



XU Celebrates Annual AJ Gala

Three Xavier students receive scholarships at the 48th annual Antonio Johnson Gala

By **KAYLA ROSS**
Back Page Editor

The 48th annual Antonio Johnson Scholarship Gala was held last Saturday at the Xavier armory. This ceremonial gala celebrated the themes of “tenacity, intelligence and brilliance: we are black excellence.” Three Xavier students were awarded with scholarships at the event.

Antonio Johnson was a Xavier student from 1971 to 1976. In his time here, he led the Black Student Association while also organizing several events for Black Awareness Month, which we now recognize as Black History Month.

Tragically, Antonio Johnson died on February 8, 1976, before he could complete the events of Black Awareness Month in his second year of leadership. He is remembered for his compassion, conviction, and articulate nature.

Each year, one junior student of African-American de-

scendent who has a 3.0 GPA and has made significant contributions to the community on and off campus is awarded a scholarship in his memory.

Junior economics major Alton Jenkins was the winner of the Antonio Johnson Legacy award this year. He is involved in several activities on Xavier’s campus.

“I am a Community-Engaged Fellow, and serve as a site lead at Evanston Academy for Boys 2 Men, guiding a mentorship program geared towards the health, wellbeing, and positive self-image of 4th and 6th grade students,” Jenkins said. “I have also been a member of G.O.A.L (Gentlemen Organized for Achievement & Leadership) since I was a freshman and now serve as the President, and we work to spark a charge of professional, academic and social change for Black men on campus.”

Although Jenkins has already worked tremendously to honor the legacy of Anto-

nio Johnson, his journey of hard work is just beginning.

“To be a recipient of this award is to continue the work that began well before Antonio Johnson but has sparked a community of leaders here at Xavier,” Jenkins said. “No good work is easy work, and especially at Xavier we hold ourselves to a standard in all spheres of our world – academic, professional and social – so if there’s something you know deserves to be changed or amplified, do not let anyone stop you from doing exactly that.”

Juniors Azizz Samureh and Natalie Pierce were the recipients of the Antonio Johnson Runner-Up Award and the Jerry Cline-Bailey Excellence Award, respectively.

Natalie Pierce is the President of the Rho Xi Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., as well as Treasurer of the Children’s Charity Club. She is also involved in off-campus volunteer work with Cincinnati Public Schools.

Azizz Samureh is the founder of XU Live and the Instagram Page “Black Tuesday XU,” which seeks to uplift the black community via social media. He is also a resident assistant and a member of the TRiO scholars program, as well as being involved in off-campus volunteer programs.

“Go on, do what you believe in,” Samureh said. “If you have an idea, no matter how many ‘nos’ you receive, do it. Believe in yourself and be your biggest advocate, because you can push yourself to do anything you believe in. You never know how far you will go.”

In addition to the Anto-



News wire photo by Daniel Betz

nio Johnson and Jerry-Cline Bailey scholarship awards, the Antonio Johnson Gala event also honors one faculty or staff member who has made a significant impact in students’ lives through their work on Xavier’s campus.

The recipient of the Faculty/Staff of the Year award was Dr. Daniel L. McSpadden, director of the TRiO Scholars Student Support program.

“The TRiO scholars program is a program for our first-generation college students that come to Xavier,” McSpadden said. “I love receiving this award because it comes from the students. I love the work that I do with students, and it just shows the appreciation that they have for what I’ve been able to help them to navigate through Xavier and ultimately gradu-

ate from Xavier.”

Assistant Dean of the College of Professional Sciences Chris Barbour was one of the nominees for the Faculty/Staff of the Year award. Barbour noted the significance of this award.

“You are making a difference in a community that really needs it, on a predominantly white campus. You are impacting the lives of not only the students that you work with but also the other students that come behind. It is an honor to be mentioned with some of these giants like Dr. McSpadden, Dr. Ashley White and Dr. Jason White.” Barbour said.

Congratulations to the winners of the Antonio Johnson Gala, and thank you to Black Student Association for their time and effort in planning this event annually.



News wire photo by Daniel Betz

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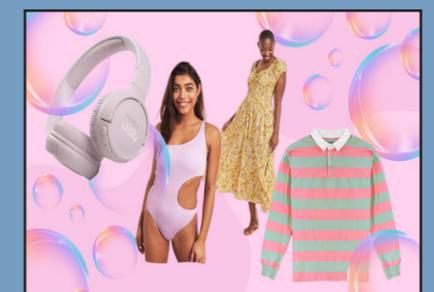
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Xavier women’s golf team tees off their season with a second place finish in Arizona.



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The spring season arrives, as does Xavier Newswire’s spring fashion advice .



XU YDSA Hosts Israel-Hamas Panel

To educate students about Israel-Hamas war, XU YDSA invites two speakers

BY BEN DICKISON
Sports Editor

Last Monday, Xavier's Young Democratic Socialists of America (YDSA) hosted the first panel on campus discussing the Israel-Hamas War joined by panelists Awad Halabi, PhD. and Elliot Ratzman, PhD.

The event was hosted in the Arrupe Overlook on the first floor of the Gallagher Student Center and was attended by an abundance of staff and students.

Both panelists shared their perspectives on the issue after an introduction from Xavier YDSA member Christian Cullen.

"Remember as we are talking about this, people are dying. We must approach this conversation with respect and empathy," Cullen said before asking for attendees to observe a moment of silence for those who lost their lives during the war.

Halabi is a professor of Palestinian history at Wright State University where he educates students on Modern Middle East History, European Colonialism and Expansion

into the Middle East. He was the first of the two panelists to speak, each giving approximately half-hour long presentations on different aspects of the war.

After an approximately 30 minute presentation from Halabi, Ratzman took the podium to discuss his perspective on the war.

Ratzman is a social ethicist who specializes in post-Holocaust Jewish history and currently serves as the chair of Jewish Studies at Earlham College in Richmond, Ind.

During his presentation, Ratzman expressed his disdain for the civilian deaths, suffering and injustice that have come with it. Ratzman also acknowledged his rare perspective as a member of the Democratic Socialists of America himself. He believes the majority of Jewish attitudes are being misrepresented.

"A lot of this war is being fought partially through memes...Memes are the end of thought. They are the end of critical thinking," said Ratzman.

"Every single Israeli I know has lost family members, friends, acquaintances



News wire photo by Daniel Betz

and more. I know because I'm tied into the Israeli peace camp. I'm tied into the Israeli academic world. I'm tied into young people in Israel," Ratzman added.

"I think their differing backgrounds definitely enriched the audience's understanding," YDSA officer Victoria Strawbridge said.

"I didn't expect so much content. I didn't expect them to touch so deeply on social

media and the way that the war is portrayed to us. I definitely enjoyed learning about the different, harmful ways that arguments are constructed and how the rhetoric can be dehumanizing," Strawbridge added.

The Xavier chapter of the Young Democratic Socialists of America has been active for around two years. Philosophy professor Dr. Alexis Dianda acts as the clubs faculty advisor

and junior accounting major Liam Fuller serves as the club president.

"As a club, we put a lot of preparation into this event. I'm amazed by the turnout from faculty as well as students. I hope the calls to action by our panelists towards the end of their speeches inspires students to know we can make positive change in the Cincinnati area, in our country and in the world," Fuller said.



News wire photo by Daniel Betz

Awad Halabi, PhD. is a professor of Palestinian history at Wright State University where he educates students on Modern Middle East History, European Colonialism and Expansion into the Middle East.



News wire photo by Daniel Betz

Elliot Ratzman, PhD. is a social ethicist who specializes in post-Holocaust Jewish history and currently serves as the chair of Jewish Studies at Earlham College in Richmond, Ind.



February 26, 2024 Student Government Association Meeting Recap

BY DOMINIC DEGRINNEY
SGA Correspondent

- The Office of Institutional Diversity and Inclusion will welcome current Director of International Student and Scholar Services as its new executive director on March 4.
- 43 programs from the Office of Institutional Diversity and Inclusion are currently underway with 12 more to be introduced June 30.
- Athletics Sales has looked into more ways to attract participation through student participation in events, particularly to draw more attention to the standby system.
- An answer seen by SGA to the ticket scalping problem is through the standby system, which allows for free access to a game past tip-off as long as seats are available.

Alabama Rules Frozen Embryos Are Children

The verdict has raised legal issues for potential parents who may depend on in vitro fertilization

BY AUDREY ELWOOD
Staff Writer

The Supreme Court of Alabama has ruled that frozen embryos created and stored for in vitro fertilization (IVF) are children under a state law that allows parents to sue for the wrongful deaths of their minor children.

The decision, which was issued on Feb. 16, stemmed from a case that was brought to court by three families whose frozen embryos were accidentally dropped by a fertility clinic. They alleged that this action made the embryos unviable, resulting in their destruction.

In 2018, Alabama voters chose to add sections to their constitution, to “protect the rights of an unborn child.” The families’ attorneys argued that the 1872 Wrongful Death of a Minor Act, which allows parents of a deceased child to recover punitive damages, extends to unborn children. Two lower courts disagreed with this, ruling that embryos outside of the womb do not constitute children, but the state’s supreme court overruled them.

The 8-1 majority of the court found that there was a state legal precedent that “unborn children” are “children” within the 1872 wrongful death law at issue. It also said



The Supreme Court of Alabama has ruled that frozen embryos are children, asserting that the state’s 1872 Wrongful Death of a Minor Act applies to unborn children based on a 2018 amendment to the law.

that any doubt about this issue was removed by the 2018 amendment. The court, whose members are all Republicans or appointed by a Republican governor, found that there was “no exception” to the law for frozen embryos.

Within the court’s opinions Chief Justice Tom Parker used religious beliefs in his argument, stating, “Human life cannot be wrongfully destroyed without incurring the wrath of a holy God...all human beings have the image of God, and their lives cannot be destroyed.”

In the wake of the ruling, three IVF providers in Al-

abama have paused offering services as of Feb. 21. The clinic that was sued, The Center for Reproductive Medicine at Mobile Infirmary, has paused its IVF treatments.

This decision criminalizes the death of a frozen embryo and could increase criminal charges from a malpractice suit to a wrongful death suit, experts have speculated.

“Why would a doctor put their license on the line by performing something that carries so much risk?” Lindsay Heller, a partner in the Family Law department of Fox Rothschild, said.

IVF providers across the

country are concerned about the implications of the ruling. IVF providers frequently conceive multiple embryos and genetically screen them for disabilities and chance of being carried to term, which this ruling eliminates.

The creation of multiple embryos may still occur, but could raise questions about how clinics or individuals could remove responsibility for the excess embryos.

If someone is to abandon an embryo, without any specifications on what should be done with the embryo, there will be legal implications. Rachel Loftspring, a partner at The

Family Law and Fertility Law Group in Cincinnati, said, “When we think about the abandonment of a kid, that’s criminal. Well, what if somebody abandons an embryo?”

Usually, IVF clinics require patients to sign agreements on what should be done with the embryos in certain cases, like death and divorce. Any agreement that could have destroyed the embryo is now null and void in Alabama.

“The Alabama court’s interpretation of the law could essentially override those agreements, turning property disputes into custody battles,” Heller said.

“If the embryo is successfully implanted, and the life is created, then the other parent theoretically under this ruling could have a child support obligation from birth until that child’s graduation,” she stated.

This ruling only applies to Alabama state law, and many legal experts believe the decision will not go to the Supreme Court, since it is based on Alabama’s state constitution and states’ highest courts are the ultimate authority on state constitutional issues.

“It sets a really concerning precedent because we see states look around and see what other states are doing and they follow,” Loftspring said.

Russian Opposer Alexei Navalny Dies

BY WILL COFFMAN
Staff Writer

Alexei Navalny, a prominent Russian opposition leader to the regime of Vladimir Putin, has died in an Arctic prison where he was serving a three-decade prison term on extremism charges. Navalny’s body has been returned to his mother.

Navalny was incarcerated at the IK-3 penal colony north of the Arctic Circle in Kharp, Russia, about 1200 miles northeast of Moscow. His death was announced by the Federal Penitentiary Service of the Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous District on Feb. 16.

According to Navalny’s colleague Maria Pechikh, he was about to be freed in a prisoner swap for Vadim Krasikov, a Russian hitman serving a life

sentence for double murder in Germany, before his death.

Navalny’s death has been widely condemned by much of the world. NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said in a statement he was “deeply saddened and disturbed.”

“We don’t know exactly what happened, but there is no doubt that the death of Navalny was a consequence of something that Putin and his thugs did,” President Joe Biden said in a statement. Biden met with Navalny’s widow and daughter in San Francisco last Thursday, announcing 500 new sanctions on Russia.

In 2011, Navalny founded the FBK, or Anti-Corruption Foundation, an organization that has conducted investigations showcasing corruption

by Russian government officials.

After a supposed Putin-backed poisoning in 2020, Navalny was left hospitalized in Berlin. Following the poisoning, Navalny returned to Russia and was imprisoned. This imprisonment of Navalny was widely criticized and met with protest in Russia.

Navalny would later receive 19 additional years due to further extremism charges that were added on to Navalny’s original sentence. This decision came at a time when Putin has shown intense suppression of political opponents, especially as the war in Ukraine has continued.

The death of Navalny is another instance in which the death of a figure at odds with Putin has resulted in serious doubt by Western governments, with the Kremlin strictly limiting the public release of information about his death.

“(Navalny’s) death was tragic, but I’m not surprised,” Stephen Klayer, a first-year data science major, said.

“I don’t have any big feelings, I’m just not surprised. He’s been poisoned before, so (Navalny’s death) is not surprising from past events, and with the upcoming election that adds to (his death) being expected,” Quentin Galeano, a first-year history major, said.



Photo courtesy of commons.wikimedia.org



BY GAVIN STEELE
Staff Writer

A Texas man has been charged with insider trading after he profited more than \$1.76 million by overhearing his wife’s remote calls when she was working from home. The Securities and Exchange Commission alleged that Tyler Loudon was taking advantage of his wife’s work-from-home setup to obtain non-public information and gain illegal profits. Loudon’s wife was a merger and acquisitions manager for BP, and he overheard details of an upcoming merger that caused him to purchase 46,450 shares of TravelCenters stock (Feb. 23).

An Irish court tossed out a woman’s \$800,000 insurance claim after she won a charity Christmas tree-throwing competition. 36-year-old Kamila Grabska sued an insurance company after she was hit in a 2017 car accident, claiming to have debilitating pain in her back and neck which left her unable to work or play with her children for more than five years. However, a judge dismissed the case after a photograph showing Grabska hurling a 5 ft. spruce tree in 2018 came to light (Feb. 26).



Photo courtesy of flickr.com

Don't Tell Me How to House

With tuition hikes and more financial demands coming to Xavier, many students are rightfully upset at how our schooling is only getting more expensive. However, there is a sneakier, hidden cost that might not be increasing, but is still costing students thousands: Xavier's mandatory two-year on-campus housing policy.

The price for the cheapest on-campus housing options is \$3,760 per semester, totaling \$7,520 per year. Now that is the cheapest housing option, but if you want a single in the Commons, that will cost you \$10,510 per year. An off-campus apartment will run you around \$600 a month per bedroom, totaling \$6,000 per school year.

Additionally, if you are living in Buenger, Kuhlman, Husman or Justice as a sophomore, you are required to get an unlimited dining plan which will amount to an extra \$3,150 per semester, totaling \$6,300. Cooking your own food could be just as expensive.

As a first-year, it makes sense to live in the heart of campus as it helps with the transition from living with your parents to being independent. You have all your meals provided and it's a short walk to class.

Many students who commit later or are from out-of-state would not have enough time to get off-campus housing for their first year. However, sophomores are well accustomed to the area, have time to get housing and typically have a solid group of selected roommates by the time housing rolls around.

While it can be expensive

to live on-campus, Xavier allots a one time room and board grant to some first-year students. But that goes away sophomore year, increasing the financial burden for sophomores. With most college students' budgets already highly constrained and an economy that is hurting many of the working class students of Xavier, limiting sophomore housing options hurts students.

This will be a big change for the school. Yes, there will be some growing pains. They may have years in which not all housing is full. Yes, they will need to recalculate the amount of students on campus. Still, many sophomores will choose to live on campus as they are not ready to leave yet. I think the system is rigged against the sophomores and that it is detrimental to them — these factors have to be taken into account.

The sophomore housing system is so broken that it is essentially a fight to the death for housing. If you do not win the time slot lottery, you are left out to dry in Kuhlman or Buenger and are required to purchase an expensive meal plan. Alternatively, you might get stuck with an expensive housing arrangement in the Village. There is no regard for affordability or student preference.

Last year, many sophomores got moved to University Station as the university over-admitted first-years. Sophomores are pulled back and forth with little regard from the administration, and the messages they do receive are vague and confusing. This year they stated that there will be no moving

to UStation, yet the housing situation remains complicated because of the unknown number of prospective students for 2024.

Allowing sophomores the ability to move off campus provides them with more flexibility. It also leaves the first-year dorms to the first-years and prevents the humiliation of the sophomores having to live in Husman and Kuhlman.

There will still be a high probability of students picking on-campus housing and a dining plan. It is more convenient, it provides accessibility to classes and is just generally easier for students to do than living off-campus. Some students really value on-campus living, whereas some students would rather save money. Both are valid choices, but students should have the ability to choose what is best.

There are concerns over a lack of student rental housing around the area. While this might put a slight strain on the current set up of the off-campus housing system, it likely will not be as detrimental as people would think. There is still housing available on the Xavier off-campus living website for 2024-2025. UStation also still has plenty of places for rent.

Xavier needs to accommodate students' needs when it comes to finances. Giving sophomores the chance to pick housing options that fit their needs will ensure that every student will be able to stay at Xavier. Xavier needs to put its students first — in every sense — rather than putting the cents lining their pockets first.

you. Are we writing the stories you want to read? Are we missing the news or events you'd like to see? We value your readership and continued support, and we will show the same level of dedication in return as we make this change. We're committed to another century of borderline serious journalism, and we're happy to take you with us.

BY *Audrey Elwood*
STAFF WRITER

A Letter From HOLA

HOLA's theme for the 2023-2024 year has been to embrace our roots and highlight the diversity in the Hispanic/LatinX community at Xavier. The E-Board has been working to get to know the community and what they want to see moving forward, in addition to what could be helpful in supporting everyone's experiences on campus.

We wanted to listen to all comments — both positive and negative — and suggestions to see what improvements need to be made to better HOLA. One of the most important goals was to create a safe, open and welcoming place for everyone to thrive and feel at home, even when being away from home.

To continue embracing diversity, the theme was carried through to the Gala hosted in September, where all 24 Hispanic/Latin countries' flags were proudly displayed at each table. To open the Gala, HOLA members walked in holding flags corresponding to their cultural backgrounds. Many students commented on how proud they were to see their flags shown and to talk about their countries with those around them.

HOLA recently got to take a group of 12 students to Chicago to attend the United States Hispanic Leadership Institute National Conference (USHLI). The conference provided workshops, panels, luncheons and other networking events led by Hispanic/LatinX leaders in different fields. Students had the chance to meet other Hispanic/LatinX students from around the country who have their own experiences to share and confide in others of similar backgrounds.

Our group was made up of students of different ethnicities, ages and majors to take advantage of everything the conference had to offer. All of the students reported feeling empowered and excited to keep moving forward to hopefully show people que sí se puede.

Since we wanted more students to learn about USHLI and how rewarding of an experience it is, HOLA did a takeover of the official Xavier

Instagram on Feb. 17th. We answered questions about HOLA and USHLI and shared pictures of other events we've had this year. After the Instagram takeover, many students made comments on how they can't wait for next year, because they would love to attend USHLI. We also invited students who were at the conference to talk about their favorite event and what they have learned from hearing Hispanic leaders share their experiences and wisdom.

"I think everybody deserves to have a hero that looks like them and I definitely found many that weekend."

"I was scared to take a leap into the light, but I was able to find the support I needed to know that I was capable of anything I set my mind to."

"Speakers were not presenters but storytellers; they empowered, enriched and invoked passion within each and every one of us."

"Seeing people who looked like my past, my present and my future meant the world to me."

To continue embracing our roots after USHLI, we are awarding two scholarships this year, each \$1,000. Students who have made an impact in their community and the Xavier community had the chance to apply to be a recipient of one of our scholarships, the other being academic based. We plan to announce the winners at our next big event which will be our Carne Asada. HOLA will be hosting a party to celebrate the end of the school year, say goodbye to graduating seniors and welcome the new E-Board.

As the year ends, we are looking forward to ending on a high note and preparing for the upcoming year. HOLA believes that without our community, we would not be where we are today. We stand on the shoulders of those who came before us and want to grow with the people who come after us. Regardless of our differences, we are all very similar and can learn from each other. ¡Sí se puede cuando estamos unidos, no cuando estamos divididos!



A year and a half ago, you noticed the lack of Newswires on Gallagher coffee tables or in Alter trash bins. We told you to look in your inbox for our PDF — some of you listened and a lot of you didn't. Now, we're telling you to check our Instagram @xavier.newswire daily, where you'll enjoy the same coverage you've come to rely on. The transition

from newsprint to a digital format was successful, so we are asking you to trust us again as we embark on our next adventure: Website updates, Instagram posts and informative reels. It is our mission to cover the news and amplify student voices, but we also want to increase Newswire content, viewership and engagement. Most of all, we want to hear from

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I Protest the Lack of Protesting

Growing up, I vividly remember seeing a History Channel documentary about the 1960s. It was a time of social strife and intense protests. A particular focus was on protests at college campuses as the Vietnam War lit a fuse that burned brightly around the country. Colleges like UC Berkeley became centers of resistance.

A famous moment from the Vietnam War protests is the Kent State shooting committed by the National Guard; while we remember this moment, rightly, for the National Guard's egregious actions, we ought not to forget they were there to face protestors who were our age.

When we look back at this era, college was less about learning and more about making your voice heard. The intersection between the college student and the protestor is one I expected to see more of at Xavier when I got to campus. However, it seems to be a stereotype that no longer applies.

This points toward a bigger issue within our gener-

ation: We do not know how to protest or engage in direct social action. Think back to a few years ago. Remember Blackout Tuesday, where people posted black squares on Instagram in a supposed show of solidarity. Think of how many infographics you could scroll through on people's stories, taking incredibly complex issues and shortening it into content we feel like we can handle. Instead of the burden of respecting an issue and diving into the topic, we can satiate our attention span with a five-slide Instagram post that somehow could summarize it all at once. We do not protest in-person anymore, but instead see our reposting and actions on social media as meeting the need for social change.

The collapse of the American protester can be viewed directly on college campuses. I think during my three years at Xavier, there have been three, maybe four protests or vigils on campus, most of which were sparsely attended. We have become content to use content as our primary

means of raising our voices at the establishment. Think of how much has gone wrong in the world this year. War in the Middle East, an economic system made to only benefit towards the rich, continued police brutality and a deeper fear about the slide toward authoritarianism in the United States.

Now compare that to student action at Xavier. Not people posting about those issues, but instead taking concrete steps to work to solve those issues. You can post as much as you want; social media posts pale at the sight of those marching for justice.

Here are a few examples. The one I focus on is in Chicago at the Democratic National Convention in 1968. Without going into the whole history, the situation at this convention was tense as younger protestors wanted a candidate that would strive to end the war in Vietnam. At these protests in Chicago, multiple artists showed up to sing and support the cause. It is also worth noting that one of the major organizers of the pro-

tests in the city was the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS).

Try to imagine a moment like this in our country today. Could you envision a national group of college students banding together under the same protest banner? Could you envision a protest concert today? I just simply do not see it. Too much of our lives have gone to the online world for it to happen.

There is a final barrier to campus political engagement to discuss: Administrative bureaucracy. Think back to the SDS. They did not have to fill out forms or adhere to university guidelines for their direct action. It was a student organization that operated as an independent entity which gave it a much greater ability to achieve social change. Rather than spending time determining if their events would fit university guidelines or if legal departments would object to their actions, they engaged in a politically charged and changing world in their own way.

The culture around our

generation has fostered a social media sphere that allows us to feel comfortable with our foray into uncomfortable topics. At the same time, college administrations have induced stricter guidelines for how we can attempt to use our voices on their campuses. The social media aspect has been more explicit, while the bureaucratic behind-the-scenes work has been much more subtle. For the most part, the graduating classes of our era have been content to stamp their voices on Instagram; those who aren't content with just that run into a maze of rules and regulations that strangle the original message out.

We often hear of the Xavier bubble when talking about our relationship with the surrounding neighborhoods in Cincinnati and Norwood. A further extension may be our insulation from the variety of events in the world that require us to speak out. Let your voices be a little bit louder than a "like" on Instagram or a retweet on X.

Rhetoric Raises Real Concerns

Up until now, I had been avoiding reading into the details of the beating and subsequent death of Nex Benedict. I knew that I would find myself deeply upset, angry and nihilistic. And I am.

Even so, I underestimated how violently ill I would feel reading about a detective asking a judge to look for evidence of blood in the school bathroom where Benedict was beaten by three girls the same age as them; how I learned from their obituary that they liked to read and play Minecraft; how their friends reported that Nex had been bullied for being non-binary for well over a year; and hearing Nex tell the police officer they didn't even know the girls' names.

All those things considered, I am most hung up on the fact that three young girls did this. Yes, the cause of Nex's death has yet to be officially determined, but there is no doubt in my mind that, at the very least, they died due to complications that arose from these young girls beating them. In my mind, these girls are murderers. They killed their classmate because they were

non-binary.

They're not the only ones to blame. I am bewildered and disturbed by the kind of dystopian nightmare we live in that these young girls were spurred to commit such violence.

My rage comes from the fact that their actions were misguided by lies and dog whistles from right-wing politicians.

It is not these girls' fault. They were convinced.

Oklahoma state superintendent Ryan Walters, who has worked to prevent students from changing their gender in school records and told the New York Times after Nex's death that he doesn't believe transgender or non-binary people exist. He indirectly told those girls that LGBTQ+ people do not deserve respect.

Conservative social media personality behind "Libs of TikTok" Chaya Raichik, who Walters appointed to a library review committee and who engages in constant anti-LGBTQ+ rhetoric calling the LGBTQ+ community a "cult" and "groomers," told these girls that LGBTQ+ people are dangerous.

The Republican dominated Oklahoma state legislature, which has passed laws prohibiting transgender students from using the restroom that aligns best with their gender identity and laws prohibiting them from receiving gender-affirming healthcare, told those three girls that LGBTQ+ people are not human.

These people fostered the conditions necessary to turn these three young girls into murderers and weapons of the right-wing. And somehow, we think this is an isolated incident.

I hate to inform you that this rhetoric and its impact are incredibly pervasive.

When I was a senior in high school, I started the LGBTQ+ Alliance at my school, and I knew that there would be resistance. I knew I would be called names, treated as less human, mischaracterized and demonized by poorly educated moms and I could handle that.

However, when at a school board meeting I listened to a girl who I had met in kindergarten and had been friends with and grown up with tell the school board she didn't

attend our graduation ceremony because she felt me starting this club was rubbing my sexuality in her face, my heart shattered.

The girl I laughed with in the cafeteria during lunch time and took AP Spanish with suddenly betrayed me. She told me she was disgusted by me, joining the room full of people who already thought of me as a sexual predator.

It was then I felt alone. I felt unsafe.

Today, I think to myself, scoffing at my naivety, "Who do you think taught her that? Who made her feel that way?" Probably her mother who corroborated her story asking the school board to pity her daughter missing her graduation as if I didn't deserve to be there, too.

I wish I could say coming to Xavier eliminated this, but the anti-LGBTQ+ and anti-trans rhetoric exists here, too.

For those of you who use the men's restrooms in Gallagher Student Center, have you noticed those black velcro strips that are stuck in the corner on the sink counter?

There used to be baskets with free period products there. What do you think happened to those products, and why do you think they aren't in the men's bathrooms any longer?

It is because they kept getting defaced and thrown in the trash; free products that yes, maybe a majority of men don't use, but a transgender student might need. Yet, people on our campus went out of their way to throw them out.

I'll say it again: I don't blame them. I am disgusted and disappointed that rather than using the bathroom, washing their hands and leaving, people felt so spurred to dump free period products in the trash.

Yet, this is nothing less than a sign that Xavier too is affected by the violent anti-LGBTQ+ rhetoric echoing throughout the country, and we need to do a better job at making sure everyone knows that is unacceptable.



BY *Christian Cullen*
STAFF WRITER

BY *Jackson Hare*
CAMPUS NEWS EDITOR

Xavier Swim Dives Into Big East Finale

BY ROBBIE
DZIERZANOWSKI
Staff Writer

Xavier swim will conclude their 2023-24 campaign at the Big East Championship starting today. The crown jewel of Xavier swim season is held from Feb. 28 through March 2 in Indianapolis, Ind. at the IUPUI Natatorium.

Xavier's swimming team closed their dual meet team schedule last weekend with a loss at Miami 179-79.

One of the four champions in the meet were the 200-yard-freestyle relay consisting of sophomore Olivia Oyseter, juniors Reese Turn-

er and Alexis Worrall and senior Kali Fischer, finishing with a time of 1:34.76. Senior Erin Ritz also won one of her events, the 100 butterfly, with a time of 56.80, and led all Xavier swimmers with a time of 25.90.

The other meet champions came from the men's side.

Freshman Matt Fralic won the 100-yard-backstroke with a time of 52.01 and placed second in the 50-yard-backstroke with a speedy time of 24.06.

The last champion from the meet was sophomore Aiden Leamer who won the 100-yard-butterfly with a time

of 49.62 and placed second in the 50-yard-butterfly with a time of 22.57.

Other notable men's swims came from junior Nathan Wall who placed second in the 500-yard-freestyle with a time of 4:42.13.

Overall, the season has had a lot of ups and downs for both the men and women's sides of the team, not consistently winning meets.

The teams both started the year on a streak, with the women going 4-0 in the Butler Double Dual in September last year, as the men went 2-1 in their division. The next meet was onto a Louisville

dual meet, where both the men and women were swept and dropped to 4-1 for the women and 2-2 for the men's team.

The men's team finished 2-5 in head-to-head meets this season, while the women recorded one win and six losses.

As Xavier heads off to Indy to compete for conference titles this weekend, 2022 and 2023 All Big East Team selection Ritz reflects, "Big East is unlike any other swim meet I've ever competed in. The atmosphere is so unique. There's a DJ on deck. Our amazing group of Xavier parents are decked out head-to-

toe in Xavier gear."

Xavier has accumulated the third-most total points among men's programs in the Big East this season, with the women holding the fifth most.

Names to look for on the leaderboard this week include sophomore Kyle Hudson in the 100 meter freestyle dash, freshman Matt Fralic in the 50m backstroke, Ritz in the 50m fly, sophomore Matthew Adanin in the 100m fly. Junior Olivia Oyseter is the favorite in the women's 50m freestyle dash, recording a 23 second performance in Cleveland State University's Magnus Cup.



Photo courtesy of Xavier Athletics



- Xavier's track and field team competed in the Big East Championship this past weekend and rung in multiple record-setting times. Laila Hankerson took home a bronze medal in the 60 meter dash. The 4x400 relay team of Audrey Bishop, Sophie Francis, Alaina Sullivan and Maddie Riviera beat their personal best by a whopping nine seconds.
- Xavier men's basketball fell short at Marquette by 24 points on Sunday evening. Notably, junior walk-on guard Brad Colbert tallied her first points as a Musketeer.
- Intramural basketball champions have been crowned! Congratulations to the Ball Handlers (Co-ed), Radio Shaq (Upper Men's) and Watsonder the Towel (Lower Men's).
- XU Baseball now sits at 4-4 after trouncing Louisville, winning two out of three games at Lipscomb in Nashville last week. Earlier today, the Musketeers defeated the Clifton Bearcats 11-9 after scoring eight runs in the sixth.

XU Women's Golf Tees Off

BY ROBBIE
DZIERZANOWSKI
Staff Writer

Xavier women's golf opened the spring season tied for second place at the Rio Verde Collegiate Invitational this past weekend from Feb. 23 to 25. The meet was hosted by Western Michigan University at the White Wing Golf Course in Rio Verde, Ariz.

Throughout the three-day tournament, Xavier put up a 54-hole total score of 870, which was +6, ranked second, tying with Illinois State University. On the individual side, junior Kara Carter led the musketeers with a score of 215, one under par, tying her for eighth in the tournament. Her finish marks her eighth career top-10 finish at Xavier throughout individual competition.

Overall, the Muskies had a myriad of high finishers, all finishing within the top-60 for the tournament. Junior Emma Welch (+13) finished tied for 59th place as well as sophomore Mad-

ison Reemsnyder, Xavier's 2023 All-Big East selection from last season, finished tied for 34th overall (+6). Additionally, freshman Darrelyn Webster, a standout coming from Anderson High School in Austin, Tx., finished tied for 30th place at (+5), while senior international student Erin Kim (below) finished tied for fifteenth at (+5).

The tournament opened up with Xavier finishing third in the opening round, only stroking three over par. By the second round, the Muskies squeaked into first place, putting them one stroke ahead of California Baptist University. By the last day, they had fallen back to second, finishing five strokes behind the champions Cal Baptist.

The Musketeers are coming off their fourth straight Big East Team Championship last April.

The Muskies are the first team in Big East history to win four team titles in a row. Additionally, because of the

conference championships, the Muskies also made it to the NCAA Tournament four seasons in a row, finishing as high as seventh at the NCAA Westfield Regional in 2023 for a new school high place.

Coach Breanna Jenco returns for the women's team, the reigning Big East Coach of the Year, an honor she has been awarded four other times in her career.

"Coach Jenco ensures our practices are not light, as we are committed to improving every day," Reemsnyder said.

In addition, the women's team returns three golfers from their postseason NCAA Regional seventh-place roster, with Carter and Reemsnyder earning All-Big East honors after the end of last season.

This season, the Muskies are set to participate in five different invitationals ranging in location from the Spring Break Shootout in Dade City, Fla. to the Pinetree Country Club Women's Collegiate tournament in Kennesaw, Ga. Additionally, the women will head to the Chattanooga Classic in Tenn. before heading to the Big East Championship in Beaufort, S.C.

Up next for the Muskies is a trip to the Jacksonville Golf and Country Club in Jacksonville, Fla. for the Momentum Transportation Northern Florida Collegiate tournament, held from March 4 to the 5.



Photo courtesy of Xavier Athletics

Drive-Away Dolls Will Drive You Wild

BY JOSÉ MARÍA GÁMEZ-LAMADRID
Staff Writer

There's an outcry in Hollywood lamenting the death of the comedy genre. Gone are the days of the Seth Rogen comedy — sex-and-drug-induced bouts of cross-country misadventure. Todd Phillips has been cured of his hangovers; the dude found his car. Even if such a comedy happens to come around, it's typically sentenced to the streaming pits regardless of quality, just ask Adam Sandler about his annual Netflix release. It's a shock nowadays to see such a comedy release in theaters, but even more so to see a Coen brother's name in the credits.

Refreshed and eager to get back behind the camera after a Hollywood hiatus, Ethan Coen presents *Drive-Away Dolls*, his solo directorial debut since the brothers split. Co-written with his wife Tricia Cooke, the film follows free-spirited Jamie (Margaret Qualley) and overworked Marian (Geraldine Viswanathan) — two best friends that decide to hit the road during the Y2K fever. Desperate for a vacation, Marian mentions a trip to visit her aunt in Florida, which

Jamie suggests turning into a booze cruise to help Marian loosen up and resuscitate her flatlined sex life. Finally set on the road trip, the two best friends attempt to make some extra cash by working a driveaway delivery along the way, hauling secret cargo that shadowy forces are eager to get their hands on.

The premise of *Drive-Away Dolls* is simple: Travel from point A to point B, deliver the cargo and have a happy ending. There's no underlying metaphors or subtext hidden within, it's a simple jaunt between two friends through the East Coast, served with a generous helping of sex and booze.

There's hints of *The Big Lebowski* (1998) scattered throughout the film with its style of humor, elevated through the absurdity of the pair's misadventures. It's a throwback to the height of the 2000s raunchy comedy, where the pair of protagonists stumble through plot points in the hopes of getting laid. It's adolescent, yet mature, offering a twist on a traditionally machismo-ridden genre through a queer lens, a rarity for a big blockbuster production.

The dynamic between Ja-

mie and Marian serves as the highlight of the movie. The pair crackles with electrifying chemistry as they spout witty Coen banter to each other. Qualley's performance is

ripped straight out of a psychedelic rock album from the 1960s hippie movement — screw the establishment, live freely and to hell with anyone who tells you otherwise.

Throw Marian in the mix though, and the genuineness of Jamie's traditional Southern upbringing humbles her selfishness for the sake of another's happiness.

As a counterbalance to Jamie's eccentricity, Viswanathan channels her chops as the straight-man to drive the plot forward. Marian knits herself into a ball of tension as the stakes continue to rise, always cool but struggling to collect herself. Curt and straightforward with others, she yearns to hold to the same carefree attitude as Jamie, but the exhaustion of the life she attempts to leave behind prevents her from finding that same lust for life (and a girlfriend). Even so, vacationing with Jamie allows a softer side of her to slip out, a platonic love that considers blossoming into something more.

At a brisk one hour and 24 minutes, *Drive-Away Dolls* does not overstay its welcome. It tells its story, thanks the audience for watching and leaves everything wrapped up neatly with a bow as the credits roll. It's passionate, earnest and absurd, a solid blast from the cinema past as we look to the future for the next Coen collaboration.



Photos courtesy of commons.wikimedia.org

Bad Batch S3 Premiere isn't a Bad Batch of Episodes

BY LUCA FILIGENZI
Staff Writer

Good soldiers follow orders, and good news outlets bring you the latest in Star Wars media.

This past Wednesday saw the premiere of the third and final season of *The Clone Wars* spin off, *The Bad Batch* starring Dee Bradley Baker, Ming Na-Wen and Michelle Ang. The show's premiere is

streaming on Disney+.

The last episode of season two came out March 29, so with 11 months between airings, fans of the show were excited for the new season. *The Bad Batch* originally started with the characters from the final season of *The Clone Wars*. One reason of particular anticipation was the trailer, which had the reveal of fan-favorite sith apprentice, Asajj Ventress. She

was believed to be dead, given her death in the now non-canon 2015 comic series *Dark Disciple*.

But what about the episodes themselves? Well, the fourth episode of the season premieres today, each running at 90 minutes. This includes explorations into Omega's foreshadowed potential, Crosshair's redemption and further sight into Palpatine's ultimate plans for cloning. Without spoiling, these three set up an interesting final conflict — that being, the ultimate culmination for all clones, what's to become of them and what the fate of show's original characters will be in the grand scale of Star Wars.

First-year Digital Innovation, Film and Television (DIFT) major Parker Smith, a longtime Star Wars fan, shows praise for the show. "It's a refreshing take on the Star Wars franchise, and delves into themes such as war, brotherhood, and loyalty," he said. "It made enough of an impression on me to where I was sad that it ended."

This sentiment is echoed by many fans. With an 86% on Rotten Tomatoes and 7.8 on IMDB, the show has received generally positive remarks from both critics and the audience. In particular, season three has an above average 8.0 rating so far, and the climax of the show has yet to come.

However, with the future of Star Wars uncertain, some loyal Star Wars fans express



Photo courtesy of deviantart.com

worry. Regarding the future of the franchise, first-year Philosophy, Politics and the Public major Drew Sikes expressed concern. "I loved the *Book of Boba Fett* and *Kenobi*... yeah we have *Bad Batch* season three, but no important movies or new things...nothing that's changing the franchise or is moving us in a new direction," he said.

"Disney needs to do something new, and do it well, or even the easiest fans to please

will give up," Sikes said.

So while the premiere of the third season of *The Bad Batch* is well received, it has not changed the franchise in the eyes of many fans.

The three premiere episodes of *The Bad Batch* have been generally liked, but have also set high precedents for the rest of the season and for the franchise itself. But concern for the future of both is persistent among many Star Wars fans.



Photo courtesy of deviantart.com

Spring Into This Season's Hottest Fashions

BY KAYLA ROSS
Back Page Editor

With Paris Fashion Week underway and spring break around the corner, spring fashion of 2024 is officially here. Let this be your guide for your evening scroll on TikTok shop.

AirPods are OUT

AirPods are out, headphones are in. They can act as a statement piece reminiscent of the 2018 bedroom pop, bright and funky era. Don't worry anymore about washing your AirPods in your jeans pocket or the sound coming out of the holes on the sides. Treat yourself to the JBL 510T headphones. They're only \$50, the sound quality is so much better than AirPods and the battery life is 40 hours. They come in a few different colors, but I highly recommend the bubblegum pink!

Long Dresses

This year, the '70s bohemian flair is all the rage. Maxis and midis are it. Mini florals and wispy fabrics are everywhere in stores right now, but there are also lots of more casual options. For the tea party

princess vibe, I highly recommend Altar'd State or Free People. If chiffon is too dressy or not your favorite texture, Old Navy is having a comeback. Online they offer many options for maxis and midis that can be dressed up with heels and a slick back hairdo or dressed down with sneakers and a tote. They have quite a few on sale right now.

Whites and Blues

Coastal grandmother is taking on a new meaning this

year with a slightly less relaxed vibe. This year, clean, crisp blues and whites that near business-casual are in. Hues of whites to creams and icy blues to cerulean blues are the moment right now and very easy to mix and match with. Abercrombie is my favorite source for sturdy staples that can carry you from season to season.

The "Air-Con" Look

The netting/meshy look is in this year. I can't exactly say

this is my favorite trend, just because I feel like people look like mermaids that got caught and sold, but it is everywhere. If you find a way to pull off the beachy thin crochet vibe, let me know. Urban Outfitters has the best looks for this trend in a variety of cuts and colors.

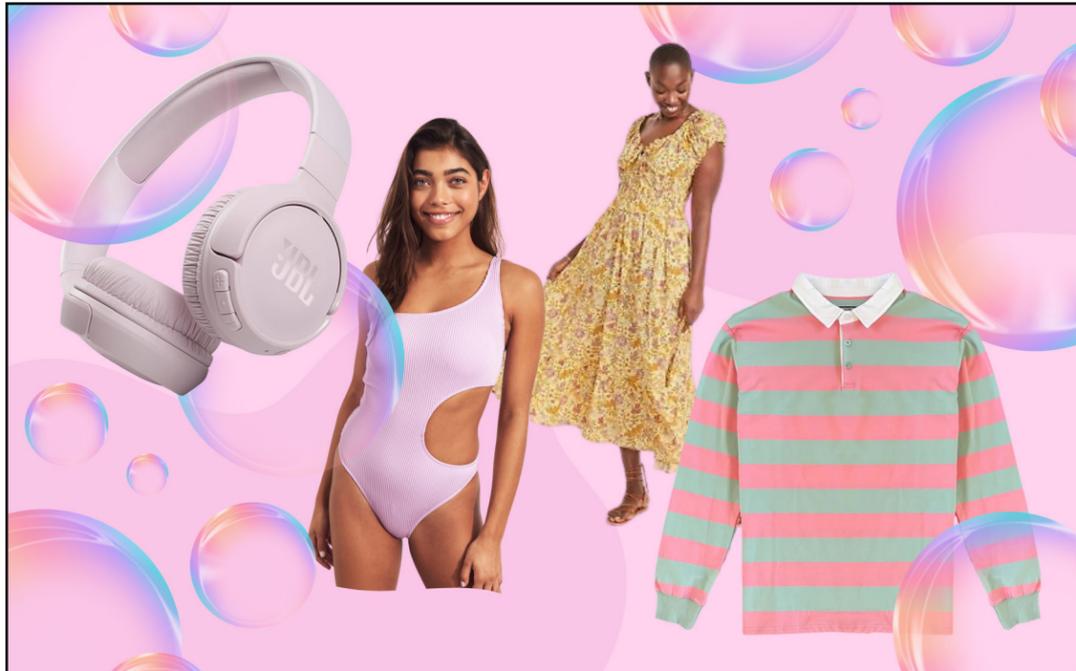
One-Piece Swimwear

Triangle bikinis are certainly iconic, but this year they are being pushed aside for one-piece swimsuits. So

far, I've seen lots of swimsuits with cutouts, one-shoulder or an open back to make up for the extra coverage. I personally love the one-piece look, and I think they can be especially flattering on my fellow short-torso girls. They give everyone the illusion of longer legs, a slightly elevated look and maybe even an extra dash of confidence. I know Hollister used to be cringe, but they are having a comeback. Their swimwear is affordably priced compared to most other mall stores, and they have some trendy one-piece options right now for less than \$60.

Rugby Shirts

I thought we tried to revive the rugby shirts and let them die in fall of 2021, but I guess they're back. I think this is a direct credit to Jacob Elordi exclusively wearing the rugby shirt looks in the opening of *Saltburn*. These are a classy, simple way to look a little bit preppier than you would in a normal golf shirt or long-sleeve tee. I would pair one with light, vintage wash jeans or a tennis skirt. Aerie, H&M and Abercrombie all just put out new spring lines including many pieces in this style.



New Indie Pop Album is a Royel-y Good Time

BY GRACE HAMILTON
Opinions & Editorials Editor

"In the lyrical justice system, the people are represented by two separate yet equally important groups: The Royel, who investigate rhyme, and Otis, who prosecutes the offenders. These are their stories."

This incredible introduction was lifted straight from the Spotify page of Royel Otis, and aside from the amazing spin on the iconic quote, they are certainly being honest in how seriously they take the art of rhyme.

The Australian indie pop duo, made up of members Royel Maddell and Otis Pavlovic, has made their mark with *PRATTS & PAIN*, their debut full-length album. Actually, it's the second time they've made their mark, after a video of them covering "Murder on the Dance Floor" went viral on TikTok in January 2024 with 10.9 million views.

It's admittedly impressive when a group can make its mark twice.

PRATTS & PAIN is a play on a London pub, Pratts & Payne, where Royel Otis recorded a live set of the album.

Music-wise, the album is sonically and lyrically cohesive. It starts off very strong with "Adored." Royel Otis sings, "And my vision turns blue with the terrible things that I want," — a banger of a line — on top of a fun mix of

drum and guitar. Otis Pavlovic brings in a subtle but soft and interesting voice that blends well with the music itself.

Two of my favorite songs are "IHYSM" and "Sofa King." "IHYSM" is upbeat with an addictive synth-sounding track, reminiscent of mid-2000s indie pop. "Sofa King" is similar in its older sound, reminding me of MGMT or Modest Mouse. "The Holy Ghost should hold your hand for me" is a great line, by the way.

In the entirety of the album, "Velvet" is the weakest song. Lyrically, it's a little too

repetitive, and it's not quite as catchy as the other songs, so it does not make up for its poor lyricism. However, it genuinely sounds like Royel Otis is just having a good time on the track.

From there, things slow down with "Molly" to coast through the last half of the album, ending strongly with "Big Ciggie." "He died thinking too much of you" is an incredible line, in my opinion, as well as "Until some jackknife cut her life / Burned up with the pack in the yard."

Royel Otis has truly made the best possible album debut.

Any enjoyer of good indie pop — from the casual fan to the hardcore stan — will love this album and its creativity, cohesiveness and obvious show of talent. And it's only their first!

Wallows and The Backseat Lovers are a bit of a similar sound. Or maybe all dudes in their 20s making indie pop records and having fun with their best friends create a sim-

ilar sound — and I just eat it up every single time. Regardless, *PRATTS & PAIN* is an album that's meant to be listened to while driving down the highway in the middle of the night with the windows down.

Or just while you're doing homework, either way is good.

Moral of the story? Just listen, you'll be glad you did.



Photo courtesy of @RoyelOtis on twitter.com



BY GRACE HAMILTON

Opinions & Editorials Editor

- **Dominic Sessa won the Independent Spirit Award for Best Breakthrough Performance for his role in *The Holdovers* (Feb. 25).**
- **Podcaster Bobbi Althoff and husband Cory Althoff are getting divorced, citing "irreconcilable differences" (Feb. 26).**
- **Talk show host Wendy Williams revealed frontotemporal dementia and language disorder aphasia diagnoses in a statement from her team. Her son claims the dementia is "alcohol-induced" (Feb. 26).**



Aries: Be nicer to the people around you. We're all just doing our best.



Taurus: Embrace the Mormon jean skirt. Just make sure it has a slit or something.



Gemini: Listen to Royel Otis's cover of "Murder on the Dancefloor" again. It's too good.



Cancer: Take a night off. Put the TikTok down. Go to sleep.



Leo: You are going to look so hot on spring break. However, I do wish you hadn't supported SHEIN for your spring break looks.



Virgo: Follow *NewsWire* on Instagram or else. @xavier.newswire



Libra: Even though you're a NARP, you can still bag an athlete. It's all about confidence.



Scorpio: Be kind to the DIFT students. Volunteer to be in their little movies if you have some extra time. You may be supporting the future Steven Spielberg.



Sagittarius: Why are dorm room movers still a thing? Why would I pay you when I have two boy best



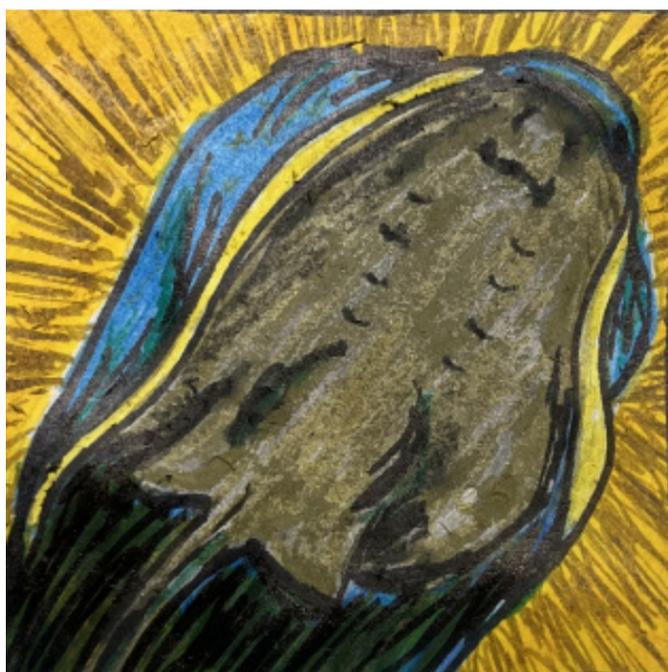
Capricorn: Minivan friends don't get enough hype. If you have a minivan friend, tell them you love them.



Aquarius: I call bullship. Tap into your inner mermaid this spring break.



Pisces: There is no reason to be afraid of thunderstorms at your big age. Drink some sweet tea and watch it go by on the front porch.



**THE PRIMADONNA
STINGRAY**
COMIC BY BRIANA DUNN

The Story of Charlotte the Stingray

BY BEN DICKISON, SPORTS EDITOR

In tropical Hendersonville, North Carolina, a genetic labyrinth has been laid out. Charlotte, a 12-to-14 year old stingray, is pregnant with four little rays of sunshine. However, she doesn't share a tank with any male stingrays. Just two strapping young sharks, Mo and Larry—who were not previously thought to be sexually mature—but it now appears one of them may need help paying child support.

The pregnancy has made waves internationally, up to the point where Charlotte is having local news station WBTV-3 tried for "slander."

On a recent taping of Judge Judy, set to release after the birth of Charlotte's offspring, which is due to arrive any day now, Charlotte remarked, "I remember one night I was at a bar in Cincinnati called Fishbowl. I met Larry and he was mewing and wearing a Burberry trench coat. He offered to swim with me into a lemon drop shot and we talked about how we both live in Henderson. At that point, I could barely see his face from all the strobelights and I figured gills are gills. So we smooched a little bit and he offered to take me back to his 'bachelor reef.' But all we did is kiss, I swear."

Charlotte could be pregnant as a result of a rare condition called parthenogenesis; this type of pregnancy occurs via asexual reproduction in which eggs are formed without fertilization, and it produces an exact clone of the mother upon birth.

"I call bull-ship," said Alicia Keys, a world-renowned Aquarius. She claims that the irresistible gaze of Charlotte inspired her to cover Billie Eilish's hit "Ocean Eyes." Keys believes that Charlotte may just be doing this all for fortune, or perhaps even all for fame.

Charlotte has never been pregnant before, according to staff of the Aquarium and Shark Lab by Team ECCO where she resides. It is also notably rare for stingrays to become pregnant by parthenogenesis. Mo and Larry's mother, however, had given birth over fourteen times via the extremely rare occurrence.

In a curious attempt to hear from a primary source, I reached out to my father, the best "Ray" I know, for his insight on how this might have come about. He responded, "Ben, how in the beard of Zeus have you gotten five parking tickets in the last two weeks. Get a grip dude."

When reached out to for comment, Mo, the bamboo shark—potential father of Charlotte's pups said, "Stinger? I barely know her." Mo claims he never met Charlotte, and his brother was tempted by the fishnets she donned on that fateful night out.

The world awaits as Charlotte reports cravings for pickles in peanut butter almost nightly.