



THE — Mystician

[N E W S] P A P E R

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Left Legacy - Former Bismarck State College students voted “yes” for the new Bavendick Center. The buildings opening was post-poned to later this spring after set backs in the interior. Meanwhile, construction crews puts on the finishing touches at the face of the building.

Kayden Schmitcke | Co-Editor

Bavendick Center Affects Student Fees

Madelyn Lemke
Reporter

The Bavendick Center is a new addition to Bismarck State College’s sports teams. It will be used to replace a majority of the sports that take place in the Armory on the south side of campus. Construction began on June 27, 2024, and the building is expected to open in the spring of 2026.

The question of the building’s funding was presented during the 68th legislative session by BSC administration and a BSC student but was rejected.

On Sept. 7, 2023, the Student Government Association presented a poll to BSC students asking if they would like to increase fees for the new center. The response was an overwhelming 82% yes vote for the higher fees.

“Tuition and fees have the potential to change every year, somewhat.” Director of Student Finances Jessie Bessert said.

In the spring semester of 2026, the fees went from 45.01/credit to 67.51/credit. This is a 50% increase, which Bessert said was “significant.” The decision to

increase the fees is a result of the student poll taken in 2023.

In 2023, BSC did not offer many four-year degrees and was mainly a two-year school. The poll was conducted in the fall of 2023, making newly enrolled two-year degree students eligible to graduate in the spring of 2025. According to College Tuition Compare, BSC’s retention rate in the 2023-2024 academic year was 71%. This means if 100 students went to BSC their freshman year, 71 students would come back for their sophomore year. Then 50 for junior year and 36

See **Bavendick Center** | 5



SCAN
FOR
WEB

Student Life
Library Flood | 3

Sports
Wrestling | 11

MYSTICMEDIA
BISMARCK STATE COLLEGE STUDENT PRODUCTIONS

Opinion
Eugenics | 9

Arts & Entertainment
Medieval | 8

Feature
The Balancing Goat: is a spotlight on a local business in Mandan, N.D.

Spotlight | 10

MYSTIC MEDIA

MEET THE CREW



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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 informative, 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.

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Library Flood Recap and Update

Kade Warren
Reporter

A little over a year ago, on Dec. 27, 2024, a water heater failed on the second floor of the Larry C. Skogen Hall building, causing burst pipes to rain water into the library and common area below. The water heater burst around 8 p.m. If, by chance, it would have failed four hours earlier, it would have been noticed and further damage could have been prevented. Since it was a Friday



Submitted

Boxes and Books - Renovations are underway as books are restored in the archives.

night, it was not caught until Monday morning on Dec. 29.

When it was discovered there was nearly two inches of water covering the entire ground floor. There was water raining from the ceiling above bookshelves, causing the books to swell. As they ballooned, they crammed for space on the shelves, causing them to jump out onto the floor where they would submerge in the water below.

The immediate goal after the flowing water had been stopped and the remaining water had been removed was to repair the commons area back to a usable condition. There were 16 floor outlets that needed to be fixed, along with most of the ceiling lights, other electronics, and all the damaged furniture needed to be replaced. Luckily, there were enough volunteers that helped with cleaning and removing the damaged items that the commons area was renovated just in time for the start of the 2025 spring semester.

The bookshelves and the archive room were not so easy. With the help of the volunteers the saveable books were meticulously packed, in order, into boxes which filled the entirety of four box trucks and sent away into storage.

There were over 2,500 books that were so damaged they were immediately discarded. There were many more books that were less damaged and sent to a drying facility in Minnesota. Out of that group, there were another 2,500 books that could not be saved.

Miraculously, the compact shelves and the room they reside in remained mostly dry, leaving all the books on the compact shelves intact. However,



Submitted

For the Love of Books - Kelsey Riggs helps transport books in an effort to help.

because of the water that soaked into the floor, the shelves themselves needed to be removed and repaired. They had hoped to be completely repaired by Halloween, but there were some setbacks. The rods that guide the shelves along their track needed to be replaced. The new rods needed to be manufactured. Once they had finally arrived, it was discovered that only half of the needed rods had been sent. When the shelves were finally ready to be filled, the weight of the books caused more problems. Some shelves are not as smooth as they once were—they make a little more noise moving along the rails and there is more fine tuning that needs to be done before they can be accessed.

The archive room was not so lucky. Although most of the items were stored

in filing cabinets, water had flowed down the walls and found its way into the drawers. The items that were subject to water damage were digitally captured and documented before being removed.

The Bismarck State College archive holds vintage memorabilia like newsletters, yearbooks, posters, and even old uniforms. A call for donations will be sent in order to fill the gaps of the missing items. Marlene Anderson, the head librarian at BSC, went into detail.

“People have offered to donate old items for the archive, but we just don’t have room yet,” she said.

The post flood transition has been bittersweet. Although it was hard to throw away the damaged items, it has allowed some reflection into the process of removing outdated material and has allowed space for more recent works. This summer, the library staff will use their time to “pull the weeds” by sorting through the shelves and removing outdated material. This summer It is also expected that once the archive room is ready to accept donations, it is likely that new items that were never there before will be added.

As of now the library remains closed for the checking in and out of books, Anderson considers a possible date for reopening the archives.

“I am skeptical about the end of February because of all the previous delays, hopeful for the end of spring break,” Anderson said.

In the meantime, the library offers robust online services. There are far more ebooks that can be found online that are available for access.

Moving forward, the library will continue to rebuild and improve their inventory to maintain their role in BSC student success. It may be disheartening to see so many books go, and frustrating for students to see the repairs delayed month after month. The flood brought the BSC community together and gave the library a chance to shed the aging books.



Submitted

Restoring the Archives - Hired help get to work organizing the books that were once damaged by the flood.

Sick Season: What To Do When Feeling Ill

Elena Sanchez
Reporter



Illustrator | Kayla Hilzendeger

With the cold winter weather still lingering slowly into the start of spring, it leaves room for people to let their guards down and get sick. Flu, colds, and corona-virus are many of the common sicknesses caught during this time. To keep the campus life sick-free, here are ways Mystics can help while sick.

There are some sicknesses that are not contagious and bearable to deal with. Some over-the-counter medications found at the Java Cafe in the Student Union can help with these sicknesses. The gas stations and stores nearby the campus, such as Cenex and Family Fare, also have simple cold and flu medications for a cheap price.

However, if simple cold medicine does not do the trick, it is best to go to the doctor and get tested. Clinics closest to the campus like CHI St. Alexis Pinehurst Clinic on West Interstate Avenue and Mid Dakota Clinic located in the Gateway Mall are the swiftest options for results.

Lastly, check out the Bismarck State College Student Accessibility page on the BSC website. For anyone facing temporary health conditions, this page will allow students to get in contact with BSC staff who can help find accommodations. Email the MACC at bsc.accessibility@bismarckstate.edu or call them at 701-224-2496.



Kayla Hilzendeger | Photographer

Feel Better Soon - Stash of over-the-counter medication and other items being sold at Mystic Java in the Student Union.

The Fellowship of Christian Athletes

Kade Warren
Reporter

On January 27, the Fellowship of Christian Athletes met in the Bismarck State College Armory. This was the first meeting led by the new BSC FCA rep, Madison Kastrow.

Kastrow is a former BSC student and track athlete, who competed during the 2022-23 season. After her graduation in the spring of 2025, she was involved in a social work internship at a local Bismarck high school. Eventually, her passion for Christ led her to apply for her FCA position and brought her back to BSC.

“There is a big opportunity for FCA to grow at Bismarck State,”Kastrow said.

The club welcomes all athletes and coaches to attend, where there will be food, drinks, a great community, and a bible study. The next meeting will be held on February 10 in the Armory at 7 p.m.

Kyle Kuether, the head women’s volleyball coach at BSC, was the previous club adviser for FCA and the unofficial head rep. Kuether has been involved with FCA since 2015. When he started coaching at BSC in 2020, he had to wait for the dust to settle from the COVID-19 pandemic to start bringing athletes together and meet regularly.

“Those first meetings were really inconsistent,” Kuether said. Since every athlete has a different schedule of events, practices, and trips to the weight

room, there was a lot of trial and error involved to find the right time that could work for everyone.

FCA has come a long way since then. The last meeting that was held at the end of January had the highest attendance the club had seen in a long time. Kuether was especially surprised by the attendance, citing that he only expected six or seven people. Kuether also mentioned that attending an FCA meeting does not require that you show up to the next. He advocated for athletes who are interested to attend just one meeting to see if it is a right fit.

“Since Madison took over I’m excited to see where this goes from January to finals week,” Kuether said.

The word of mouth communication

through the players and coaches at BSC is expected to grow the FCA attendance through the next couple of months.



Kayla Hilzendeger | Photographer
Off to a Good Start - Tyler Kastrow, and Madison Kastrow start up the very first FCA meeting.



Kayla Hilzendeger | Photographer
All the Giggles! - Eric Shadoan, Mercedes Lura, Koen Levy, Aislyn Hogan, Ashley Martodam and Delaney Deschamp chuckle at a joke that was presented.



Kayla Hilzendeger | Photographer
Good Information - Carolin White, Autumn Sackman, Brayden Nunberg, and Caleb Almeh listen and take note of the plan for the club

Survey Highlights Newspaper Readership Trends

Alondra Vidal
Reporter

A recent survey of Bismarck State College students revealed that only a small percentage regularly read the college newspaper. Several factors contribute to this trend, including a preference for smartphones as a source of information, a perception that the newspaper is boring, and a lack of awareness about its existence. There may be additional influences at play, such as generational differences or changes in daily behavior that lead to drifting away from newspapers, as well as varying levels of involvement with the college.

The survey was conducted over the course of a week and included responses from 17 BSC students representing various majors and class years, as well as responses from three professors. While the survey reflects a limited sample size, the responses reveal patterns worth exploring which can relate to many BSC students. Of the respondents, 25% answered “yes,” to reading the newspaper, 20% indicated “sometimes,” and 55% responded “no,” highlighting a shift in how students consume information. Surveys were administered both on campus and online.

Among the 25% who reported reading the newspaper weekly, many admitted they typically skip to the sports section. Timol Walters, a track athlete, highlighted this preference. Two professors mentioned that they read the publication in their free time, enjoying the puzzles and the sports coverage. The sports section, in particular, seems to be a favorite among readers. However, the staff opinion and segments have gained immense popularity. BSC Sophomore Patsy Friez openly shared her enthusiasm for these articles, emphasizing how much she enjoys reading them. Additionally, the monthly calendar listing events from BSC received positive feedback, and readers appreciated the fun photos included. Among the 20% who occasionally read the publication, many noted that they pick it up when it’s laid out on tables or when they are bored, looking for interesting updates on recent happenings.

Feedback from the surveyed individuals highlighted a desire for more dedicated content in the publication. Dylenn Schwind suggested including a page or two focused on the art department, showcasing the work being done by its members. BSC Student Hailey Sjomeling echoed this sentiment, recommending the inclusion of content that reflects everyday life, such as local news, job opportunities, and educational issues impacting the community. Additionally, a professor pointed out that it would be beneficial to highlight the various opportunities available at BSC for students, mentioning the recent bachelor’s programs that have been introduced.

Now, what about the 55% who said “No”? Many individuals expressed that “nobody really talks about it,” or that it simply does not cross their minds. Some find it boring, and these reasons

are understandable. Many students are incredibly busy and often do not reflect on their surroundings or the events taking place. They barely have time to chat with their friends.

“I work full time,” said Sjomeling.

“I honestly had no idea we had one, so that’s probably why I haven’t read it,” BSC Student Grace Bosserman said. Her sentiments echo those of others who do not engage with the paper. While these reasons are valid, for those who find it boring or do not think about it at all, there may be a more psychological aspect at play, which could relate to the evolution of our generation.

Reading for pleasure has significantly declined over the years, with a recent study from The New York Times revealing a decrease of about 40% in daily reading habits over the past two decades. This trend, attributed to a 3%

decline each year, is largely driven by the rise of technology and social media usage. As people increasingly turn to the internet for answers, there seems to be a corresponding decrease in the desire to engage with books and in-depth reading materials. Additionally, many individuals appear to be becoming lazier in their reading habits, often preferring not to read unless they have a physical copy in front of them. This reflects broader societal changes as technology continues to dominate daily life, making the act of picking up a book less appealing to the current generation. Technology changed how and when people consume news, advertising, and revenue online, shifting attention and trust patterns. Collectively, this has made printed weekly papers less convenient.

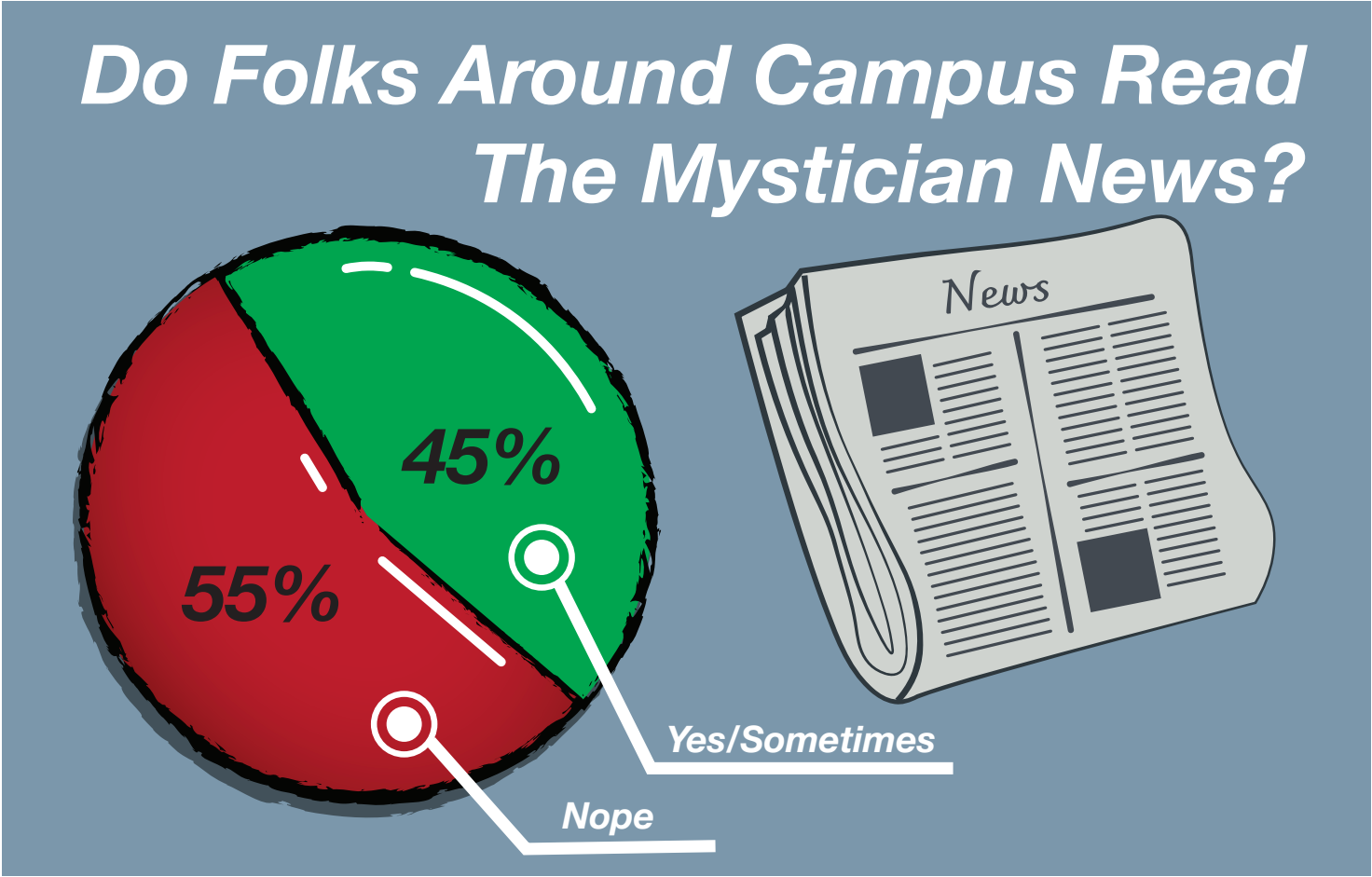


Illustration | **Kayla Hilzendeger**

Bavendick Center

Cont. 1

Madelyn Lemke
Reporter

students for senior year. Based on this math, if 1000 students were enrolled in 2023, 358 would remain in 2026. This shows that a large chunk of the students who took the poll in 2023 are not here to pay for the fees they voted yes for.

“I have to pay more for classes for my elementary education degree, and I am going into a field with little pay, which means I’ll be in even more debt,” BSC Student Lily Giffey said.

Students are all affected by the choice to increase fees. This raised the question if there was any consideration by BSC or the Student Government Association to repoll the new students.

“Once the student vote supported moving forward with the bond, the



Light it Up! - New Bavendick Center Gym floor freshly finished

Submitted

institution proceeded with the process,” BSC Executive Vice President Rebecca Collins replied via email..

It also raised the question of how the administration determined the poll still represented the current student body.

“The timing of the vote aligned with the expectation that students contributing to the fees would also have the opportunity to benefit from the facility,” Collins responded.

Using the poll of one student body to justify fees for another one could raise future questions about choosing how to pay for continued growth and expansion. Even with the increase in fees, BSC still offers the lowest tuition in the state.



Submitted

Let’s Go Mystics - Bismarck State College logo on the new turf in the Bavendick Center



Submitted

Climbing to the Top! - New climbing wall that is elevating the environment in the Bavendick Center.



Submitted

Look Down! - New top loading gym in the Bavendick Center.



Submitted

Go Green! - Turf is freshly placed in the new Bavendick Center

Students Share Winter Layering Tips

Clayton Sicble-Fox
Photographer

North Dakota weather is always changing. Learning how to layer your clothing is an essential part of staying warm and sick free. A key component to having a good time on campus is staying warm, but not getting too hot.

Layering is the first step to keeping warm and building a unique style. If done properly, the use of layers can add to an outfit while allowing flexibility when crossing campus on a cold winter day. For many students, layering can

come in a variety of forms based on personal preference.

Wyatt Opp, a student at Bismarck State College, shared his ideal layering set up. Opp comes from a ranching family and has experience dressing for winter.

“I like marina wool socks and athletic socks. Along with boots preferably fleece lined. Then long johns under the jeans—preferably lined work jeans,” Opp said. “For my first layer on my upper body I start with a long john or a t-shirt, depending on how cold it gets

either a flannel or my personal favorite a wool vest. I can’t have poofy arms so for my outer layer I like a sherpa lined denim jacket. Finally, I like a wild rag, preferably silk. For hats I like a stocking cap, a felting hat, or a crown cap.”

After assembling the three layers, think about what to shed if it gets too hot in a room.

When speaking with BSC Student Kayci Thom, she explained her ideal winter outfit.

“Starting with my base layer I prefer a long t-shirt and leggings, typically

I will layer sweats over the leggings,” Thom said, “Hoodie over my t-shirt. For my outerlayer I like wearing a puffer. Finally, I like fluffy socks and I also prefer to wear a scarf.”

Layering is essential in order to remain at a comfortable temperature as students move through different buildings on and off the campus. There are many different ways to layer clothing for different weather conditions, so learning how to layer properly can make sure students are always prepared for North Dakota’s bipolar weather.

Pass the Spotlight
A reporter and photographer hit the streets of Mandan, letting businesses guide their path. Each stop was recommended by the last, creating a unique business-to-business map of the city’s hidden gems and local favorites.

REVIVE NUTRITION

Sophia Fafard
Co-Editor

Even though Revive Nutrition is not locally owned, it still made the list on our Morton County adventure. With everything from smoothies and teas to shakes and coffee, Revive Nutrition serves up healthy alternatives to sugary drinks that keep the community feeling good and coming back for more.

Kira Stahl is an employee at Revive Nutrition. She explained what the shop is and how people can benefit from it.

“This is a protein shake shop,” Stahl said. “You can get your protein fill, and our teas have energy in them, but it’s a healthier option for caffeine instead of coffee and stuff. People come in here to work, or to catch up with friends. It’s a fun place to be.”

Inside, you will find a clean environment, with low lights and a quiet space to enjoy your refreshment.

“I like that it’s a healthier option for food, because if you want to run through somewhere fast, you could stop here and get a protein shake instead of a burger or something,” Stahl said.

Stahl said customers especially enjoy the shop’s “summery” teas, which offer a refreshing pick-me-up after a long summer day. Her personal favorites are the Pink Starburst and the Pink Wave tea with coconut. She also recommended the Monster Cookie, a shake that tastes like a peanut butter cookie.

Stahl passed on the spotlight to the Balancing Goat Coffee Co.

Revive Nutrition is located at 1710 E Main Street Suite C, Mandan. Check out their socials on Instagram @revivenutritionnd or their Facebook page at Revive Nutrition Mandan.



Kayden Schmitcke | Co-Editor
In An Interview - - Revive Employee Kira Stahl talks about her favorite beverages at Revive Nutrition.



Kayden Schmitcke | Co-Editor
Sweet Syrups - Jars full of flavored syrup line the counter for easy access.



Kayden Schmitcke | Co-Editor
Fireworks - Revive Nutrition celebrates the 4th of July with a specialty drink.

THE BALANCING GOAT

Sophia Fafard
Co-Editor

On the north-west side of Mandan is a coffee shop filled with the constant buzz of customers and the whirring of coffee grinders. This is the Balancing Goat Coffee Co., a locally owned coffee shop that believes fresh is the best for customers.

Dawn Hager is the co-owner of the Balancing Goat alongside Karen Schmidt. Hager explained the inspiration behind the coffee shop.

“So my business partner and I, we just wanted a place where

people could balance out their lives, you know, either before work, after work, or have us be a part of their day.”

The Balancing Goat has a trendy vibe, with a mix of natural and artificial lighting. The coffee shop is usually busy with family and friends talking over a coffee or students studying in the corner. The design is mostly modern, with map decor and a coffee grinder that customers can view.

A focus on health is one of the most important things to the Balancing Goat Coffee Co. Hager highlighted this by

explaining what the coffee shop offers.

“We’re all about balancing out. So we have a lot of healthy options for people to choose from, like our salads that are made with whole grains and organic vegetables, and things that people need for nutrition,” Hager said. “But then we also have that balance of the sweet treats. We have the pastries, we have the doughnuts, we have the croissants and the scones and where we can, we like to make everything house made. A lot of people look at us as like a fast food place, which we

aren’t. Everything is made to order.”

Hager made some menu recommendations for people interested in trying their drinks or food.

“If they’re looking for coffee ... our signature drinks. It’s a blend of our espresso, milk, and our syrups. We use 1883 syrup, which is another unique product for us because 1883 is made with cane sugar,” Hager said. “If you’re going to do a smoothie or a smoothie bowl, a good one is the acai smoothie bowl. It’s covered with our housemade granola and fresh

fruit and honey. We have locally sourced honey, and we try to use local honey as much as we can.”

The Balancing Goat Coffee Co. is located at 2705 Sunset Drive in Mandan. Check out their socials on Instagram @balancinggoat.

Hager passed the spotlight to a neighboring business, where she and Schmidt like to work on their own projects outside of the coffee shop. Look out for a spotlight on Bennigans in the next issue of the Mystician.



Kayden Schmitcke | Co-Editor
Fresh is Best - Spicy organic wraps are one of the many lunch products served at The Balancing Goat.



Kayden Schmitcke | Co-Editor
Taking An Order - An employee takes a customers order. The Balancing Goat hires both high school and college students, making it a desirable summer job for some.



Kayden Schmitcke | Co-Editor
Est. in 2019 - The Balancing Goat has been around since 2019 and has been a big hit with residents in both Bismarck and Mandan.

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Year Two of Mystic Wrestling

Michael Huravitch
Reporter

Bismarck State College’s Mystic Wrestling teams are in the middle of their second season since the sport’s revival last year. The NAIA National Tournament is on March 5. Although the teams have spent time preparing, the wrestling meets have taken a physical toll on some wrestlers.

“I got good guys in the room to work with, but I would say we’ve got hit a little bit with some injuries as of right now, so some guys are sitting,” Men’s Wrestling Head Coach Jeff Schumacher said.

Schumacher went on to say that the goal is trying to

get everyone healthy and that he’s been proud of how hard the team has worked so far. Schumacher added that the team is made up of mostly freshmen, and some sophomores, so they have been working on polishing their technical skills. Still, the team has grown and improved their bond with each other.

“At the beginning of the year we were kind of a separate group, but right now as a team, we’re really good. They bonded real well together. It’s a good group that’s really come together,” Schumacher said.

He added that John Kenney has really stepped into a leadership role as the only junior on the team.

Sophomore Wrestler Izac Turner has been preparing for competition for some time, but severe injuries have left him on crutches for the time being.

“For me, I feel like the season is going great besides right now, because I am currently injured,” Turner said.

Turner added that he believes he has a torn meniscus,

but overall he’s happy that the team has succeeded in going beyond JUCO and being elevated to the NAIA. Turner said the team’s aggression has been greatly improved.

“We were kind of shy at the beginning, but the more we put our heads into it and the more aggression we bring onto the mat, the more success we’ve had,” he said.

Turner also mirrored what Schumacher had to say, in that the team has come together as a unit.

“We have a bunch of supporters now. I feel like the culture of wrestling has changed in just the two years that we’ve had it here,” Turner said.

As for now, Turner is focused on healing up and supporting the team. Keep an eye on both men’s and women’s wrestling as the season starts to wind down.

BSC MALE ATHLETE TRIVIA

1. Who was named Frontier Indoor Track Athlete-of-the-Week (The week of Feb. 10,2026)?
- A. Jakson Ensign
B. Connor Ensign
C. Kade Warren
D. Harrison Cobb
2. Who scored the most points (16 pts) in their last game against Montana Tech on Feb. 7, 2026?
- A. Jah Gulley
B. Houston Davis
C. Alex Proctor
D. Carter Zeller
3. Where is the first baseball game on Feb. 21, 2026?
- A. Yankton, S.D.
B. Sioux City, I.A.
C. Bismarck, N.D.
D. Hesston, K.A.

1) B, 2) A, 3) D
ANSWERS KEY

BSC FEMALE ATHLETE TRIVIA

1. Who was named Frontier Indoor Track Athlete-of-the-Week (For the third time)?
- A. Alexia Anderson
B. Ava Stafford
C. Priviledge Bower
D. Dedra Wood
2. Who won NAIA Women’s Basketball Offensive Play of the Week (First BSC athlete to win the nation honor)?
- A. Kennedy Harter
B. Natalie DeCoteu
C. Adeia Erickson
D. Kennedy Stormer
3. In their first softball game, who delivered a solo homer to bring the Mystics to within one point in the seventh?
- A. Lexi Wesson
B. Brynn Arnold
C. Gracie Ferriter
D. Jada Walter

1) C, 2) D, 3) A
ANSWERS KEY

SUPERBOWL TRIVIA

1. Who caught the game-winning touchdown in Super Bowl XLIII (2008 season)?
- A. Larry Fitzgerald
B. Santonio Holmes
C. Hines Ward
D. Steve Smith Sr.
2. Which team did the Bears defeat in their lone Super Bowl win (Super Bowl XX, 1985 season)?
- A. Kansas City Chiefs
B. Buffalo Bills
C. New York Jets
D. New England Patriots
3. Who made “The Catch” in Super Bowl XVI (1981 season)?
- A. Jerry Rice
B. Dwight Clark
C. Freddie Solomon
D. Roger Craig

1) B, 2) D, 3) B
ANSWERS KEY

SAY CHEESE!



Just Hanging Out - From Left to Right: Morgen Fischer, Hayli Hartman, Jenica Twete, Chance Leingang, Kenzie Fleck, and Aleah McGraw.

Mygel Porter | Social Media Manager

Medieval Rush: Test Your Guts, Grit, and Gumption

Sophia Fafard
Co-Editor

The sun is hot in the air, sweltering for the people below. Families, friends, and fellow competitors gather at the Bismarck State College Community Resources Bowl, ready to tackle one of the largest mud runs in North Dakota, and mentally prepare themselves for the physical challenge that is Medieval Rush.

Many are eager to push themselves to the limit, while others are there to get outside and build comradery with their team. No matter who they are, one thing is certain—everyone is looking to have a good time.

Spanning 5.1 kilometres, Medieval Rush is North Dakota’s longest-running and largest mud run. This all-terrain run features a variety of obstacles with a medieval twist, such as the Moat of Mud, Hell’s Fires, Castle Walls, and Barbed Wire Frenzy. These obstacles can change each year as the event organizers see fit.

Tanner Schweitzer is an assistant men’s wrestling coach at BSC. He is also the founder of Medieval Rush. Schweitzer leads fitness classes and boot-camps in the Bismarck area, showcasing his enthusiasm for health and fitness.

Medieval Rush is a passion of his, as he has a history of organizing mud runs in the past. Medieval Rush started when a friend planted the idea in his head—to start a mud run in North Dakota.

“I was living down in San Diego for seven years, and one of my friends reached out to me [about it],” Schweitzer said. “There were mud runs down in San Diego, and I would put on various workouts on the beach and make people run through terrain. Then I came back up here and thought, ‘yeah, it would be great.’ And so I put one on and I thought it would work, and it took off.”

For 15 years, Medieval Rush has been there for the Bismarck/Mandan community. The event has taken place in a variety of locations. First, it was at Huff Hills. Then, it took place at the Missouri Valley Fairground for four years. It has even taken place at New Salem, under the large cow statue Salem Sue herself, for three years. Finally, Schweitzer brought the event to BSC in 2020, following the events of COVID-19 and the pandemic shutdown. Medieval Rush has been at the BSC Community Bowl ever since.



Submitted

Through the Mud - Kids stumble through the Medieval Rush kids course. The Kids Course allows children from the ages 8-13 a chance to join in on the fun.

“After COVID and stuff, we’re still recovering, but it’s getting better and better and coming back,” Schweitzer said. “It’s such a fun event, and we need to get the word back out there and spread it so that people realize this and take advantage of it because it won’t be here forever.”

As Medieval Rush recovers from the

effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the community continues to support the local event. The event is open to two age categories—one for children, and one for teens and older. There is no maximum age limit. The oldest person to sign up for Medieval Rush was a 71-year-old woman. Also, people can sign up to compete as an individual or with a team. Teams can have up to four people and can win the Team Trophy if they have the fastest time.

Schweitzer’s favorite part is seeing how much fun the community has at the event.

“The adults go in and out of the mud pits and just run in and out and the smiles on their faces, and they’re giggling and laughing,” Schweitzer said. “Just watching people finish [the run] and smiling and high-fiving and going, ‘wow, that was awesome.’ And then everybody’s like, ‘oh, it wasn’t as hard as I thought.’ It makes me feel so good.”

Schweitzer encourages college students to participate. For many students who complain that there is not much to do in the Bismarck/Mandan community, Medieval Rush helps to prove this statement false.

“I want to bring back a sense of adventure for the younger generation,” Schweitzer said. “We’ve got to get that new generation to do it. We always tell people ‘use it as a goal to train for.’ If you can go for a walk on grass or on even terrain, you can do this. So don’t be intimidated. Don’t be afraid of it.”

Students can also help volunteer at Medieval Rush. Finding volunteers is one the biggest challenges Schweitzer faces when putting on the event, though he has found help from high schools, such as the Mandan Braves football team.

This year, Medieval Rush opens to the community at 8 a.m. on June 13. The kids’ course kicks off at 9 a.m., followed by the adult course at 10:15 a.m. Although this event tests a person’s grit and guts, Schweitzer reminds people that it is all meant to be fun.

“It’s kind of like being a kid again. It’s like the one day where you get to let loose and just have fun again. Nobody judges, nobody cares. Everybody’s out there having a great time,” Schweitzer said.

At the end of the day, the sun is still hot and blazing, but the crowds gathered at the Community Bowl have smiles on their faces. Despite being covered in mud, many people still laugh and cheer, proud that they have conquered the challenge that is Medieval Rush.



Submitted

A Helping Hand - Medieval Rush participants help each other out through the dirt and mud, showcasing a sense of teamwork and camaraderie.

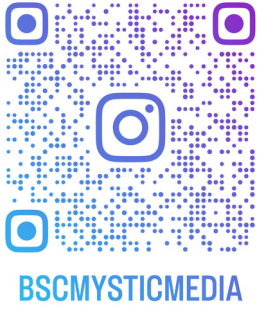


Submitted

The Top Spot - Participants find a trial in the huge Medieval Rush obstacle, which tests the grit of many who dare to try it.

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on March 5



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Campus Police Safety & Security
Office Hours: 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday - Friday
Location: Student Union Lower Level Room 120
Phone: 911 - Emergency
701-223-9111 - Non-Emergency
701-224-2700 - Office

Mystic Advising & Counseling Center (MACC)
Hours: 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday - Thursday | 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday
Location: Student Union Lower Level
Phone: 701-224-5752

Bismarck State College Library
Hours: 7:30 a.m. - 8 p.m., Monday - Thursday | 7:30 a.m. - 4 p.m. Friday
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Bismarck State College Bookstore
Hours: 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday - Thursday | 7:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. Friday
Location: Student Union
Phone: 701-224-5453

Editorial

OUR VOICE

Letter from the Editors



Sophia Fafard & Kayden Schmitcke
Co-Editors

The state of the news world has never been crazier. When clicking a link to any news website, one of the first things that comes up is the Epstein files. Then, after that, stuff about ICE. Then, maybe something about AI. While some might call it “good” news, we aren’t here to bring you that. You can find that “good” news everywhere. While some of us might talk

about it, we’re here to bring you news that is relevant to YOU. Events like these are always relevant to us, as people, and if it comes up, we will explore this relevance to you in a story. Anyhow, whether you’re a faculty member, student, or Bismarck State College employee, we hope you enjoy this newest issue of the Mystician.

Sometimes, when the world seems dark, college news is here to bring some light and fun to campus. The news doesn’t always have to be dark and dreary (though I know some of you out there like it that way). Sometimes, stories of hope, success, kindness, and courage can be just as impactful, if not more so than bad news. These stories inspire hope in readers, and, I hope, happiness.

Now get in there and find some stories to read. I hope you find a little bit of joy from this paper. It sure brings me joy writing stories for you all to read.

Conform: A Beginners Guide to Eugenics



Liberty Friez
Content Editor

I’m back!!!! And sadly I have another terrible book to cover. This one is going to be fun. I received a book from my sister this past Christmas. I was pleasantly surprised that I hadn’t heard of it before. My sister prefaced it by saying it sounded like something I would like. After reading the summary, however, my hopes sank much like the Titanic. I decided to give it a chance. Who knows—maybe it would surprise me.



Illustration | Liberty Friez

Well, I was wrong. It was as I expected, but it made it perfect for another book review.

The book in question is “Conform”, published in October 2025 by author Ariel Sullivan.

This novel follows Emeline, a 27-year-old woman living in a futuristic, dystopian society ruled by the Illum, a group of technological advanced people. The dystopian aspect of this society is that the Elite—the upper class—have preferable genetic traits. Their whole society is based around producing children with the best genetic traits by selectively matching couples in hopes to produce those desirable traits, so basically eugenics. Love that. To continue having children, Elites will create mating agreements with other elites or defects. Illum is the one who does these matches, using tech to match people together for the best genetic matches from which the elites get to pick which one they approve of.

Emeline, our quirky (of course she is) bland, main protagonist is approved for a potential mating agreement. Emeline also has a birth defect as she had heterochromia making her a Minor Defect in rank. She does her daily job of burning pre-war art and runs into love interest numero uno—Hal (on page seven no less). You may wonder how I know that he is a love interest. She calls him handsome in her internal monologues, that’s how. Love interest numero dos turns up shortly after. Turns out #2 is her potential Mate, Collin. Collin is not just an Elite, he is an Illum.

Complex Board Games



Isaiah Johnson
MystiCast Executive Producer

I frequently encounter people who never play games exceeding the difficulty of UNO. Now, I can understand the impulse to sit down and not have to worry about strategizing. Especially when people of a large age range are

playing, these types of games can be a great way to bridge that gap. I am sure there are more qualifiers I could throw in as to why simple games have their place, but I don’t really want to. Today, strategy games get the spotlight.

Having clarified that I do not have an ultimate revulsion of simple games, I now present my case for strategy board games. First off, most of the closest friendships I have cultivated in my life so far have seen incredible growth over a board game. Everyone rightfully has some barriers in conversation, but strategy board games do an excellent job of breaking down some of that barrier. Jokes flow freely, and the postgame conversations reveal what

everyone was planning and how that was subtly disrupted by emptying the village pile, or using my steel, or tucking that science card... you get the idea.

There’s something about challenging our brains together that creates a unique bond. Tough board games force people to strategize and think analytically in the company of others. It creates this comfortable climate of camaraderie and competition. And when this attitude pervades a game night, participants can plot and calculate and try as hard as they can to win, but after the game ends, any frustration over the game dissipates.

The 2020s Are The 1890s



Garrett Froelich
Columnist

I was watching a video by the YouTuber Mr. Beat the other day. I don’t watch his stuff often, as I’m not often in the mood to learn more than I already know about American historical politics. I would describe my relationship with American history similarly to Donald Trump’s relationship to the Epstein files... passionately pursuing until the reality of it became too real too quick.

I’ve been in the mood lately to continue my research into our cultural and political history since the events of the last two decades, but especially the events recently are starting to get to me.

The video was comparing the 2020s to the 1890s. The 20s are usually compared to the 1910s, the 50s, 70s, even the decades leading up to the Civil War. Essentially any turbulent era in American history has been compared to our present decade.

The 1890s was a time of

industrialization, political corruption, and giant wealth disparity.

All of which are problems today all in different ways of course, but we are facing similar situations. Artificial intelligence has made once steady professions uneasy, with an uncertain future. Also, a government that lies straight to our faces, and the second greatest wealth disparity in our country’s history aside from the aforementioned.

Our decade is similar down to such details like there being a group of about five extremely wealthy men who monopolized emerging industries and who then controlled the American culture through those monopolies. It is also said we are living in the Second Gilded Age, the first of which lasted from 1870-1900. It signifies extreme wealth and abhorrent spending by the rich as opposed to the middle and lower class living in conditions that were unsafe, unsanitary, and working conditions that were abysmal.

All of this led to the best use of populism that the country has ever seen outside of The Revolution. It got Theodore Roosevelt in office, where he fixed many of the problems of the Gilded Age and resulted in twenty years of progressive policy until the Teapot Dome Scandal followed by The Great Depression.

The stakes aren’t as high as they were in the past. The

average person in poverty has a higher living standard, but having autonomy through the cost of living is the bigger issue, whether it is healthcare, housing, or groceries.

In the 1890s the populist movement blamed many issues on immigrants. They were blamed for social, economic, and cultural issues. That led to Immigration Act of 1924 that limited the number of immigrants allowed to enter from year to year. It lasted until 1965.

I say all of this to follow it by saying that a strong populist movement that doesn’t demonize, but simply fights for the needs of people and that can unite the common person is the only way to make it to the other side. If we keep letting our political leaders impact our thoughts and emotions rather than our neighbors and friends, we will continue to squabble over our frustration to headlines and fabrications. There are no sides of the isles when it comes to the American citizen being held as the priority by our representatives and not their wallet or power struggles.

“E pluribus unum” means, out of many, one. That doesn’t mean one country, government, or land. That means one “people.”

Who could have guessed? I did, that’s who.

Throughout the novel, Emeline gets involved in the resistance force fighting against the Elite and has several back and forths between the two love interests. Nothing of substance happens through the majority of this book.

My main complaint with this book is the focus. This is classified as a dystopian romance.

The themes of non-conformity and bodily autonomy I feel, however, are not conducive to a productive romance story line. If this book forged the romance and actually tried to say something, it wouldn’t be half bad. Sadly, that doesn’t sell but a romance, werewolf, ChatGPT, centered book does, so here we are.

Sidenote: The wolf/werewolf terminology is not lost on me

and I hate it. This book has nothing to do with wolves. So using “Mate” and “Breeding” seems like a tool used to get certain readers interested. Or could be used to show how barbaric the whole system is, but I feel like I would be giving the book too much credit.

This book is just an unoriginal mess and I hate it. 4/10.

Staff Opinion

The Mystic Media Staff Brings the Beat



Mygel Porter
Social Media Manager

Making the Perfect Playlist

I am a huge Tate McRae fan, so as much as I want to recommend three Tate McRae songs, I'll mix it up. My first song recommendation is "Sports Car" by Tate McRae. It's the perfect summer song. My next two song recommendations are more winter songs. "If We Have

Each Other" by Alec Benjamin, and "How to Save a Life" by Ben Montith. Those two songs just fit the vibe of winter. I believe the soft guitar in the background of both the songs add so much personality to it.



Kayla Hilzendeger
Photographer

The Best Songs: My Recommendations

The first song that I would recommend is "Broken Things" by Matthew West. This is because even though it's not very up beat, it really digs deep, and gets to the heart. The song is really inspiring to me and helps me stay grounded when I have a really tough day. The second is "Leather and Lace" by Don Henley and Stevie Nicks. This is because I just

like how chill it is. I love the harmonies and how the artists' voices seamlessly melt together. Also because these two artists are some of the biggest musical names of the era. The last one to make the cut is "Riptide" by Vance Joy. This is because it is super upbeat and I just love that it always puts me in a good mood when I hear it.



Kerstin Hilzendeger
Graphic Designer

Miscellaneous Melodies

same list as one another. My taste in music is not categorized by genre or style. My first recommendation is my current ear worm: "Bloodlines" by Alex Warren featuring Jelly Roll. Its catchy rhythm and emotional lyrics are the perfect blend of heartfelt, soul and upbeat, infectious sound. Another song that I would recommend is "Write this

Down" by George Strait. This is a prime country classic and will always make you tap your foot or dance along. My final song recommendation is "Fast Car" by Tracy Chapman. The relaxed feel and emotional lyrics make this song a perfect listen no matter the day.



Sophia Fafard
Co-Editor

Ballads are Amazing

Ballads are such an underrated form of storytelling. I love songs that tell a story, and while every song has a theme, ballads usually tell a specific story. I ask that you please listen to "Spanish Train" by Chris de Burgh. It's one of the reasons I think ballads are so cool. The song is a narrative ballad that tells the story of a cursed train, and the devil and the Lord play

poker for the souls of the dead on that train. It's amazing and scary and a little strange for someone to like of course, but I love everything about it—the narrative style, the main chorus, and the jarring twist at the end. If you don't like "Spanish Train", I recommend you listen to "One Tin Soldier" by The Original Caste or "The Boxer" by Simon and Garfunkel.



Kade Warren
Reporter

Rediscovering an Era

songs from that iconic era. I can't believe it's already been a decade. So if you are like me and are returning to your old playlists this year, I would suggest you listen to "Shy" by Reneè Rap. The entire album she released last August, "BITE ME", is worth a visit, but this track in particular fits the new 2026 vibes perfectly. But before these winter storms start closing in, I think it's time to start rotating our genres in preparation for this spring. "San Fran-

cisco Knights" by People u\Under the Stairs and "GO!" by Common are two great 90s rap songs that I find myself listening to on repeat every winter season. One last song I would recommend be added to your playlist in honor of Valentine's Day is "Love" by Kid Cudi.



Jaxon Miller
The MYX Producer

Being on the radio, you'd probably expect me to be pretty decisive on what my favorite song is. Well, you'd be

Too Many Picks

wrong. It really changes to fit my current mood. Currently, I'm into three very different sounding songs. I grew up with music from the 2000s so one of my current faves is "The Quiet Things That No One Ever Knows" by Brand New. The song just has a lot of that early 2000s angst that I for some reason really love. I can't really recommend it because I know it's not for everyone, but it's still a personal favorite. "And A

Big Load" by my favorite band, Hot Mulligan, is so phenomenal, I love it so much. I can recommend "And A Big Load" more than my last song just because it's way more poppy. The favorite that I would recommend to everyone is "The District Sleeps Alone Tonight" by The Postal Service. It's the perfect blend of pop, indie, and electronic that I feel like anyone can dance to.

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BISMARCK STATE COLLEGE STUDENT PRODUCTIONS



Liberty Friez
Content Editor

In the Rain on a Train

My taste in songs changes week by week but there are four that are a constant and have been for years. These few songs are “Ophelia” and “Stubborn Love” by The Lumineers, “Babel” by Mumford and Sons, and “Amsterdam” by Gregory Alan Isakov. They are not necessarily the catchiest songs but I appreciate the story telling. These songs make me want to go on a train ride (specifically in England) in the rain and just stare out the window, and that’s exactly what I want in a song. Maybe I just like despair.



Michael Huravitch
Reporter

Oldies but Goodies

I listen to a lot of music. Originally I was going to just recommend my three favorite songs, but then I figured I’d just recommend one of my favorite bands. Incubus is a band I’ve been listening to since I was a kid, and I revisit their music a lot. I discovered them from playing the first few Guitar Hero games,

just like many of my other favorite bands. They’re an alternative rock band who were popular in the late 90s and early 2000s. My favorite songs by them are “Wish You Were Here,” “Dig,” “Stellar,” “Drive,” “Pardon Me,” and “Nice to Know You.” I can remember going on road trips as a kid and listening to them on my CD player. When I was a kid I just liked how the music sounded, but as an adult I love the meaning and lyrics in their songs. I’d definitely recommend checking out their music.

Illustration | **Kayla Hilzendeger**



Paysha Rex
Sports Editor

Paysha’s Playlist

I see myself being all over the place when it comes to music. I mean, I like whatever my parents listened to growing up. They would play anything from Pearl Jam to Shine-down. I also play a lot

of my boyfriend’s songs when driving or working, and I really enjoy them, like “Poster Boy” by 2hol-lis and “I Wonder” by Kanye West. I get a lot of recommendations from family and friends, and I want to continue expanding my playlist with any the songs that connects me with them. When it comes to my own music, I am all over the place. I enjoy really fast-paced songs with a techy vibe or a dystopi-an-like feel. If I had to choose a specific song to listen to, it would have to be “Obit” by Leo Varella. It is a must listen! It is a go-to song for sunset or night driving.



Alondra Vidal
Reporter

Super Massive Black Hole

Aura, speed, and motivation are the feelings that the song “Supermas-sive Black Hole” by the band Muse evokes. For me, starting my day often means rushing to class or

work, and this song has become my go-to anthem to fuel my speed when I drive. It pumps adren-aline through my veins, making me feel like I’m in a Fast and Furious movie, and surprisingly, I hav-en’t been pulled over yet. When I’m feeling down, turning up this song boosts my confidence, making me feel like one of the vampires in Twi-light during the iconic baseball scene played in slow motion. It’s amus-ing to think that I once disliked the song, finding it strange, but now it has become one of my favor-ites and a daily source of inspiration.

Elena Sanchez
Reporter

Yearning In Spring

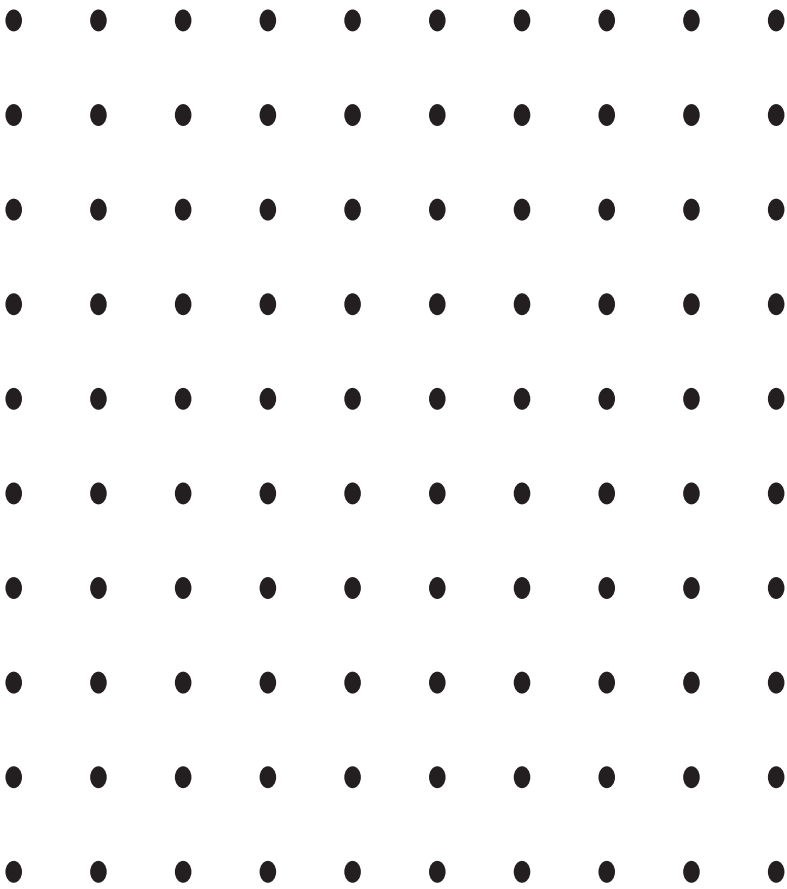
For me, a good song is one that makes you feel so heavy with emotion. “Silver Lining” by Laufey from her album “A Mat-ter of Time” is a classical jazz piece that tells the story of heartache, yearn-ing, and love. I remember the first time I listened to the song, and I fell in love with it. The lyrics felt so relatable, memo-rable, and immersive in the storytelling. I have struggled with love in the

past, but there is nothing more special than finding someone that truly loves you. It really does feel like you can go through hell and back while they remain by your side. In a way, a true lover will be your silver lining.

PUZZLE PAGE

Dots to Boxes

Two players take turns drawing a single horizontal or vertical line between adjacent dots on a grid. The player who draws the fourth line of a 1x1 square claims the square by putting their initial inside it and gets to take another turn. The game ends when no more lines can be drawn, and the player with the most claimed squares wins.



Sudoku

9				7			2	
				3	4			
			6			3		
6				5				
	8				2			6
		1			9	5	7	
			5			9	1	
								2
			3	8			5	

FAMOUS BOOK WORD SEARCH

P L U M S O A Y M H D N F H A M L E T T
G Y O P E T S E M A T A R Y H I F U S B
W R Y R Q R K C A R R I E Q N T E N Z U
G U W Y D T E F R A N K E N S T E I N M
F U T U N O N G J R T F M S N P D J D I
Q O L H U D F L R W M A Z E R U N N E R
C G U E E N I T B E T I A G A T S B Y G
H T N R S R W V H Y T H S E L Z F L A S
O H N M T M I I E E G T E E U R A U M Q
L E M A L H I N N R R B I G R S M I O H
E H S C I F W S G D G I F N I Y W H B A
S O H B T J X I E H T E N Q G V J M Y R
U B R E T X J I N R E E N G J Y E V D R
H B E T L D K Z J G A I C T S A O R I Y
A I K H E W V L Z F W B G I H S Y U C P
T T C P W V Q M O Y H T L H N B W K K O
C P U O O C H R I S T I N E T D X E V T
H Z J U M Q D R A C U L A W S S E F I T
E X O L E T H E S H I N I N G X X R T E
T U Q F N S R D H U N G E R G A M E S R

- wuthering heights
- frankenstein
- hunger games
- les miserables
- divergent
- cinder
- hatchet
- dracula
- shrek
- holes
- lord of the rings
- little women
- harry potter
- maze runner
- moby dick
- macbeth
- hamlet
- gatsby
- the hobbit
- regretting you
- pet sematary
- the shining
- fourth wing
- the giver
- unwind
- misery
- carrie
- christine
- cujo
- it

BOOK TRIVIA

1. Which author wrote the 1925 classic novel, “The Great Gatsby”?
A. F. Scott Fitzgerald B. Ernest Hemingway C. George Orwell
2. What is the romance book series about vampires and werewolves?
A. Percy Jackson B. Twilight C. The Hunger Games
3. Which horror writer wrote stories such as “The Long Walk” and “Carrie”?
A. Ray Bradbury B. Stephen King C. Clive Barker
4. Who wrote the popular romance novel “It Ends With Us”?
A. Colleen Hoover B. Stephenie Meyer C. E.L. James
5. What is the name of the pig who is the main antagonist in “Animal Farm”?
A. Squealer B. Snowball C. Napoleon
4. Which author wrote the classic novel, “Moby Dick”?
A. Charles Dickens B. Mark Twain C. Herman Melville
5. Which book did the horror character “Hannibal Lecter” originally appear in?
A. Red Dragon B. The Silence Of The Lambs C. Hannibal

