

THE **Mystician**

Volume 88 | Issue 3
September 17, 2026

[N E W S] P A P E R



Mystic Pride! - The Mystic student section rises in celebration for BSC Women's Volleyball at the Bavendick Center on Aug. 22. Submitted

BSC Welcomes Students to Campus after Summer Break

Liberty Friez
Editor

Bismarck State College welcomed new and returning students back to campus on Aug. 24. The campus has seen quite a few developments in the last year with building construction, degrees, and additional sports. As students settle into the semester, there are some upcoming events and important dates to add to the calendar.

The Bavendick Center, BSC's new athletic facility, opened in April. It provides a range of athletic facilities and accommodations for both students and the community. The center features a climbing wall, sports simulation rooms, indoor walking track, an E-sports room and a 2,000 seat gymnasium.

Students will notice construction in the parking lot north of the Jack Science Center. With the growth of students BSC has seen over the years and

the increase in interest of on-campus living, a new residence hall and underground parking garage is in the process.

Since the start of the school year, two sports were announced to be joining the BSC roster. Women's and men's golf will begin in the fall of 2027 with women's flag football starting the same semester.

The start of the school year is filled with campus events. Homecoming Week See **Welcome Back** | 3



SCAN
FOR
WEB

Student Life
Club Fair | 4

Sports
BSC & Larks Baseball | 10

MYSTICMEDIA

BISMARCK STATE COLLEGE STUDENT PRODUCTIONS

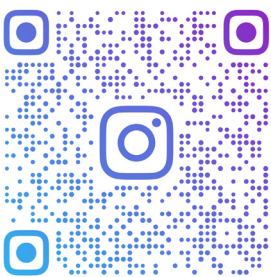
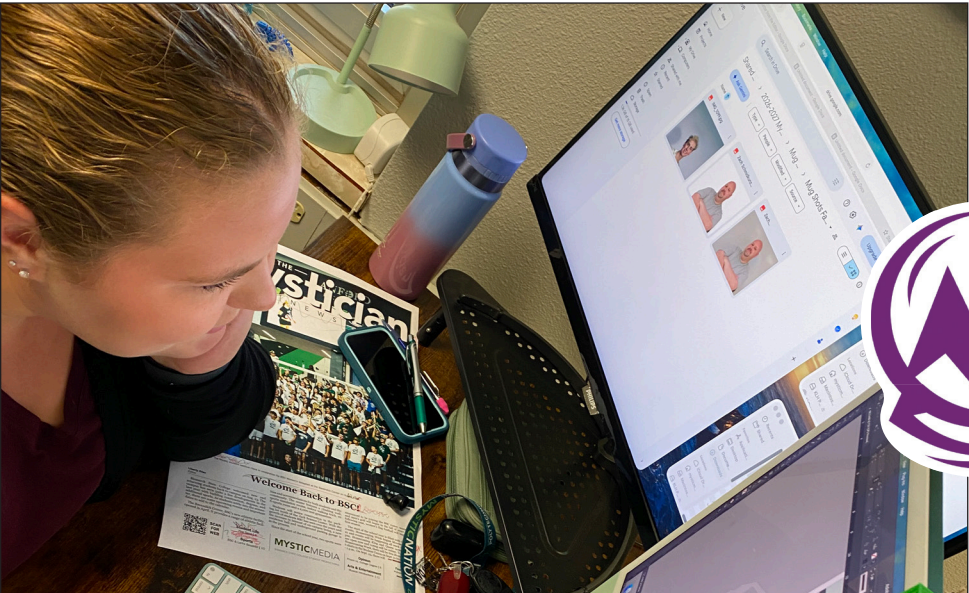
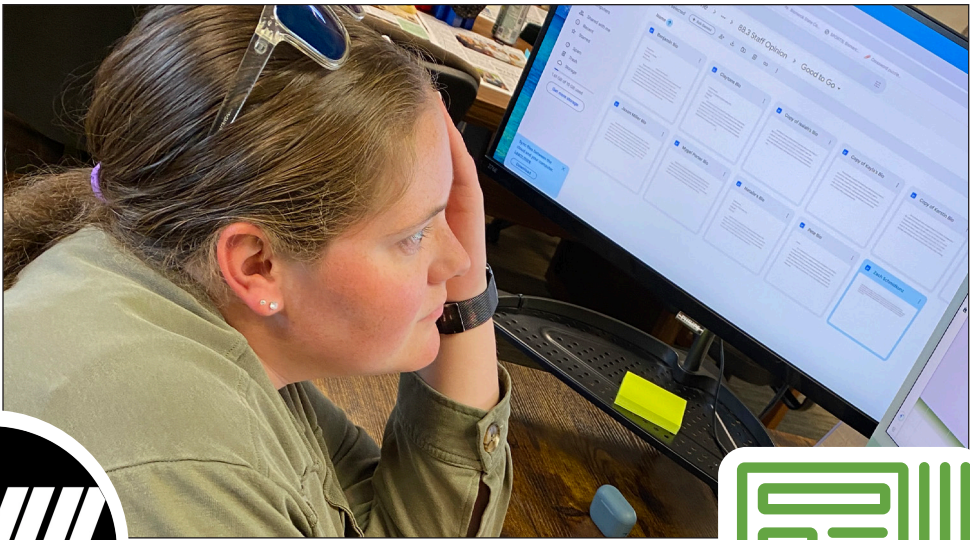
Opinion
Prison vs. College Degree | 6

Arts & Entertainment
Musical Introductions | 11

Feature
Welcome Back
Home | 3

MYSTIC MEDIA

SHENANIGANS



Instagram



Next issue
88.4 on
October 1



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Welcome Back

Cont. 1

begins Monday, Sept. 21 and events will be happening all week on campus. Homecoming King and Queen nominations are open now and voting will be online. To kick off Homecoming Week, there will be free Homecoming t-shirts in the Student Union on Sept. 21 from 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.. On Sept. 25, there will be a tailgating party at the Bavedick Center

from 4 p.m - 6 p.m. The homecoming court will be crowned during this event. Homecoming Week will conclude with a volleyball game on Sept. 26.

There are a few dates students should take note of. Tuition payment for classes was due Aug. 24 and late fees will be applied on Oct. 14. For students planning on living on campus next school, applications for residence halls opens

on Oct.1. The last day to withdraw from class with a record and no tuition refund is Nov. 13.

Students can go to the BSC events page or check out of The Mystician monthly calendar to see all the upcoming activities planned for the semester. The complete 2026 fall dates and deadlines can be found by going to the Calendar and Deadlines page on the BSC website.



Tech Center - The Advanced Technology Center glowing Mystic green as the sun starts to set at the beginning of the school year.



Clayton Sicble- Fox | Photographer
Bav Sign - Ahyden Fetzter and Micheal Pfliger leave the volleyball game at the Bavendick Center on Aug. 22.



Clayton Sicble- Fox | Photographer
Bavendick Building - The Bavendick Center is the newest addition to Bismarck State College campus. 2026 to 2027 school year is the first year the Bavendick Center is open to the public.

New Instructor Looks to Grow BSC Pep Band

Natalie Lawrence
Reporter

Bismarck State College welcomes new Assistant Teaching Professor of Music and pep band director Dr. Dylan Mashburn. He hopes to expand the group and make it a major part of campus life.

Mashburn is originally from the small town of Lester, Alabama, and moved to Bismarck, N.D. in early August. Before moving to North Dakota, he attended the University of North Alabama in Florence and later earned a doctorate from the University of Memphis in Memphis, Tennessee.

Mashburn began playing trombone in 2011 as a member of a beginner band. Since then, he has performed on several instruments, participated in all-state ensembles, and marched in both high school and college bands. While attending the University of North Alabama, Mashburn played in the Pride of Dixie Marching Band, which is also known as the Marching Pride.

Mashburn has a master’s degree in music education and has experience playing bass in jazz ensembles. He also performed with a New Orleans-style brass band called Kicks and Licks. What began as a side project eventually became the focus of Mashburn’s doctoral dissertation in trombone performance. The group performed in a variety of venues, including cruise ships.

Mashburn said the opportunity at BSC appealed to him because of the pep band’s potential. The group began last fall and currently has five students in the program.

“It feels like it sort of went through a tough time here recently,” Mashburn said. “It sort of went dormant, so I saw this as an opportunity to pick it back up and make something out of this.”

Mashburn hopes to bring a different band culture to campus while building on the traditions already present in the area. The pep band is scheduled to perform at volleyball games and men’s and women’s basketball games. In the future, Mashburn said he hopes the group will eventually be able to perform the national anthem at baseball games, attend recruiting events, and visit local high schools.

Students do not need previous musical experience to join. In fact, the band is open to all BSC students, including those interested in learning a new instrument. Furthermore, private lessons will be available at no cost.

Students who qualify may also receive a tuition waiver. Because pep band is offered as a class, students must register for it. The class is worth one credit and meets Mondays and Wednesdays from 4 to 4:50 p.m.

The deadline to receive the tuition waiver has been extended to Sept. 11. Students interested in joining can contact their academic adviser or speak directly with Dylan Mashburn.

For the new instructor, the main goal for the school year is growth.

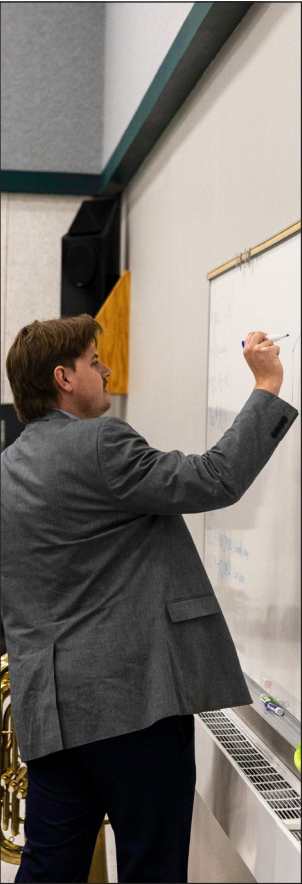
“We’re really trying to get numbers,” Mashburn said. “You have to start with quantity before we can really dig into the quality.”

The pep band offers ways for connection.

“People are looking for ways to get off the screen and connect with others,” Mashburn said. “This is the perfect opportunity.”

As the pep band begins its second year, Mashburn is inviting students from every level of musical experience to participate.

“Come one, come all,” Mashburn said.



Clayton Sicble- Fox | Photographer
Single Whiteboard - Professor Mashburn shares information on the white board with his students.



Clayton Sicble- Fox | Photographer
Group Photo - Professor Mashburn rehearses with his students in the Leach Music Center on Sept. 2. **Left to right** - Joseph Macdonald, Hannah Daniels, Gavin Burckhard, Iris Wehri, Raven Franklin, Maddy Martin, Loren Wolf, Matthew Macdonald. Back- Luke Miller

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BSC BISMARCK STATE COLLEGE North Dakota's Polytechnic Institution



Clayton Sicble- Fox | Photographer
Trumpet - Loran Wolf rehearses with his classmates while Professor Mashburn attentively listens and instructs his class.

Mystics Go Clubbing

Elena Sanchez
Reporter

On August 26, Bismarck State College hosted their first club fair of the school year in the Student Union. The club fair had an exceptional turnout compared to past fairs, likely due to the partnership between the Congress of Student Organizations and clubs across campus. Erin Schwalk, the CSO adviser, gives insight into what CSO is and what they do.

Hadley Headley

- Q: What year of school are you in?
- A: 2nd Year
- Q: What do you like BSC?
- A: It's a good community and a good starting point for further education.
- Q: What club would you join at BSC?
- A: CRU

Interviewers: Maren Gaebe & Maddie Gefroh

“CSO stands for Congress of Student Organizations and that’s the governing board that oversees all of the clubs and organizations on campus that fall into that purview,” Schwalk said. “What I do is I coordinate with club advisers on the rules for the year; I help students with [their] questions... and I get to set up some pretty fun events for the clubs too. Like [the] club fair.”

While the Student Government

Association can still help with event coordination, CSO is meant to take the burden off of their shoulders.

“It was a nice way to keep us separate so that SGA could focus on their things without being overburdened by clubs because there’s [quite] a few of you,” Schwalk said.

The intention behind CSO is to ensure clubs are seen and heard by the student body while still getting to interact with students too. Events for clubs are what can attract new members, create interest, and cultivate ideas for new clubs.

Setting up events is no easy task. CSO helps make it easier for clubs to do so. For this year’s club fair, Schwalk wanted the spotlight to be on the clubs and what they offer.

“Technically, I’m the one who planned it all,” Schwalk stated. “So, I like to think of it as like I set the stage and then it’s the clubs and their advisers and students, who are the actors, really put it together.”

The planning, creation, and timing of the event made the club fair stand out this year with an admirable turnout. However, Mystics were the ones that made it special.

“It is the club advisers and the students who come and actually participate that really bring it to life and make people want to come,” Schwalk said. “It’s kind of like an art gallery otherwise if I can set it up and make it look pretty,



Clayton Sicble- Fox | Photographer

Recruiting Students - International Advertising Campaign Champion Cammie Veldkamp, helps recruit students to DECA during the Club Fair in the Student Union on Aug. 26.

but it’s way cooler to speak with the artist. We had a fantastic turnout this go around because of that.”

BSC is always willing to add new clubs if students wish to create one. Information and requirements for club creation is listed on the BSC website under Student Clubs & Organizations. Mystics are also encouraged to email Erin Schwalk or the CSO email for any further questions.

DECA — Cammie Veldkamp

- Q: Why should we join?
- A: Low time commitment looks good on resumes, and there is a lot of travel opportunities.
- Q: Where does the funding come from?
- A: Funding comes from different grants and we run fundraisers ourselves
- Q: What are the requirements?
- A: It is a dedicated business major club. You attend one meeting a month and the conferences are optional.
- Q: What makes this club stand out?
- A: DECA travels the most out of all the clubs

Interviewers: Jessa Lee & Natalie Lawrence



Natalie Lawrence | Reporter

Drama Club - Jessica Rhoades and Jaxon Miller encourage students to join Drama Club at the Club Fair in the Student Union on Aug. 26.



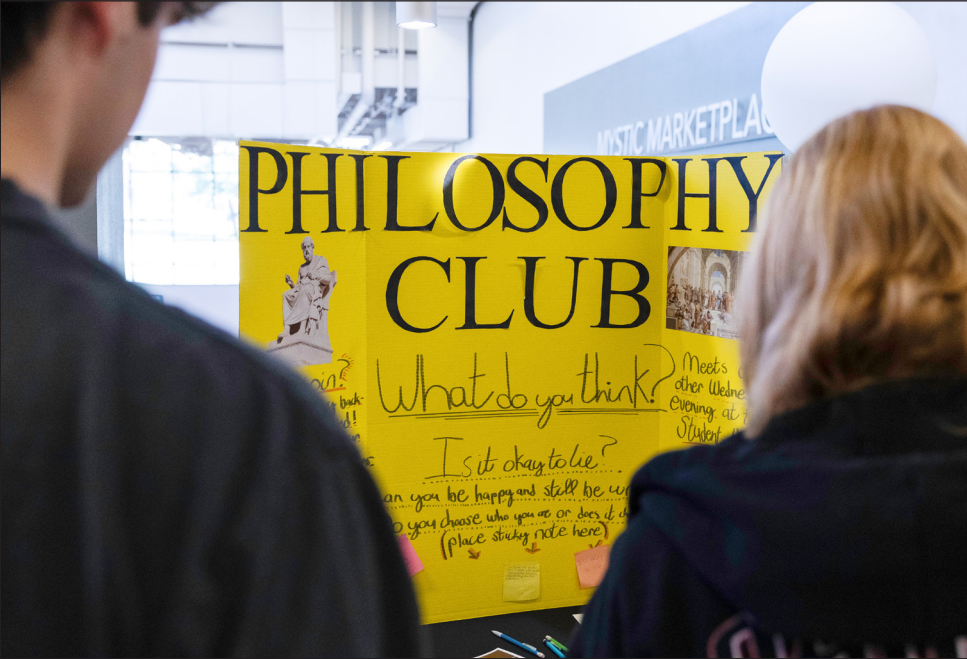
Natalie Lawrence | Reporter

Join a Club - Aisha Zaffino considers joining a new club during the Club Fair.

Aisha Zaffin

- Q: What is your major?
- A: Finance
- Q: What year are you? Are you excited?
- A: Senior, very excited
- Q: Are you thinking of joining a club?
- A: Yes, possibly FCA.
- Q: What are you currently involved in?
- A: Track and [I] am an RA
- Q: Where so you see yourself in five years?
- A: Being a real estate agent in some other state
- Q: What is your favorite food?
- A: Steak

Interviewers: Jessa Lee & Natalie Lawrence



Clayton Sicble- Fox | Photographer

Exploring Options - Nick Kunf and Kailee Gussey examine the Philosophy Club poster at the student Club Fair.

DRAMA — Jessica Rhodes

- Q: Why should we join?
- A: We take fun trips.
- Q: Where does the funding come from?
- A: By group fundraising and concessions
- Q: What are the requirements?
- A: You have to attend at least two meetings.
- Q: What does your club do?
- A: We put on plays and sing some songs.
- Q: What is the best part about your club?
- A: Making good friends

Interviewers: Jessa Lee & Natalie Lawrence

BSC Artificial Intelligence Program Receives 2026 NDACTE Innovative Program Award

Submitted

BISMARCK, N.D. – Bismarck State College (BSC) has been recognized by the North Dakota Association for Career and Technical Education (NDACTE) with its 2026 Innovative Program Award for BSC’s Associate of Applied Science (AAS) in Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning.

The award recognizes innovative career and technical education programs in North Dakota that are unique, novel and advance the image and impact of career and technical education. BSC’s Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning program is the first two-year applied artificial intelligence degree program in North Dakota and was developed to prepare students for a rapidly evolving workforce increasingly influenced by AI and machine learning technologies.

Designed around BSC’s stackable approach to education, the Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning AAS includes certificates in Foundations in Emerging Technologies, Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning Specialist, General Education and Cybersecurity. Students can earn credentials along the way as they progress toward the associate degree.

Graduates who want to continue their education can then apply their AAS toward BSC’s Bachelor of Applied Science in Intelligent Machine Learning, creating a pathway from certificates to an associate degree and ultimately a bachelor’s degree in the field.

As the use of artificial intelligence expands, the need for workers with AI and machine learning skills is expected to grow across industries. The BSC program prepares students for career opportunities in areas such as artificial intelligence, machine learning, data science and analysis, business intelligence and computer systems analysis.

The program’s reach extends beyond traditional college students. The Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning AAS has been accepted by the U.S. Naval Community College (USNCC) as an educational option for eligible military personnel. BSC also offers AI 100: Introduction to Artificial Intelligence as a dual credit course, giving high school students an opportunity to explore artificial intelligence and begin earning college credit in the field.



Submitted

Smile and Celebrate! - Bismarck State College academic leadership, faculty and program representatives accept the 2026 NDACTE Innovative Program Award during the NDACTE Awards Ceremony on Aug. 4 at the Bismarck Event Center.

Back row, from left: BSC Professor of Computer and Office Technologies Vickie Volk; BSC Dean of Current and Emerging Technologies Mari Volk; BSC Vice President for Academic Affairs Alicia Uhde
Front row, from left: BSC Professor Emeritus and architect of the Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning program Dr. Lynette Borjeson Painter; first graduate of the BSC Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning program Zachary Weinberger; BSC Associate Professor of Computers and Office Technology Amy Helgeson

BSC’s Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning program is also part of the National Applied Artificial Intelligence Consortium (NAAIC), which supports the development of applied AI education and provides training and resources for faculty.

NDACTE is committed to advancing education that prepares youth and adults for successful careers. The association represents career and technical education professionals throughout North Dakota, including educators, administrators, researchers, school counselors and career development professionals, and supports CTE through advocacy, public awareness, professional development, resources and leadership opportunities.

BSC academic leadership, faculty and staff accepted the Innovative Program Award during the NDACTE Awards Ceremony on Tuesday, Aug. 4, at the Bismarck Event Center. The ceremony, held in conjunction with the North Dakota Career and Technical Education Professional Development Conference,

recognizes outstanding CTE educators and programs from across the state. The BSC program will now advance to be recognized at the Association for Career and Technical Education Region V Conference in April 2027, in Colorado Springs, Colo.

Pleased to Meet You

Natalie Lawrence & Benjamin Wolff
Reporters

Caiden Aanderud

Staff Employee: Works at the Power Bean in the ATC

Q: Where are you from?

A: Beulah, North Dakota

Q: What are you doing at BSC?

A: I just work here, I actually do online through Valley City.

Q: What are your future plans?

A: I want to work in Human Resources.

Q: What is your drink order at the Power Bean?

A: Peach Red Bull with strawberry and vanilla with no cream.

Q: What is your favorite part about working?

A: I really like my coworkers and the flexible hours for my busy schedule.



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FALL 2026

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Editorial

OUR VOICE

Can a College Degree Stop the Revolving Door of Prison?



Zach Schmidkunz
Reporter

The United States has more people in prison than any other country in the world. In fact, while the U.S. has roughly only 4-5% of the world’s population, it has more than 20% of the world’s incarcerated population. According to the Vera Institute of Justice, 95% of those people will one day return home to local communities. However, the sad fact is nearly two thirds of those people will end up back behind bars within three years. Yes, the good old “land of the free, and home of the brave” is successfully running a multi-billion-dollar revolving door of failure.

For decades, the judicial system, as part of sentencing, has mandated that offenders take treatment classes while serving their sentences, such as anger management and drug and alcohol treatment. The hope is that this will prevent men and women from returning to their old lives and back to prison. It is not going very well.

But what if there has been an alternative in existence for years that has real success rates? Earning an education, more specifically a post-secondary education.

According to a Federal Bureau of Prisons study, the more education earned while incarcerated, the less likely an individual is to be re-arrested or sent back to prison. Residents who achieve a high school diploma or GED have less than a 54.6% recidivism rate, whereas 13.7% of prisoners who obtain an associate’s degree reoffend, and only 5.6% of prisoners with a bachelor’s degree reoffend. The recidivism rate for prisoners who earn a master’s degree is a jaw-dropping 0%. These percentages

reflect a substantial decline of recidivism rates that were more than 60%.

The North Dakota Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation is attempting to drop their numbers by offering residents the opportunity to participate in the Prison Education Program. While residents housed at the North Dakota State Penitentiary, Missouri River Correctional Center, and the Heart River Correctional Center are partnered with Bismarck State College, residents at the James River Correctional Center take classes through Valley City State University.

“The overall goal is to get people to earn their associate’s degree, with the intention of expanding degree options,” said Michelle Pfaff, NDDOCR superintendent of correctional education. “A college credential improves employability. When people can support themselves in a living wage job, they are far less likely to reoffend. We have a workforce shortage in North Dakota right now. This helps to prepare motivated job-ready graduates. For every dollar invested in prison education, taxpayers save four to five dollars due to reduced incarceration costs.”

Classes are taken in both online-only and hybrid formats, with some professors coming to the facility to teach certain classes. There are currently 44 students enrolled in the program statewide.

If upwards of 95% of incarcerated people are returning home to local communities, shouldn’t the prisons want to create the best neighbors possible? Which sounds like a better option: the person who spent years behind bars focused on nothing other than being angry at the world that they’re in prison, or the person who spent their time completing higher levels of education and becoming the best version of themselves as possible?

The right choice seems pretty straight forward.

As former Chief Justice Warren E. Burger once said, “to put a man behind walls to protect society and then not try to change him is to win a battle and lose a war.”

our lifespans and maintain our youth, we might find true happiness.

But there is a dark side to immortality. Consider James Islington’s Licanius Trilogy, a story filled with gripping dialogues between immortals weighed down by their protracted lifespans. Imagine the anguish of living an eternity with multiple lifetimes worth of regrets, pains, and losses. But the thirst for immortality has been with man since the very beginning. The Book of Genesis tells of the very first sin our race committed: disobedience in an attempt to become like God. What is it that makes immortality so terrifying yet heart-achingly appealing?

The key comes in the distinguishment between permanence and immortality. The idea of permanence could be defined as something lasting indefinitely without change. On the other hand, immortality merely extends one’s lifetime indefinitely. It might shelter someone from the negative effects of aging, but it actually provides the immortal with vastly more time to change than a mortal would have. The immortal’s own fallen nature is a constant companion

Letter from the Editor



Liberty Friez
Editor

Call Me a Hooker

In the multiple attempts of writing this letter, I think I have finally settled on what I want to talk about. Crocheting.

About a year and a half ago, I took up crocheting. Which I have been told is a “grandma hobby.” I started with a dishcloth. Dishcloths are supposed to be square. I knew this, but mine ended as a triangle. I got better however and now I can make a square. Yay!

I have realized that when I start a hobby, as I seem to do every other week, I tend to try it, make a little project, and then decide I am an expert. This was no different. After finishing my triangular dishcloth and a four month hiatus from the craft, I found a granny square, sunflower blanket pattern and thought “I can do that.” Could I? I bet you are just shaking with anticipation. And the answer is: well kind of. After making about fifty granny

squares, I realized that I had been doing the rounds incorrectly. But they did look like sunflowers and I was pleased. I had proved I could do something beside a triangle. I abandoned the project and set to other things. I kept crocheting and it is the main way I spend my freetime. I now get made fun of ruthlessly by my less granny-like friends.

Currently, I am working on a crochet quilt and I gave myself until Christmas to finish it. I have one square done with 15 left. I am also working on a mesh and hexagon sweater, setting a completion date for October. I am dead set on completing these. And I will be showing my progress in every letter. It keeps me accountable and hey, this is my letter now, and while I am allowed to write, I might as well enjoy it.

If anyone is looking for a hobby, I highly recommend crocheting. Is it relaxing? Yes. Well, not when you skip a stitch and have to frog it. Or when you are learning how to do a magic ring. Or when your yarn decides to barf. Is it inexpensive? Yes. Unless you see that Michaels has a bunch of yarn on clearance and you break your no buy rule. But it is satisfying and fun and incredibly versatile. Want to make a minecraft cup cozy, a cowboy dinosaur, or a nice beanie. Crocheting can do all that. It may make you cry, but it will build character. I couldn’t have sat through all three seasons of “The Summer I Turned Pretty” without it.

Small Favors



Liberty Friez
Editor

“Small Favors,” by Erin A. Craig, is a book I have put off reading for a while. I saw it in Barnes and Nobles a few years back and immediately cast it aside. I thought it was a romance novel judging by the cover. I know what they say, “Don’t judge a book by its cover.” As a reader, I absolutely judge a book by its cover. You can base a lot off the style on the contents of the cover, and frankly this one gave “smut.” I was interested in the story however, and yes, it is a romance, but it is also a dark, Folkloric western.

“Small Favors” follows 18 year old Ellerie Downing, who lives in Amity Falls, a secluded small town surrounded by a forest. The forest is dark, mysterious, and full of creatures. The lore is that there are gory, massive, magical animals that live in the woods that are out to get the townsfolk, but they haven’t been seen in decades, leaving

everyone to think it’s a myth. That is until a supply run consisting of men from the town goes missing and are discovered dead in the forest. As time goes on, the towns turn on each other because of the increased supernatural activities. Ellerie has to navigate the town, the changing forest, her family, and the apiary.

I thought the premise was intriguing. When something bad happens in the town, it is preceded after a deal or a favor is made. The creatures take these are actual deals made unbeknownst to the people “making” them. Say something simple like, “I would do anything for a piece of chocolate.” to a friend can get someone in trouble. The creatures will lead someone to do literally anything for a piece of chocolate. Theft- okay. Fire- sure. Murder- why not?

I had some grips with the story. I felt like the characters were purposely obtuse to drive the plot. Ellerie had some moments herself where I felt she was being dragged by the plot rather than carrying it herself. But overall, she was a decent main character.

I do think the author nailed the atmosphere and suspense. It has a haunting, magical feel that became more pronounced as the book went on. The madness of the town was palpable by the end.

If you enjoy folklore this would be a great novel. 7/10.

Pemanence



Isaiah Johnson
MystiCast Executive Producer

Recently, the word permanence is one you might say has found permanence in my mind. I’ve been dedicating significant thought to the incredible reality that some things truly last forever. Humans from the dawn of time have been fascinated with thoughts of eternity. Countless books have been written and movies have been made dealing with themes of immortality. Just this morning, I read about Calypso’s tantalizing offer of eternal youth and vigor to Odysseus in “The Odyssey,” a tale penned thousands of years ago. Our hearts cry out for eternity while our bodies age and begin to waste away. If only we could extend

Rambling
Raconteur

corrupted without the saving grace of God. Those of us who do not know Jesus Christ who died to save His people from the wrath of God cannot escape immortality. The fate of the immortal in the previous paragraph becomes the fate of those who reject the Savior: eternal torment apart from the smile of God. But those who turn from sin and put full trust in the Redeemer find the only true rock of permanence to ever exist: the God of the Bible. He is unchanging in glory, the perfection of all virtues from eternity past to eternity future. And it is He alone who can satisfy our desire to live forever in a perfect world. ✍️ filled with His glorious permanence. ✍️

Staff Bios

Meet the Mystician Staff!

Liberty Friez
Editor



Liberty Friez is an Elementary Education student. She grew up across the river in Mandan, ND. She graduated from BSC in 2025 with her Associates in Science and is staying at the college to finish her bachelors in Elementary Education. Once finished with school, she hopes to be a 3rd-5th grade teacher. She loves to read, crochet, and play piano. Her favorite coffee is the Snickerdoodle from the Power Bean on campus.

Mygel Porter
Social Media Manager



Mygel Porter is an Integrated Marketing Communication student. He grew up in Connecticut and moved to Mandan 6 years ago. He graduated from BSC in 2026 with his Associates in Mass Communication. Once he’s done with school he hopes to run some organization or businesses social media page. He loves to play pickleball, workout at the gym, and watch movies. His favorite movie being “Runt” featuring Cameron Boyce.

Kerstin Hilzendeger
Layout Editor



Kerstin Hilzendeger was born and raised in Bismarck, North Dakota. She graduated from BSC in May of 2026 with an Associates in Applied Science for Graphic Design and Communication. She is planning to stay at BSC to pursue a Bachelors degree for University Studies focusing on Business Administration and English/Communication. She is a graphic designer for The Mystician and also runs a freelance graphic design business with Kayla Hilzendeger called 2K Designs. Her favorite activities include crocheting, reading, and baking.

Isaiah Johnson
MystiCast Executive Producer



Isaiah Johnson is a Sports and Digital Broadcasting student at Bismarck State College. At BSC, he has broadcasted athletics, written for the paper, and managed the student video productions. He is actively pursuing sports broadcasting, continuing as the voice of the Mystics after broadcasting Bismark Larks baseball. In his free time, he loves reading, singing, dancing, playing sports, playing board games, fellowshiping with the flock, and talking about his favorite stories.

Kayla Hilzendeger
Graphic/Web Designer



Kayla Hilzendeger is a graduate of the Graphic Design and Communications program at Bismarck State College and plans to continue at BSC to receive a Bachelor’s degree in University Studies. Currently she is working as a supervisor and barista at a local coffee shop and is on the newspaper staff at BSC as a photographer and illustrator. She also runs a freelance graphic design business with Kerstin Hilzendeger called 2K Designs. Some of her hobbies include crocheting, reading, and photographing nature.

Clayton Sicble-Fox
Photography



Clayton Sicble-Fox was born in Bismarck North Dakota and is also an enrolled member of the Mandan Hidatsa Arikara Tribe. He is now a sophomore at Bismarck State College where he studies Mass Communication. In his free time he enjoys playing games, drawing, going on runs, and watching movies or shows. Clayton also runs a free lance photography business and goes by ClaysCaptures. If you need to reach him the best way to get in contact is messaging him through Facebook or Instagram @clayscaptures.

Jaxon Miller is an Integrated Marketing and Communications student. In 2026 he graduated with an Associates in Mass Communications and is continuing his education for the next 2-3 years. He is also the production manager for The Myx and has his own show, The Record Vault. Growing up in Jamestown, ND, he didn’t have a lot to do. He spent a lot of time becoming engrossed in music of varying genres and decades. Once finished with school, he hopes to find a career with music. In his free time, he loves to listen to music, collect vinyl records, go to concerts, watch movies, and admittedly scrolls a lot of reels.

Natalie Lawrence
Reporter



Benjamin Wolff is a senior at Bismarck State College studying Mass Communication. He is from the small town of New Salem and has written as chief editor for his high school newspaper called the Hoofprint. After BSC he plans to test out new fields to apply his degree including but not limited to: HR, education, and news outlets. Benjamin has many hobbies that he fills his spare time with including musical theatre, choir, painting, and eating. He loves his mom more than anything and takes any out of pocket opportunity to thank her for passing down her awesome talents to him so he can follow in her footsteps in his career.

Elena Sanchez
Reporter



Pete’s main goal in life is to out-weird the naysayers. Just imagine the scene of Starlord entering a room, but instead it gives whiplash as metal, k-pop, Broadway, and rap fight for the now playing award. But Pete also stole the jukebox with a bit of help from Tom and Doc Brown’s Delorean. It’s about time to really tell you readers about Pete. He is unapologetically strange with a longing for new adventures. Pete is rumored to get lost in space and it shows. He looks to the sky as if it holds more secrets than stars. 3 out of 5 stars. Would try again but with a different order.

Zach Schmidkunz
Reporter



Jaxon Miller
The MYX Production Manager



Natalie Lawrence is a sophomore Mass Communication student at Bismarck State College. She grew up in the small town of Timber Lake, SD and has previously written for The Mystician and her local newspaper. Once finished with school she hopes to get a job in public relations or social media marketing. Fall is her favorite season and her favorite drink are Bubblr’s. A few of her hobbies are reading, going on walks, and watching movies.

Benjamin Wolff
Reporter



Elena Sanchez is one of the Mystician’s reporters and journalists. She has been going to BSC since 2024 and has fallen in love with this school. She is aiming for an Associates in Mass Communications and considering pursuing a bachelor’s program. Elena has been a part of the Mystician team for a year. She aims to bring important subjects to light for students to be engaged in as well as to keep the community informed.

Pete DeMille
Reporter

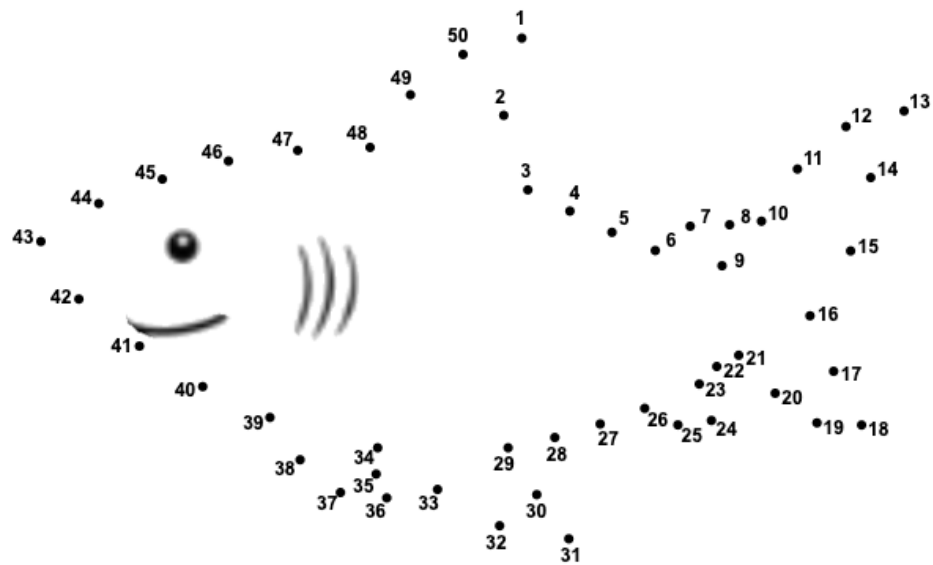


Zach Schmidkunz is currently a student enrolled in North Dakota’s Prison Education Program and has been incarcerated for 23 years. During his time inside, he was the co-creator and co-hosted the Chainz 2 Changed podcast that is recorded at the North Dakota State Penitentiary. Because his release date is nearing, he is now housed at the Missouri River Correctional Center in Bismarck and is currently in the process of starting a new podcast focused solely on reentry.

PUZZLE PAGE

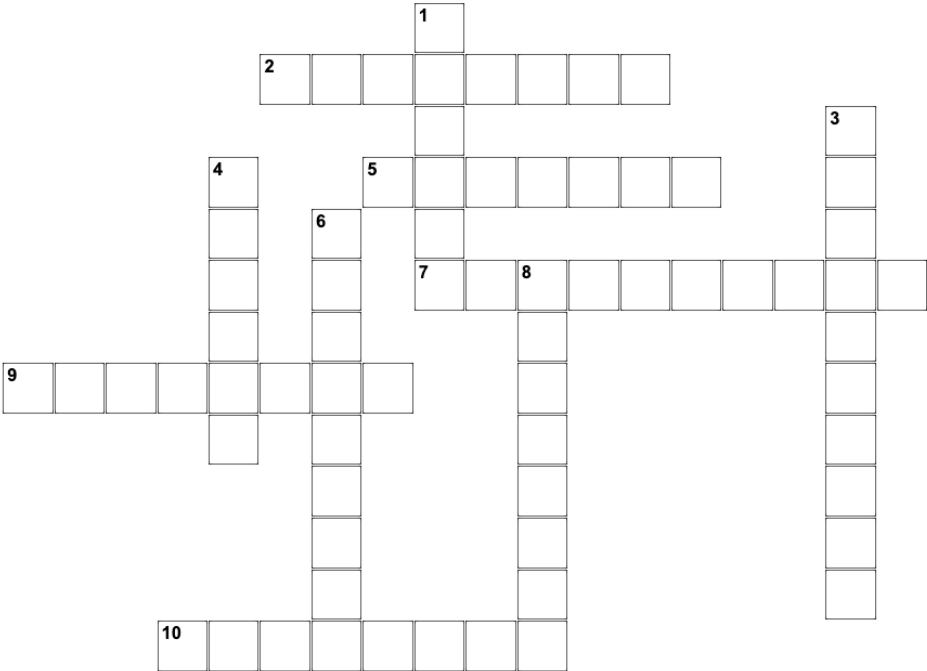
DOT-TO-DOT

Connect the dots to complete the picture!



CROSSWORD

Back to School!



Across

Down

2. A bound collection of blank pages used for taking notes and organizing thoughts.
5. A person who is highly educated or has a deep knowlegde in a particular field
7. A room equipped for scientific experiments and practical work in education.
9. A division of the academic year, typically lasting around six months.
10. Assignments given by teachers to be completed outside of class hours.
1. A common tool used for writing or drawing, often made of wood and graphite.
3. The set of courses and content offered by an educational institution.
4. A break period during the day for students to relax and socialize.
6. A schedule that outlines class times and subjects for students.
8. A bag carried on the back, designed to hold books and school supplies.

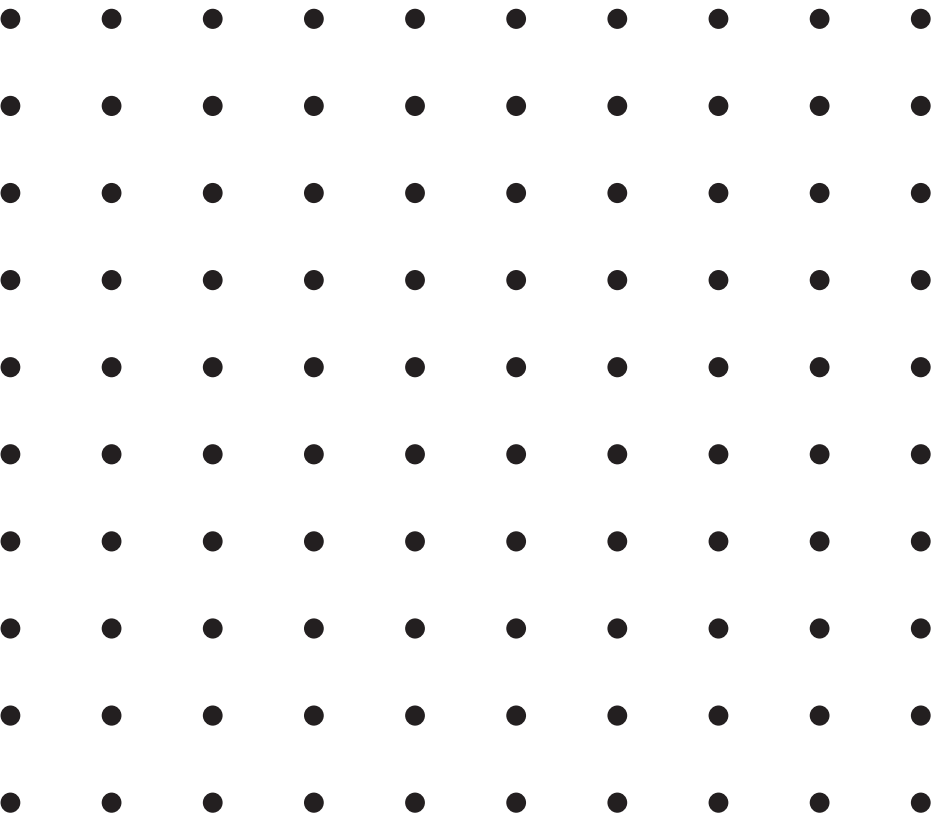
REBUS PUZZLES

Each of the boxes below represents a phrase. The only rule is that there are no rules so think outside of the box, and don't forget to have fun!



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.



SAY CHEESE!



Natalie Lawrence | Reporter
Students Make Friendship Bracelets in Student Union! - Val Martinez Jimenez and Jack Kozusko

Find the answers to these puzzles and more on our website!



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BSC ATHLETICS

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Mystics Fall to Lancers in Volleyball Home Opener

Isaiah Johnson
MystiCast Executive Producer

In front of a crowd of 1,020 fans, opposite hitter Reese Duchscherer elevated on a set from Aubrey Flynn and powered the volleyball through two defenders to secure a 25-23 set one victory. The crowd erupted, and the Mystics varsity team won their first ever set in the new Bavendick Center. However, Bismarck State College’s strong home crowd, promotional rally towels, and first set win, wasn’t enough, as the Mount Marty Lancers stormed back, winning the next three sets by a combined 17 points.

The Lancers rode strong defense and aggressive inside offense to spoil the Mystics’ first match in the new athletic center. The sets went 25-23, 17-25, 19-25, and 22-25.

Transfers Ashlee Stanger and Aislyn Hogan impressed in their first action at



Clayton Sicble- Fox | Photographer

Jordyn Rood - Jordyn Rood spikes the ball and gets the kill in the first set against Mount Marty in the Bavendick Arena



Clayton Sicble- Fox | Photographer

Aisleys Hogan - Aisleys Hogan early in the first set passes the ball, in the hopes that her teammates will capitalize against Mount Mary.

home. Stanger, an outside hitter coming over from Southern Idaho, picked up a game high 15 kills while hitting .281. Hogan, a setter from Indiana University East, continued to shine with 35 assists and five kills. Key returner Reese Duchscherer added 12 kills and 10 digs, and middle blocker Summer Thomas picked up five kills and four blocks.

On the other side, Mount Marty’s Caitlin Guenther was too much for Bismarck, putting up 12 kills on .231 hitting with two blocks. Jaya Wachholtz and Adi Indahl totalled 22 kills in the match, and freshman Maycee Williams had a brilliant day, with five service aces and 21 digs.

The Mystics (2-3) continue their second season in the Frontier Conference on the road for the next two weeks before returning home to face number six Providence on Sept. 18 for Light up the Bav Night.



#2 Brooklyn Sand - DS/L



#15 Aislyn Hogan - S



#8 Reese Duchscherer - OH



#15 Aislyn Hogan - S
#17 Ashlee Stanger - OH



All Photos by Clayton Sicble- Fox

Mystics Take Part in the Next Great Expedition



Submitted | larksbaseball.com

Pitching - River Walters on the mound.

Pete DeMille
Reporter

Larks finished season 10 on Aug. 8, the Next Great Expedition. Three student athletes from Bismarck State College held temporary contracts to play Northwoods League Baseball. The league gives opportunity to college players during summer months and mimics a professional schedule.

The Larks finished 34-35 over the season. 59,339 fans attended home games at Bismarck Municipal Ballpark. Of the wins recorded, six were walk-offs. Even multiple games played in triple digits did not stop fans coming to support the team. Players sweated while hiding in the dugouts, and some were good enough to cool off with a victory dump. BSC players were among the roster for a few games a piece. Bryson Mohs played two games, River Walters played two games, and Omar Reynoso played three with a Larks jersey.

At the May 30 game, catcher Bryson Mohs was a relief position player against the St. Cloud Rox for one inning. On May 27, Mohs played a full game facing

the Mankato MoonDogs. On the season, he put out seven batters and assisted with another. Mohs did not get on base during his short stay with the Larks.

Mohs shared his insight of playing against the Mankato MoonDogs for the Larks.

“Getting to play against the talent that they had on the Moondog’s and getting to play with very talented players on the Larks was an awesome experience,” Mohs said. “It will be an experience I hold on to and strive to get to the level every day.”

On Aug. 3, River Walters was the starting pitcher playing against the Minot Hot Tots and Aug. 8 at the Wilmar Stingers. The seven innings pitched allowed six hits and five runs. Both games were victories for Bismarck and Walters.

Walters expressed his favorite memory of the Larks season.

“Watching my teammate Jpro throw two shut out innings in the last game of the season,” Walters said.

Omar Reynoso was another late sea-



Submitted | larksbaseball.com
River Walters



Submitted | larksbaseball.com
Bryson Mohs



Submitted | larksbaseball.com
Omar Reynoso



Submitted | larksbaseball.com

In the Game - Bryson Mohs warming up after a pitching change.

son addition to the Larks pitching crew from Santa Maria, California.

“My favorite memory on the Larks was getting to meet everyone from different states,” Reynoso said.

Reynoso assisted in the last two wins in Wilmar, Minnesota. Only playing a total of five innings, Reynoso kept opponents to four hits with none converting to runs. He also has a winning record as the three games he was the relief pitcher were all victories. Besides the wins at the Stingers, Reynoso took over during

the Aug. 3 Hot Tots game.

“The competition was way better,” Reynoso said, referring to his previous baseball experience with the Santa Clara Indians. “I thought the Larks crowd was pretty cool ... being there felt like a big family.”

This past summer of baseball kept some Mystics in Bismarck briefly to play with the Larks, but BSC is ready to see them in green bringing home victories this season which began Sept. 5.

Women’s Volleyball

Date	Opponent	W/L	BSC	OP
8/21	Hakell (Kan.)	W	3	0
8/21	Dordt (Iowa)	L	0	3
8/22	Clarke (Iowa)	L	0	3
8/22	Briar Cliff (Iowa)	L	2	3
8/29	Mount Marty (SD)	L	1	3
9/2	Dickinson State (ND)	L	1	3

Arts & Entertainment

Theatre Releases Upcoming

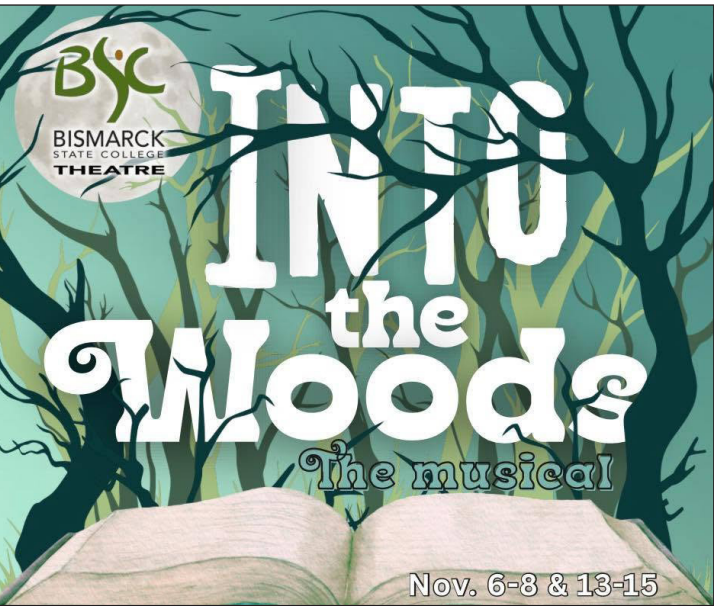
Season Productions

Benjamin Wolff
Reporter

Bismarck State College Theatre announced their 2026-2027 season. This year’s productions are some of the most well-known, contemporary pieces presented at BSC. Each show promises to deliver extraordinary storytelling through music, dancing, and acting derived from the heart of each student.

In the fall, a timeless story intertwining favorite beloved fairytale characters, Stephen Sondheim’s “Into the Woods” is coming to campus. Featured characters include: Cinderella, Rapunzel, Snow White, Little Red Riding Hood, and more. This show dives into each character’s mind and brings to life the desires they have and the struggles they face when trying to achieve them alone.

“Far more than a fairy tale, ‘Into the Woods’ is a timeless story about what it means to be human. It reminds us



that courage is often found in uncertainty, that hope can shine even in life’s darkest moments, that our choices ripple through the lives of others, and that no one is alone,” Daniel Walstad, director of “Into the Woods, said. “It is a celebration of resilience, compassion, responsibility, humor, family, friendship, forgiveness, sacrifice, and the extraordinary strength we discover when we face life’s challenges together.”

“Into the Woods” will be presented on Nov. 6-8 and Nov. 13-15, 2026 at the BSC Advanced Technology Center Live Event Venue

To bring the season to a beautiful ending, Disney Pixar’s “Finding Nemo: The Musical” will be presented in March. This production brings wholesome, unusual artistic choice that will leave a pleasant taste on the audience’s tongues. Creating an underwater scene, this show promises visual effects, whimsical staging, and lighting that will bring amazement to all who watch it. The fan favorite fish come together to present themes of courage, family, and friendship that will make waves on audience members of all ages.

“Finding Nemo: The Musical” will be presented on March 12-14 and March 19-21, 2027 at the BSC ATC.

Though some

strive to be as iconic as fairytale characters, it is important that people do not act like Dory and forget their tickets. Tickets can be purchased at the box office located in the entrance of the ATC, or order them on the BSC Theatre page. Happy swimming!



What’s New at the Library

Kelsey Riggs
Reference & Instructional Librarian

I love the beginning of the new school year. Students are back on campus saving us from the sometimes too-quiet summer silence. Faculty and staff adding fun activities and discussing new ways to engage their students. Let’s not even start on the rabbit holes we all go down when learning something new.

We have worked hard over the summer to revamp the library by adding new things to the collection and making sure we are fully supporting everyone on campus with our materials. If there are some titles, topics, or formats missing that you believe we should have, contact Marlene Anderson (marlene.anderson@bismarck-state.edu) or fill out the New Material Suggestion form in BSC Library- Student, a non-term course in Blackboard that is more of an information site than a true class.

Another major update this year is the library catalog. The search functions and results from the new format are much easier to filter, decipher, and see. You can access your library account in several different ways and request materials much more easily. I highly recommend playing in the

catalog yourself or stopping by the library to have library staff show you the ropes. We are excited about the new look and accessibility features and hope you enjoy them too.

If you stop by in the evenings or on the weekends, you may notice there is a new face at the library desk who looks a little like Santa Claus. His name is James Schadler and, by his own admission, has leaned into the comparison he’s had all his life. James was born and raised in Bismarck and even went to BSC in 1981- although it was called Bismarck Junior College then. He is a retired US Navy Frogman (EOD) and professional jack-of-all-trades who has worked on everything from rough carpentry to nuclear weapons. He always has a good story. As the BSC Library’s new Evening & Weekend Supervisor, he is there for you if you need help troubleshooting your computer and doing research. Stop by, say ‘Hi’, and ask him questions. He loves learning something new as much as he likes teaching it.

There are so many new things to take in and explore this year. We hope you enjoy it all! Our next major library event, Banned Books Week, is October 4th – 10th, so keep an eye out for event announcements and updates. See you all soon!

Bismarck State College CONTENT CREATORS SUMMIT



Join Us at the
Advanced Technology Center!

Friday, Oct. 9
9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

BSC BISMARCK | North Dakota's
STATE COLLEGE Polytechnic Institution



FMI bismarckstate.edu

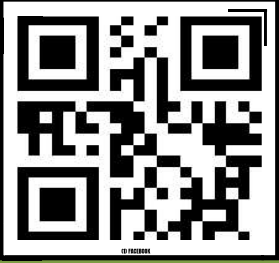
One Free Concert Admission



200 W Main
(the Antique Mall building)
Bismarck, ND 58503

(701) 426-7348
Tuesday-Saturday 12 - 6 pm
Instagram: rhythm.records.nd

September 2026

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
SCAN HERE  SCAN ME TO OPT INTO TEXT MESSAGES FOR ACTIVITIES		1 Meet Your Title IX Team Where: Virtual Meeting	2 Building a Balanced Life & Wellness Wheel When: 11 am - 1 pm Where: Student Union Cultural Exchange Club When: 11 am - 1 pm Where: Student Union	3	4	5
6 Homecoming Nomination Ends Where: Online	7 BSC Closed: Labor Day	8 Stay Afloat When: 11 am - 1 pm Where: Student Union Military 101 When: 11 am - 1 pm Where: Student Union	9 Walk for Down Syndrome Table When: 11 am - 1 pm Where: Student Union	10	11 Men and Women’s Cross Country Where: University of Mary	12
13 Out of the Darkness Walk When: 12 pm Where: North Dakota State Capital Grounds	14 Play with Clay When: 11 am - 1 pm Where: Student Union Cannabis Reality Check When: 11 am - 1 pm Where: Student Union Bowling Night When: 7 pm Where: Midway Lanes SGA Freshman Elections	15 Job Fair When: 11 am - 1 pm Where: Student Union SGA Freshman Elections	16 Community Resource Fair When: 11 am - 1 pm Where: Student Union	17 Welcome Fair When: 11 am - 2 pm & 4-6 pm Where: Student Union	18 Volleyball When: 6 pm Where: Bavendick 	19 Volleyball When: 2 pm Where: Bavendick 
20 Suit Up When: 2 - 5 pm Where: JCPenny’s	21 Homecoming Voting Begins Where: Online Homecoming Shirts When: 11 am - 1 pm Where: Student Union Smore Badges When: 11 am - 1 pm Where: Student Union Patio Laser Tag When: 7 - 9 pm Where: Lidstrom Yard	22 Blood Drive Battle When: 10:30 am - 4 pm Where: ATC 306 Parking Lot Celebration When: 3 - 6 pm Where: Student Union Parking Lot	23 DIY Canvas Painting When: 11 am - 1 pm Where: Student Union BEEP Bingo When: 7 - 9 pm Where: Student Union Challey When: 5:30 - 7 pm Where: ATC Live Event Center	24 Prevention Team When: 11 - 1 pm Where: Student Union Panel Disccussion: Pathway to Succes When: 3:00 - 6:00 pm Where: ATC Live Event Center	25 The Great Game GPS Scavenger Hunt Tailgating and Homecoming Court When: 4:00 - 6:00 pm JV Volleyball When: 4 pm Where: Bavendick Volleyball When: 6 pm Where: Bavendick	26 Harry Potter 5K When: 10 am Where: North Dakota State Capital Grounds JV Volleyball When: 12 pm Where: Bavendick Volleyball When: 2 pm Where: Bavendick
27	28	29 Know the Code Trivia When: 11:30 am - 1 pm Where: Marketplace Grand Theatre Tickets	30			