

CAMPUS NEWS

College  Paper

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Writing is not dead yet!

In this digital age, it may seem like the art of reading and writing is doomed, but really, it's enhanced. Prof. Jessica Yood explains.

Read more on pages 6-7 – and other great stuff within!



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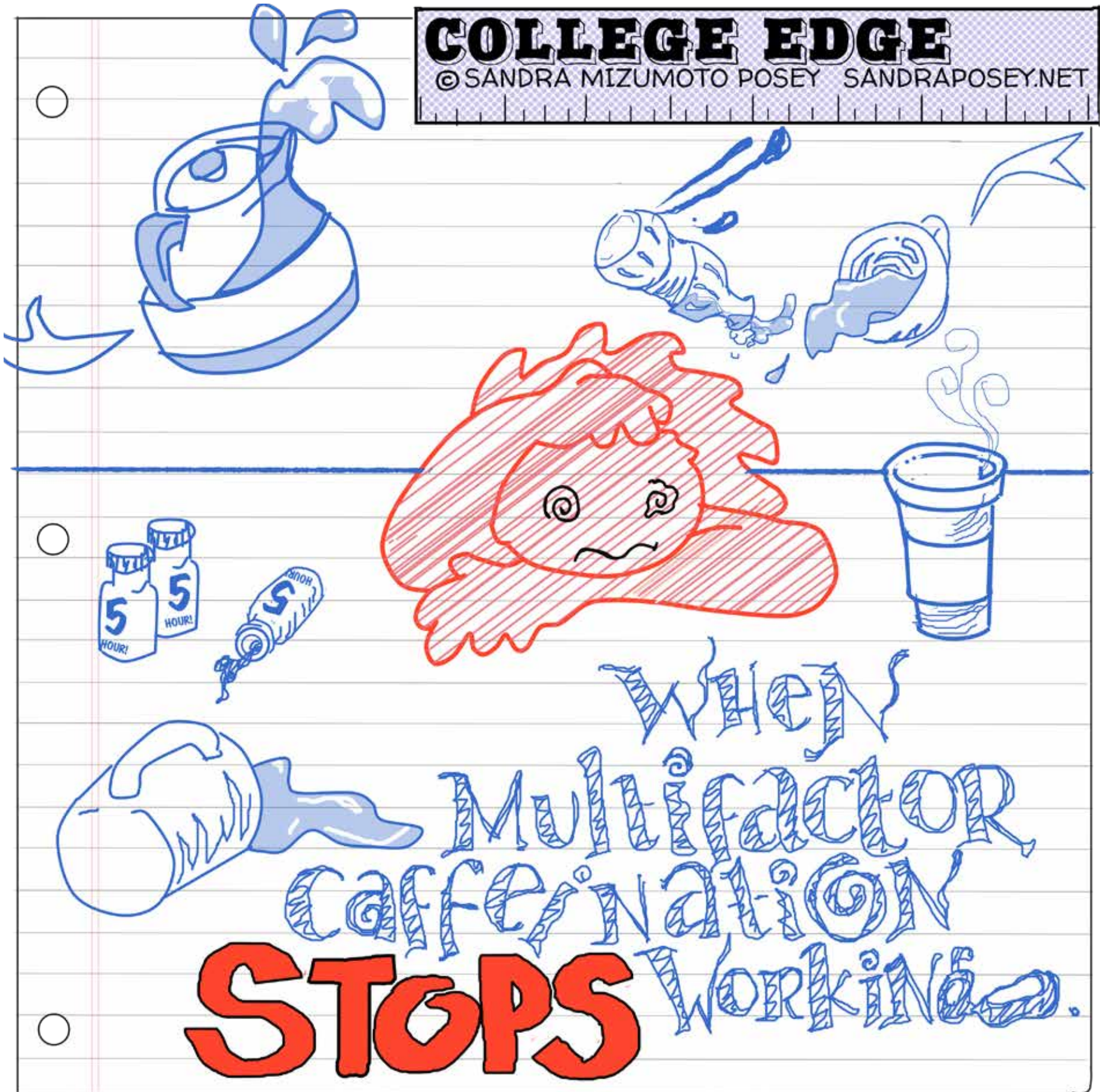


**22 NCAA DII MEN'S
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A podcast about newspapers

Ever wonder how this newspaper is made, and all of the journalistic decisions that come with managing a newspaper? Then listen to publisher Darren Johnson's Weekly Newspaper Podcast.

You can find it on your favorite podcast app or go to WeeklyNewspaperPodcast.com.

You can also sign up for his daily Substack newsletter at journalandpress.com.

Johnson mixes talk about the business of small-town newspapers with national journalism trends, often using his hometown The Journal & Press as an example, as well as his independent college paper, Campus News.

Johnson is also a Visiting Professor of Multimedia Journalism at Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts.



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What I learned from my students and Instagram: Write more, worry less

Jessica Yood

Special to Campus News

This is the season for New Year's resolutions. Mine was to be more online. In November I opened my first Instagram account. Already I have nine followers.

Nine is not a lot, that much I know. I also know that many believe that at this point, I might as well stay away. We keep learning more about social media's detrimental effects on our mental and civic health. But I broke my abstinence in 2024 when a slew of reports declared that books are dead and social media killed them.

I am a college professor, a teacher of literature and writing, and an author of a new book. So these headlines felt personal. Does being on social media mean the end of reading? I had to investigate.

"Students Don't Read Anymore" announced an October New York Times piece documenting a decline in reading, especially among young people. More bad news followed. Scientists champion the cognitive and cultural benefits of reading but studies show, as a November Atlantic article puts it, even "elite college students" won't do it.

Experts say the pandemic and a teach-to-the-test school culture also contributed to a disinterest in long-form texts. But digital devices do the greatest damage. Reading doesn't reward like social media does. It "can't compete," say the professors cited in that Atlantic article. Books promise delayed but sustained satisfaction while apps offer immediate but superficial gratification.

I think this is only half true. In my (albeit short) time on Instagram I did get derailed from to-do lists and, at times, from reading. Yet I also got diligent. Last month I started a strict writing practice. I used to wait for the right moment and mood to write. Now I post every day. Social media broke the habit, cultivated from 25 years in academia, of overthinking. Perfectionism led to procrastinating. Social media propelled productivity.



I find it liberating that my words and readers come more easily. It turns out my students want to feel free too. Since 2020, I've been surveying CUNY undergraduates. Many fear reading and most have no plans to major in English. Yet a majority want to write.

They are not alone. Demand for writing classes is up at Lehman College, the public, Hispanic- and minority-serving institution where I work, and also at Stanford and Yale. American undergraduates describe a desire to write better Instagram posts. They also want to compose poetry, finish their novel, and become smart journalists and culture critics.

Social media may have instigated a reading crisis. It also may have also inspired a writing renaissance.

Perhaps I'm overly optimistic. You might point to ChatGPT as evidence that writing will soon be like reading: another casualty of our digital age. You might also note that anyone who wants to write well should read

the greats first.

There is some truth to these arguments. But such warnings often feel like threats. Students don't want to succumb to doomsday scenarios. They're trying to craft their way into existence, even as robots seek to do it for them. And maybe it's time we all challenge the adage that reading must happen before writing, that creativity comes only with cultivation.

I've tried to take up this challenge in my composition classes. In the first weeks of semester, we read nothing but write a lot. We do so with paper and pen and on computers, three hours during class, two hours for homework. Students write about themselves and what they find out about each other from interviewing classmates, administrators, and teachers. They keep notes, reflect, and describe, in any form and all genres, so that readers get an impression of their experience of the world.

In under a month's time we've accumulat-

Please read more on the next page

(cont.)

ed around 140 pages. That's about a book. I put this together into one document and students get to work reading it. They ask the same questions about their writing as we'd ask about a published work: What does this text say, do, and seek to be? Does its length and language enable it to do and be those things? When are we curious, entertained, bored, bothered, begging for more?

Writers are surprised, delighted, and sometimes disappointed by readers' answers. Like all authors, students must face their limitations. Maybe their syntax needs work or they require more background knowledge in a topic. But once writers feel what it is to be heard, felt, seen, and known, they want more of that. They want their ambition and ability to scale. And that's when we bring in the books.

The following month, we turn writing goals into reading assignments. First, I research books that connect to student goals and needs. For a class of 25, I find 10 works of fiction and nonfiction and group students according to interests. Last spring, for example, Jamie and Kenneth were creating scripts for video games. I assigned them the

2022 bestseller about gamers, *Tomorrow, Tomorrow, and Tomorrow* and Aristotle's *Poetics*, a study in the high stakes of human play. Groups then spend two class periods online, finding out what readers say about how these books influenced them as writers. This fall, Ashley, a transfer student studying business and fashion, wanted to blog about TV period pieces, and how they complicate race and gender identity. She found out that writer and producer Shonda Rhimes of *Bridgerton* fame is a Jane Austen fan. We added *Persuasion* and Edward Said's *Orientalism* to Ashley's list.

Over the next eight weeks students read two books independently and two as a whole class. Each month students post about their books, returning to those questions about craft, and answering anew their thoughts on character, creativity, context. In other words, they become readers.

Four books finished over one term will not reverse a national trend. But we can't undo a crisis simply by reading about it. Worrying our way out of problems won't



Jessica Yood

solve them, either. Instead, as my students and social media have taught me, we must write our way to a better new year, a better new era.

Jessica Yood is Associate Professor of English at Lehman College and the CUNY Graduate Center. Her book about higher education and the humanities, "The Composition Commons: Writing a New Idea of the University," was published in April 2024.

Bronx workforce center ribbon cutting

State University of New York Chancellor John B. King Jr. in December celebrated the ribbon cutting of the Bronx Educational Opportunity Center's (EOC) new facility, located at 2467 Jerome Avenue in the Bronx. The EOC had been housed in its previous location on Bathgate Avenue for the past 34 years of its 39-year existence.

"The Bronx EOC has built a legacy of service through their academic and workforce development programs, which support economic advancement, and that work will only be enhanced by this cutting-edge facility," said SUNY Chancellor King. "EOCs are a cornerstone of SUNY's commitment to foster upward mobility for communities and populations that have historically been excluded from such crucial opportunities. Thanks to the support of our champions in state and local government, and our partners at Bronx

Community College, the Bronx EOC is now better positioned to add a new chapter to its proud history of advancing equity for individuals and families."

Chancellor King was joined at the Bronx EOC by SUNY Board Trustee Marcos A. Crespo, who said, "As a Bronx resident, I am profoundly proud to join SUNY leaders, elected officials, and community members at the ribbon cutting for the new Bronx EOC facility. We are confident this facility will broaden opportunities for New Yorkers in search of economic and career mobility, and we're excited to continue working with EOCs across our state as they reach new heights."

Through more than 35 years of affiliation with CUNY Bronx Community College, the Bronx EOC has served as an adult learning education center, with academic programs leading to GED attainment, access to higher

education, and innovative workforce training that provides a path to gainful employment. In the 2023-24 program year, the center enrolled 580 educationally and economically disadvantaged students. This resulted in over 230 certificates and licenses earned, as well as more than 50 confirmed job placements.

Tamara Frazier, Deputy Chief Operating Officer and Executive Director of SUNY's Black Leadership Institute added, "For nearly four decades the Bronx EOC has been a pillar in uplifting members of the community as they look to achieve their professional and personal endeavors. I am confident that the new EOC facility will only extend the work of this already impactful network. As we open these new doors, we are thankful for the work and dedication of the Bronx EOC team, and the financial commitment and support from our Governor, the legislature, and local com-

Closing the books on 2024

Sarah Murphy

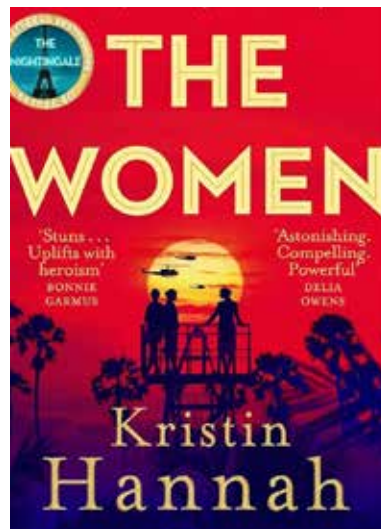
Special to Journal & Press

Here it is, readers, the list of most circulated library titles of the year that was in the library I direct in Greenwich, NY. Are they the best of the year? Not for me to say! But they were the most popular, if we gauge popularity by the number of times an item leaves the library and goes home with one of you. And that is precisely how we gauge popularity on this annual list. This time, we'll take a look at the top five adult fiction titles, the top four nonfiction picks, and the top three DVDs.

Fiction

I'll start with fiction, which happens to be my personal favorite category. My own preferences are totally irrelevant, however, as I've not read a single book on the list that follows. Am I totally out of touch? Or were these just in circulation so much that I never even had a shot at them? I'll save my own top five for another column, but without further ado, here are the most circulated fiction books of the year:

1. "The Women" by Kristin Hannah. No surprise here, this title had a request queue in the hundreds across the SALS system, and our two copies were almost always checked out. Fans of 20th-century history and of Hannah's previous novels found her latest to be riveting and humane. The New York Times says, "Kristin Hannah takes up the Vietnam epic and re-centers the story on the experience of women." "The Women" was released in



February, so the request queue has finally calmed, and readers can pick it up today to join in the conversation.

2. "Missing Persons" by James Patterson and Adam Hamdy. This is the newest installment in Patterson's "Private" series, and came out in January, and as with most Patterson titles, no matter who he's teamed up with, if we stock it, people will read it.

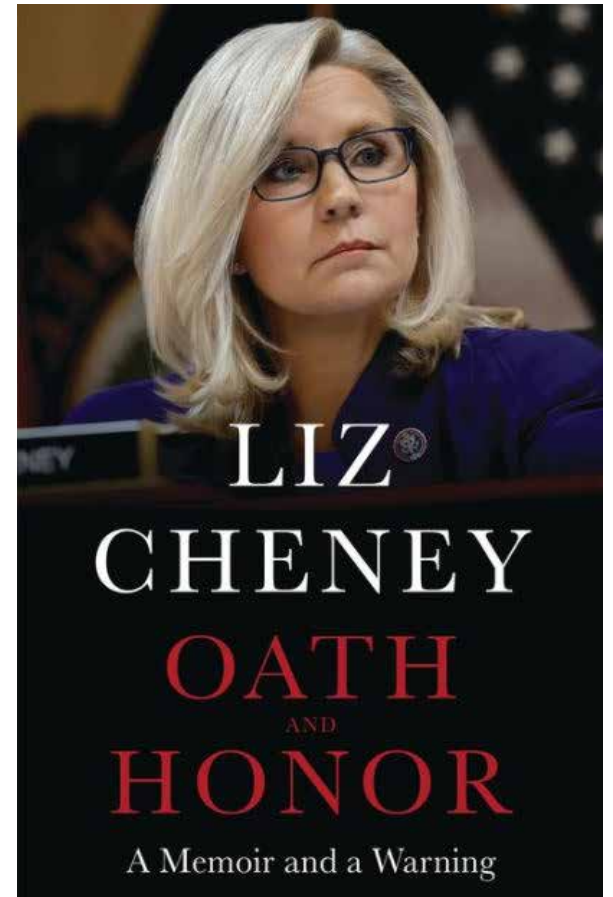
3. Tied for third, another surefire hit from popular author C.J. Box, "Three-Inch Teeth" and one of the many titles that made a splash this year from relative newcomer Frieda McFadden, "The Inmate." McFadden began self publishing in 2013, but it was her 2022 thriller, "The Housemaid" that seemed to catapult her into what felt, to this librarian, like overnight success. She published four books in 2024 alone, with at least two scheduled for 2025. Who even is this lady? Great question, because Frieda McFadden is a pen name; she's also a practicing physician and in the interest of patient/doctor privacy, doesn't really want you to know much about her. She does have an author photo that's widely available online, but she appears to be wearing a wig. Not, like a super obvious wig, but if I had to put money on it, I'd say it's definitely a wig.

4. In addition to "The Inmate," two other McFadden books made our top five this year. I'm not one for resolutions, but I'm making one right now: I will read a Frieda McFadden book in 2025. McFadden fans out there: come and tell me which one is the best. Is it "Never Lie," which tied for 4th on this list with Ariel Lawhorn's historical mystery, "The Frozen River"?

5. Or is it "The Teacher" vying for that fifth spot with dependable bestseller Harlan Coben and his latest, "Think Twice"?

Nonfiction

I've got to say, this year's nonfiction list is a lot weirder, less expected, than the fiction. It's tougher to truly analyze popularity because these titles circulate far less than fic-



tion overall, and each loan is likely to take considerably longer (it's not often you hear somebody exclaim, "I burned through the new Meacham in one night!"), meaning that a nonfiction book that circulates eight times in a 12-month period has spent no more than a quarter of its shelf life...on a shelf. So while our fiction could really be any library's list, reflecting what's popular in mass culture, our nonfiction list is maybe a little more random, reflecting what was either requested, or available, on display, and of interest to our browsers at any given time. And, something I love about nonfiction: title + subtitle + author pretty much tells you what you need to know about each book.

1. Coming in at number one this year is Liz Cheney's "Oath and Honor: a memoir and a Warning." Well, you can't say you weren't warned.

Please read more on the next page

(cont.)

2. We take a sharp turn (and so does the author, who was heretofore mostly known for military history and speculative historical fiction) with number two. It's "My Beloved Monster: Masha, the half-wild rescue cat who rescued me" by Caleb Carr.

3. Readers pushed three titles into a tie for number three, and I've got to say, these make you sound pretty darn thoughtful, Greenwich: "The Deerfield Massacre: a surprise attack, a forced march, and the fight for survival in early America" by James L. Swanson, "The Lede: dispatches from a life in the press" by Calvin Trillin, and "In My Time of Dying: how I came face to face with the idea of an afterlife" by Sebastian Junger.

4. The four-spot sees a record (this has to be a record, right?) seventeen titles tied. A seventeen-way tie?! Seventeen titles that reflect the varied tastes and interests of our neighbors! Here we go.

- "Barons: money, power, and the corruption of America's Food Industry" by Austin Frerick
- "After 1177 B.C.: the survival of civilizations" by Eric H. Cline
- "They Came for the Schools: one town's fight over race and identity, and the new war for America's classrooms" by Mike Hixenbaugh
- "The Way of the Hermit: my incredible 40 years living in the wilderness" by Ken Smith (Hermit of Treig)
- "Lovers in Auschwitz: a true story" by Karen Blankfeld
- "Among the Bros: under the influence and above the law in an American fraternity" by Max Marshall
- "The Black Woods: pursuing racial justice on the Adirondack frontier" by Amy Godine (who happened to visit our library last winter!)
- "When Being a Nurse Was Fun: tales from my life as a nurse" by Ann Watt

- "Where Rivers Part: a story of my mother's life" by Kao Kalia Yang
- "The Loves of Theodore Roosevelt: the women who created a president" by Edward F. O'Keefe
- "You Never Know: a memoir" by Tom Selleck
- "Shakespeare: the man who pays the rent" by Judi Dench
- "An Unfinished Love Story: a personal history of the 1960s" by Dorris Kearns Goodwin
- "Enough" by Cassidy Hutchinson
- "The Art Thief: a true story of love, crime, and a dangerous obsession" by Michael Finkel
- "Our Town: a play in three acts" by Thornton Wilder
- "Hillbilly Elegy: a memoir of a family and culture in crisis" by J.D. Vance

Videos

DVDs present another tricky category when it comes to assessing popularity. Fewer and fewer titles are being released in that format, and although we continue to add to our collection, we cannot possibly keep up with all of the content available on streaming services. But we have a steady cohort of patrons who continue to prefer their media in a physical format and free of charge, so while the new releases section might not be what it once was, these aren't departing the shelves any time soon.

1. Two films topped the circulation list for 2024, and in my opinion, both are excellent: director Greta Gerwig's monumental box office smash, "Barbie," starring heartthrobs Margot Robbie and Ryan Gosling; and Alexander Payne's sweet, sad Christmas film, "The Holdovers" featuring a cross-eyed Paul Giamatti. Both films deliver outstanding performances and perfectly detailed design and art direction. Which best fits your mood today, an endless pastel beachy wonderland or a snow-covered, corduroy-clad New England boarding school? Immerse yourself in these gorgeous, poignant films, and enjoy.



2. The first season of "1923: a Yellowstone origin story" sits alone atop the number two spot. As with all of the "Yellowstone" IP, this series is quite popular among fans of westerns and drama. Oh, and it features Helen Mirren and Harrison Ford, who honestly could give Robbie and Gosling a run for their Barbie/Ken money, am I right? Talk about dreamboats.

3. And at number three, Greenwich viewers picked the Oscar-winning "Oppenheimer," directed by Christopher Nolan and starring Cillian Murphy. Well, our patrons have shown which side of Barbenheimer we're on, but we made it close!

In reading over the above lists, I don't see a whole lot in terms of patterns or obvious tastes, which I think is pretty cool. Whether you see your preferences reflected above or not, we hope you'll find something you love in our stacks. When you do, ask at the circulation desk for a "Recommended" bookmark, and we'll display it. With enough hype, you just might push your favorites onto next year's list.

Sarah Murphy is Director of the Greenwich Free Library in Greenwich, NY.



Don't let Trump end congestion pricing

Evan Shieh

Special to Campus News

Donald Trump has promised to “terminate” New York City’s plan to impose a \$9 toll on drivers entering certain parts of Manhattan on his first day back in office. He isn’t the only critic of congestion pricing; the plan has catalyzed rallies in New Jersey and on Long Island and generated headlines across the country.

These criticisms are understandable. New York City’s congestion toll will impose a financial burden on those driving to the city. But the presence of so many automobiles has created tremendous costs beyond time lost in traffic.

Congestion pricing presents an opportunity to rebalance these societal costs and create spaces that prioritize people over cars. As such, it should be a policy goal for communities nationwide.

Let’s uncover the hidden costs of a car-centric culture. New Yorkers – a majority of whom do not own cars – collectively subsidize 3 million free parking spaces across the city. But those automobiles spend 95% of their lifetime parked, ironically making streets and traffic more congested while providing little benefit for most of the day.

Automobiles also consume valuable urban space. On average, American cities sacrifice a

staggering 22% of their land to accommodate parking, resulting in nearly seven parking spots for every car.

Then there are the environmental costs. A single car releases about 4.6 tons of climate-warming carbon dioxide annually. Asphalt-paved streets and impermeable parking lots also create stormwater runoff issues and make cities even hotter.

Shifting more of these societal costs to car owners would allow cities to invest more in parks, public transit systems, and other shared amenities that enhance quality of life for all residents.

Cities with congestion pricing policies are already reaping these benefits. Stockholm implemented congestion pricing in 2006, while Singapore has utilized it for nearly 50 years.

In Stockholm, traffic has plummeted, and transit has become more affordable and reliable. Even as the city’s population jumped 10% in the decade post-congestion pricing, its traffic declined 22%. Singapore’s transit system is among the world’s best, and it is one of the greenest and most livable cities worldwide.

Congestion pricing may sound novel, but many U.S. cities have taken steps to prioritize pedestrians before. In 2009, New York City leaders transformed highly congested areas -- including Times Square and Herald Square



–darren johnson photo

-- by reclaiming driving and parking lanes. These changes, along with investments in bus and bike-friendly infrastructure, helped create the pedestrian-friendly landmarks we know today.

How we choose to move around our cities impacts their evolution. Congestion pricing provides yet another critical opportunity to disrupt the status quo and spark new social norms.

New York City’s congestion toll may be an initial fiscal burden on those using cars to commute into the city. But the bias toward automobiles has exacted a far greater toll on the city’s residents for decades.

Evan Shieh is an architect, urbanist, researcher, and assistant professor of architecture at New York Institute of Technology.

Rockland small-business program to close

The New York Small Business Development Center (NYSBDC) announced the closing of the Rockland Small Business Development Center, effective 12/31/24. Plans are underway by the center and state staff to open a new center in the region soon after the New Year to ensure continued, consistent, and seamless support, according to a statement. Over the last 37 years, the Rockland Center has served over 21,000 small business clients and brought a financial impact of over \$800 million to the region. The college has served as a vital resource for entrepreneurs and business owners, helping to strengthen the regional economy through expert

advising and training programs.

“We are grateful to RCC for their partnership and dedication to the success of the Rockland SBDC,” said Sonya Smith, director. “We remain committed to ensuring small businesses in the region continue to receive the guidance and resources they need to thrive. Stay tuned for an exciting announcement very shortly on a new center that will be servicing the same region and clients. We hope this will give us the opportunity to expand coverage and program support for entrepreneurs and small businesses.”

The greatest city in the world turns 400

Eric Adams
Mayor of New York City
Special to Campus News

2025 marks a historic occasion — our city's 400th anniversary. It marks four centuries since the first European settlement of Manhattan in 1625, on land then known as Lenapehoking, the homeland of the Lenape people. The tiny Dutch colony began as New Amsterdam and then changed to New York when the English took control and expanded rapidly. A century ago, its boundaries increased beyond the island of Manhattan to encompass the Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens, and Staten Island.

To celebrate our city's 400th anniversary, we are proud to announce the launch of our "Founded By NYC" campaign, which focuses on commemorating and celebrating our city's 400th birthday and honoring the Indigenous communities that came long before. The cam-

paign highlights contributions from New York City that have shaped our nation and affirmed our country's place in the world.

Our website, FoundedByNYC.com, features events and activities that showcase our city's amazing 400-year history. You can also sign up for our newsletter, which will keep you up to date on events in the five boroughs and submit information about your own events that illustrate New York City's past so that we can showcase it on our calendar.

Even as we look forward and celebrate all our great city has to offer, our administration is deeply committed to acknowledging and engaging with our city's complex past. That is why we met with Chief Brad KillsCrow of

the Delaware Tribe of Indians at Gracie Mansion and have proclaimed November 20 as "Lenape Heritage Day." The Lenape people are the original inhabitants of this region, we acknowledge the pain they have experienced and the great contributions that have made — and continue to make — to our city.

Like the Lenape, our city's story has ultimately been one of perseverance and triumph. Together, the many nationalities, religions, and ethnicities that have been a hallmark of our city from its earliest years have worked to build a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts. For four centuries, New York City has been a beacon of hope for people from all over the world, a place of religious freedom and tolerance, a place to fulfill the American Dream; and our administration has been working hard to bring that dream a little closer for New Yorkers today.

We passed the historic "City of Yes for Housing Opportunity" plan that will help build a new generation of affordable housing; proposed the "Axe the Tax for the Working Class" to eliminate and cut city income taxes for some of our hardest-working New Yorkers; driven down crime all last year by seizing illegal guns, getting ghost cars and other illegal vehicles off our streets, and closing down unlicensed cannabis stores. We also created a record number of new jobs and small businesses, shattered affordable housing records, and produced a record amount of public space for pedestrians across the five boroughs. And, as we commemorate our 400th anniversary, we are preparing for the next 400 years — prioritizing climate resiliency by instituting citywide composting, creating new parks, planting trees, and completing the first section of the East Side Coastal Resiliency Project.

As mayor of the greatest city in the world, I am committed to fulfilling the great promise that is New York, and delivering for you. Every day. Everywhere.



Find more of Mayor Eric Adams' op-eds on ccnews.info.

'Our city's story has ultimately been one of perseverance.'

A green and white advertisement for regional editors. The top half has a green background with the text "REGIONAL EDITORS WANTED" in large white letters. To the right, it says "Flexible schedule!" and "Details on cccn.us". The bottom half has a white background with six logos for "CAMPUS NEWS" in different regions: New York City, Long Island / Queens, Hudson Valley, Upstate New York, New England, and New Jersey. Each logo includes a small graphic representing the region.

STAC revamps MPA program

St. Thomas Aquinas College is launching its newly redesigned Master of Public Administration (MPA) program, featuring specialized tracks in Nonprofit and Criminal Justice Leadership. This 36-credit program is designed for students seeking to develop the skills needed to lead, implement policy, solve problems, and improve efficiency in government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and public service institutions. It offers flexible in-person and online course options and is led by distinguished faculty who emphasize critical inquiry, hands-on learning, effective communication, and professional development.

“At St. Thomas Aquinas College, we empower our students to create meaningful change in their communities and beyond. The newly redesigned Master of Public Administration program exemplifies this mission by equipping students with the skills, knowledge, and real-world experience needed to lead with purpose in today’s nonprofit, criminal justice, and public service organizations,” said Ken Daly, President of St. Thomas Aquinas College. “This program, and all of our graduate and certificate programs, reflect our dedication to lifelong learning and our commitment to making graduate education accessible and affordable for students who aspire to serve and lead,” he added.

Students can complete an internship and a required capstone project, gaining invaluable experience in public administration, policy development, and grant application. The College has already partnered with the Center for Safety & Change, the County of Rockland, the United Way of Rockland County, and Catholic Charities Community Services of Rockland County to provide internship opportunities to MPA students.

MPA Program Director Jamin Sewell, J.D., Esq., brings over two decades of experience as an attorney, social justice advocate, and policy leader. His extensive background enhances the classroom experience,



and inspiring students to drive change within complex systems of governance. Sewell, and the team of experienced and passionate faculty who teach in the program, are committed to fostering practical, real-world skills to develop future leaders who can effectively advocate for justice and positive social impact.

Dr. Heath Bowen, Dean of the School of Arts & Social Sciences at St. Thomas Aquinas College, stated, “This MPA program is strategically designed to meet the evolving needs of public administration across various sectors. The prognosis for governmental and nonprofit job availability is promising, with several key factors contributing to ongoing demand, especially in the mid-Atlantic and northeast regions. Our graduates will have the knowledge and skills to address global and local challenges.”

The new MPA program is part of the College’s “ADVANCE: Graduate and Certificate Programs for Lifelong Learners” initiative, which provides a range of affordable educational paths to support lifelong learning. The College’s Education Partnership Program provides employees

of partner organizations, businesses, and groups with valuable opportunities to advance their skills and education through a 50% tuition discount on undergraduate and graduate programs.

As part of the new program rollout, students who apply to the MPA program by January 24, 2025, will be eligible for a \$10,000 financial award toward their degree. Through the admissions process, applicants will also be considered for scholarships, tuition discounts, and financial aid opportunities, demonstrating the College’s dedication to supporting students as they advance their education and prepare for impactful careers in nonprofit, criminal justice, and public service sectors. Priced at \$1,215 per credit, and with various options for aid, the MPA program is a valuable career investment.

Applications are now being accepted for the program. The next Quarter begins on February 28, 2025. Visit stac.edu/mpa to learn more and apply. Contact Dana Caponong, M.A., Assistant Director of Graduate Admissions at dcaponon@stac.edu or call 845-398-4220 with any questions.

Bard's Early College New York City program

Bard College has been awarded a \$500,644 grant from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation to develop accelerated, early college science instruction at its four Bard Early College public high schools in New York City. This grant enables Bard Early College to create the infrastructure for a more robust science program and deeper engagement with the sciences for Bard High School Early College (BHSEC) students and faculty across its Manhattan, Queens, Bronx, and Brooklyn campuses. With its first campus opened in Manhattan in 2001, BHSECs currently serve 1,600 New York City Public Schools students across four boroughs with plans to serve 2,200 students by 2028.

The Alfred P. Sloan Foundation grant

will provide funding for the design of a new laboratory, and, through it, the development of a new set of teaching plans and instructional resources for use at BHSECs across New York City.

The laboratory will feature new biotechnology equipment, which allows students to perform procedures and get hands-on experience with laboratory techniques as part of Bard's early college biology curriculum. Specific laboratory equipment supported by this grant will include PCR machines, gel electrophoresis apparatus, centrifuges, micropipettes, incubators, and spectrophotometers. Additionally, this new equipment will allow faculty to design and develop biotechnology-based elective courses and further enhance the early college curric-

ulum. With this enhanced science infrastructure, students will graduate from Bard's public early college high schools better prepared for ongoing engagement in the sciences in their future lives in academia, in the workforce, and as citizens.

"We seek to strengthen the Bard Early Colleges as an ecosystem for serious and sustained study in the sciences, particularly for underrepresented students. To that end, the overarching goal of this project is to develop robust and connected opportunities in the classroom, the lab, and the community," said Bard Early College Vice President and Dean Dumaine Williams.



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Transforming college spaces: The vision of interior designer Liz Toombs

In a world increasingly shaped by remote work and evolving academic priorities, college interior designer Liz Toombs is carving out a unique niche.

Toombs is proprietor of one of the country's niche design firms, PDR Interiors, focusing on college residential spaces, especially sororities and other aspects of Greek life. But she also has insights as to how any student can improve their personal living space.

As a part of a journalism class assignment recently led by instructor and Campus News publisher Darren Johnson, students asked Toombs about these topics via Zoom. The goal was to practice interviewing. The following quotes were gathered based upon the questions asked, and, as there is no lead writer, organized by AI:

"From a business process standpoint, we were positioned well," she reflects, highlighting how her firm seamlessly adapted to the challenges of the pandemic.

Toombs' design philosophy centers on creating spaces that reflect the identity and

lifestyle of their users. She places a strong emphasis on understanding her clients, stating, "We ask a lot of questions of the collegians and alumni about the space—what works, what doesn't, and how we can create something better for them." This commitment to tailored design has positioned her as a go-to professional for Greek life housing and beyond.

Designing for Academics and Versatility

Recently, Toombs has observed a shift in priorities among her clients. "We're getting a lot of requests for more study spaces," she notes. While social and recruitment-focused spaces were once the norm, academic support has become a driving force behind recent designs. "They want versatile spaces—places where they can study, collaborate, and thrive academically, which is ultimately why they're there."

Finding Her Niche

Toombs' journey into designing for college students was serendipitous. "I was Greek in college," she shares. "The times I had living in the chapter house were really fun and instrumental for me." Yet, it wasn't a planned career path. A chance connection with a fraternity in need of a new space led to her first Greek life project. "When you're a young business owner, you say yes to anything," she says. That first project opened the door to a new world, eventually leading to a robust network and a specialization in Greek life housing.

Toombs thrives on the opportunity to mentor students, particularly young women. "Supporting them at this juncture in their lives by creating spaces that work for them brings my career full circle," she says.



Liz Toombs

Navigating Budgets and Supply Challenges

Like many in her industry, Toombs has faced the dual challenge of shrinking budgets and rising costs. "I try to leave emotion out of it and focus on finding the best product for the client," she explains. Her approach involves prioritizing high-use items, such as sofas and chairs, while economizing on less critical elements like side tables or artwork.

The pandemic and subsequent supply chain disruptions have taught Toombs to

Please read more on the next page

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Campus News publisher Darren Johnson has turned his small-town newspaper into a daily Substack. He often writes about journalism issues. Get it as a free newsletter by going to JournalandPress.com and inputting your email address. No spam, we promise!

(cont.)

anticipate delays and adapt. “We’re focusing on domestic suppliers to avoid issues with ports and often find they’re more affordable, too,” she says.

Giving Back Through Scholarships

Toombs’ personal life has also influenced her professional mission. After losing her mother to kidney cancer in 2012, she founded The Mary Estes Memorial Scholarship program at alma mater University of Kentucky to support students who have lost loved ones to cancer. “We’ve helped seven students so far,” she shares. “Knowing that these funds help them stay on track with their education is incredibly rewarding.”

Staying in Tune with Student Needs

Toombs’ ability to connect with college students is rooted in her proactive approach. “Having a younger staff and bringing in interns helps us stay in tune with what our clients like,” she explains. She also relies on social media and direct feedback from students to understand their preferences. “It’s about asking the right questions and really listening.”

Design Tips for Dorm Life

For students looking to personalize their dorm rooms, Toombs offers practical advice. “Oversized wall hangings, lightweight tapestries, and strands of lights can make a dorm feel homey instead of institutional,” she suggests. Affordable finds on platforms like Amazon and Etsy also go a long way in transforming a space.

The Future of Interior Design in College Life

While sorority houses have long embraced professional interior design, Toombs has noticed a growing trend of parents hiring decorators for dorm rooms, particularly in the South. “It’s fascinating to watch,” she says, though she’s unsure if the trend will persist. Regardless, Toombs plans to maintain a balance between residential and Greek life projects, ensuring both creative fulfillment and business stability.

For Liz Toombs, designing for college students is more than just a career—it’s a passion that continues to evolve, one campus at a time.

Learn more about Toombs and her design firm at pdr-interiors.com.

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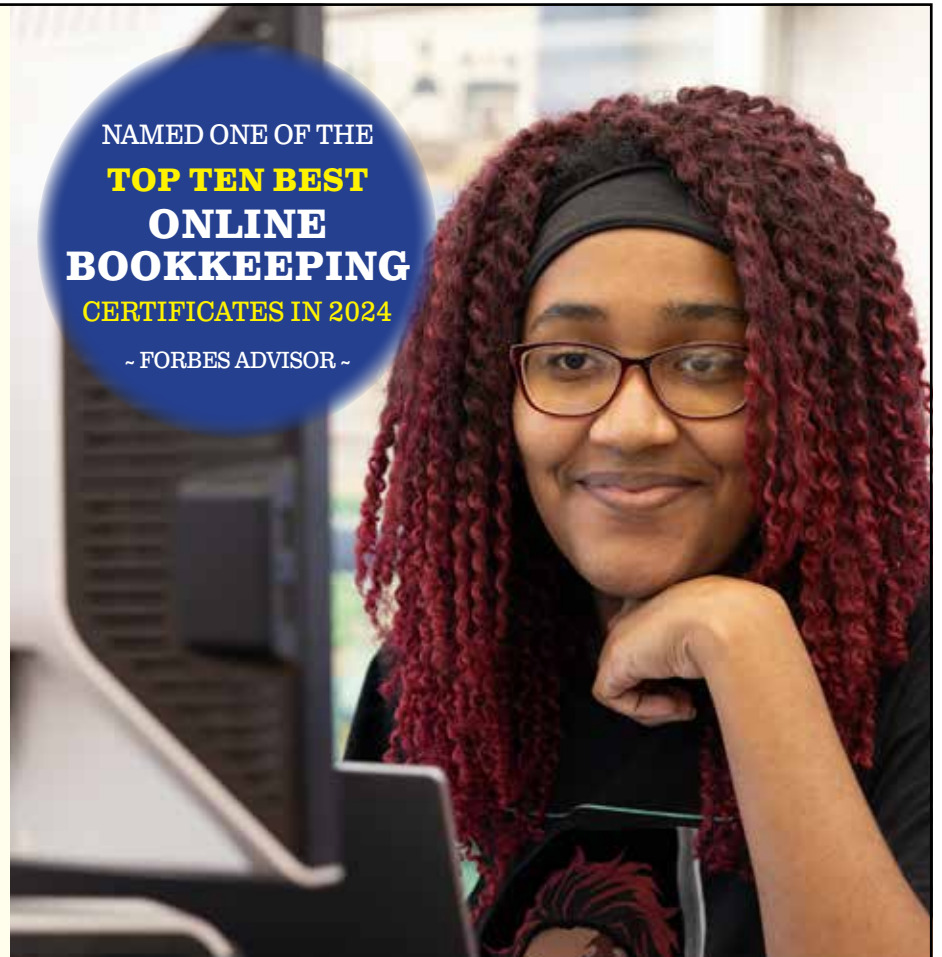
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Become a volunteer tax preparer

Department of Consumer and Worker Protection (DCWP) Commissioner Vilda Vera Mayuga recently encouraged all New Yorkers looking for opportunities to give back to their communities to become a volunteer tax preparer for NYC Free Tax Prep this coming tax season. Volunteers receive free, professional training and are certified by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to help eligible New Yorkers file their taxes for free and claim all the credits that they are entitled to. With just a few hours of service a week throughout the tax season at one of more than 150 NYC Free Tax Prep sites, volunteer tax preparers can help their neighbors claim tens of thousands of dollars in credits and keep their full refund. Volunteers can also serve as greeters or language interpreters at select sites.

“Few things are as rewarding as giving back to your community and knowing you’ve made a difference in someone’s life,” said DCWP Commissioner Vilda Vera Mayuga. “Training and certification are not only easy, but you will learn basic tax law and filing software and can help New Yorkers keep their full refund, which is often one of the largest checks they receive all year. If you have a few hours a week and want to make a difference in your community, I urge you to become a volunteer tax preparer. It’s a short-term commitment with long-term impact.”

“As a retiree, I was nervous about learn-

ing the tax material and going through the certification process, but the program coordinators were very supportive in helping me through the process,” said Nancy Kaplan, a volunteer tax preparer with Grow Brooklyn. “Once I was assigned a site, the staff were warm and friendly and knowledgeable, helping me with my questions and getting me up to speed. I found my first tax season to be very rewarding and I’m looking forward to volunteering again.”

The number of volunteer tax preparers decreased following the COVID-19 pandemic, impacting the number of returns that NYC Free Tax Prep can file. In Tax Season 2019, there were more than 900 volunteers across 178 sites around the city. In Tax Season 2024, there were only 300 volunteer tax preparers across 150 sites. Although the number of volunteer preparers has fallen, NYC Free Tax Prep still helped file more than 101,000 returns last tax season, saving New Yorkers more than \$134 million in filing fees.

New Yorkers who earned \$93,000 or less and file as a family, or those who earned \$65,000 or less and file as an individual or couple without dependents, are eligible to file for free using NYC Free Tax Prep this coming tax season. In addition to the training, the volunteer commitment is to volunteer a minimum of one 4–8-hour shift per week, over the course of the tax season, which runs January through April.



Volunteers are encouraged to learn about NYC Free Tax Prep volunteer opportunities now by signing up through our online volunteer registration form or attending an informational session, which are offered through January. Volunteers can also start reviewing the training materials by visiting the IRS Link & Learn site and New York Cares’ online information sessions and training opportunities. Visit nyc.gov/volunteertaxprep or contact 311 for more information or to sign up.

SUNY high-needs nursing grant announced

SUNY Chancellor John B. King Jr. and the Board of Trustees recently announced the impact of a \$3.7 million investment from its High Needs Nursing Fund, advancing simulation-based education in SUNY nursing programs. Over two consecutive years, the SUNY High Needs Nursing Fund has equipped SUNY campuses with the necessary tools, training, and resources to modernize and expand simulation experiences for students. This effort has allowed nursing programs to train more nurses, directly supporting Gov. Kathy Hochul’s goal of growing the state’s health care workforce by 20%.

In May, Hochul signed legislation permitting nursing students to complete up to one-third of their clinical training through high-

quality simulation experiences. Asked to consider how best to implement the new law, the SUNY Future of Health Care Workforce Task Force, a group convened to guide SUNY in addressing the critical health care workforce shortage, identified fully leveraging nursing simulation as one of its four priority areas for short-term action and investment. Every SUNY campus with a nursing program received funding to enhance simulation-based education. The \$3.7M supports more than 150 faculty and staff simulation trainings across 24 campuses, the acquisition of 53 new state-of-the-art simulation mannequins, and the purchase of essential simulation and medical equipment, including scenario kits, code response carts, and more.

Mullaney named new Rockland leader

Rockland Community College in December announced the selection of the College's ninth president, Dr. William P. Mullaney. At a special board meeting on December 2nd, the RCC Board of Trustees approved the appointment of Dr. Mullaney. He was then approved by the State University of New York, on December 17th. The date he will begin serving as President has yet to be determined.

"We are excited to welcome Dr. Mullaney to Rockland Community College as our ninth president. We are confident he will lead RCC toward an exciting and promising future. His impressive academic credentials, deep commitment to equity, understanding of the significance of community engagement, and his leadership experience align perfectly with our goals for the college. We look forward to seeing his vision come to life," said L'Tanya M. Watkins, Esq., Chair of the RCC Board of Trustees.

The announcement concludes a national search that launched this Fall with a Presidential Search Advisory Committee, and with the assistance of search firm Isaacson Miller. The final three candidates recently visited the RCC campus and met with the Board of Trustees, faculty, staff, and students.

"Rockland Community College is an excep-

tional institution, and I am deeply honored to serve as its ninth president. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the Board of Trustees for placing their trust in me to lead RCC into the future. I look forward to collaborating with the Board, faculty, staff, and community leaders to build on the college's proud legacy while ensuring that our students have the tools, opportunities, and support they need to succeed. Together, we will continue to advance RCC's mission of academic excellence, innovation, and service to our community," stated Dr. Mullaney.

Dr. William P. Mullaney became the seventh president of SUNY Corning Community College on July 1, 2019. Previously, as Vice President of Academic Affairs at Bergen Community College, he increased graduation rates by 7% over three years, launched the college's first early college program, and introduced new academic programs, including fashion design, paramedic science, and sports management. With roots as an English faculty member, Dr. Mullaney is deeply committed to student success, equity, and the role of community colleges in economic and social progress.

Under Dr. Mullaney's leadership, SUNY CCC adopted an equity-focused approach, implementing the college's first Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan and launching programs like the Education Opportunity

Program (EOP) and Corning Prison Education Program (CPEP). He also helped increase the African-American student population by 3% and co-developed the SUNY PRODiG+ Program to recruit and retain diverse faculty across the system.



By successfully executing a Strategic Enrollment Management Plan, SUNY CCC saw its first enrollment increase in over a decade (+2.3% in 2023-24), and its three-year graduation rate rose to 40%, the highest among SUNY community colleges. Dr. Mullaney also oversaw the development of new programs, including Mechatronics, Digital Design, Automotive Technology, Battery Technology, and multiple healthcare-related certificates, with Optical Technology and Surgical Technology set to launch in 2025.

Nationally, he represented community colleges at a White House roundtable in February 2024, where he advocated for their role in strengthening the U.S. workforce.

Still time to register at SUNY Ulster

SUNY Ulster's Enrollment & Success Center is gearing up for One Day, One Stop on Monday, January 13, and Wednesday, January 15 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on the Stone Ridge campus and on Thursday, January 23 from noon to 7 p.m. at the Kingston Center to ensure that all who want to start classes this spring can finalize the admissions process with the guidance of experienced staff. Classes begin Monday, January 27.

No matter where people are in the admissions process, SUNY Ulster staff is mobilizing to help you fill out admissions and FAFSA applications, take the entering assessment exam, and register for classes. For those planning to attend, if you have not submitted your official documents, please bring:

- Official high school transcript in its original sealed envelope,

- GED certificate or IHIP Letter of Substantial Equivalency

- Any official college transcripts in its original sealed envelope

Reservations for January 13, January 15, and January 23 are recommended, but not required. Walk-ins are welcome! There is one snow date on Friday, January 24 in Stone Ridge.

SUNY Ulster remains one of the smartest ways to gain a college degree, certificate, or microcredential. For those concerned about affordability, Foundation awards \$1 million in scholarships annually and many career certifications are grant-funded, covering all or most of the cost of attendance.

For more information, contact the Enrollment & Success Center at esc@sunyulster.edu or 845-687-5022.

My Top 10 recent interview watches

Adam Harrison Levy
Campus News

Dear Readers,

What follows is a list of ten interviews that make for eclectic viewing -- some humorous, some political, and some cultural. Browse at will and find one or two that might cut through long Christmas movies, loaded family conversations, or scrolling on TikTok or Instagram.

These are not the best interviews, or the most influential, but what I've been looking at recently, two of which were inspired by current movies about Maria Callas and Bob Dylan.

These interviews are, on the whole, historical – from the 50s, the 60s, 70s and 80s and just a few later. That is how the dice fell (perhaps a nostalgic turn of mind as we hurtle into an unknown future) but not planned.

You can scan the QR codes with your smartphone to view.

If you have any suggestions for interviews that made an impact on you, please send your suggestions to the editor at editor@journalandpress.com

Frost / Nixon, 1977



In this interview (this is an edited excerpt from the Nixon Library) Nixon comes as close as he could to admitting his culpability in the Watergate scandal. His careful choice of words seems quaint by today's barroom standards. Wait for the end when he uses the astonishing Shakespearean metaphor of the sword.

Brad Pitt/Zach Galifianakis Between Two Ferns, 2014



Brad Pitt probably knew that he would be skewered but you can tell a lot of this episode is spontaneous. This is the best use of chewing gum for laughs during any interview I've ever seen.

James Baldwin/Nikki Giovanni, Soul, 1978



For an in-depth and sophisticated conversation about race and identity, it doesn't get any better than this. Baldwin is astonishingly articulate and moving. The young poet Giovanni is admiring and a wonderful listener. It's beautifully filmed as well.

Andy Kaufman / David Letterman, 1980



This is one of the most uncomfortable talk show performances I've ever seen. Is Kaufman acting? Or is he genuinely down

on his luck and having a breakdown? He turns the normally upbeat television format on its head. The end of the interview, when



he panhandles in the audience, is both pathetic and hilarious.

Jack Nicholson answers a phone call from Anjelica Houston, 1982



Nicholson is so suave and so wicked when the phone rings in the middle of the inter-

Please read more on the next page

RIDE ALONG

(cont.)

view.

John Ford/Peter Bogdanovich, 1971



Even for those of you who don't know or care for John Ford's Westerns (Stagecoach, The Searchers, The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance) this interview is an example of an epic fail. Ford replies to Bogdanovich's questions with hilariously curt one-sentence replies.

Tom Cruise/Oprah Winfrey, Oprah Winfrey Show, 2005



Cruise is famously unhinged during this interview, he gets down on his knees in front of Winfrey and jumps up on the couch like an overexcited dog. He had recently fallen in love with Katie Holmes (or so they say, it looks to me like he's on some substance besides hormones).

Maria Callas/Edward R. Murrow, Person to Person, 1958



Murrow interviewed an impressive number of famous people in the late 1950s on his program Person to Person including Duke Ellington and Harry Truman but I went back to watch this interview with Maria Callas after seeing the recent film Maria starring Angelina Jolie. Murrow probes Callas for being "temperamental" but she doesn't fall for the bait and keeps up an elegant exterior. Her most memorable revelation is that she shops for clothes in Europe but prefers American undergarments.

Bob Dylan sketches his BBC interviewer while being interviewed, 1986



Brilliant! Dylan subverts the power dynamic of this interview by drawing the interviewer during the interview. The interviewer stumbles and fawns and can't get traction while Dylan subtly plays with him while giving absolutely nothing away. Another interview choice by the release of a new movie, A Complete Unknown.

Jeremy Paxman/Michael Howard, BBC Newsnight, 1997



Bob Dylan on the BBC

The politics of this interview are not essential to know, except that Michael Howard was starting a campaign to run for Prime Minister of England. What is essential is to witness how Paxman, at the end of the interview (wait for it!) nails Howard's evasions with a series of 12 repeated questions. No American politician could stomach such a grilling, and no current American journalist would have such polite but ruthless persistence. After this interview, Howard dropped out of the race.



Tom Cruise on 'Oprah'

Adam Harrison Levy is a freelance author and journalist (The Guardian, BBC). He teaches writing at the School of Visual Arts and offers workshops and private lessons in Salem, NY.



Selena Gomez responds to criticism

Jack Dunn

Variety
Special to Campus News

Selena Gomez has responded to Eugenio Derbez after he criticized her “Emilia Pérez” performance.

While appearing on the Spanish language entertainment podcast “Hablando de Cine”, the “Coda” star slammed Gomez’s use of Spanish in the film as “indefensible.” Gomez, who is not a native speaker, plays Jessi del Monte in Jacques Audiard’s musical crime drama about a drug lord who escapes his life of brutality to transition in secret with the help of a sentimental lawyer (Zoe Saldana).

“Selena is indefensible,” Derbez said of the performance. “I [watched ‘Emilia Pérez’] with people, and every time she had a scene, we looked at each other to say, ‘Wow, what is this?’”

“Hablando de Cine” host Gaby Meza echoed Derbez. Although she acknowledged Gomez as a “very talented actress,” she emphasized that “Spanish is not her main language, not her secondary or fifth,” which

severely dampens the “nuance” of her performance.

“I feel like she doesn’t know what she’s saying,” Menza said. “If she doesn’t know what she’s saying, she can’t give her acting any nuance.”

Derbez added that he did enjoy the film outside of Gomez’s role, crediting it as “an interesting experiment.” But he couldn’t help but wonder why the French director Audiard would take on a story rooted in a culture that is completely foreign to him.

“I liked the film, aside from the Selena [moments] that jump at you, because it has salvageable things,” said Derbez. “But I told myself, ‘How weird that the director doesn’t speak English or Spanish and the movie is in Spanish and English, and it takes place in Mexico and you don’t understand the culture.’ It’s like if I made a film in Russian without knowing the culture or speaking Russian and talk in French.”



Tribune Content Agency file photos on these pages

After the clip circulated on TikTok, Gomez commented on a post of Derbez’s criticisms.

“I understand where you are coming from. I’m sorry I did the best I could with the time I was given,” Gomez wrote. “Doesn’t take away from how much work and heart I put into this movie.”

Despite Derbez’s remarks, “Emilia Pérez” remains a front-runner for this year’s Academy Awards, vying for nominations for best picture, best director and best actress.

Billy Crystal reflects on Scorsese

Natt Minton

Variety
Special to Campus News

Billy Crystal is thinking back on his formative years in Martin Scorsese’s classroom.

“He was a graduate student at the time, just doing his first movie, called ‘Who’s That Knocking at My Door.’ And it was 1968, 1969, 1970,” Crystal remarked on the podcast.

Crystal went on to describe Scorsese’s looks: “[He] had a big beard and granny glasses and hair down to his shoulders. He looked like everybody. He’d stand behind you while you were editing your film and he would be very scary, because he would look

and he was so intense and he would speak very quickly -- even then -- he spoke quicker then because he was, you know, 50 years younger.”

Scorsese would reference Howard Hawks always using wide shots in his films as a response to what his students were shooting. But while decades have passed since Crystal first crossed paths with Scorsese, he says Scorsese still retains the same energy and spirit.

As a student in the 1960s, Crystal also learned during the counterculture movement as it took over.

“[The West Village] was wild,” Crystal added. “It was a terrible time for America,



but a great time at the same time. ‘Cause all of that adversity and all of the protesting against the Vietnam War. It brought us together ... What came out of it was a renaissance in music, in poetry, in art -- that we’re still feeling today.”

Gardner takes credit for Kelce launch

Matt Minton

Variety
Special to Campus News

Travis Kelce hosted “Saturday Night Live” in March 2023. Now, “SNL” cast member Heidi Gardner is giving the behind-the-scenes details on how she got him to host in the first place.

On an episode of the “Not Skinny But Not Fat” podcast, Gardner said that “the biggest swing I ever did in that department, and it did work, but it took a couple years, was Travis Kelce. I don’t want to take full credit from the show and the talent department, but I’m just, obviously a big Chiefs fan, and I had seen him do like other little acting gigs and appearances, and I was like, ‘He’s funny, he’s charming.’”

The two presented a category together at the 2023 ESPY Awards. After years of Gardner pushing for Kelce to host “SNL,” executive producer and creator Lorne Michaels gave in on one condition: Kelce had to win

the Super Bowl first.

“I was like, ‘That is so much pressure to ask.’ And then he won the Super Bowl,” Gardner recalled. In fact, Kelce was part of the winning Kansas City Chiefs teams in 2020, 2023 and 2024.

Gardner described how many of Kelce’s friends and family came to see the show. She didn’t think that the Kelces would have time to join Gardner for tailgating -- until she got a text.

Gardner recalls how she opened her phone “to a picture of Travis and Jason Kelce in my dressing room eating barbecue ... [Kelce is] the only host in ‘SNL’ history that’s ever tailgated before hosting the show.”

Many music fans have grown to associate Kelce with Taylor Swift, although they



Ego Nwodim, Heidi Gardner and Mikey Day speak during SAG-AFTRA Foundation Conversations presents “Saturday Night Live” at the SAG-AFTRA Foundation Robin Williams Center on December 16, 2024 in New York City.

started publicly dating six months after Kelce hosted “SNL.” Since his gig on “SNL,” Kelce starred in the FX show “Grotesquerie” and is set to appear in “Happy Gilmore 2,” releasing on Netflix in 2025.

Angelina Jolie shares ‘vulnerable’ role

Naman Ramachandran

Variety
Special to Campus News

In a revealing interview with BBC News, Angelina Jolie opened up about how filming her Maria Callas biopic led to unprecedented emotional vulnerability with her children on set, particularly sons Maddox, 23, and Pax, 21, who served as production assistants.

“They have seen me go through a lot of things, but they hadn’t experienced me expressing a lot of the pain that usually a parent hides from a child,” Jolie told BBC News about her sons witnessing her portrayal of the troubled opera legend. The typically private star added that the experience created “a new way” of being honest with her children about her feelings.

The Pablo Larraín-directed film “Maria” marks a significant return to leading roles for Jolie, with early buzz, including a Golden Globes acting nod, suggesting potential Oscar consideration. The project required seven months of intensive opera training for the actor, who admitted to being “quite shy about singing” prior to taking on the role.

“When the opera classes began, what it requires with your breathwork and your body and just the force of what you push through yourself, it’s just a very different physicality,” said Jolie, whose singing scenes blend her voice with original Callas recordings.

Director Larraín praised the professional contributions of both Maddox and Pax on set, with Jolie revealing that Pax recorded her early vocal training sessions. “It’s always good for your children to watch your

mum not do something easily, but swear and fight and fail and have to try again,” she reflected.

Written by “Peaky Blinders” creator Steven Knight, “Maria” focuses on Callas’s final years in 1970s Paris. It had its world premiere at Venice where it earned an eight-minute standing ovation. The film’s New York City premiere in September was attended by Maddox, Pax and their sister Zahara.



Don't stop with the 'golden at-bat' rule

Greg Schwem

*Tribune Content Agency
Special to Campus News*

I recently read, with a combination of amusement and horror, online chatter concerning the “golden at-bat” rule that is being tossed around major league baseball.

I would have dismissed it as a conspiracy theory, so ludicrous is the proposal, except Major League Baseball Commissioner Rob Manfred addressed the proposed rule. In short, the idea is that, once per game, each team gets the chance to send the batter of its choice to the plate, regardless of where that player is in the batting order.

Former Boston Red Sox and New York Yankees flamethrower Roger Clemens summed up the concept, and its potential hiccups, perfectly via his X account:

“Hypothetical.... You have bases loaded (with) no outs and (Los Angeles Dodgers superstar Shohei) Ohtani is up. You strike him out. Then they can just use this rule to let him stay up and I have to face him again?”

Manfred discussed the rule on a podcast shortly before the 2024 World Series, saying there had been a “little buzz” about it at an owner’s meeting. But, as speculation grew about when the idea might become part of the game itself, Manfred backtracked. Implementing the golden at-bat rule was, he told the YES Network, was “a very, very long road.”

Hey, tweaking the rules of a long-established institution seems to be commonplace these days. Just ask some politicians who want to do that with our nation’s Constitution. Sometimes it makes sense though. I was ecstatic when the pitch clock rule was created in 2023, ensuring night games didn’t stretch into “next morning” or “Midnight Madness!” games.

But this? It sounds like something dreamed up by prepubescent boys after sides had been chosen for a game on a lazy summer day. Growing up, I participated in many such games and they were nothing if not

creative. While we never experimented with a golden at-bat, here are a few of our rules Major League Baseball might want to consider:

1. The “invisible man” on base rule. Used when players had to return home for dinner and team rosters dwindled to four or less. The idea: If a player got a hit and successfully ran to first base, he didn’t have to stand on the bag. He could return home and reenter the hitting lineup. If the next player got a single, the “invisible man” on first moved to second.

This could be a great major league rule in inclement weather. Why should New York Yankee Aaron Judge stand on the bag in the pouring rain when his invisible self can do it while he remains warm and dry in the dug-out?

2. The “CAR!” rule. While most of my pick-up games were played on sandlots, occasionally we created a diamond out of a suburban street. Those games were often interrupted by a passing motorist who chose to drive right over the pitcher’s mound and second base. Realizing the driver held all the cards in this territory dispute, we could only yell, “CAR!” and step aside until the offending vehicle passed. Play resumed thereafter.

I’ve never seen a car on a major league baseball field unless it was part of a pre-game celebration. But why not allow players to eliminate overhead distractions by yelling, “Plane!,” “Comet!” or “Flock of birds!” Play wouldn’t resume until the skies were clear. True, this would negate any time saved by the pitch clock rule; but fly balls would be



less difficult to catch.

3. The “snack” rule. A huge part of my Little League experience. Win or lose, all players chowed down on post-game treats while their manager told them it’s just a game and they all tried their best, and asked if they had fun. If this rule reaches the majors, all teams would have to add team moms to their bulging payrolls, ensuring snacks were delivered on time and some were void of peanuts, just in case.

I would pay good money to hang around after the game just to see Shohei Ohtani take down a juice box.

Greg Schwem is a corporate stand-up comedian and author of two books: “Text Me If You’re Breathing: Observations, Frustrations and Life Lessons From a Low-Tech Dad” and the recently released “The Road To Success Goes Through the Salad Bar: A Pile of BS From a Corporate Comedian,” available at Amazon.com. Visit Greg on the web at www.gregschwem.com.



Traditional college is not always realistic

Dr. Daniel Goines
Special to Campus News

Student interest in school is declining. According to a Gallup survey, less than six in 10 middle and high-schoolers say they've learned something interesting at school in the last week.

The emphasis on college preparation may be partly to blame. Two-thirds of high-schoolers say they've heard a lot about college, but fewer than one in five say they've heard a lot about jobs that don't require a college degree.

That's problematic because only half of Gen Z students plan to go to college. Fewer than 40% of students aged 18-24 enroll.

There's no one roadmap for success after high school. Educators provide a disservice to students by implying that college bestows the only path toward financial independence and employment. An improved system would balance college preparation with career and technical education.

Consider the makeup of the American economy. There are 8 million construction workers in the United States, double the amount of teachers.

Construction workers generally don't require a bachelor's degree. However, our edu-

cation system almost exclusively steers students toward attending a four-year college.

It's important to note the role that family plays in career paths. For a student who takes care of younger siblings or grandparents and will eventually seek a job with flexible hours, a career in skilled trades may be the right fit.

The trades might also be a fit for a student who wants to stay in their rural hometown, where employment options that require a college degree are limited.

Such ambitions are just as valid as aspiring to attend an Ivy League school.

In addition to asking questions like, "What are you passionate about?" counselors can incorporate practical questions in their conversations, such as:

"Are you comfortable with taking out loans?"

"Do you have family responsibilities?"

"What jobs are available where you want to live?"

There are steps schools can take to meet the career readiness needs of all students, such as hiring counselors from diverse educational and economic backgrounds -- including those with connections to blue-collar occupations.

I've worked to advise college students, and I know that counselors are doing their best. Unfortunately, many high school counselors have larger workloads than they can accommodate.

The average school counselor is responsible for a staggering 385 students.

Nearly 20% of public high schools don't have a counselor at all.

To address this, administrators can set up a career advising program for teachers to participate in, just as teachers can earn extra pay by coaching a sports team or managing a student club.

This approach can reach students who may not make an appointment with a



counselor but feel comfortable discussing post-graduation plans with their favorite teacher or coach.

Even at the college level, many schools miss the mark on career readiness.

Universities will better prepare students if they emphasize how classroom learning can translate into real-world job opportunities.

For example, students at Northeastern University alternate between semesters of school and full-time work, gaining experience at everything from tech start-ups to nonprofits and marketing firms. Drexel University students can graduate with 1.5 years of full-time work experience based on their curriculum.

It's time for educators to encourage students to think more broadly about their futures, no matter what career path they pursue.

Daniel Goines, Ed.D, is a higher education specialist at KI, a global furniture manufacturer in Green Bay, Wis. He has two decades of experience in higher education administration and education leadership.

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Suffolk one of the best for veterans

Military Times, for the sixth consecutive year, has named Suffolk County Community College a Best for Vets college. The ranking is the largest and most comprehensive annual list recognizing the top colleges and universities for military service members and veterans. These rankings have become a vital tool for veterans seeking guidance on maximizing their educational benefits.

This year, an impressive 304 schools made the list, demonstrating their commitment to supporting the military community in their educational journeys. Suffolk County Community College is honored to be ranked 10th in New York and 14th in the Northeast among public colleges as a 2024 Best for Vets College.

“Suffolk County Community College is proud to be recognized as a ‘Best for Vets’

school for six consecutive years,” said Suffolk County Community College President Dr. Edward Bonahue. “Military-affiliated students need support to transition back into civilian life and into the learning environment. Suffolk County Community College honors their service by providing the needed tools for success.”

“The designation is a testament to Suffolk County Community College’s strong academic programs as well as the college’s collaborative efforts to provide exemplary service to military-connected students,” said Shannon O’Neill, Suffolk County Community College’s Director of Veterans Affairs.

Each year, Military Times surveys colleges and universities nationwide to evaluate their veteran-focused programs. These survey responses, along with public data sourced from

the Department of Education and Department of Veterans Affairs, undergo a rigorous analysis by the Military Times data team to produce a trusted, unbiased ranking.



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Advocates, allies

State University of New York Chancellor John B. King Jr. recently announced the inaugural fellows for the SUNY Accessibility Advocates and Allies Faculty Fellowship Program. A total of 11 fellows from across the SUNY System will work to expand digital accessibility and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) practices across their campuses, which is crucial for student success.

“There is a place at SUNY for every New Yorker, and we are committed to excellence and inclusivity across our 64 SUNY campuses,” said SUNY Chancellor King. “The work of our inaugural Accessibility Fellows is crucial to ensuring our faculty have the support to consistently adopt inclusive teaching practices to guarantee student success and upward mobility.”

The inaugural fellows of the SUNY Accessibility Advocates and Allies Faculty Fellowship Program are:

- Shannon Bessette, Jamestown Community College, Professor, Social Sciences
- Liz Bowen, Upstate Medical University, Assistant Professor, Bioethics and Humanities
- Kathy Doody, Buffalo State University, Professor, Exceptional Education
- Melissa Glenn, SUNY Broome Community College, Associate Professor, Biology
- Shelly Jones, SUNY Delhi, Professor, English
- Talia Lipton, Rockland Community College, Associate Professor, Communications Studies
- Gillian Paku, SUNY Geneseo, Associate Professor, English
- Carrie Rood, SUNY Cortland, Associate Professor, Foundations and Social Advocacy
- Casey Ryan, Hudson Valley Community College, Associate Professor, Business and Criminal Justice

- Jessica Sniatecki, SUNY Brockport, Associate Professor, Healthcare Studies
- Nicole Tschamper, Westchester Community College, Associate Professor, Art and Design

Students with disabilities self-identifying with their campus Disability Services or Accessibility Resources offices are increasing as a share of total enrollment, with over 10% of students enrolled across the SUNY System. This number does not capture the many students who do not self-identify with the student disability office, either because they do not know they are eligible or have chosen not to disclose due to a wide variety of reasons, including stigma. SUNY has invested \$10 million in annual recurring State funding to increase support to students with disabilities at all State-operated campuses.

The SUNY Accessibility Advocates and Allies Faculty Fellowship program is co-sponsored by the SUNY Office of Student Success in partnership with the Office of the Provost and supported by the Universal Design for Learning at SUNY project. This cohort of fellows will establish a community of faculty leaders and champions committed to promoting and growing accessibility practices in and out of the classroom on their campuses. During this program fellows will:

Explore models and strategies to build and expand a culture of access on their campuses;

Share their expertise and experience as they identify obstacles and work towards solutions to broaden adoption of accessibility practices;

Connect with other communities of practice and campus leaders with a shared vision, including but not limited to: Disability/



Accessibility Directors, EIT Accessibility Officers, Chief Diversity Officers, Chief Information Officers, Teaching Center Directors, Directors of Online Learning, SUNY Faculty Advisory Council on Teaching and Technology, Instructional Designers;

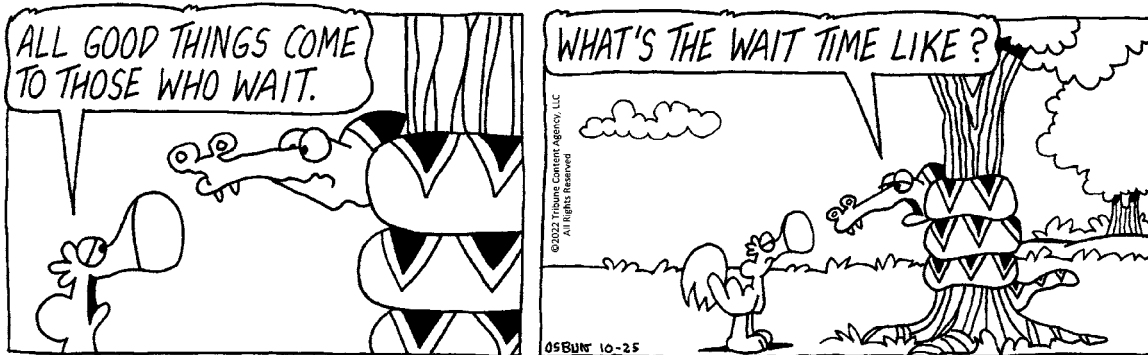
Grow as faculty leaders as they coordinate with campus leadership to design and execute a plan to engage their campus community in the work of access.

This program is facilitated by Professor Rebecca Mushtare, an experienced faculty member and Associate Dean from SUNY Oswego, who has successfully worked with her campus leadership to cultivate a culture of access on campus. The fellowship lasts a full calendar year, and each cohort will consist of 11 fellows. The fellowship is organized into three phases that are allotted four months each: discovery and analysis, design and development, and implementation and evaluation.

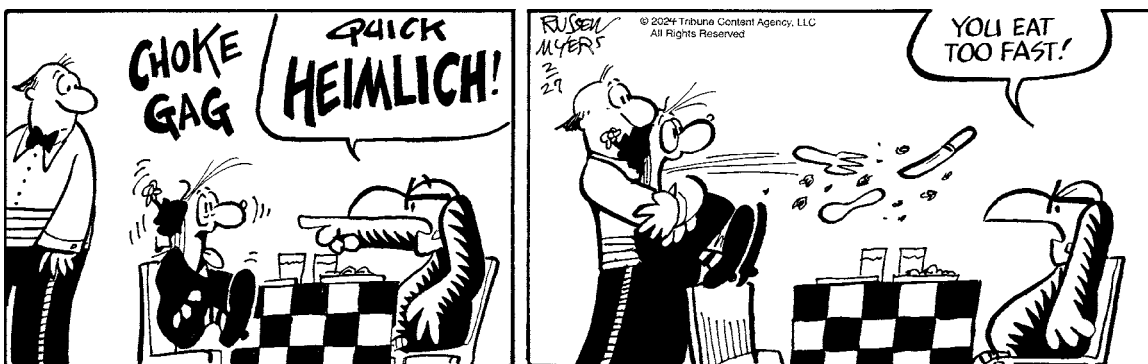
SUNY Oswego Professor and Associate Dean Rebecca Mushtare said, “I am honored to build upon the accessibility work at SUNY Oswego at the system level and look forward to collaborating with this knowledgeable cohort of SUNY faculty colleagues. Proactively addressing accessibility during the design phase of programs, curriculum, content, materials, environments and experiences is essential to a more inclusive culture. Supporting faculty champions, like the SUNY Accessibility Advocates and Allies Faculty Fellows, who can engage a team across their campus, is key to advancing this work across disciplines and empowering all content creators, including students.”

FUN & GAMES

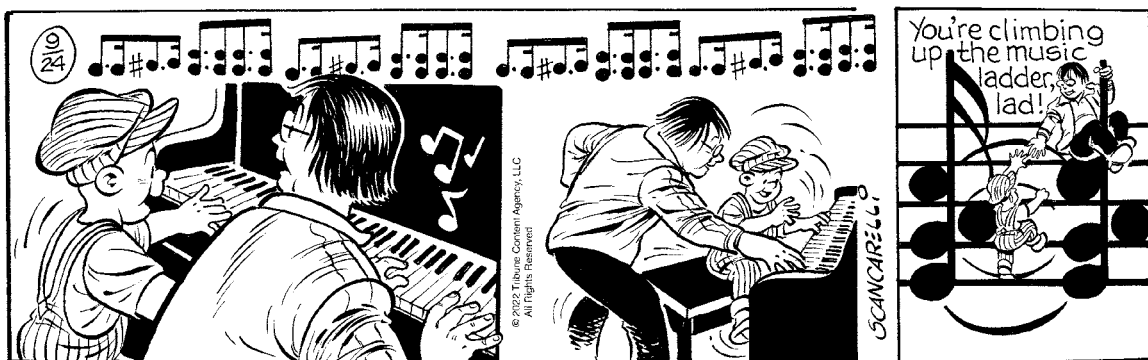
Animal Crackers by Fred Wagner



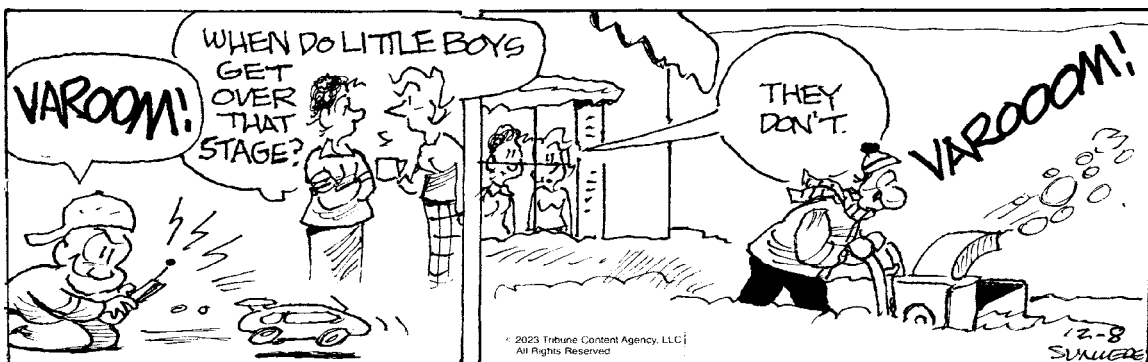
Broom Hilda by Russell Myers



Gasoline Alley by Jim Scancarelli



The Middletons by Dana Summers



9 to 5 by Harley Schwadron



"You are accused of 'insider trading.'
Before I sentence you, do you have any
stock tips you'd like to pass along?"

Word Play Answers Page 28

JUMBLE

Unscramble these Jumbles,
one letter to each square,
to form four ordinary words.

CENUL
○○○○

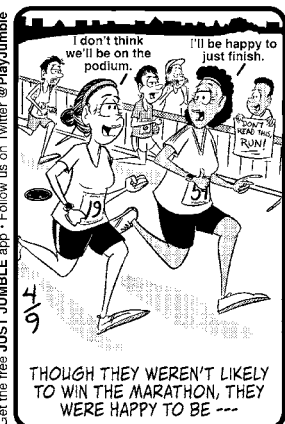
GINVE
○○○○

AMPIRI
○○○○

CAUNNE
○○○○

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek



THOUGH THEY WEREN'T LIKELY
TO WIN THE MARATHON, THEY
WERE HAPPY TO BE ---

Now arrange the circled letters
to form the surprise answer,
as suggested by the above cartoon.

Ans. here: ○○○ THE ○○○○○○○○○

Boggle BrainBusters!

INSTRUCTIONS: Find as many words as you can by linking letters up, down, side-to-side and diagonally, writing words on a blank sheet of paper. You may only use each letter once within a single word. Play with a friend and compare word finds, crossing out common words.

BOGGLE POINT SCALE
3 letters = 1 point
4 letters = 2 points
5 letters = 3 points
6 letters = 4 points
7 letters = 5 points
8 letters = 10 points

YOUR BOGGLE RATING
151+ = Champ
101-150 = Expert
61-100 = Pro
31-60 = Garner
21-30 = Rookie
11-20 = Amateur
0-10 = Try again

By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek



Boggle BrainBusters Bonus
We put special brain-busting words into the puzzle grid. Can you find them?
Find AT LEAST EIGHT U.S. STATES in the grid of letters.

Answers to Last Sunday's Boggle BrainBusters:
DELL GLEN DALE BLUFF CLIFF CASH FLAIN CANYON

FUN & GAMES

More Word Play Answers Page 28

SCRABBLE G₂ R₁ A₁ M₃ S₁

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Blank tiles

A₁ E₁ E₁ L₁ C₃ B₃ D₂

3rd Letter Triple

RACK 1

Blank tiles

E₁ E₁ U₁ M₃ F₄ R₁ P₃

RACK 2

Blank tiles

E₁ O₁ U₁ N₁ T₁ S₁ B₃

RACK 3

Blank tiles

O₁ O₁ B₃ N₁ C₃ C₃ R₁

RACK 4

Blank tiles

A₁ E₁ I₁ C₃ V₄ D₂ M₃

Double Word Score

RACK 5

PAR SCORE 265-275
BEST SCORE 334

FIVE RACK TOTAL
TIME LIMIT: 25 MIN

DIRECTIONS: Make a 2- to 7-letter word from the letters in each row. Add points of each word, using scoring directions at right. Finally, 7-letter words get 50-point bonus. "Blanks" used as any letter have no point value. All the words are in the Official SCRABBLE® Players Dictionary, 5th Edition. SOLUTION TOMORROW

Word Find By Frank J. D'Agostino

Find these words as associated with camping (and find Frank's acoustic books on Amazon):

Air Mattress
Backpack
Batteries

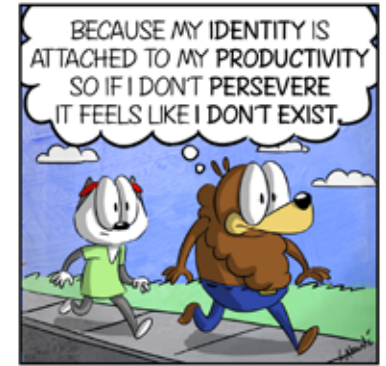
Blanket
Boots
Cabin
Campfire
Canoe
Canteen
Compass
Fishing
Flashlight

Forest
Gear
Grounds
Hammock
Hike
Lake
Mountains
Nature

Path
Sleeping
Bag
Tarp
Tent
Trail Mix
Trees
Woods

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

Filbert by LA Bonté

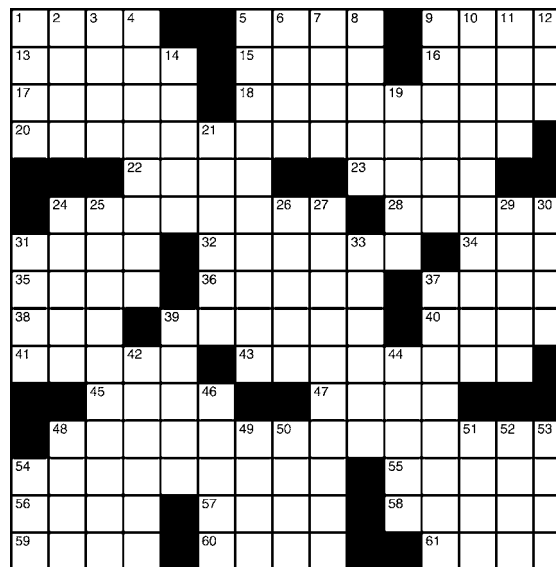


Political Cartoon of the Month by Joel Pett



Crossword

Across
1 Sign of shock
5 shop
9 Pottery and printmaking
13 World Golf Hall of Famer Lorena
15 Jelly that may be added to boba tea
16 Device with threads
17 Skirt
18 Dark days or long days
20 Woman whose immortalized cell line was used in developing the polio vaccine
22 "I feel seen"
23 "RuPaul's Drag Race Live!" regular O'Hara
24 Taxing time?
28 bar
31 Big finish
32 Go for the win, in Clue
34 "Luna": Allende novel
35 Accutane target
36 Inseparable
37 Tough going
38 "Awkward Black Girl" creator
39 Insolent



40 French dip?
41 Traditional Islamic garment
43 Navajo taco base
45 Trick
47 noodle
48 "That's what you're bragging about? You do you ..."
54 "Say what?"
55 Japanese mushroom
56 Smudge

Test challenges
6 So much
7 "Mozart in the Jungle" star Kirke
8 Electric company?
9 Keys on a piano
10 "She put the Miss in misdemeanor when she stole the beans from Lima" singers
11 Low digits

Sudoku

Each column/row must contain the numbers from 1 to 9, without repetitions. The digits can only occur once per block. The sum of every single row, column and block must equal 45.

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

57 Emily Oster's subj.
58 Court apparel
59 Bonus rooms
60 Disallow
61 Shutter part
Down
1 "Goodness me"
2 Heating pad target
3 One guarded on a soccer pitch
4 Fabled food that's bear-ly eaten?
5 Competition series that features Mystery Box and Pressure
12 Texting inits.
14 Breed from Honshu
19 Work with one's buds?
21 Mantis of "Guardians of the Galaxy," for one
24 Gambling mecca near Hong Kong
25 Dark aspect of one's persona
26 More aloof
27 Change of fortune?
29 Skirt
30 Mint family herb
31 Fence-sitter's deterrent
33 Stadium suite
37 Goes underground
39 Three-time Best Director of the 1930s
42 Mollifies
44 Court apparel
46 Having clear boundaries
48 Soyinka who was the first Literature Nobel from sub-Saharan Africa
49 Head space?
50 Sword-wielding animal on Sri Lanka's flag
51 A crow's twig, e.g.
52 Cajun staple
53 Catwoman player
54 Oil in some pet treats, for short

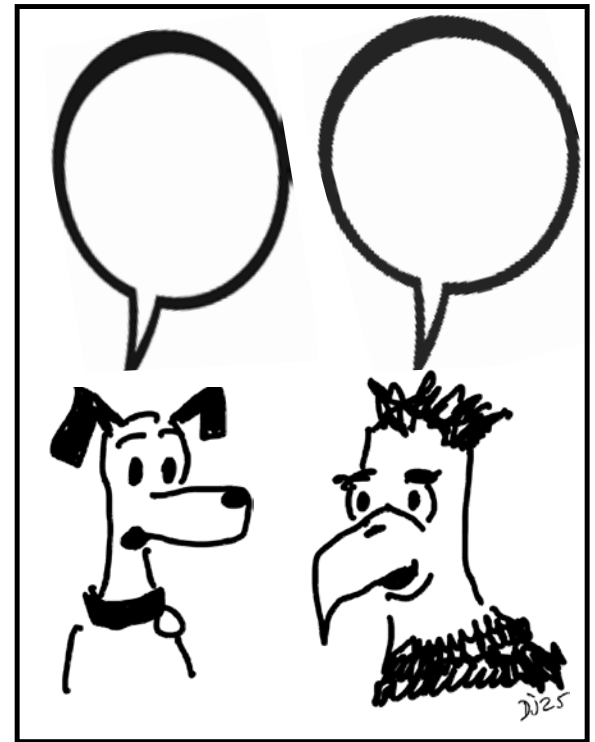
You make

THE FUNNY PAGES

No. 001

Title of Your Comic:

Author Name (You):



You are a newspaper cartoonist!
Fill in the dialogue bubbles.
Be creative. Have fun!

Feel free to send us photos of your work – editor@cccnews.info!



FUN & GAMES SOLUTIONS

Boggle: IOWA
OHIO ALASKA
KANSAS ARIZONA
FLORIDA COLORA-
DO ARKANSAS

Jumble: UNCLE
GIVEN IMPAIR
NUANCE – IN THE
RUNNING

SCRABBLE G R A M M S SOLUTION							
D ₂	E ₁	B ₃	A ₁	C ₃	L ₁	E ₁	RACK 1 = 68
P ₃	E ₁	R ₁	F ₄	U ₁	M ₃	E ₁	RACK 2 = 64
S ₁	U ₁	B ₃	T ₁	O ₁	N ₁	E ₁	RACK 3 = 59
C ₃	O ₁	R ₁	N ₁	C ₃	O ₁	B ₃	RACK 4 = 63
M ₃	E ₁	D ₂	I ₁	V ₄	A ₁	C ₃	RACK 5 = 80
PAR SCORE 265-275							TOTAL 334

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

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

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

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Healing soul weariness

Dr. Daneen Skube

*Tribune Content Agency
Special to Campus News*

Q: *I'm ending this year exhausted. No amount of sleep seems to help. I'm day-dreaming about desert islands. I've checked out medical reasons and doctors don't find anything. How can I be productive when I'm absolutely bone weary?*

A: You can get back to productivity if you realize that sleep doesn't help when it's your soul that's fatigued. Bone weariness is a combination of being burned out, depressed, and having feelings of powerlessness, and fatigue. To recover, you'll need to address each of these issues.

Being burned out means you've put too much emphasis on work and too little on wellness. Look at your schedule and consider taking mini breaks. Do you have a respite room at work? Could you rest or learn to meditate there? When do you move your body? Can you join a group, church, or see family members to increase support? Who do you tell the truth to about your life?

Being depressed can be a combination of suppressing anger and low levels of self-advocacy. Ask yourself what you're frustrated about? Now... are you channeling that anger into negotiations to change what you don't like?

When we take action, depression tends to dissipate, like mist on a sunny morning.

Being powerless is a lie we tell ourselves. We are never completely powerless. Telling ourselves we can't do anything can feel safer than the truth that our well-being is always up to us. If we don't care about what we need, nobody else will ride up on a white horse and make it happen!

Fatigue is helped by sleep, naps, meditation, and good nutrition. But soul-level fatigue requires that we give ourselves a break from the daily routine. Take a sick day or a vacation, and do something you daydream about. Everyone's soul requires

different food. Ask yourself when you feel most profoundly nurtured and do that.

Ironically for most of us we are the last thing on our list. Work, family, and social commitments come before our own needs. We may fall into bed exhausted without having done a single thing for ourselves.

In working with exceptional leaders in my coaching practice and highly functional adults in therapy, I've watched how fatigued most of my clients are. Many are still recovering from COVID related issues and the election. Most of us need a "stop-the-world" series of moments to bounce back.

Be aware that rest doesn't mean literally moving to a desert island. I've spent time on many and within a week I'm bored. If you move to an island but take the same poor self-care habits with you, the exhaustion will not recede. The recovery process is about what you do habitually — not where you do it.

We have a million reasons why we don't take care of ourselves. Combat this tendency by writing down the ways you could improve self-care that do not amount to another burden. Small moments can help a lot: a cup of tea, a warm bath, early bedtime, a walk with a friend, or reading a chapter of a book you love — these can be mini vacations.

At the end of each day, contemplate where you missed opportunities or changed your habits. Watch your exhaustion meter, and how what you're doing is helping or hurting.

Use exhaustion as an adviser that points a finger at what and where you need to



Bing Create

change. You won't wake up tomorrow transformed into the energizer bunny, but in the long-run every aspect of your life will benefit from you listening to your fatigue.

The last word(s)

Q: *I feel like I've wasted a lot of time in 2024 and want to turn that around. But I keep beating myself for letting so much of this last year go flying by. Is there a way I can think about starting over that might motivate me?*

A: Yes, as Mason Cooley (1927–2002), an American professor of speech, observed: "Regret for wasted time is more wasted time."

Daneen Skube, Ph.D., executive coach, trainer, therapist and speaker, also appears as the FOX Channel's "Workplace Guru" each Monday morning. She's the author of "Interpersonal Edge: Breakthrough Tools for Talking to Anyone, Anywhere, About Anything." You can con-



My bookie story

Darren Johnson
Publisher

When I was in college, I worked in a pizza place and one of the vendors who came in was a self-stylized bookie of sorts. I think he delivered bread or cheese or something, but also wanted to make extra cash. He had a name like Bob or Don or something uncomplicated (let's go with Don) and was probably in his late 40s, hair starting to thin, grey, paunchy, but affable. He kind of looked like Vegas Matt does today.



I was a pretty disciplined bettor back then, maybe like young Christopher mentioned above, and would just bet a set amount on every game with him vs. the spread. No parlays, props or other loser bets. Just straight Seattle +6 or whatever, maybe \$25 or \$50 each game, a few games a week.

I went on a streak where I hit 14 games in a row, and the bookie couldn't pay me. But he had an idea. He had a bettor who owed him and couldn't pay, on the nearby Indian

Reservation, and this bettor offered his car. So the bookie would bring me there to the Rez, and I'd drive off with the car, and we'd all be settled.

This was the style of car, but rusty and obviously not nearly as nice:

OK, fair enough, I thought. I was down a car. Basic transportation. At that age, I was used to having big cars from a couple of de-



acades prior that got me through a season or two.

But this car didn't last nearly that long. Going through a huge intersection, I stepped on the brakes for a red light — and nothing happened. The car kept going! I narrowly missed being T-boned and had to coast it into a 7-Eleven. But somehow the brakes started working again, and did for a while thereafter, so I figured in my immature mind it was just a blip.

But then I lent it to my then girlfriend (now wife), and she reported a similar near-death experience.

Somehow, we got over near-death experiences pretty easily back then.

Eventually, I bought another car in the next town over from some guy, and parked this bomb on the side of the road near a ditch. It was an older stick-shift Honda Accord that I'd seen advertised in the newspaper. Maybe I swapped the plates from the red bomb to the Accord right there. Not sure what the law was back then. I told the guy I'd be back for the red bomb, but I guess I took too long, as the town had it towed and impounded. Without plates, they probably figured it was abandoned. And, maybe, subconsciously, that was my goal. Of course, I didn't bother to get it back.

Don, the bookie, stopped coming by the pizza place. I saw him months later working as a deli clerk, seeming a bit deflated. I asked him if he still was taking bets, but he brushed me off. He had sandwiches to make.

The Honda Accord didn't last long. I was hit by an unlicensed motorcycle driver who took a turn too wide. It wrecked his bike and probably his leg, and my car, too. By then, I was working at a small newspaper and no longer doing pizza deliveries, but had to bike to work for a couple of months until I could save up for perhaps the worst car I'd ever had. A manual tan VW Rabbit that barely made it up small hills. It was pretty much just a small metal box on wheels.

You can't say I wasn't a gamer. Now I get way over-concerned if one of my wheels feels a tiny bit wobbly on the Thruway.

ABOUT CAMPUS NEWS

CAMPUS NEWS

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