors of this potential expansion into the Queen City would be the necessity of building a new arena that would house the team.

"The other thing I think is interesting is what about adding an NBA team, right? Because the closest NBA team in our state is Cleveland. It would be interesting to know the appetite of people in Cincinnati," Dr. Dominique Kropp, who serves as the program director for Graduate Sport Management & Marketing at Xavier, said.

The Cincinnati Cyclones, who are a part of the East Coast Hockey League as affiliates of the New York Rangers, play at the Heritage Bank Center downtown. While this arena would be big enough for an NHL team, Cincinnati's tourism organization, Visit



The National Hockey League has recently spent the big bucks on expanding west, adding the Las Vegas Golden Knights and the Seattle Kraken since 2017. Photo courtesy of commons.wikimedia.org

Cincy, has discussed the potential of a new arena instead of housing two hockey teams in one building.

Kristin Ropp, the general manager of the Cyclones, believes that this expansion could become a reality, but it can't happen without a new arena.

"We love the idea of the NHL here. But we're really putting the cart before the horse. Everything starts with the arena. You can talk about the NHL all you want. Nothing happens without a new arena," Ropp said.

In the 1970s, Cincinnati had a major league hockey team, the Cincinnati Stingers, who played in the World Hockey Association (WHA). The WHA disbanded after financial difficulties in 1979 but made a deal with the NHL, and four of the six remaining teams moved leagues.

Since then, various minor league teams have been in Cincinnati. The Cyclones have been around since 1990 for all but two seasons. The Cyclones franchise relaunched in 2006 and has had increasing attendance every year. They

average more than 6,000 fans per home game and have been financially stable. Because of these statistics Ropp believes Cincinnati could support an NHL team.

"I think with the growth of the Cyclones and the interest in hockey in general, I don't see why not," Ropp said.

As of now, there is no firm expansion into Cincinnati or any other city, but fans can continue to express their interest in the possibility of an NHL team coming to town to see how the conversation progresses.

Xavier Men's Hoops Marches Towards March

BY BEN DICKISON
Sports Editor

Your Xavier men's basketball Musketeers are officially "in position to be in position" according to national basketball personality Jon Rothstein.

Following wins over St. John's, the DePaul Blue Demons and Wednesday night at Cintas Center against the Villanova Wildcats, the Musketeers hosted the 19th-ranked Creighton Bluejays on Saturday at noon.

The Bluejays flocked to a sold out Cintas Center on the wings of back-to-back losses. The Butler Bulldogs left CHI Health Center in Omaha with roadkill in a 99-98 thriller. Immediately following Xavier's nail — biting win over Villanova, the Jays fell at Providence, as Friars guard and Big East player of the year candidate Devin Carter put on a masterclass in the clutch.

Xavier prevailed in a 56-53 slugfest on Wednesday night. The Musketeers continue to track down the resumé to earn a spot in the NCAA tournament.

"It's February. There's gonna be some nights when you score 70 or 80 points and win. Sometimes you have to play defense and win. And our defense won us the game tonight," Big East Player of the Week Quincy Olivari said after the game.

"Defense is what brings fans to the stands. Y'all love gritty, hard working people, and that's what defense is about," he continued.

"Q-dini" finished with 14 points, eight rebounds and drew five fouls on his way to a three-for-five performance on free throws.

Freshman forward Dailyn Swain (pictured below) amassed nearly 18 minutes of action off the bench. In that time, he recorded eight points, five rebounds and two assists. Swain also played an instrumental role in holding experienced Villanova forward Tyler Burton to just five points.

"We needed Dailyn to step up because Gytis was terrible. If Dailyn didn't play the role he did tonight, we would have been in big trouble tonight," Head Coach Sean Miller said.

Another key agent in slowing down the production of Burton and star Villanova forward Eric Dixon was senior center Abou Ousmane. The passionate paint-force swatted away five Villanova shots and pulled in a team-high nine rebounds in 30 minutes of action.

Senior point guard Dayvion McKnight added seven assists without a turnover in 37 minutes of floor time.

In a once-in-a-blue moon finish, the Wildcats failed to get a shot in the air in the 18 second possession they had

to wrap up the game. With Xavier up 56-53 for the duration of that final possession, Miller was asked if he had considered fouling to prevent a three-point attempt.

Villanova Head Coach Kyle Neptune noted that the plan was to get freshman sharpshooter Brendan Hausen a look to tie the game on the final possession. He neglected to take fire, and the Wildcats took one timeout for the road.

The Musketeers then turned their focus to Creighton.

Bluejay skipper Greg McDermott has been linked to the Ohio State job, according to recent reports. Amid the uncertainty, his team is leading the conference in three point percentage and has the best team assist-to-turnover ratio in the league.

On Saturday, Creighton center Ryan Kalkbrenner torched Xavier for 28 points, seven rebounds and four blocks. In large part due to his presence, the Bluejays are one of the Big East's most efficient teams on the defensive end this season and led them to a victory over Xavier's team that shot 46.5% from beyond the arc.

At first glance, this statistic may be disconcerting, especially when one sees the Bluejays only converted on seven of 28 three-point attempts. However, the difference lies

in the fact that the Creighton man-to-man scheme only allowed for 13 three point attempts by the Musketeers. McKnight and Olivari took five pulls from deep respectively, and Claude added three.

Xavier shot 22-53 from inside-the-arc, landing them at over a 41% clip. On the other hand, Creighton shot 24-for-36 on two point attempts, recording 24 fast break points and eight dunks, seven by Kalkbrenner.

Schiereman poured in 16 points, despite shooting only two for eight from deep and shooting no free throws. Swain was able to contain dynamic wing Trey Alexander to 10 points and nine rebounds, a testament to Swain's growth and Alexander's consistent production. Utah State transfer guard Steven Ashworth added 12 for the Bluejays on five-for-six shooting from the line.



Photo courtesy of Isaac Fiely/Xavier Athletics

Totally Rad Vintage Fest: Just As Advertised

BY MARTY DUBECKY
Print Managing Editor

Last Saturday, the Totally Rad Vintage Fest made a stop in Cincinnati, bringing timeless pieces of jewelry, dusty records from the '70's and vintage graphic tees.

The festival took up shop in the Northern Kentucky Convention Center for its first ever stop in the Cincinnati area.

The Totally Rad Vintage Festival travels all around the US with a host of independent vintage sellers looking to introduce each city to the world of retro clothes, media and decor.

The event took place from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. For seven hours, casual bell bottom and graphic tee wearers listened to classic tunes coursing through the speakers while searching for their next perfect piece.

The convention center held over 30 vendors. Looking to the left, right as you walk in, beheld all the jewelry, records and DVDs a collector could hope for. Clothing vendors took you back in time displaying floral '70s blouses, then brought you right back with Edward Cullen *Twilight*

graphic tees.

Shop owners Belle Davis and Willis Woolson both had a lot to say about store running, vintage clothing and perfect piece searching.

Davis, who runs G4r4ge S4le, started selling clothes when she met a friend with similar interests.

"I met a friend who did this for a living, and we start-

ed a business together. He taught me what to look for from stitching to tags to what brands to look for. We went our separate ways, and now I run G4r4ge S4le and he runs Slick's Picks," Davis said.

When looking for pieces of her own, Davis focuses on stitching and tags.

"The printed-on tags are too modern for what we are looking for in this environment.

Tags like All Sport, Screen Stars Velva Sheen (which is based out of Cincinnati)... those are chef's kiss," Davis said.

"If you're talking something I would pick up 10 out of 10 times, you cannot go wrong with anything single stitch," Davis added.

Woolson grew up in Bloomington, Ind. and always had a penchant for style. Although, he talked about how his style was not always appreciated.

"I'm originally from the Podunk, so if you don't wear orange and camo,

they look at you funny. I just dress different. You shouldn't be judged on that. It's 2024 now," Woolson said.

He realized that he could make a living selling clothes after meeting his ex-wife.

"My ex-wife started selling stuff at the time, so I was like, 'I'm gonna start doing that too.' Fast forward in the future, I'm divorced, I do markets here, travel around the states. The quality and plethora of styles I find as a style curator and the uniqueness is what I like," he said.

Woolson recommends dressing for the occasion. He was wearing what he called his "Valentino fit for Valentine's" at the festival to best fit this occasion. Woolson was quick to give advice regarding what to wear.

"You don't wanna wear a sweater in 100 degrees. Even if you are looking big pimpin' you ain't gonna be feeling big pimpin'," he said.

"You got to dig through the junk to find the gold," he said.

Next stop for the Totally Rad Vintage fest is in Cleveland, Ohio on March 9. Both Davis' and Woolson's shops can be found on Instagram @g4r4ges4le and @thriftyponds.



Photos by Daniel Betz (top, bottom) and Marty Dubecky (right)

Cincy Celebrated Restaurant Kiki is Just Okaykay

BY GAVIN STEELE
Staff Writer

Recently, I visited Kiki, a contemporary Japanese diner. Owned by Chefs Yuko and Hideki Harada, Kiki's menu offers oysters, chicken karaage and entire fish, among other classic Japanese delicacies.

Last year, the Harada couple were semifinalists for a James Beard award for "Best Chef in the Great Lakes Area."

The menu was elevated and filled with items that are not part of the standard Americanized Japanese cuisine, so expectations were high for the restaurant to leave an impact. Ultimately, though, all Kiki left me with were mixed feelings.

My table ordered pork gyoza, chicken karaage, the Shio Ramen (pork belly), the Kinoko bowl (mushrooms and rice) and fried cauliflower.

The fried cauliflower was perfectly fried and topped with a delicious curry aioli and pickled red onion, jalapeño and radish garnish that finished the dish well. The jalapeños and radishes were a testament to the rigor and uniformity of the restaurant. You can tell Kiki holds themselves in high regard simply from the prepwork they put into their accoutrement. The jalapeños were cut perfectly uniform into chips and the radishes were a work of art in themselves. It was evident a

lot of effort went into cutting vegetables perfectly.

Similarly, the pork gyoza was held in high regard.

Xavier first year Philosophy, Politics and the Public major and fellow diner Carolyn Isaly said, "The pork gyoza was incredibly good and was unlike any potsticker I had ever had before."

Up to this point, all the food was good, but some items were just shy of great. They were missing that flare that could have elevated the dish.

The entrees were good but left something to be desired. My Kinoko bowl was a rice bowl with stir-fried mushrooms, nori and chili crisps. Individually, everything was excellent; the wide variety of mushrooms created a unique texture and taste while eating. The nori was added to the bowl

which gave it an umami flavor which was a great base line to the dish. I wish the chili crisps were spicier or more acidic to add a more nuanced element to the dish. I think that if there was either more spice or acidity, the dish would have been superb. After already discovering all the components and how they interacted, the flavors became dull.

The chicken karaage had a similar fate.

"The soft golden breading made the flaky chicken a delight to eat. Although the chicken was bland, the sauce made up for it by being rich and slightly spicy," first-year Philosophy, Politics and the Public major Emma Rehes said.

The waiter told us that the Shio ramen was the most popular item on the menu.

Overall, we found it to be

ordinary. "The Shio Ramen tasted very strongly of pork and (was) rather salty," first-year management and entrepreneurship double major Hannah Carusso said.

The best part of the ramen was the tea marinated soft boiled egg. The tea marinade took a standard ramen ingredient and truly elevated it from a normal soft-boiled egg.

Overall, Kiki was a fine but underwhelming experience. It had its ups, but its downs were equal in number and hard to ignore.

Because Kiki takes some bolder steps with its spin on traditional Japanese cuisine, I would only recommend this restaurant for people who are on the more culinarily adventurous side.

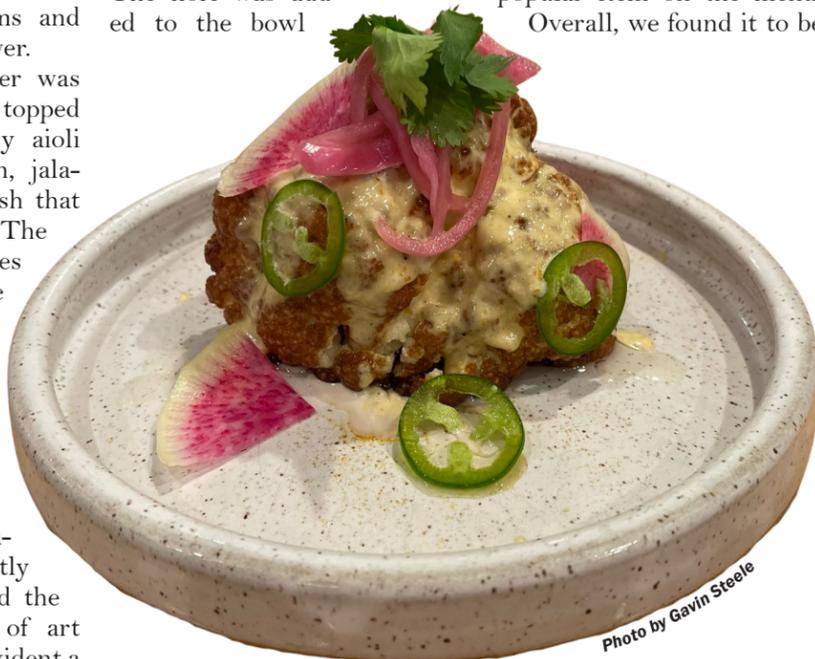


Photo by Gavin Steele



BY GRACE HAMILTON

Opinions & Editorials Editor

- Kim Kardashian and Odell Beckham Jr. were seen together in Las Vegas before the Super Bowl, fueling rumors of a romance (Feb. 11).
- Beyoncé announced the March 29 release of her new country album, *Act II* (Feb. 11).
- Sophie Turner made her romance with British aristocrat Peregrine "Perry" Pearson official, as the couple appeared together at a London Year of the Dragon party (Feb. 11).

I Spy the Perfect Rom-Com for V-Day

BY JOSÉ MARÍA GÁMEZ-LAMADRID
Staff Writer

Hihi, rom-com lovers, have you been keeping *Mr. & Mrs. Smith* (2024) on your radar? It might be the best one you'll watch this year.

"But wait," you might say. "What about *Anyone but You* (2023) with the sex appeal power couple Sydney Sweeney and Glen Powell? Or the recently released *Lisa Frankenstein* (2024), Zelda Williams's teen romance reimagining of the Mary Shelley classic? And just hold on a second, there's guns and explosions? Is this even a rom-com?"

Why yes, dear reader. Yes it's a romance, and not only is it a comedy, it's also damn good television.

Continuing his streak of acclaimed television, renaissance man Donald Glover has delivered his latest creation: a limited series reboot of the 2005 movie, exclusively streaming on Amazon Prime. *Mr. & Mrs. Smith* follows the lives of two unnamed ex-government operatives, now working as agents for the mysterious "Company." As per policy, each agent is assigned a partner to masquerade as a

happy married couple to avoid suspicion.

Under their omniscient supervisor "Hihi" — named after the way they begin each mission directive — pretend newlyweds John (Donald Glover) and Jane (Maya Erskine) Smith must navigate a tricky blend of romance and espionage as the two realize that there might be some truth to their pretend feelings for one another. Over the course of eight hour-long episodes, Glover and Erskine guide viewers through the Smiths' cycle of joy and misery, balanced with a careful dose of humor that takes advantage of each mission's absurdity.

We begin with a meet-cute at the couple's New York abode, where expectations are made clear: neither one of them is in this for the romance. However, per the nature of the rom-com, a short moment of bonding after a disastrous second mission quickly sparks a passionate connection.

With John, Glover has crafted a hopeless romantic that mimics those around him, whether it be to complete a mission objective or resuscitate his failing marriage. He risks falling too deep into the cold-uncaring-assassin mold,

but clings onto his past life, an indication that while the benefits of the job are pleasing, he's not fully committed. Against the wishes of Hihi,

someone and receive unconditional love.

With Jane, Glover has written an antisocial loner with sociopathic tendencies.



Photo courtesy of commons.wikimedia.org

Created by and starring Donald Glover in one of the titular roles, *Mr. and Mrs. Smith*, is a triumphant rom-com spy reboot of the 2005 movie.

John maintains constant communication with his mother, his excuse being that he's responsible for her care after the death of his father. This relationship draws John back to humanity — the desire to love

Brought to life by Erskine, she's desperate to feel attached to John even though such a relationship clashes with her very nature. There are moments throughout the show where Jane falls in love

all over again after a profound confession from John, but she quickly sobers from the trance. As much as she enjoys the euphoria of her marriage, she remains committed to her ground rule: It's simply for the job. When they leave the "Company" — if they can leave — it's over. A "mere work fling."

For a brief moment, one might wonder if such a Jane would've remained had Phoebe Waller-Bridge stayed as co-writer and lead actress, but that moment is fleeting. With such performances, accompanied by eccentric supporting characters portrayed by an all-star cast including Ron Perlman and John Turturro, why bother moping on what could've been?

When taken at surface-level, the latest Smith venture represents the cancer that's plagued Hollywood for the past decade: a desire to milk existing IP dry through reboots, remakes and sequels. I'm of the belief that anything can be good, given that someone knocks on a studio big-wig's door with an idea they're passionate about. In the case of *Mr. & Mrs. Smith*, boy does it feel good to be proven right.

Don't Pass Away the Opportunity to Watch Stellar TV

BY KAYLA ROSS
Back Page Editor

Not married yet. Not happy yet. Not stable yet.

Gina Rodriguez stars as a lost 30-something in a new dramedy, *Not Dead Yet*, airing on Hulu and ABC. In this sitcom, Nell (Rodriguez) is a newly single, flopping journalist who has just moved back to Pasadena, Calif. after a failed five-year engagement that took her to London. She attempts to return to her previous job as a journalist at the SoCal Independent, only to find that the only role left available for her is that of obituary writer.

With the help of her best

friend Sam (Hannah Simone—who previously acted as Cece in *New Girl*), Nell grudgingly accepts her first assignment. And in turn, she accepts her first ghost mentorship. She is suddenly being haunted by what seems to be a wannabe musician, Monty (Martin Mull), who forces her to learn about the paths of love and friendship.

Nell is a disaster. She can't stop watching *Bachelor in Paradise*. She leaves Cheeto dust on the walls. She drinks too much. She can't stop thinking about her ex. She hates her straight-line, uptight roommate. Her boss, Lexi, (Lauren Ash of *Superstore*) is a terror. And now, she's being haunted.

Monty's ghost leads Nell to his favorite restaurant and leads her straight to his grieving wife, Cricket (Angela Elayne Gibbs). Cricket is a bohemian, mid-to-late 60s woman, who happens to own a wine bar down the street from Nell's apartment. Cricket quickly befriends Nell, and teaches her that grief is natural and necessary. Together, they start learning how to go on without the person they thought they would be with forever.

With the help of the various spirits she is assigned to, Nell continues to learn more about herself. She sticks up for herself, earns a front page assignment and gains the courage to leave her ex-fiance a second time after he comes back to California for her. Nell even learns to love her tricky roommate, Edward (Rick Glassman), with a little push from Cricket and some guidance from her assigned spirits.

I love this show. It has the best life lesson beat of comedy writing since *The Good Place*, combined with the comedic timing and tenderness Rodriguez brings to the screen.

More than anything, this show is entirely too relatable. *Not Dead Yet* continuously explores the desperate need to build a sense of self-identity, the fear of missing out that comes with growing up and the mess that follows leaving a serious relationship.

In the very last scene of the season one finale, Edward



Photo courtesy of @NotDeadYetABC on twitter.com

and Nell share an intimately framed moment after Nell has left a rooftop party in her honor and finally decided that she is done with her ex-fiance. Soon after, they rejoin the rooftop party and once again share a passionate glance inadvertently. However, nothing gets by Cricket. The screen pans over the party while Cricket gives the ground a knowing smile and closes on the happy group of unlikely friends. As Monty said, "You never doubt a woman named Cricket."

The season two premiere aired last Wednesday (Feb. 7). In this first episode, Edward's gaze has been refocused to Lexi, Nell's horrible boss. In

a twist I was certainly not expecting, Edward and Lexi hook up in the breakroom of the SoCal Independent office.

Although this was unexpected, I think fans are in for a much bigger surprise: an enemies to friends to lovers pipeline. I predict that in this season the ghosts mentoring Nell will lead her to realize that her true match was under her nose the whole time. Edward, the bothersome roommate turned friend, has been the one constant in Nell's second attempt at love in Pasadena.

Not Dead Yet will continue to teach us lessons about love and loss, while also teaching us to expect the unexpected.



Photo courtesy of @NotDeadYetABC on twitter.com

Be Grateful You're Single.



Aries: You may be forever single. But that is okay because you have Beyoncé's new country album to look forward to.



Taurus: I think you have a situation on the horizon but mostly singleness.



Gemini: The stars are telling me you're lost in love. Take some self-care time, discover yourself and soon enough you'll discover the one.



Cancer: Listen to "Honey" by Troye Sivan again and yearn for a relationship.



Leo: I hope you're finding a way to be content with the fact that you are hotter than anyone surrounding you.



Virgo: You seem to be not over your ex. Get over it. You have your galentines.



Libra: Ugh. You're in a happy, committed relationship. I think I envy and pity you. No, actually, it's mostly envy. Shuffle some sappy love songs or whatever.



Scorpio: I don't know if you have any idea, but someone very close to you is madly in love with you. It's in front of your face.



Sagittarius: You have a boyfriend but not a true love. Break up with him.



Capricorn: I think you like this little life. You don't have anyone even kind of on the roster (yikes), but you're okay with that.



Aquarius: Broaden your horizons. Lower your standards. Your love life is sad at this point.



Aquarius: Maybe your true love is the memories we made along the way.

BY GRACE HAMILTON, OPINIONS AND EDITORIALS EDITOR

Hey, it's me. The girl in the back of the coffee shop who's been staring at you and your significant other for the past 20 minutes while chewing on her hoodie strings.

Why am I not ashamed that I haven't washed my face or changed my clothes in multiple days and that the smell of Tito's is leaking from my every pore?

Because I'm single! No texts to check. No one to cuddle. No one to play footsie with under the table in this Starbucks— which, like, quit it by the way.

Why am I happy that I'm forever alone? I'll gladly tell you. First of all, the other night I got groped at Dana's by a 40-year-old man — you don't get that kind of action when you're standing next to your forever-and-always. I mean, did I like it? Hell no. Did I get a free drink out of the experience?

Also no. But I could have! Which wouldn't have (almost) happened if I were in a happy and committed relationship.

Where are my consolation drinks at, am I right?! No? Don't give me the counseling number, I know it already— whatever, moving on.

Second reason I love my lonely life? I regularly get to sit on the couch and listen to my engaged roommates giggle and laugh with each other. How exhausting that's gotta be. I'd rather eat paint chips than pretend anything a man has ever said is funny. Instead, I get to become the one with this stained recliner while eating mayonnaise out of the jar with my bare hands— I know which situation I'm choosing. Every. Single. Time.

Pop the lid on that mayonnaise, babe. I've already got reruns of *Suits* playing.

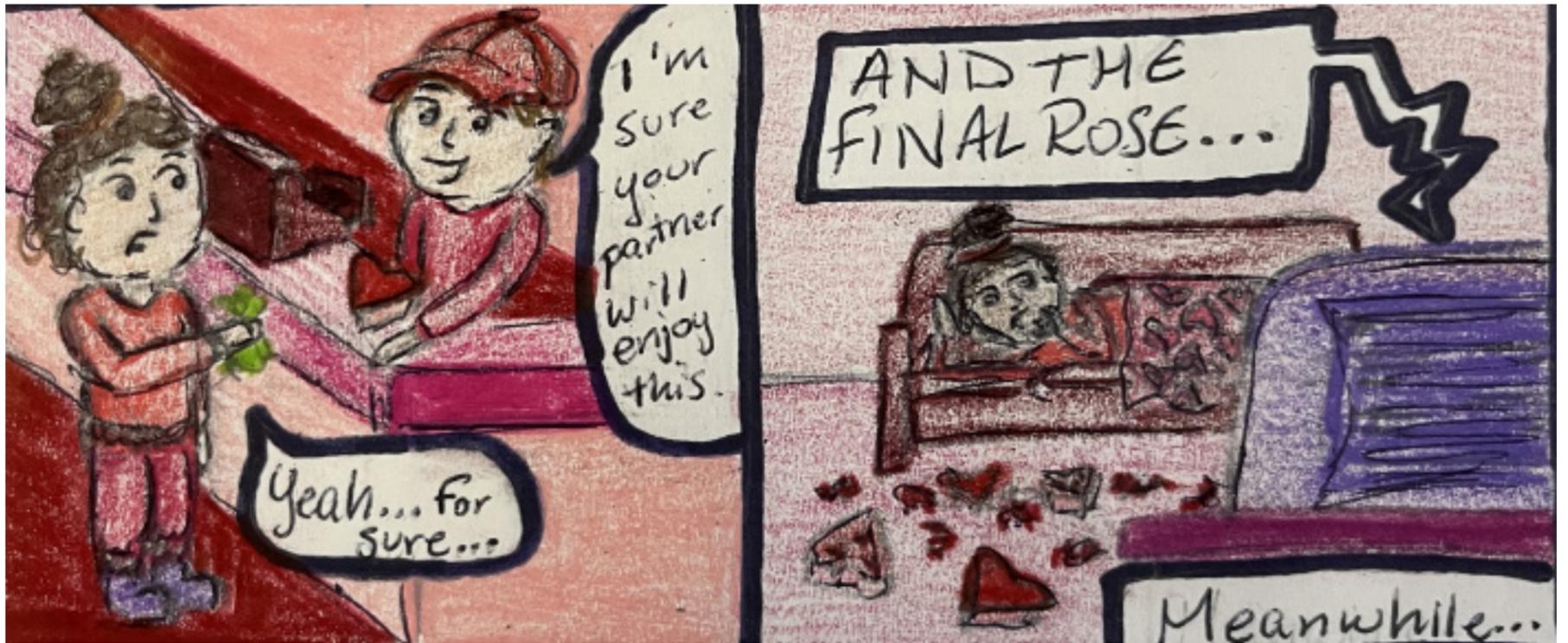
You want a third reason? I can keep going all night. I haven't shaved my legs in months. It's '70s shag carpeting all up and down my shins, and I've never been more comfortable. There's no expectation over here anymore. I've got a handlebar mustache growing thicker than my non-existent boyfriend's ass, and I am beyond proud of it.

No dinner dates. No late night ice cream. No big spoon/little spoon. No kisses or hugs or baby talk. No pet names. No hand holding. No meeting the parents. No "I love you mores". I ate chocolate covered strawberries and stained my white t-shirt beyond repair, then stayed on the toilet for more than an hour, because I can't eat chocolate. You don't get that kinda night when you're Mr. and Mrs. Til Death Do Us Part.

So? Be single and be happy about it. I sure am.

Wait. Sorry— you have a single friend? It's a girl?

...Can I get her number?



COMIC BY BRIANA DUNN

My Life Sucks Because I Have a Perfect Boyfriend :(

BY AUDREY ELWOOD, STAFF WRITER

I get it, single people, it's hard around Valentine's Day! I wouldn't know, I love my snookie wookie pookie bear, and I am going to have the best Valentine's Day of my life. The dating pool at Xavier is notoriously scarce; all of the good ones start dating early on in the year, leaving the weird, gross, unlovables for Valentine's Day, like you! Relationships aren't all they are cracked up to be, though.

This year, Valentine's Day is on a Wednesday. That means after a hard day of classes, I need to spend forever getting ready, with so much homework. Shaving my legs, everything shower, curling my hair, following a 30-minute makeup tutorial. For the men, their routine consists of putting on some deodorant and maybe brushing their teeth. I am so tired from my classes, and the candlelit dinner makes the room so dark, that I might fall asleep after my first bite of steak. Talk about a snoozefest, I won't even be awake enough to put on our matching jammies.

I love my boyfriend, but sometimes he can be such a nuisance. When we are studying, I'll just start staring at him and his baby blues and not get anything done. It's so hard to keep secrets from him because he's my best friend, and I just want to talk to him all the time. He is so tall (6'3") that he will steal my phone and hold it above my head, because I am so small and tiny and not like the other girls. It's great to have a boyfriend who is so likable and easy going, until you realize your friends like him more than they like you. My back hurts all the time from carrying the weight of having the best boyfriend on campus.

Single people, if you are down and sad about being single, do not fret. I have some solutions for you. First, you can always watch the new season of *The Bachelor*. Joey is great and awesome, and I am sure that one day if you try hard enough, you can find someone who is half as good as Joey Graziadei. You always have Ben and Jerry's, and you guys have been the longest relationship you have ever had. If you need something to do, have your resident couple friends set you up with someone. Sure you guys will have nothing in common and not go on a second date, but at least it will give you hope for the despair that is your dating life. Remember Valentine's Day is just one day, and you have the rest of your life to be single, so you'll be ok!