

THE — MYSTICIAN

[N E W S] P A P E R

MAY 2024
VOL. 85 ISSUE 8

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BSC ALUMNUS AND FOUNDER OF HEXAHIVE JADE SCHERR AT WORK ON APRIL 19, 2024
PHOTO CREDIT: ARIANA GONZÁLEZ RODRIGUEZ

BSC GRADUATE MANAGES MARKETING FIRM

BY ARIANA GONZÁLEZ RODRIGUEZ
MYSTIC MEDIA CREW

Bismarck State College graduate, Jade Scherr, is the owner of Hexahive: a business dedicated to assisting other businesses with marketing, designs and offering guidance. An early-graduate, seventeen year-old Scherr's original plan was to go to BSC for criminal justice, social work and psychology. One thing led to another, and Scherr decided to switch her major to Graphic Design.

"I got pregnant when I was 17 and that kind of made me rethink of 'Do I wanna be a single mom and a lawyer?'" Scherr said. "I always really liked the legal, the math, that kind of thinking, and I also really liked art."

Scherr fell in love with the graphic design program right away. The idea of her own business actually came to her while going to school.

"I was not nearly as talented as the other students in my class," Scherr said. "I didn't have the experience that they did, so I got an internship in town at a corporation and I wanted more experience."

While Scherr was planning her business, she stayed busy. Scherr was a student, a full time employee and a mom: all in one.

"Was it easy? No, but I was determined," Scherr said. "I knew what I wanted and I wanted to set a really good example for my daughter of 'If you have a dream, you go and you work for it and you chase it.'"

The meaning behind the company's name, Hexahive, comes from the words hexagon and hive. Hexagons, when banded together, are the strongest and yet most efficient and structurally sound shape. Hive represents collaborative work towards a shared mission.

Scherr, however was not alone. Besides being supported by her family and friends, She was supported by her the employer and her then boyfriend, now husband, showed a large amount of support.

"I probably, if I were him, would have been like 'What? You wanna leave your job and do what?' but he was crazy supportive all the way," Scherr said.

With the help of her instructors and members of her

SCHERR ON PAGE 4

CAMPUS ACTIVITIES CALENDAR

SPRING SHOW

MAY 1 | 6 AM - 9 PM
STUDENT UNION

TACOS & PINATA

MAY 1 | 11 AM - 2 PM
STUDENT UNION

FIGMENTS READING

MAY 1 | 12 PM
LIBRARY

GRAPHIC DESIGN

PORTFOLIO EXHIBITION

MAY 1 | 10 AM - 12 PM
CAREER ACADEMY RM 305

ONE ACT PLAYS

MAY 1 | 7:30 PM
SIDNEY J. LEE AUDITORIUM

ONE ACT PLAYS

MAY 2 | 7:30 PM
SIDNEY J. LEE AUDITORIUM

CONTENT CREATORS

SUMMIT
MAY 3 | 9 AM - 5 PM
NECE

SHORTCUTS

MAY 3 | 6 PM - 8 PM
BAVENDICK STATEROOM

THERAPY DOGS

MAY 7 | 11 AM - 1 PM
STUDENT UNION

BSC ALUMNI AWARDS CEREMONY

MAY 9 | 6 PM - 9 PM
BAVENDICK STATEROOM, NECE

BSC 84TH COMMENCEMENT

MAY 10 | 2 PM - 3:30 PM
BISMARCK EVENT CENTER

EXPLORE BSC

MAY 31 | 10 AM - 3 PM
JACK SCIENCE CENTER

HAVE A GREAT SUMMER!

MYSTIC MEDIA STAFF

- Kaia Lehman** The Mystician Editor-In-Chief
- Levon Schulz** MystiCast Executive Producer
- Jayden Fajardo** Mystic Media Coordinator
- Emily Tryon** The MYX Production Manager
- Alix Dobler** Mystic Media Crew
- Alex Sanabria** Mystic Media Crew
- Ariana González Rodriguez** Mystic Media Crew
- Caleb Herr** Mystic Media Crew
- Irie Townsend** Mystic Media Crew
- Quinn Berg** Mystic Media Crew
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- Mina Good Eagle** Mystic Media Crew
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- Eittol Martin** Mystic Media Columnist
- Jaden Reinicke** Mystic Media Columnist
- Mason Zacher** Mystic Media Columnist
- Cody Eisenbeis** Photographer/Reporter
- Chloe Erickson** Graphic Designer
- Robert Mechaley III** Alumni Reporter

MYSTIC MEDIA MISSION STATEMENT AND DISCLAIMER

The purpose of college media is to serve and give voice to the students. We, as the student based forum of journalism on the Bismarck State College campus, provide content that is information, fair, concise and of importance to students and the community. With this goal in mind, Mystic Media is dedicated to accuracy and maintaining ethical journalistic practices. We strive to give a voice to student issues and policies within the local community. Our goal is to incorporate as many students as possible and be an outlet for student expression. Mystic Media strives to be objective and is not affiliated with any outside organizations. Mystic Media upholds the principles guaranteed by the First Amendment and utilizes these rights to bring diverse, entertaining, and thought-provoking material to the college community. Thoughts expressed may not be the opinion of all the staff or BSC community.

SAY CHEESE!



HARYS BEAUCHAMP, EMILY SCHMITZ AND SHYLA JORGENSON
PHOTO CREDIT: CHLOE ERICKSON

Want to be in The Mystician?

Submit your photos to bscmysticianeditor.bismarckstate.edu for a chance to be featured on one of our pages!

For all inquiries regarding this publication, contact:

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FIGMENTS OF IMAGINATION LEAVES LEGACY

BY ALIX DOBLER
MYSTIC MEDIA CREW

In 1991, a group of aspiring Bismarck State College students started a revolution. With the help of professor Judy Swartz, the following year presented a new class called “Fiction Writing 101.” The main goal of the class was to help further develop student writing skills. At the end of the semester, all work went into a fully in-house published literary arts magazine.

Thirty-three years later, the magazine has become a tradition in BSC’s history--what is now known as Figments of Imagination. The publication has experienced much change within its time period.

In 1992, at the genesis of its first release, the publication was originally titled “Tales from the Wasteland” and featured only short stories and full-length novels written by those in the writing class.

In the following release, the title changed to Figments of Imagination and expanded to include works of art, photography and poetry. This was also the time when submissions were open to all students on campus.

The age of each issue is apparent by the colors, font types and paper used for the cover. The first 10 magazines were printed in black and white until 2001’s issue featuring a full color print.

As years went on, the student staff team began drawing new concept ideas, page sizes, binding and paper types. Staff often experimented with ways to make the magazine more interactive.

Themes ranging from comic books and cabin doors to crayons and smartphones captured reader’s attention with their interactive elements. Something different was brought to the table with every release.

In support of the student staff members were faculty advisers who played a large role inspiring fresh ideas. Associate Professor of English at BSC, Kimberly Crowley advised Figments from 2013 to 2017.

“I always love working with new students,” Crowley said. “Each year students found something from previous years they wanted to emulate, but they also

always added their own ideas and perspective to the publication.”

For the past 20 years, Figments has been working with The Printer’s Inc., a local printing company in Bismarck to publish each volume of the magazine. General manager, Dan Hildebrand has visited the classroom, helping inspire ideas and bringing design elements to life.

“Part of my job was to rein in some of the exuberant enthusiasm,” Hildebrand said. “For example, one year they wanted to have a scented page to make it smell like garbage, and then they wanted another to smell like flowers.”

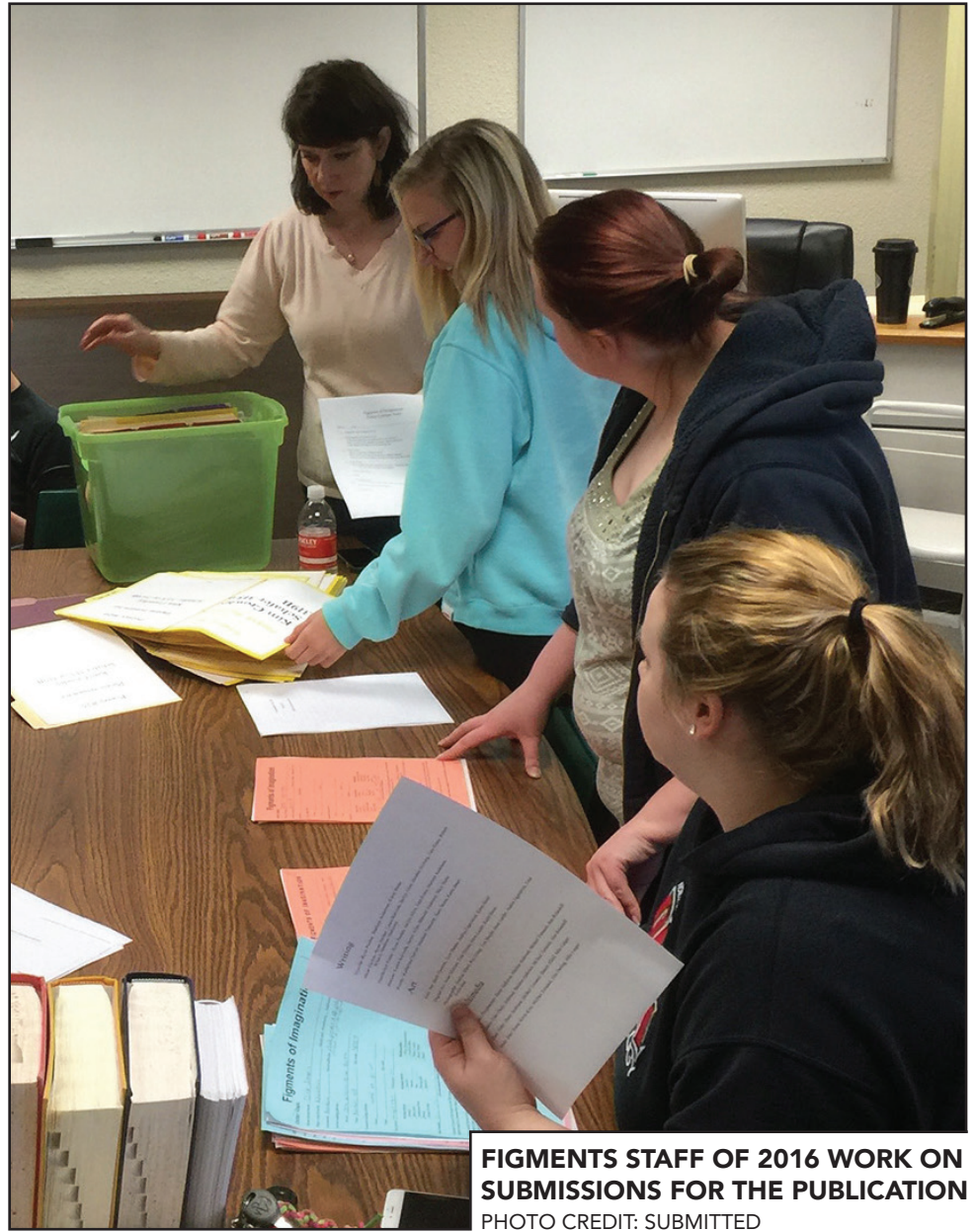
These scented pages were meant to represent the two main smells during a BSC trip to New York City in 2004 but the cost for printing this specialty idea was out of budget.

“I think some of the things that prevented having the book get way out of hand was the budget set by the college,” Hildebrand said.

Each edition of Figments focused on reader’s accessibility rather than a mash of elements.

Despite the legacy that Figments has, class enrollment and student submissions have gone down drastically in recent years. Discussions of reformatting the design,

process of printing and content are being reviewed. In the meantime, this year’s edition, Volume 32 will run as usual at the end of the semester. The big reveal of Figments is set for Wednesday, May 1 at the Library on campus.



FIGMENTS STAFF OF 2016 WORK ON SUBMISSIONS FOR THE PUBLICATION
PHOTO CREDIT: SUBMITTED



ILLUSTRATION CREDIT: KAIA LEHMAN

BISMARCK HOSTS HOLISTIC WELLNESS FAIR

BY MINA GOOD EAGLE
MYSTIC MEDIA CREW

On the edge of the Capital city in the AmVets center hosted the bi-annual holistic fair event. The Souls of Spirit expo or SoS promises a rejuvenating experience for the mind, body, and spirit. The lineup had a variety of local and national vendors that included energy healers, health professionals, palm readers, aura photography, handmade products, and so much more. With such a welcoming presence the event is set to draw everyone seeking a holistic approach to wellbeing.

The head pioneer for the Expo is Lori Lashman, explains how the expos were started,

“I had a spiritual awakening of my own in 2015,” Lashman said “I went through a time called ‘dark night of soul’... when that happened it changed my life so drastically, I wanted to share that with everybody.”

Lashman’s favorite part of the expo is the people and the connections she has made throughout the journey.

“Seeing how it has changed their lives when they come, and seeing them come back,” Lashman said “it’s something that people are looking for, things that help us feel better, and to think positive, and that

we are supported.”

She is also so grateful for the help and support of the vendors that came to the event. She explains how some have travelled from Wisconsin to all the shows as far as Deadwood S.D.

“They are so amazing,” Lashman says “they know my heart is in what I do, and they are there to support me... so, I want to do my best for my vendors.”

Joe Rothengass along with his wife Lisa Rothengass is one of the vendors who travels with SoS from Wisconsin, they sell a variety of gemstones under the name ‘Maple House Art’,

“We’ve been doing shows for 20 years” Rothengass said “It’s kinda like seeing old friends with the people who come back.”

Two attendees for the event Link and Laney who are students at Mandan High School enjoyed all the booths they viewed at the event.

“I really like jewelry, crystals, and the creativity that is expressed through everyone’s work,” said Laney.

The SoS fair will come around again in the fall.



COMMUNITY MEMBERS ADMIRE CRYSTAL TABLE DISPLAY
PHOTO CREDIT: MINA GOOD EAGLE

SCHERR: FROM PAGE 1

community, Scherr earned more opportunities freelancing and gaining skills to add to her resume. These projects with different agencies planted the seed of interest in what would grow into a business of her own.

“From there, I started to recognize I really like getting to partner with businesses and help them figure out what to be doing,” Scherr said.

Scherr’s daughter became a motivator through this process.

“Prior to having her, while I was down the prelaw track, I honestly was a little lost,” Scherr said. “I had issues with depression and other stuff for a long time, so she helped snap me out of it and gave me the reason of ‘Here’s something to live for.’”

Hexahive was officially formed in 2019. Scherr can typically be seen at different community events, volunteering with a variety of organizations, and getting coffee with potential business partners.



HEXAHIVE SPARK AWARD TROPHY AT THE MAIN OFFICE
PHOTO CREDIT: ARIANA GONZÁLEZ RODRIGUEZ

SOCIAL MEDIA CRISIS STRIKES BSC

BY MATHEW EIDE
MYSTIC MEDIA COLUMNIST

In today's digital age, social media has become a universal presence in the lives of college students, including those at Bismarck State College. From Snapchat stories of campus events to Instagram posts showcasing study sessions in the library, platforms like Facebook, X and TikTok have transformed how students interact and engage with each other and the world around them.

Currently, social media fosters connectivity and community. It enables students to stay updated on campus news, participate in online discussions, and network with peers and professionals. For students living off-campus

or those with busy schedules, platforms like Zoom and Discord provide vital connections to classmates and campus resources.

The allure of social media comes with its own set of challenges. The constant barrage of hand selected posts and filtered images can lead to unrealistic comparisons and feelings of doubt among students. The pressure to maintain an online persona can contribute to anxiety and stress, creating a "highlight reel" culture that overlooks the complexities of student life.

The pervasive nature of social media can sometimes overshadow real-world interactions.

Students may find themselves glued to screens, missing out on meaningful face-to-face

connections and experiences. This phenomenon raises questions about the balance between digital engagement and genuine human connection in a campus setting.

Furthermore, At BSC, the impact of social media is evident in various aspects of student life. From student organizations leveraging platforms for recruitment and event promotion to faculty using online forums for course discussions, the integration of social media is both transformative and nuanced. It is crucial for our campus community to engage in thoughtful dialogue about the

role of social media in student life. How can we harness its benefits while mitigating its negative effects? How can we promote digital literacy and responsible online behavior among students?

Social media plays a significant role in shaping the college experience offering connectivity and opportunities, but also poses challenges like unrealistic comparisons and digital distraction. It's crucial to strike a balance, prioritizing digital literacy and meaningful face-to-face interactions. By fostering a healthy relationship with social media, students can maximize its benefits while minimizing its drawbacks, ultimately contributing to a more fulfilling and authentic campus experience.

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR



BY KAIJA LEHMAN
THE MYSTICIAN EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Welcome back my beautiful friends to the final issue of The Mystician for the school year. Let me say, this has been such a privilege working on the paper these last two years. While I may not have loved every second of it, this was an amazing experience that has taught me so much about life, leadership, caffeine, cults and people in general. Between a broken down vehicle, losing my job, and being bribed with a free trip to New York. I'd have to say this is one of the weirdest side quests I have ever been on, but it has been by far the most rewarding.

You can all read about it more when I publish my autobiography. I'm kidding, of course. I think. I have no idea what life has in store for me, and neither does anyone else. We all just have to roll with the punches as they come.

In true Kaia Lehman fashion, I will end this last letter off with a few words of wisdom. Consider the following, (cue Bill Nye sequence) 1. Try something new. Even if it is just talking to the cute girl, or guy, or person at the coffee shop, or joining a co-ed softball team, get out there. You never know who you might meet, what you might do, or where it might take you. Take a leap of faith, try something new. 2. Call your mom. This is dark, but you won't always be able to call her, talk to her while you still can. 3. Get a goldfish. I don't have a reason for this, goldfish are just cool. Plus, you can name it Gladys. Not enough pets are named Gladys and I want to see the name Gladys get the recognition it deserves.

You have so much potential, and you are capable of anything you decide you really want to do. Live life to the fullest, live authentically, and live freely.

Later Dudes,

Kaia Lehman

POST CREDIT BLUES

BY LEVON SCHULZ
MYSTICAST EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

"Madame Web," "Dune Part Two," "Godzilla x Kong: The New Empire" and "Kung Fu Panda 4." What do these all have in common other than being 2024 releases? None of them have post credit scenes. Please get up and leave, so I can clean.

I have worked at a movie theater for three long years, and there are many things that have made me lose my faith in humanity. Today, I set humanity

aside and focus solely on the moviegoer. I have cleaned all the theaters hundreds of times, and it's as unglamorous as it sounds. The general guideline is to wait for you, the patrons to leave and then start to clean.

However, that can be a nauseating experience when watching thirty adults wait for a post credit scene that will never come. They scroll their phones as the credits scroll by. Only the rare few take the 23 seconds to Google if the movie has a post credit scene. I've witnessed one of the enlightened ones tell

their group that the extra scene was never coming just to be shunned and unacknowledged.

As I stand at the bottom of the dark auditorium, I can't help but wonder why you sit and wait for ten minutes in hopes of seeing more "Madame Web." Was two hours not abysmal enough? Rarely can a scene placed at the end of the credits add to anything other than an effort to minimize the film you just saw. Rarely is there any consequence to the scene unless its purpose is to sell you the next thing.

I have worked through and witnessed the decline of Marvel movies at the box office. It's something I have prayed for many times in my short life. Though my prayers are slowly being answered, the behaviors created during the Marvel heyday have led to many annoying moments facing off with ignorant casuals.

VI get it, you went to two Marvel movies a year for the last ten years. There is nothing coming after the credits. There is no superhero revealed at the end of "Dune Part Two."

MAKING AN ARGUMENT FOR GOD

BY JADEN REINICKE
MYSTIC MEDIA COLUMNIST

Accounts of the true nature of our universe are various and diverse. We have begun to understand some of the mechanisms governing our world, thus challenging many religious doctrines. However, saying that science disproves some extra-physical existence is wrong, as science pursues physical and observable truth, and most religions presume God exists outside our rational domain. While it is currently impossible to prove or disprove the existence of God, there are many compelling arguments.

Some explanations of our physical existence are rooted in irrational events, an example being the beginning of our universe. There are two possibilities: either the universe just began, or our universe contains an infinite history. If the universe did just begin, the principle of cause and effect would be broken, which conflicts with many principles of science such as Newton's laws of motions. If the

universe has always existed, we would create a timeline with an infinite regress—this is impossible. As an example, imagine having to take infinitely many steps to arrive at the present; it only follows that we would never finish taking steps therefore we would never arrive at the present. Because rational reasoning cannot currently explain our genesis, irrational events seem almost more likely.

Conscience is another concept that has irrational elements, specifically, thoughts exist in some capacity somewhere. For example, if we were to think of red, we would experience redness in relatively the same way you experience red in the physical world. This experience of red is quantifiable; therefore, it exists if only in the mind. The only problem is that we cannot open someone's brain to find this redness, so where is it? The only rational response is that it exists beyond the physical world.

Following this rationale brings us to our first argument for the existence of a God,

which is derived from the argument for common morality. One theory of learning states that we only learn from experience, and any creative thought is just a conglomerate of experiences – a dragon is a lizard and a bird. If we can think of something as right or wrong, then these concepts were creatively derived from some experience which is God, and if we can experience a God, then one exists.

Another proposition for the existence of God is intelligent design or the watchmaker argument. This states that if we found a watch composed of complex gears, motors and other parts that function together perfectly sitting on the ground, we may assume that someone created it. Our universe is an extremely diverse and balanced system, and the slightest deviation in any of the fundamental forces would have made life impossible.

When considering how unbelievably well the universe is tuned for hosting life, it is no stretch to say that some extra-physical deity may have created our universe.

CLEAN OUT THE FRIDGE



BY KAIA LEHMAN
THE MYSTICIAN EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

It's that time of the month where sleep is sounding pretty good for dinner. In these times, especially with moving, cleaning out your cabinets and fridge is essential. That's the one thing I love about fried rice. It is basically an amalgamation of whatever you have in your fridge, and it turns out edible. Fried rice is also super cheap to make, especially if you buy produce on sale or from the freezer section. The optional protein is the most expensive part of the meal, which can be anywhere from \$0.68 to \$4 per serving, depending on how boujee one is feeling that day. Despite the laid back nature

of this food, there are a few hard and fast rules to making a quality fried rice.

Get the starch off your rice by washing it. If you're wondering why your homemade rice always tastes more like tapioca pudding than it does rice, it's because you're dealing with dirty rice.

Use old rice. Fried rice is best when the rice is a day or two old, because it absorbs the flavor better.

Use a 1 to 1 ratio with rice and water. Enough said.

Use chicken or beef stock to add extra Umami to your rice.

Cook your rice in one pan, starting with the protein, then veggies, and save the eggs for last.

Don't be afraid of Spam. Spam was destined to be with fried rice just like the toxic couple from high school. But you do need to fry it first.

Ingredients:

3 tbsp butter, divided

2 large eggs, whisked

1 bag of frozen mixed

vegetables (I usually get carrots, peas and onions)

3 cloves garlic, minced

salt and black pepper

4 c. cooked and chilled rice (I prefer basmati rice)

3 green onions, thinly sliced

3-4 tbsp soy sauce, to taste

2 tsp oyster sauce (optional)

1/2 tsp sesame oil

I usually make fried rice after I make orange chicken so I can use the leftover rice (check out my orange chicken recipe in The Mystician 84.5). Make sure your rice is cold when you are making fried rice, otherwise you will get clumps.

Start adding some butter and scrambling the eggs, be sure to break up the eggs into smaller

pieces as they cook. Remove eggs from the pan, add more butter and begin sauteing the veggies until soft and cooked thoroughly. Push the veggies to one side and add the cold, cooked rice, soy sauce and oyster sauce. Saute the rice and veggies together for about three minutes or until the rice starts to brown slightly. Remove the pan from heat and add the scrambled eggs back into the rice. Season to taste and Enjoy!



FRIED RICE DISH PREPARED BY JAYDEN FAJARDO
PHOTO CREDIT: KAIA LEHMAN

TIPS & TRICKS TO MAKE

FRIED RICE

1 Wash your rice

2 Use Old Rice

3 Use a 1 to 1 ratio with rice and water

4 Don't be afraid of Spam

5 Cook your rice in 1 pan, starting with the protein

6 Use chicken or beef stock to add extra Umami to your rice.



ILLUSTRATION CREDIT: KAIA LEHMAN

WNBA RECEIVES A SPARK



BY QUINN BERG
MYSTIC MEDIA CREW

With another year of March Madness all wrapped up, there is one woman at the forefront of everybody's minds, and her name is Caitlin Clark. The Iowa Hawkeye skyrocketed to stardom in the midst of her senior year, shattering records, enthraling a nation, and earning her place as one of the greatest women to ever play the game. Despite leaving college without any titles to her name, Clark will depart knowing she had a truly exceptional four years of play. At least that's what I'm told.

The truth is that I was not a Caitlin Clark fan three months ago. In fact, I wasn't even a basketball fan three months ago. Even with siblings who played in high school, I never took much interest in the sport, just cheering whenever our half of the bleachers did and scratching my head wondering what a shooting foul was.

That all changed when my sister, the biggest Clark fan I know, threw on one of her games and told me to sit down and watch. I did. It was awesome.

Spending time emphasizing how good Caitlin Clark is at basketball would be like throwing pebbles into a rockpit: it's just unnecessary. But her importance to the sport has extended far beyond her game; it has grown into something that transcends the court, something that attracted millions of people like me who have never had any interest in women's basketball and now find themselves captivated by it. For all the records that Caitlin Clark smashed, that may very well be her greatest accomplishment.

For those who haven't yet seen her influence firsthand, all they need to do is take a look at the numbers. For the first time in history, more people tuned in to watch the NCAA women's championship than the men's—several million more. This year's men's game was viewed by approximately 14.8 million spectators. The women's—nearly 19 million. That figure is even more historic when comparing it to the 2023 women's championship, with viewership

more than doubling in a single year. Would that have happened without Clark? I find it doubtful.

And the thing is, she's more than just a player—she's a lynchpin for others. Thanks to her influence, audiences drawn to her this season have discovered players that I believe will prove to be nearly as iconic and captivating as Clark herself. For example, it's hard to picture Caitlin Clark without thinking of her sensationalized on-court rivalry with Louisiana State's Angel Reese. Despite both players claiming no ill will toward the other, spectators came in droves to watch the pair duke it out in the Elite Eight. The hype surrounding their confrontation made the whole matchup feel like an event, the women's college equivalent of Magic Johnson and Larry Bird in the 1980s—a rivalry that some

would argue revived the NBA when it was at its lowest.

Will Caitlin Clark ignite a basketball frenzy for her league in the same way the two hall-of-famers did back then? The numbers seem to indicate she already has. While Clark was leading her fellow Hawkeyes against the University of Connecticut, the matchup between the University of South Carolina and North Carolina State had only just concluded with a whopping 7.2 million viewers, all watching a game that included no trace of Clark. The masses may have come for the Hawkeye, but they stayed for the basketball.

Clark's time in college athletics may be at an end, but her legacy will live on—not just through her records but also via the newfound attention she has brought to many talented

women playing in the NCAA. Rising stars like Flau'jae Johnson and JuJu Watkins will continue to fuel the fires of women's college ball for several years to come, while seniors such as Angel Reese, Cameron Brink, Kamilla Cardoso and Clark herself are poised to reinvigorate the WNBA, bringing their newfound fans along with them—a boost the struggling league could certainly use.

If there's one universal truth in all of sports, it's that greatness elevates greatness. Thanks to Caitlin Clark, a whole new batch of talented female athletes are getting the attention they've deserved for a long time, and it doesn't seem likely to stop anytime soon. It's a new dawn for women in basketball, and for growing the game like no other, Clark has more than earned the right to bask in the sun.



THE ASSASSIN'S BLADE: A REVIEW

BY IRIE TOWNSEND
MYSTIC MEDIA CREW

Sarah J. Maas, known for her fantasy tales, writes "The Assassin's Blade," a set of stories that is written as a prequel for her Throne of Glass series. In these stories, readers dive into the early adventures of the main character Celaena Sardothien, a skilled assassin.

In these stories, Celaena faces many challenges along the way, like fighting pirates and joining shady groups. Through the book, we meet interesting characters like Sam Cortland and Arobynn Hamel, and her mini adventures explore loyalty and power.

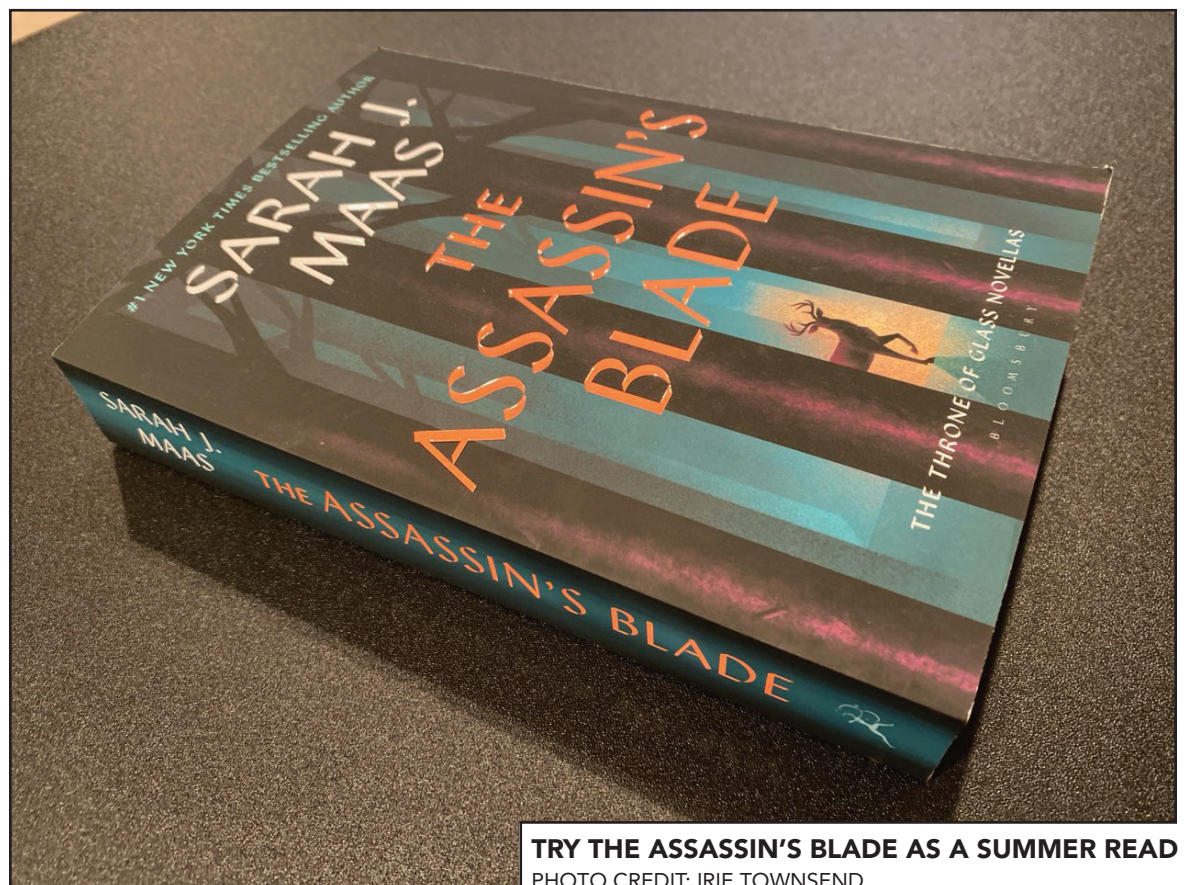
Sarah J. Maas explores some themes and ideas to think about while reading.

One of those is about figuring out who you really are, which

is something Celaena, the main character, struggles with throughout the book. She also looks at the importance of friendship and trust. Whether it's the busy streets of Rifthold or the sunny beaches of the Southern Sea, each location makes it easy to picture yourself there.

"The Assassin's Blade" is popular for its adventurous stories and characters. It's a great starting point to the introduction of the Throne of Glass series. Leaving readers wanting to know more about Celaena's future experiences.

If you like fantasy books, "The Assassin's Blade" is a book to crack open. With its blend of action, romance, and suspense. It's a journey that will keep you invested until the last page.



TRY THE ASSASSIN'S BLADE AS A SUMMER READ
PHOTO CREDIT: IRIE TOWNSEND

STAFF EDITORIAL

LAST RITES

JAYDEN

Well everyone, the year is coming to an end. Overall it was a very good year for Mystic Media, we had tons of great content, memes, and we brought back two awards from the CMA conference in New York. All in all I hope you had a great year too. As for my last words as the Mystic Media Coordinator, I shall say keep it swaggin', make sure to treat yourself to something nice for finishing this year, and take that awesome summer trip. Keep it real!

ARI

It has certainly been an eventful first year at BSC. Here at the communications program and Mystic Media, I have learned so much more than I could ever imagined and finally solidified what I want to do in life. Only a few months into my time here, I went on a trip to New York City with people from this program that, through the course of the trip, would become good friends of mine. I also received a job opportunity doing what I love. As this year comes to a close, I am grateful for all of the opportunities given to me through Mystic Media and for the friendships I made this year. I am looking forward to next year and the opportunities it will bring. Have a good summer, and until next time!

LEVON

Being a part of Mystic Media has certainly been my favorite part of attending BSC. My main focus has been the video side and doing MystiCast but being involved with the whole team has been a great joy. Whether it be submitting Mystician articles at the last minute or a trip to New York, this semester has been the most purposeful and rewarding. I know that the long hours of messing around with cameras and trying new things every week will pay off. I am grateful to have done my part within this team.

KAIA

This has been a wild ride, and while I am happy it is almost over, I am a little melancholic over the end. I've made some great friends during my time at BSC and I will miss the ridiculousness that goes on here at Mystic Media. It's been a great experience coming to BSC as a wide eyed bushy tailed freshman, now moving on and establishing my career. I will never forget my experience of going to New York, making orange chicken in the coke room, or sitting at the computer for 10 hours with no break during layout week to finish the paper. The latter I could live without, but the former are memories I will cherish forever. Until next time.

CHLOE

At first, I joined Mystic Media as a club member, but as I grew to know more about the Mystician, the more involved I got. I started to officially work at the Mystician and help a lot more as I grew more confident in my skills. I took photos, made illustrations, ads, infographics and helped during the chaotic layout weeks. During my time here, I grew closer to the people here and gained valuable experience and advice that will help me in the future. I love this place, and I'm so glad I stepped out of my comfort zone to reach out and join Mystic Media. When you are interested in something, even just slightly, pursue it! It's okay to be nervous at first, give it time, and you won't regret it.

QUINN

When I came to BSC, I thought it would be a nice break from the hustle and bustle of UND. I was partially right. This year was introspective, unstressful, and mellow—it was also tremendously fulfilling. I have Mystic Media to thank for that. Writing for the Mystician has been more fulfilling than I ever imagined, and I'll always cherish my time as a contributor. My only regret is that I didn't write more.

CALEB

When a passion can be turned into a career, you must pursue it. When I discovered I could join a team that would support me and share similar career goals, I had to seize the opportunity. I joined Mystic Media in the fall of 2022 and immediately found myself surrounded by passionate advisors and peers. I entered the program to enhance my writing skills and kickstart my dream career. Two years later, as I prepare to graduate from BSC, I have gained so much experience and received a job in my desired career. Being a small part of the Mystic Media family has been an incredible experience, and I am beyond grateful to have grown with a dedicated team and an amazing adviser.

ALEX

When I switched over to the communications program my eyes opened wide because I realized that I found what I wanted to do and was finally in the right place. I found a little close knit community with it. Everyone involved in Mystic Media is so welcoming and kind. We all work hand in hand and I think that's pretty cool. It's fun hearing everyone's ideas and watching them come to life. I'm excited to see what's to come as I continue to be involved in the communications program and Mystic Media. I hope everyone has a great summer break and keep being you!

Here are the last words
and testaments from
Mystic Media members
of the 2023-2024
school year.

STUDENT AFTERHOURS



STUDENTS PLAY MEGA JENGA IN THE STUDENT UNION ON APRIL 17, 2024
PHOTO CREDIT: CHLOE ERICKSON

CARING FOR CATS

BY ALEX SANABRIA
MYSTIC MEDIA CREW

Cats are the second most popular household pet. According to Dogster, 45.3 million households have cats. They are known to be independent creatures, however there's still a lot that goes into caring for a feline friend.

Cats need time to adjust to a new place. It takes patience, but an owner will be able to tell when their new friend feels at home.

"Remember the 3-3-3 rule when it comes time to get a new cat," Smith said.

The three-three-three rule includes giving a cat three days to decompress, three weeks to learn an owner's routine, and three months to start feeling at home. In the first three days it is essential to give the new cat a "safe space." A place where they can be alone, hide and decompress.

Cats sleep for the majority of the day but physical activity is still important for them. Getting them toys they enjoy is essential. A lot of cats can play and entertain themselves; however, they also need interactive toys that will not only entertain and satisfy them but also socialize them with the owner.

"Cats sleep anywhere from 13-17 hours a day," Alison Smith, the executive director of Kitty City said. "Play time is very important for socializing and for hunting instinct satisfaction."

Cats are known to jump on counters, scratch up furniture and more. Contrary to popular belief, cats can be trained; although, it requires lots of patience. Cat owners will spray their cats with water bottles and yell at them but this is not always effective.

"Clicker training cats is a great way for a food/treat motivated cat to learn," Smith said. "No negative reinforcement as cats do not learn that way, ... it just takes patience and time."

Clicker training includes using a "clicker," which is a device that makes a short and distinct clicking sound. The owner should use the clicker and offer a treat after their pet does the right thing. In turn, the animal will associate the clicker sound with doing a desirable behavior.

Another important factor of owning a cat is making sure they are on an appropriate diet. This varies for each cat. It can depend on the cat's age and condition.

"Be sure to speak to a vet on the best food for your individual cat," Smith said. "Kittens need more protein for the first year and cats that have health issues or seniors need fewer calories."

How much an owner feeds their feline is also important. There are multiple options to manage their diets. This can also depend on each individual cat. It is not always possible to regulate a cat's feeding.

"They do make a food dish that



NIKO LOVING HIS SWEATER
PHOTO CREDIT: ALEX SANABRIA

is operated with a chip on your cat's collar so that it will only open for them, and it could be a great way to control all day eating," Smith said. "Otherwise, feeding on a schedule is a good idea. Only free choice [feed] if necessary."

Neutering and spaying a cat is another essential part of caring for them. If an owner allows their cat to go outside, fixing their cat helps with population control. Neutering and spaying is also known to calm cats down and eliminate unwanted behavior. Intact male cats are more prone to urine-marking than neutered cats. This is not as common in female cats

but still possible. It is also important to their health and life span.

"Cats that are spayed before 6 months of age have a whopping 91% less risk of mammary cancer and those that are neutered have no more risk of testicular cancer," Smith said.

Cats are a creature of habit so they love routines and schedules. It is up to the owner to make their pets schedule and keep to it. Messing with their routine/schedule can stress them out.

"Just like people, they stay organized and grounded by

having a routine," Smith said. "and [they] can tell if life is off if their routine is off."

Owning a cat can be rewarding just like any other pet. Having a feline friend can provide multiple benefits such as helping with mental health. Overall, they are fun and loving friends to have around.

"Being a cat parent can be so rewarding on so many levels," Smith said. "It may be companionship, having a loyal best friend, help with loneliness, help people with anxiety and just all around fun!"

a comprehensive guide to your

Cat's Survival

Keep your cat indoors other than supervised time outdoors

Provide a variety of toys & play with your cats!

Provide scratching posts to redirect your cat & save the furniture!

Socialize with your cat & give them plenty of attention

Neuter/spay your cats

HOROSCOPES



BY MINA GOOD EAGLE
MYSTIC MEDIA CREW

These horoscopes were written for the purpose of being fun. They were written with the astrological sun signs in mind using tarot cards, and guided by the spirits.

Aries (March 21 - April 19)

Use this time moving forward for potential growth and nurture personal relationships. Financial worries will disappear. This could be a time to plan a new adventure.

Taurus (April 20 - May 20)

Embrace this time with an open mindset, seek out new opportunities that showcase your talents and skills. Keep open communication with relationships. Balance is key to health.

Gemini (May 21 - June 20)

This will be a time to start harnessing your personal power. You might also be receiving important messages about education or career. Embracing this surge of energy, and learning to adapt to all situations will become a great strength.

Cancer (June 21 - July 22)

Use this time to look inwards, reevaluate your core values and emotional needs. It may also be a time to explore your artistic side. A personal relationship may be on the rocks, look for solutions instead of focusing on the problem.

Leo (July 23 - Aug. 22)

This is a good time to let your natural skills of leadership shine. Certain obstacles may stand in your way keep your head held high. On the other hand, this will be a good time with your love life, joy and happiness will be heightened.

Virgo (Aug. 23 - Sept. 22)

Let this be a time to build confidence and trust in your abilities to overcome doubts. Grab opportunities with an open heart and adventurous spirit. Express hidden feelings this will lead to deeper connections.

Libra (Sept. 23 - Oct. 22)

Time to take a step back and think about what is good for the long term. Patience will be your biggest ally when navigating through upcoming challenges. Relationships will begin to develop moving forward. You will become attuned to your physical and emotional health this month.

Scorpio (Oct. 23 - Nov. 21)

Brace for highs and lows moving forward, there will be moments for positivity but also challenges that will test your resilience. This is a time for growth, love, and self-discovery.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22 - Dec. 21)

Explore new ideas and adventures to help broaden your horizon. Making changes in your life will help with the burdens and over commitment you are shouldering. Create a financial plan, and take inventory of investments. This will be a time for new beginnings in either love or creative projects.

Capricorn (Dec. 22 - Jan. 19)

Make decisions cautiously, peace and quiet is needed during this time. Keep in mind to follow what is best for you, not the crowd. You will gain financial control in life. A possible vacation will help with rejuvenation.

Aquarius (Jan. 20 - Feb. 18)

All your careful planning may be about to pay off. A change in lifestyle or career is in store this month. Reassurance for loved ones is needed. This will also be a time for practicality rather than spontaneity.

Pisces (Feb. 19 - March 20)

You are entering a time of great happiness and positive events. Navigate through challenges with a blend of creativity and objectivity. Love and relationships will be on stable ground.



VIETNAM VETS SHARE STORIES

Local Veterans recall the Vietnam War nearly 60 years later.

BY QUINN BERG
MYSTIC MEDIA CREW

The year 2024 marks sixty years since the Gulf of Tonkin Incident opened the floodgates for direct U.S. military involvement in Vietnam. The ten-year conflict that ensued was a whirlwind of death, sacrifice and controversy that rocked America to its core, and at the center of it all were the 2.7 million soldiers sent to fight it.

Over 58,000 would die in the jungles of Southeast Asia, while those who survived returned home to a country that largely wanted to forget the Vietnam War.

But as time rolls by and Vietnam continues to slip further and further into America's past, there is one group who can never truly forget: the men who served. Half a century later, they move through life carrying the invisible yet ever-present memories of their time spent in-country.

Bob Gregoire is one such Veteran. After spending four years at the University of North Dakota enrolled in the school's Reserve Officer Training Corps, Gregoire was commissioned to the rank of Lieutenant in the United States Army.

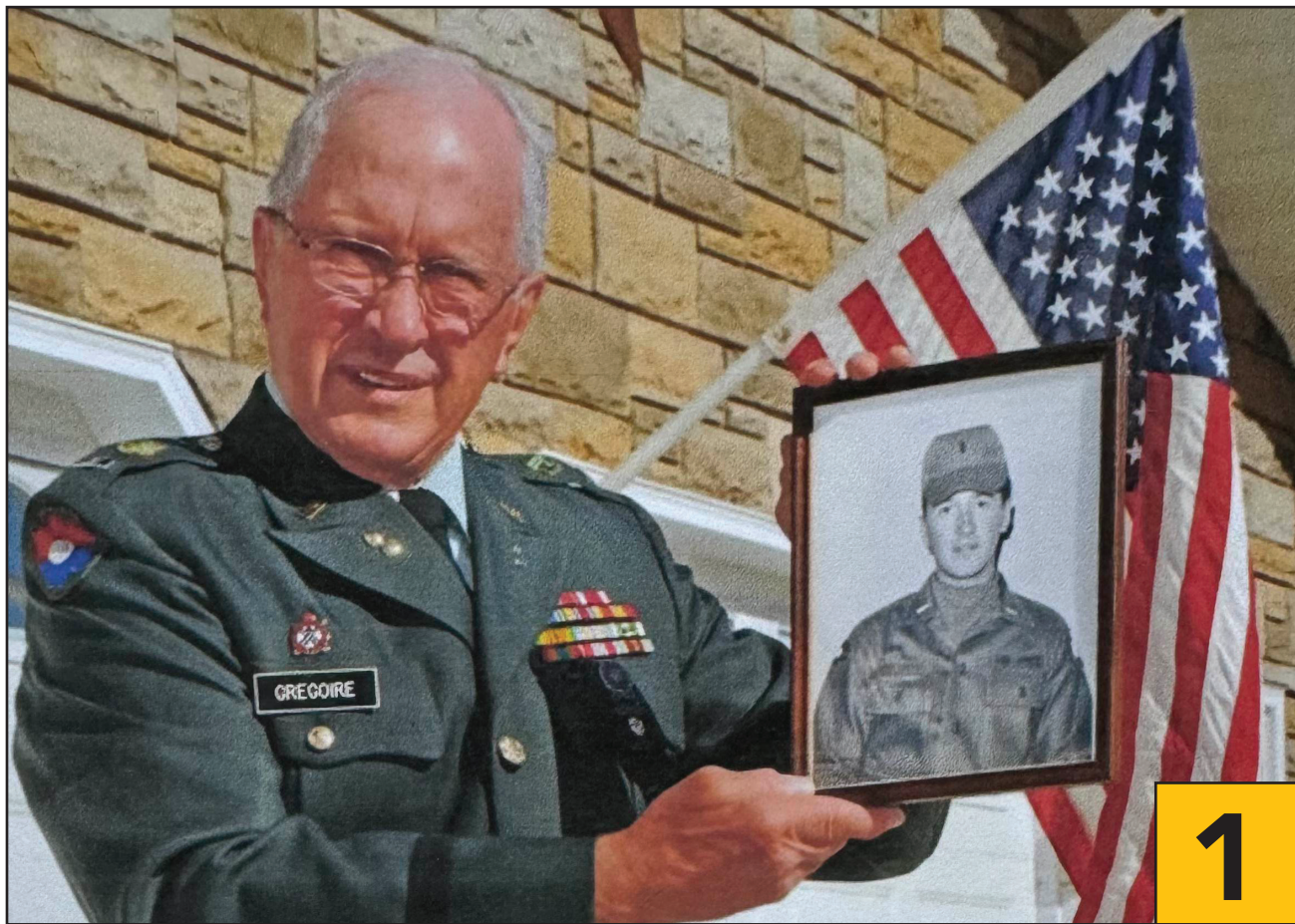
In 1965 he reported to Aberdeen Proving Grounds, Maryland for training in the Ordnance Corps, the segment of the army responsible for maintaining equipment.

"We repaired basically all of the stuff that the combat units were using," he said. "Their trucks, tanks, rifles, machine guns, artillery—we fixed all that stuff."

By October of 1966, Gregoire was a platoon leader in the 709th Maintenance Battalion, charged with maintaining the gear of his fellow soldiers in the 9th Infantry Division. Two months later, he was deployed.

Gregoire's battalion landed on the beaches near Vũng Tàu, Vietnam on New Year's Day of 1967, proceeding inland in order to establish a permanent position at a base called "Bear Cat." It was then time to settle into their new surroundings.

"For the first whole bunch of days, our soldiers that got on guard duty were told they could shoot at anything that made noise out there in the jungle," Gregoire said. "And boy, we had a lot of bullets flying around that camp for several days until everybody kinda calmed down and got used to being there."



1

The 709th would soon move deeper into the region of Southern Vietnam known as the Mekong Delta, an area of the country infamous for its high number of hostiles: the guerrilla fighting force known as the Viet Cong.

Aside from the constant threat of attack, life in Vietnam meant waging a daily war against much more unexpected enemies.

"It was hot. It was always warm, hot, sweaty weather," Gregoire said. "I'm a North Dakota boy, and I get to Vietnam—I mean, you can about imagine."

The heat and humidity also invited another unpleasant issue.

"There were always odors and smells," Gregoire said. "The rivers there were used as sewers, and they all smelled, and we went over them constantly."

Despite the daily hardships that came with life at war, Gregoire persevered, and in December of 1967 he woke up to his last day in Vietnam.

"It was a relief, going home!" Gregoire said. "I was sent to the airport in Saigon ... and got on a 707 Boeing Jet—we called them the "Freedom Bird"—and came back to the world."

Bob Gregoire was lucky enough not to have suffered any long-lasting consequences from his service; he knows full well the same can't be said for many of his fellow soldiers.

"I was fortunate," he said. "I was there before the Tet Offensive ... in an ordnance maintenance unit, not a combat unit, so I have no actual combat experience to dream of. There are many soldiers that experienced a very, very hard life over there compared to me."

Hard is an appropriate description of Robert Olzweski's time during the war. Drafted into the military in April of 1967, Olzweski underwent training in Fort Bliss, Texas and Fort Huachuca, Arizona, before being stationed in Germany. By September of 1968, the 20-year-old had been redirected to Vietnam.

Like Gregoire, Olzweski was part of the 9th Infantry Division; however, his unit, the 5th Armored Cavalry, was meant for combat. Being stationed near the demilitarized zone (DMZ) where North and South Vietnam were divided meant there was plenty of it.

"I was stationed near Huế [in the] Quảng Trị province," Olzweski said. "Our mission was to search and destroy, and that's what we did every day."

As a sergeant in an armored cavalry regiment,

Olzweski operated various vehicles from tanks to armored personnel carriers. His unit's mission was to patrol the area and look for enemy soldiers attempting to cross into South Vietnam.

The constant combat of Olzweski's tour of duty came to a head on March 7, 1969. While searching for the source of a mortar attack the previous night, his unit came under heavy gunfire. Olzweski's tank was hit by an explosion that sent shrapnel into his left leg and back—another soldier was killed. By the time the fighting stopped, Olzweski had also taken a bullet to his side. Only after ensuring the rest of his men were okay did he allow himself to be flown out to receive treatment.



2

“I didn’t even write back [home] and tell anybody I was wounded,” he said.

Olzweski was awarded the Purple Heart for his wounds. Less than a week later, he was back with his unit, remaining in action for the rest of his time in-country. But an end to active service did not mean an end to adversity.

“We got off the plane at Fort Lewis, Washington, and I tell you, I couldn’t believe my eyes,” he said. “The public was out there screaming and hollering at us, calling us ‘baby killers’ ... throwing eggs and stuff. I said, ‘What the heck am I coming back to?’”

Reintegrating into civilian life also proved difficult.

“It took me probably six months to a year before I really went back to civilian life,” he said, “just to get back to what I call normal.”

Shortly after Olzweski sustained his wounds in the battle near the DMZ, another North Dakotan was just arriving. Patrick Ferderer joined the U.S. Army in February of 1969 when he was just 19 years old, planning on a two-year enlistment. After receiving training at Aberdeen Proving Grounds, Maryland, he was deployed to Vietnam as a sergeant in the 25th Infantry Division, dealing mainly with artillery and

supply convoys. He was sent to Cù Chi Base Camp, the headquarters for the 25th Infantry.

Opposition was encountered immediately. On his first day, while repairing the perimeter of concertina wire that surrounded the base, the Viet Cong attacked. Ferderer was standing on a large truck—completely exposed.

“We started getting incoming [gunfire],” he said. “The Viet Cong were shooting at us, so they said, ‘Get the hell off the truck!’ ... we got kind of educated there a little bit, about what this was all about ... these people are gonna kill you.”

Ferderer was uninjured, but the attack would pale in comparison to a mortar strike that came later.

“I remember one morning ... they [Viet Cong] hit the latrine and twelve guys got killed,” he said.

After departing from Cù Chi, Ferderer was stationed all over South Vietnam, including Pleiku, Da Nang, and Cam Ranh Bay. Originally intending to serve for two years, Ferderer found himself exiting the war earlier than anticipated.

“I had about a month left when I came back down from Da Nang ... and we got our early out because [Richard] Nixon was ending the war,” he said. “I had joined for a two-year service, but I got out in sixteen months.”

Like Sergeant Olzweski, traces of the war stuck with Ferderer long after he had left it.

“The Agent Orange part of it, looking back, was stupid,” he said. “They didn’t tell you what they were doing, killing the vegetation. You were breathing the sh*t in, and now I’m experiencing all kinds of side effects.”

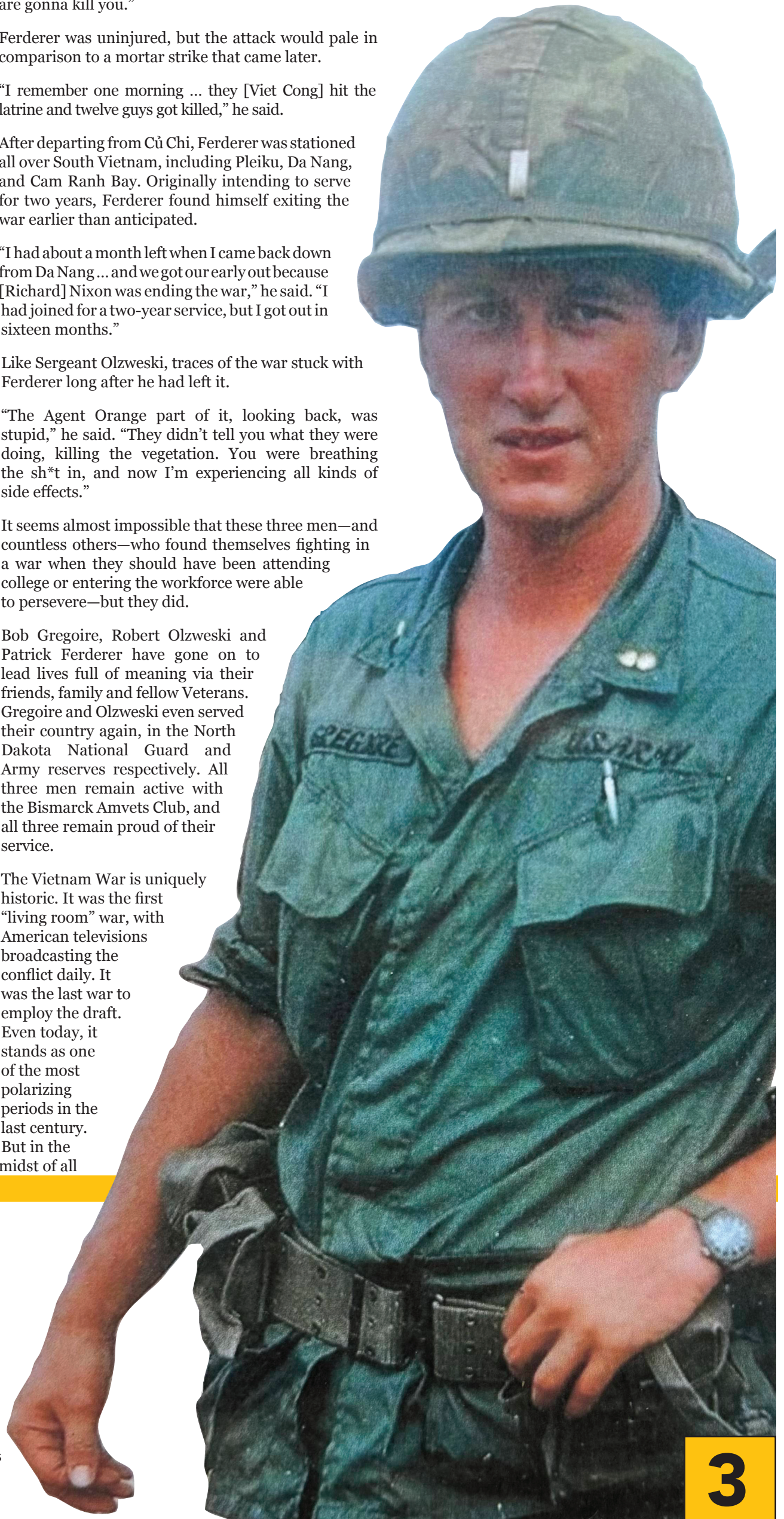
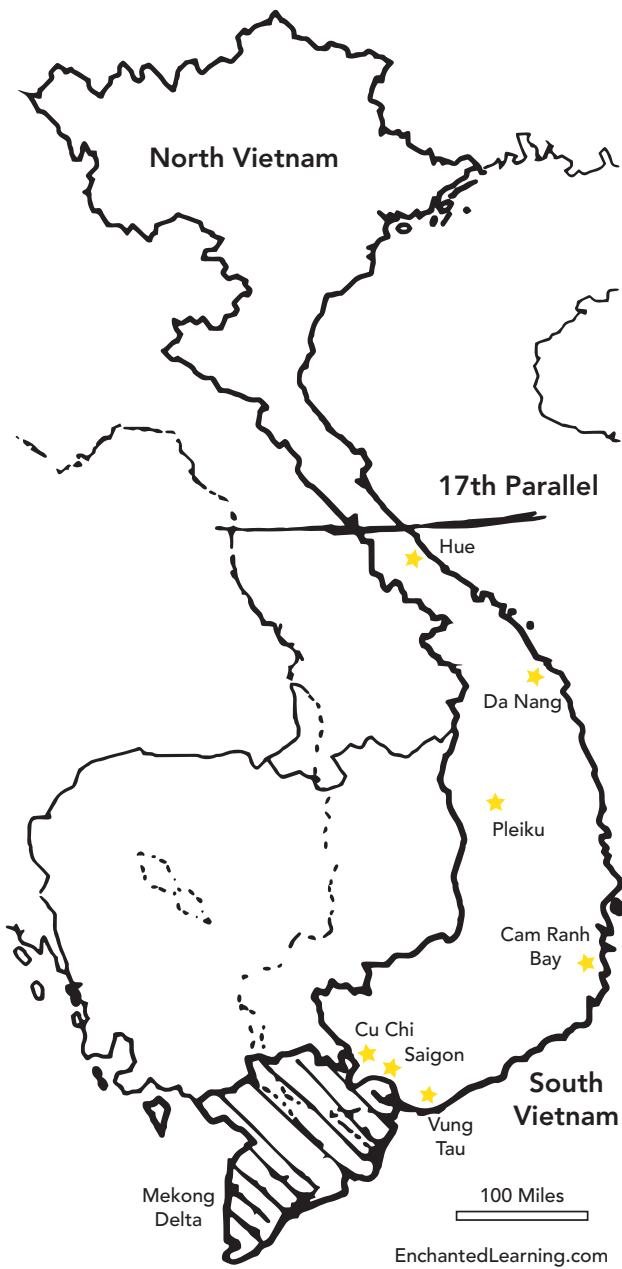
It seems almost impossible that these three men—and countless others—who found themselves fighting in a war when they should have been attending college or entering the workforce were able to persevere—but they did.

Bob Gregoire, Robert Olzweski and Patrick Ferderer have gone on to lead lives full of meaning via their friends, family and fellow Veterans. Gregoire and Olzweski even served their country again, in the North Dakota National Guard and Army reserves respectively. All three men remain active with the Bismarck Amvets Club, and all three remain proud of their service.

The Vietnam War is uniquely historic. It was the first “living room” war, with American televisions broadcasting the conflict daily. It was the last war to employ the draft. Even today, it stands as one of the most polarizing periods in the last century. But in the midst of all

the history, the controversy and the violence were the soldiers who risked their lives to serve their country without even knowing if they would survive long enough to return to it.

“It’s all luck of the draw,” Bob Gregoire said. “all you had to do was be there, and you could be killed. It’s just lucky when you don’t get killed, I guess.”

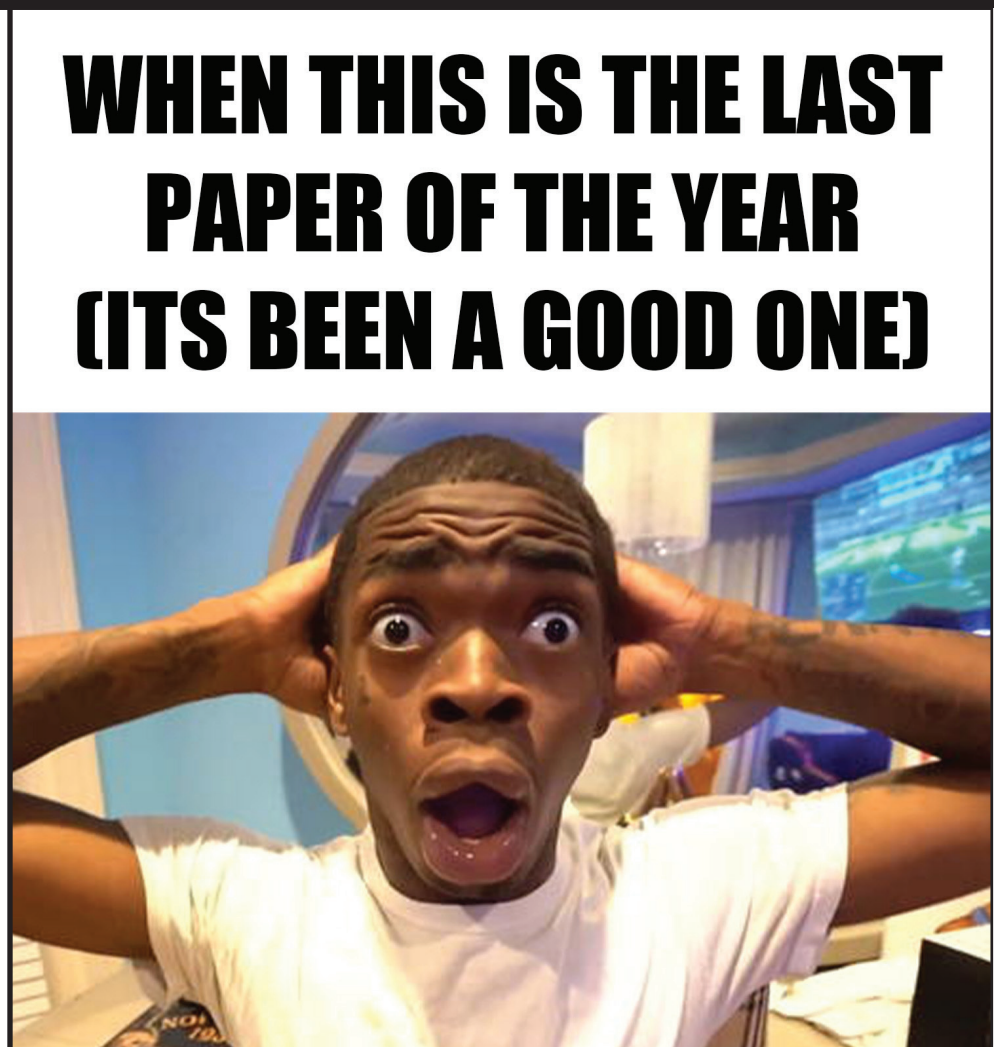
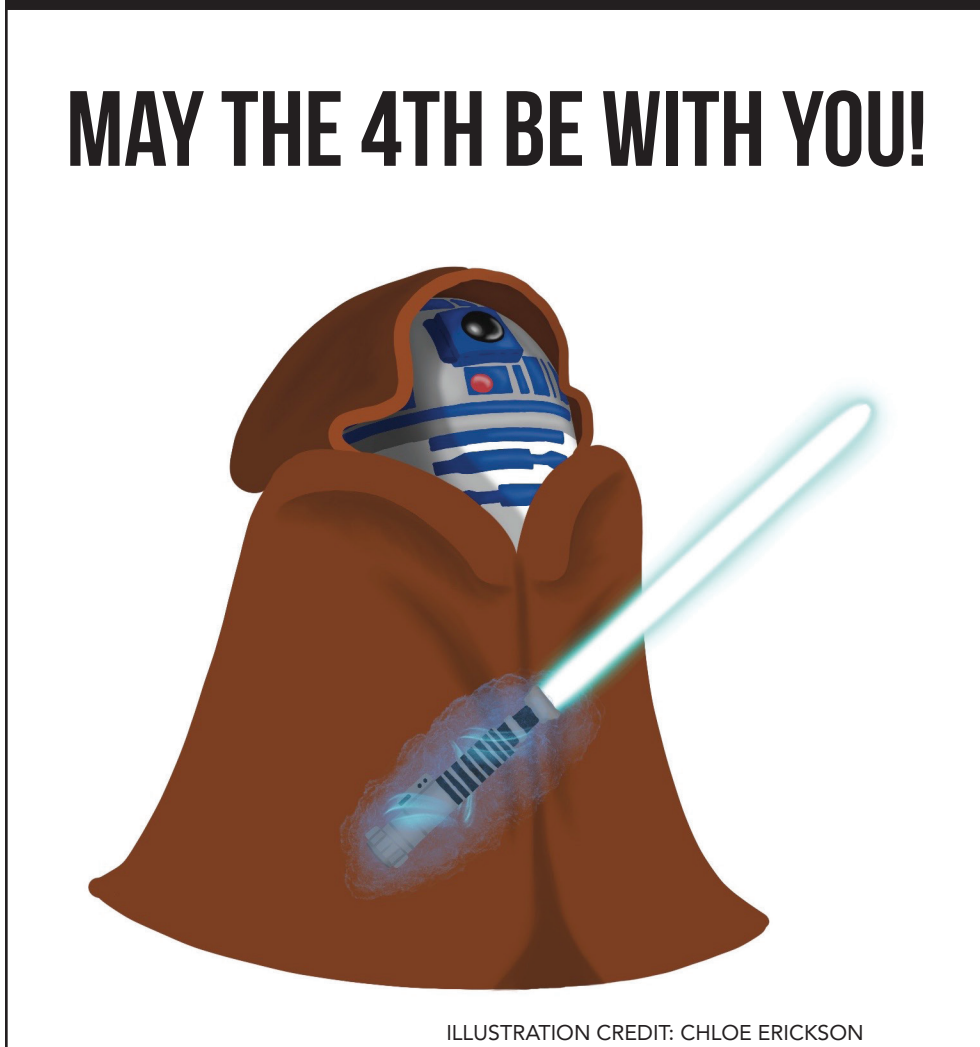


1 Bob Gregoire continues to take pride in his service and remains active with the Bismarck Amvets Club.
Source: Submitted

2 U.S. Marines partaking in Operation Oregon, one of the Vietnam War’s many search and destroy operations.
Source: Department of Army, National Archives

3 Lieutenant Bob Gregoire spent several months at Bear Cat before moving deeper into South Vietnam’s Mekong Delta region.
Source: Submitted

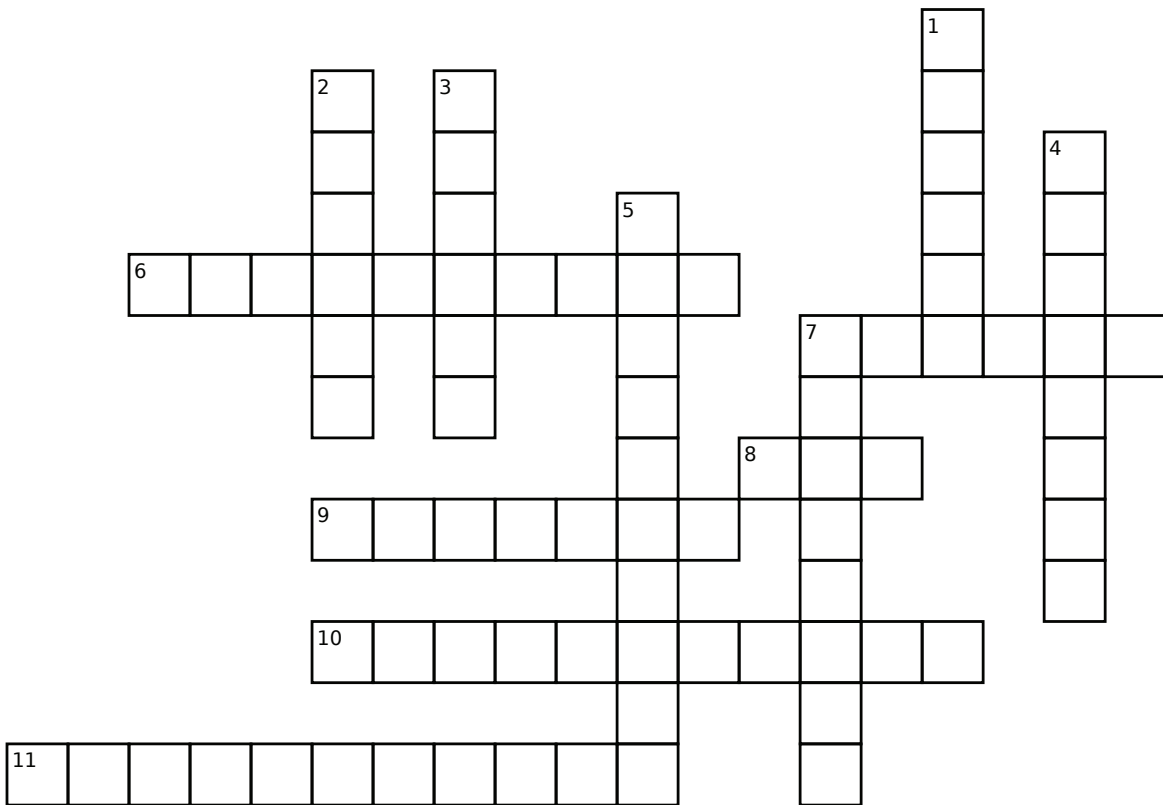
COMEDY CORNER



GOT A COMIC OR ILLUSTRATION?

WE WANT TO SEE IT! SEND AN EMAIL TO bscmysticianeditor@bismarckstate.edu

PUZZLE PALOOZA



U T R A D I T I O N D J Z O O
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| Tradition | Ladybug | Dance |
| Gemini | Teacher | Green |
| Taurus | Picnic | Flag |
| Track | Butterfly | Zoo |

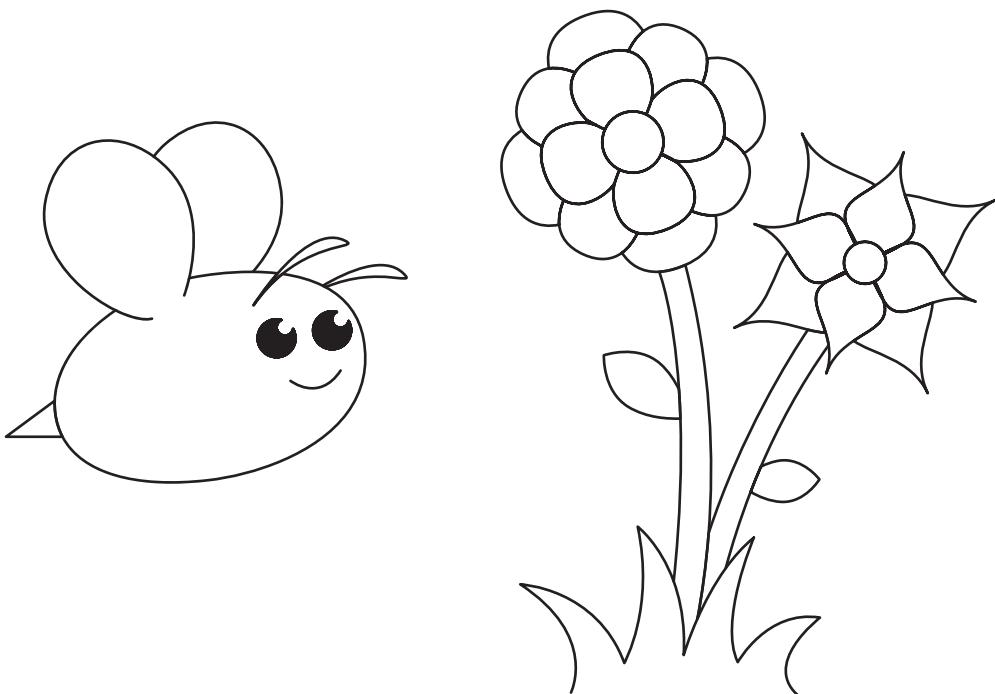
DOWN

- a place where historical artifacts are shown
- a place to grow plants
- Exams after midterms
- sport with bats and balls
- holiday all about your awesome mom
- receiving your degree or diploma
- intergalactic battle between good and evil

ACROSS

- receiving your degree or diploma
- the hottest season
- the fifth month on the year
- a quiet and peaceful place to read books
- celebration of Mexico's victory over the Second French Empire at the Battle of Puebla
- federal holiday honoring those who died defending the US

COLORING SHEET



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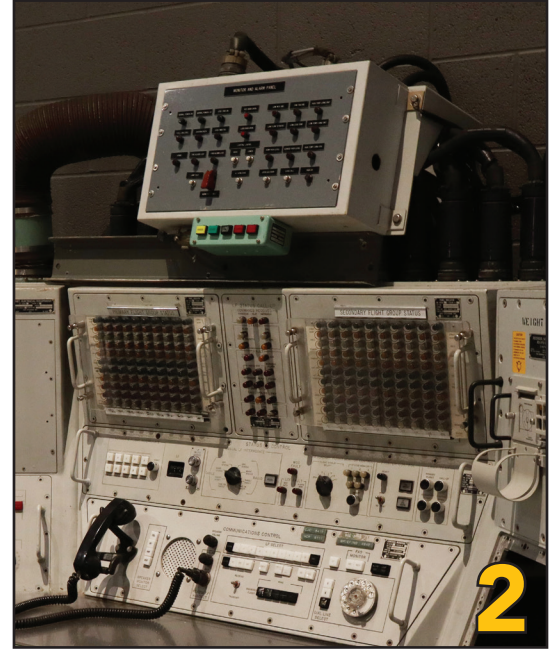
NEED A CLUE?

**CHECK OUT
 OUR ANSWERS
 PAGE HERE**



THE HERITAGE CENTER

BY CHLOE ERICKSON
MYSTIC MEDIA CREW



1 Triceratops Skeleton
Located in the "When Dinosaurs Roamed" section, going head-to-head with a Tyrannosaurus Rex.

2 Missile Launch Control Equipment
Equipment used by missileers who spent hours practicing launch procedures.

3 Norwegian Loom, 1880-1889
Made by Ole Solberg, Rolla. Used to make textiles.

4 Mummified Edmontosaurus Tail Skin
An extremely rare mummified dinosaur skin, specifically an Edmontosaurus named Dakota.

5 Desiree and Eli
Illustration of a life-sized 23ft Edmontosaurus, Dakota.



SIDNEY AMERMAN UP TO BAT
PHOTO CREDIT: CODY EISENBEIS

ESPORTS MAKES A LEAGUE OF THEIR OWN

BY SHANE BIBERDORF
MYSTIC MEDIA CREW

From gunfights to playing soccer with cars or even just fights breaking out. It all happens on Bismarck State College's Campus. In a video game of course.

BSC is home to the Mystic Esports team. They play Valorant, Rocket League, Super Smash Brothers and more. Esports has the same requirements as other sports. The players have to follow the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) guidelines, including full-time student status and maintaining a minimum grade point average (GPA) of 2.00

Like any other sport, the Esports team also has to practice consistently. They practice different games on different days. David St. Peter, the head coach of the BSC Esports team said, on Mondays and Tuesdays they play Fortnite. Also on Tuesday, they play Super Smash Brothers. On Thursdays, they play Valorant and Call of Duty Gunfight. On Fridays, they play Rocket League and Rainbow Six Siege. On Saturdays, they play League of Legends.

Esports has three tiers of

competition: the premier league, the contender league and the open league. They decide which games or players will contend in which league at the start of the season. Sean Purdy is a Valorant and Rainbow Six Siege player for the Mystic Esports team.

"Usually a day of practice, we get together either from home or here at BSC and we play a scrimmage against another team depending on the game," Purdy said. "I think in my opinion, just like any other sport, cuz I played hockey in high school—it's just a lot of you gotta make time for it and then practice certain things—you have to focus on one thing at a time."

The Esports team is currently the third seed in the contender league of Valorant and going to the playoffs.

St. Peter coordinates who the team is playing and verifies if they are showing up; he also coaches the players in a few of the games. However, his interaction with the team is limited.

"I'm not allowed to talk to them unless it's an official time-out," St. Peter said. "You can talk to your team between games or call a time-out ... typically it's

... we got our match, everyone is here, we think we know what our strategy is, good luck, and then we're just here watching—cheering them on."

They stream their games live on Twitch five to six nights a week at BismarckState_Mystics.

On stream, the players communicate with each other and that can be heard to better understand what is going on.

The BSC Valorant team competed at the national level on April 25, and the match was settled 0-3 with Madison

College in Wisconsin.

"We lost 0-3 to Madison College. The Mystics kept it close at times but couldn't overcome a really strong team out of Wisconsin!" St. Peter said.



GAGE MILLAR PRACTICING HIS AIM
PHOTO CREDIT: CHLOE ERICKSON

BSC SOFTBALL BRINGS IN FRESH TALENT

BY CALEB HERR
MYSTIC MEDIA CREW

Spring softball is underway, and BSC has a roster loaded with freshmen talent. With a team consisting of 14 freshmen and just three sophomores, head coach Kurt Grenstiener and the Mystics have navigated the early-season jitters and are now focused on closing out the season strong.

"Being acclimated as a freshman is tough," Grenstiener said. "With freshmen there are ups and downs and a lot of adversity to overcome. We've [gone] through a lot of that and the bonding has become pretty cool."

Grenstiener relies on his three returning sophomore players to not only lead the freshmen but continue to develop the young program. Given that this is only the fourth softball season for BSC, Grenstiener feels the sophomore players went through a lot last year trying to grow the program.

"The three sophomores that we have are super solid," Grenstiener said. "They [have] stepped up in all aspects of leadership."

Grenstiener says sophomores Dominique Baker, Halle Mattern and Sidney Amerman have helped put practices together and lead their freshmen teammates through the ups and downs.

Freshman catcher Daisy Sparrow leads the BSC offense with a .425 batting average and has a team-high eight home runs. Sparrow is joined by freshmen teammates Elin Williams and Jada Walter, all of whom have accumulated 27-plus runs batted in.

Grenstiener's freshmen athletes have generated an offensive-dominant game style in the early portion of the season. The Mystics succeeded last year's run total in early April and currently have 288 runs in 38 games. Grenstiener claims the offense has been crucial in keeping them competitive, but acknowledges the defense has faced challenges.

"Our offense keeps us in games; they really show that they can score runs," Grenstiener said. "I think [in] the next few weeks our defense will get quite a bit better."

With the progress Grensteiner



JADA WALTER TAKES A SWING
PHOTO CREDIT: CODY EISENBEIS

has seen from his freshmen and the leadership shown by his sophomores, he recognizes this team shares a close bond unlike

any of his past teams.

"I think from years past you don't find teams that have the

camaraderie that a team like this does," Grenstiener said. "Hopefully it sets us up for years to go."

ATHLETE'S MENTAL HEALTH WORSENS

BY CODY EISENBEIS
MYSTIC MEDIA CREW

According to findings published in the British Journal of Sports Medicine, suicide is now the second leading cause of death amongst NCAA athletes. Male cross-country runners represent the largest number of suicides.

Ivar Martell joined Bismarck State College in the fall of 2023. Martell currently runs for the cross-country and track and field teams.

“For distance runners, we have a lot of stress — like a lot of anxiety before a race,” Martell said. “They got to take care of their well being — like if they are eating right, sleeping right. They have to worry about all that.”

According to authors in the British Journal of Sports Medicine, athletes are generally thought of as one of the healthiest populations in our society, yet the pressures of school, internal and external performance expectations,

time demands, injury, athletic identity and physical fatigue can lead to depression, mental health problems and suicide.

A database of deaths posted by the NCAA identified there were 1,102 deaths among college athletes from 2002 to 2022. Of these deaths 77% were male. They had an average age of 20 but ranged from 17-24. Suicide made up 11% of these deaths. The suicide rate of athletes doubled in the last 10 years compared to the previous 10 years.

Thai Haggin is the athletic coordinator for Bismarck State College. She is in her third year as the women's head basketball coach. “For athletes, we have the MACC [Mystics Advising Counseling Center],” Haggin said. “I believe that it is harder for people not in sports to get help. If you are in a sport, most athletes are able to talk to a coach about anything. People that do not participate in a sport don't have that family you work with every single day.”



ATHLETE BEING COMFORTED BY A FRIEND
PHOTO CREDIT: CODY EISENBEIS

All coaches are trained to look for signs of depression and will take actions based on the athletes' behavior. BSC provides the MACC for anyone who needs it. The college also has a helpline (701) 224-5752 that students are able to contact if they are feeling down. If the call is made after business hours, it will be directed to the 24-hour crisis line.

REFORMING RECRUITMENT IN COLLEGE HOOPS



BY CALEB HERR
MYSTIC MEDIA CREW

Aggressively recruiting high school players has become a thing of the past as the transfer portal has taken over coaching recruitment efforts. All of the collegiate sports have been impacted by this resource, but few have been as chaotic as men's basketball.

The transfer portal essentially allows athletes to reopen their recruitment, similar to high school recruitment, but with the added advantage of already demonstrating their abilities at the collegiate level. This benefits players that have excelled at smaller schools and teams that may have positional needs in their lineup.

During the 2023 college basketball transfer portal window, more than 1,800 athletes entered their names into the portal. With the sport experiencing an all-time high in transfers, the NCAA made some adjustments to the use of the portal. They reduced the entry window from 60 days to just 45 days, meaning players who plan to transfer must enter their names into the portal database between March 18 and May 1.

This not only speeds up the process for the players but also condenses time for coaching recruitment trips.

One of the major changes made was the NCAA allowing multi-year transfers immediate eligibility. In the past, an athlete that transferred multiple times would have to sit out at least a year. With the new change in place, transferring has become a trend among collegiate athletes. With no fear of punishment in 2024, we have seen over 1,000 players enter the portal in just the first three weeks since it opened.

I support this new wave of transfer portal use in college hoops, and I think it is great for players to change their environment if they feel it necessary. Athletes that enter the portal have the option to return to their school while also exploring what other programs have to offer. A recent option for athletes allows them to test the NBA draft processes while also maintaining their college eligibility.

Some transfer moves make for a very heartwarming story, like Meechie Johnson's. On April 2, the 6-foot-2 guard committed to play his senior year for the Ohio State Buckeyes. This is the second time in five years Johnson has committed to Ohio State.

Johnson, a Cleveland, Ohio native, was a four-star recruit coming out of high school. After an offer was made by then-head coach Chris Holtman, Johnson made the two-hour drive to the Ohio State campus and played for Holtman and his assistant coach Jake Diebler from 2020-22.

Johnson would transfer to South Carolina in 2022. His scoring exploded from four points per game at Ohio State to over 12 points per

game in his first year at South Carolina. Johnson played his best basketball in the 2023-24 season and decided to enter the transfer portal after their first-round NCAA Tournament loss.

Holtman was fired during the 2023-24 season and Diebler earned the head coaching position after going 8-3 to end the season. Johnson was sure to mention that the Diebler hire impacted his decision.

“I'm excited to play for Jake Diebler,” Johnson wrote in his commitment letter. “You can tell there's a lot of momentum behind the program with Coach Diebler at the helm, and I can't wait to be part of this resurgence!”

The transfer portal has had a remarkable

effect on Johnson's life. The experiences he went through after transferring to South Carolina have given him another opportunity to fulfill his childhood dreams.

“I am a lifelong Buckeye,” Johnson wrote. “It was my dream to be a Buckeye since I was a little kid. My story didn't go exactly as planned, ... [I] still have the ending I've always dreamed about.”

Although the transfer portal has drastically affected college sports, it serves as a valuable resource for student-athletes to explore and utilize. Providing these young adults with more opportunities has the potential to change lives and create brighter futures.



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