

PVCC Program Alleviates Food Insecurity over Holiday Season

Experience
 Let There Be Light
 pages 16-17

Jaume Plumb-Planas, staff writer

Food insecurity is a well known issue, with thousands of food banks and food resource networks across the US attempting to alleviate it; the problem is that most of them are closed during the last ten days of the year. So in 2019, Amanda Key, the Student Financial Resource Center (SFRC) coordinator, came up with a solution; Boxes for Break.

Food insecurity is a huge issue for college students, especially for those who have to work and attend. Student advocacy organization Chegg published a report that stated that nearly one-third (29%) of college students have missed a meal at least once a week since the beginning of the pandemic and more than one-third (34%) know someone who has dropped out of college due to difficulties affording food. While college food

pantries have been picking up the slack, a good portion of them simply do not have the same levels of funding or volunteer support as traditional food banks and resource networks.

However, thanks to a grant from Anthem Healthkeepers Plus and donated money and supplies from the Virginia Foundation for Community College Education, the SFRC was able to plan and assemble 200 food and hygiene boxes for PVCC students and their families. Members of the SGA, PVCC Foundation Board, UVA SIM 21-22 volunteers, and PVCC staff and faculty got together to assemble these boxes.

“It took us a few days to get everything done, but we had over 45 volunteers, so we were well ahead of schedule. We finished packing boxes the first week we started, within three days. We had three boxes, a hygiene bag, a box that came

See Boxes on page 4



Volunteers and Faculty posing in front of the Panther Cafe, with Boxes for Break in background. Photo courtesy of Amanda Key

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DATES TO REMEMBER

— Fall Final Exams —
Dec. 15-21

— Spring 2022 16-week Classes Begin —
Jan. 10

— Martin Luther King Day Holiday —
Jan. 17, All Day, No classes

— Gallery Exhibition Opening Reception * —
Feb. 5, 5-7 p.m., Dickinson Building Galleries

— One Mic Stand * —
Feb. 11, 7 p.m., Dickinson Building Maxwell Black
Box Theater

— "Gospel Joy" with Odyssey of Soul featuring
Horace Scruggs —
Feb. 19, 7:30 p.m., Dickinson Building Main Stage

— Spring Break —
March 7-13, All Day, No classes

— Richmond Ballet —
March 9, 7:30 p.m., Dickinson Building Main Stage

*Free Event

Santa Crashes a Tree Lighting at Stonefield

Jaume Plumb-Planas, staff writer

Both children and adults that came for the tree lighting at the Shops at Stonefield were in for a surprise on the night of Nov. 27 when a special interruption occurred.

When the crowd got to the end of the countdown for the lighting of the tree, the lights simply did not turn on. All of the sudden, Chris Gallagher, one of the event organizers, pointed out a figure on the roof, who turned out to be none other than Santa Claus plugging in the lights and saving the event.

Disney Princesses Elsa and Anna also made an appearance immediately after, singing a piece from Frozen. Following the song, children lined up outside Eichner Studios to take pictures with them and lined up inside the building directly adjacent to the tree and Regal Cinema to get pictures with Santa Claus.

“This event is supposed to help celebrate all the nonprofits that the Shops at Stonefield has worked with in the past year,” said Gallagher, “after we worked with them on Battle of the Bands, they wanted EpicCville to come back here to help them set up this event.”

The lighting featured over a half a dozen nonprofits and charities, including Building Goodness Foundation, the Arc of the Piedmont, SARA (Sexual Assault Resource Agency), The Ishan Gala Foundation, HOWS (House Of Wood and Straw), and Elk Hill.

The tree will remain lit from sundown to midnight until after New Years.



Photography by Jaume Plumb-Planas



Student Government Association News

What is the SGA?

We are a student-led organization that gives PVCC students a platform to voice their concerns and expectations. Our vision is to establish a communal spirit that supports student engagement and develops a civic sense of responsibility.

What do we do?

- Represent the student body and voice their concerns
- Look to build student engagement and student participation
- Improve student satisfaction with PVCC and help take PVCC to new heights
- Host annual events. (Casino night, spring fling, drive-in movie, welcome back social)

Accomplishments so far:

- Successfully held Welcome Back Social event
- Initiated PVCC's first Service event alongside the IRC (International Refugee Committee)
- Night Against Procrastination took place on December 8, 2021
- Provided items and support for Boxes4Break
- Organized Voting for PVCC's next service project

How do I join?

As long as you are interested and willing to share your ideas and contribute, we would be happy to have you. If you are looking to spend a couple of hours per month, please join our General Assembly. If you are looking to be an active member who is directly involved with organizing events and activities, join the SGA Senate.

For further information please contact aza251@email.vccs.edu.



Boxes, continued from page 1

from Sentara, and then the regular food box. We prepared 200 food and hygiene boxes,” said Raven Hysell, a single stop coach with the Student Financial Resource Center.

Inside the boxes were a variety of items, to suit a wide range of cultures and tastes, as well as utensils, cooking tools, and meal kits. “This year we put a wide range of things in it, not just canned goods. We added a little twist to the boxes, a little spice by doing a cookbook and providing some of the ingredients from it. Just because you need this service doesn’t mean you shouldn’t be allowed to do things like baking or things like that,” said Key.

Once packed, the boxes were brought up to the Panther Cafe by volunteers and staff for a large distribution day, where students came between 4-6 p.m. to pick up the boxes. “We try to accommodate everyone’s needs, both with the boxes and with distribution. Our whole goal is to remove the barriers to getting what you need, and it’s especially difficult when they’re older or they just don’t have that type of transportation they come to get the items, so everybody could either

pick-up or get a delivery. We actually just got done doing a delivery of 22 boxes that we took straight to some people’s homes,” said Key.

But Boxes for Break still has a few more goals to tackle, including increasing the scope of the project to covering non-credit students, expanding coverage to Greene County and the Guiseppe center, and continuing to add more culturally inclusive items to the boxes.

“We need donations of hygiene items, diapers, and things that are culturally friendly. That’s one of the reasons we add so many of the spices and items like that. Blue Ridge Area Food Bank did a study and those were some of the items that some of the refugees and others requested,” said Key.

Overall, the entire program is about ensuring that students and their families are able to celebrate during the break without worrying about resources.

“Seeing everything packed up is my favorite thing about this. It’s absolutely beautiful. Just knowing that all of this is going to be given away to someone, and they don’t have to pay anything for it, it’s just a good feeling,” said Key.

Night Against Procrastination at PVCC

Chloe Boutin, staff writer

With finals coming up quickly, it is easy for students to start getting overwhelmed about all of the work they have on their plates. PVCC’s Student Government Association (SGA) held a Night Against Procrastination to give students a space to work on assignments for different classes, study for finals, and give them a relaxing space to de-stress during this hectic time.

This event was held in the Bolick Student Center on Dec. 8 from 5-10 p.m. This event was supplied with free snacks such as fruit, assorted wraps, pizza, sodas, sparkling water, and coffee was even offered in

the library. The snacks were set up in the main area for people to study, but writing center tutors and other support staff were located in the Betty Sue Jessup Library for extra support.

This was a space for students to study for their exams or work on any final projects or assignments they had for the rest of the year. But this event was not just for study time. It was also a chance for students to re-focus and calm down during these stressful times. There was a mindfulness session held as well to let students relax in between study sessions.

With this event, PVCC’s SGA helped set students up for success by mixing both study time and relaxing time in order to help students get into the correct mindset for finals.



Jessica Hladky at the snack table
Photography by Chloe Boutin

The Psychology of Misinformation

Luca Gett, staff writer

While they remain important components of the issue, the increasing abundance of misinformation cannot be entirely attributed to technology and interconnectedness. Without the individual and the combined actions of many, misinformation would remain confined to its source. On Oct. 27, employing the topics of the 2020 presidential election and recent increases in vaccine hesitancy, PVCC Associate Professors of Psychology Dr. Adam Johnson and Dr. Michael Rahilly sought to explain the role of human psychology in facilitating the spread of misinformation in a campus talk titled “The Psychology of Misinformation.”

The discussion was centered around measuring just how much of an effect human psychology had on facilitating the spread of misinformation, with the two professors making mention of cognitive biases, as well as identity and social influences, all while seeking support from a series of studies and the application of other psychological concepts. This effect was, as demonstrated by Johnson and Rahilly, vastly more than one would think.

Johnson began the talk. He accompanied explanations of authoritarian psychology and confirmation bias with the example of the 2020 presidential election and the disputes surrounding its outcome. He credited Bob Altemeyer for his extensive work on the psychology of authoritarianism. The authoritarian personality was explained as someone with an unwavering adherence to a preferred authority, even to the point of justifying violence. He defined confirmation bias as an inclination of the individual to validate their beliefs with their preferred sources. These two factors were highlighted as causes of disputes to the 2020 presidential election results, mentioning studies conducted relating these concepts to the issue.

Johnson made a particularly interesting mention of social media as strengthening the effect of confirmation bias due to its incredible levels of personalization, something that will only increase as these platforms continue to develop.

Vaccination hesitancy was the focus of Rahilly’s portion of the talk, a topic that was a little more complex. Mention of confirmation

biases reappeared in this portion of the talk, along with mentions of social identity and conformance biases as well. He identified personal and social identity as integral components of one’s sense of belonging. Consequently, they have a great deal of influence on human behavior. The conscious rejection of information could occur at the hands of an individual’s social identity and conformance biases, Rahilly stated.

From here, the complexity of this particular topic became more apparent. While concepts such as confirmation, social identity, and conformance biases could be easily explained and exemplified. It was the combination of these things with the unique conditions of the pandemic that caused such widespread vaccine hesitancy. Firstly, the stress of the pandemic accelerated the effects of these biases in influencing those resistant to vaccines. This stress was combated with what Rahilly described as fast thinking coping mechanisms. In this particular case, these mechanisms were the rejection of information in the interest of maintaining social belonging. The newness of the vaccine and a lack of education in science and the scientific process further contributed to the spread of misinformation and vaccine hesitancy, Rahilly added.

Both Johnson and Rahilly used the examples of the 2020 presidential election and vaccine hesitancy amid the pandemic to explain the effect that human psychology has on the spread of misinformation. Johnson’s brief discussion of the 2020 presidential election was accompanied by explanations of authoritarian psychology and confirmation bias. Rahilly’s portion of the talk related confirmation, social identity, and conformance biases to the incredibly unique nature of the pandemic.

It was, however, some of Johnson’s last statements that resonated most. “The internet and social media platforms have made it easy to select information sources that align with our views and opinions” read one of Johnson’s presentation slides, to which he added “...a stronger source of confirmation bias is going to come from the internet.” Social media platforms will only increase in personalization as data collection and analysis becomes more sophisticated. The heightening effects this will have on confirmation bias in the future are unthinkable.

ACPS to Receive Electric School Buses

Jaume Plumb-Planas, staff writer

Albemarle County Public Schools (ACPS) are getting two new electric school buses, but unlike the vehicles themselves, they are not staying quiet about it.

On Friday Nov. 5, ACPS co-hosted an event with Generation180 to showcase the model of the new electric school buses that will be joining their fleet “most likely midway through next school year,” according to Jim Foley, director of transportation for ACPS.

The addition of the electric buses is a part of Albemarle County’s Climate Action Plan, which aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and lower environmental impact in the county. Currently ACPS’ fleet of 220 school buses travels an average of over 14,000 miles a day, and while the current diesel buses are around one third of the price of an electric bus, they cost significantly more in terms of fuel and maintenance costs, while also producing greenhouse gases.

Albemarle County’s funding for the electric school buses was provided through a Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) grant, originally announced by Governor Ralph Northam last August. Part of the funding for the grant will go towards creating infrastructure for

charging the buses and other electric vehicles, and requires that the new electric buses replace older buses that do not meet the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) diesel engine requirements.

Louisa County Public Schools (LCPS) will also be receiving two new school buses from the DEQ grant besides the two it received in January from Dominion Energy’s school bus grant. “We did something we’ve never done before, which is that we ran those buses with 30 day paper tags,” said Deborah Coles, director of transportation at LCPS.

“Last year we ran those buses on a shorter route because we weren’t sure what would happen ... This year the new buses we’re getting will be running substitute routes, where we don’t know where they’ll be ahead of time,” said Coles.

“We have five transit systems in this community with their own buses,” said Diantha McKeel of the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors, “The next step that we need to take is to start thinking about how we can reduce the number of those buses, for efficiency’s sake, as well as the type of buses we have. I am thrilled Albemarle County is putting a pole in the ground and saying ‘we are going to be purchasing electric buses.’”



One of the new Blue Bird buses taking the Generation180 event attendees on a test drive.
Photography by Jaume Plumb-Planas

Creativity over Tradition

Yasser Perez, staff writer

Across hundreds of colleges and universities in the United States, thousands of collegiate majors are offered. Engineering, business, and education are among the most popular choices for college students, but one student at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University chose to defy tradition and opted to pursue her passion in a more creative field.

Emily Baugher is a sophomore at Virginia Tech who is currently pursuing a degree in Interior Design. Visibly excited to dive into detail over her chosen career path, her infectious smile and passion radiated through the screen as she explained why she chose interior design over a virtual conversation.

Baugher explained that throughout high school she had always liked her art classes and had a passion for design. Baugher described that pursuing a career where creativity was a main focus was a contributing factor towards her decision. Although she was undecided on what to major in for the majority of her senior year, Baugher said, “I picked interior design because it’s not rigid like engineering and other traditional majors ... I felt like it would be a perfect fit for me.”

Baugher admitted that although interior design is an easier major than engineering or medicine, it is no walk in the park. Baugher mentioned that while engineering is based on a rigid structure of math and rules to follow, interior design is more subjective. With a slight chuckle and wipe to her brow, she shared that one of her biggest challenges is over criticizing her

own work. Comparing her work to the work of her peers can be overwhelming, she says, but it pushes her to expand her creativity.

Another challenge Baugher mentioned was how much work and planning actually goes into interior design. “It’s so much more than just decorating. There’s more to it than what you see on HGTV,” Baugher said.

Enthusiastically, Baugher dove into all of the nit-picky details that interior designers are responsible for, often using hand motions and facial expressions to truly personify the importance of building codes interior designers have to adhere to, specifications of light fixtures, and other interior furnishings.

When speaking about her future, Baugher beamed with joy describing her excitement to put her skills to use at a design firm, or in her own business. Baugher expressed her desire to work close to home and focus on residential interior design, but the commercial side of her career also entices her.

“I’m a homebody, so I don’t want to move that far away, which is scary to think about, but if I were to work in commercial interior design, such as working on hospitals and hotels, I could travel a lot which would be super cool,” Baugher said.

Baugher recognized that challenges are inevitable whether she chooses to pursue the residential or commercial side of her career, but that she is eager to face those challenges. In a world where traditional careers reign supreme due to their safety in regards to their return on investment, Baugher is ready to take on the risks of a more experimental career.



Emily Baugher
Photo courtesy of Emily Baugher

Trans Activist Teaches Self-defense

Jaume Plumb-Planas, staff writer

Gun sales increased rapidly in 2020 with an unprecedented amount of new gun owners walking out of stores with firearms, many of them with no prior experience handling or operating any sort of firearm. I met with a local firearms instructor to discuss how she has been working to counteract this trend. We met at a gun range about 45 minutes from Charlottesville, where she had been teaching a concealed carry class, and sat down at a picnic bench for our interview.



Clara Elliot and student on the firing line. Photo courtesy of Clara Elliot

“I remember one particular time going into a gun store at the height of the [Black Lives Matter (BLM)] protests, and there were a lot of African-Americans, and there were a lot of white folks in there, and you could feel the tension. That’s when I realized that a lot of people are very uncomfortable around ‘gun culture,’” said Clara Elliot, founder of ATW Firearms Instruction, “Often times when you think of gun culture, you think of the far right, y’know, people who are racist, sexist, homophobic; extremely nasty bigotted people. I realized that people needed a place where they could feel comfortable learning about firearms, in training to use them safely.”

So she took a National Rifle Association (NRA) instructor course and started ATW Firearms Instruction in Oct. 2020. “Unfortunately, that class was a perfect example of why I was becoming an instructor. The entire class was nothing but cops, and they made bigoted jokes about LGBT people, African Americans, POCs (people of color), Muslims, Latinos; and I was literally in fear the entire class. I had just had

voice surgery and thankfully they couldn’t tell I was trans, because I was afraid, in all honesty, of what would happen if they did,” said Elliot.

Since founding her LLC (Limited Liability Corporation), she has provided training for more than 60 people in Virginia and gained over 1,300 followers on Instagram. “Starting [ATW Firearms Instruction] has been a learning experience, but I’ve found amazing people who share the mindset, a great community of leftist, POC, and female gun folks and instructors that I’ve been introduced to,” said Elliot.

“One of the things from the beginning of ATW was that it was about building a community for LGBTQ+ [people], building a community is so important and especially in the aftermath of 2020,” said Elliot, “Currently besides teaching this class, I’ve been making and handing out free self-defense kits for local trans and non-binary people. It’s been great for helping them have more access to self-defense and feel a little safer as well.”

Elliot said, “This is a passion project for me, and I’ve seen the impact that it’s had for people. They’re happy to have a place to come learn self-defense, because they’ve wanted to, but they’ve never had a safe way to do that. The NRA is not the end all and be all of training organizations, but I’m an NRA instructor. As a friend of mine put it, use rocks to break rocks, which is a good analogy of what I’m doing. I’m trying to do my part to break down these stereotypes of gun culture, so in the future I want to expand out from helping a few people a month to get their concealed carry permit, to being able to teach future instructors, so they can go out into their communities and do the same thing I’m trying to do.”



Clara Elliot, founder of ATW Firearms Instruction. Photo courtesy of Clara Elliot

Patricia Jassmann, Living a Life of Language

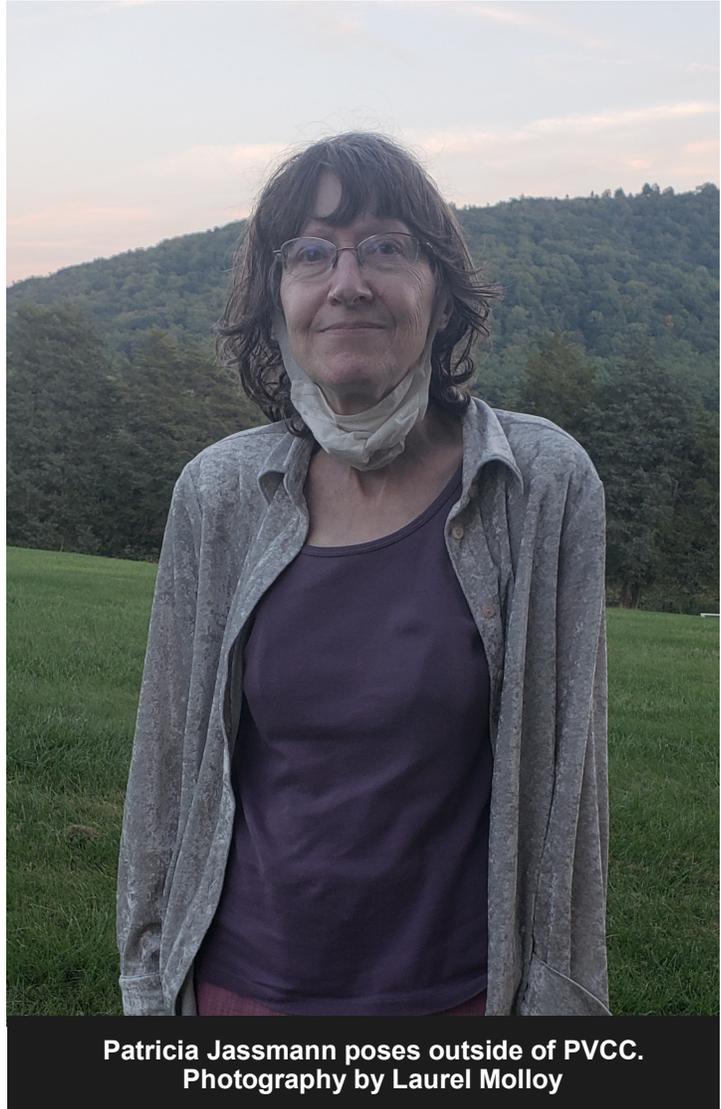
Laurel Molloy, staff writer

Patricia Jassmann, adjunct assistant professor of German, sat outside the north entrance of PVCC. She wore pink pants and a rich-purple shirt covered by a silver blazer that looked almost like reflected snow or metal. As Jassmann talked, gesturing, and taking occasional sips of water, black birds chirped and swam through the air. She discussed many different subjects from social issues, to the importance of language and believing in yourself.

Jassmann has been teaching for a long time. She has taught German and English as a second language. Before she started at PVCC, she lived and worked in Germany. Her longest stay was seven years. The love she has for the place and language was clear as she sat recalling her time there. She lived in Kiel, the capital of Schleswig-Holstein, for a while. Schleswig-Holstein is the northernmost state of Germany's 16 states. Jassmann said around 3 p.m. in the winter it would get dark, and by 2 a.m. in the summer, "the sun off in the distance [would] just start to shine."

The light slowly sank across PVCC, the glow on the grass receding, as Jassmann mentioned the importance of language and history. She said, "We really need to learn more languages." She went on to say that languages are gateways into other countries and cultures. As Americans, we are not just influenced by ourselves, so many places and people affect us. She said traveling, learning languages, and culture help everyone appreciate our own country and others. Jassmann talked about how it is crucial to understand the world and where we all come from, saying, "We don't live in just this country. We live in this country but are affected by so much that is going on in other countries." She also added that it is important for everyone to examine history including the mistakes and triumphs made in the past so we can all learn from them.

Many people find learning languages hard, and it does take a lot of work. But Jassmann said when she teaches German it is not as much memorization as people first think. She said there



**Patricia Jassmann poses outside of PVCC.
Photography by Laurel Molloy**

are various tricks and patterns you can learn and follow. Parts of German still need to be memorized, but these tricks help people learn and understand the language better.

When asked for a closing remark about something she wished to tell students, Jassmann said, "You have to believe in yourself." She said that it is not enough for teachers to believe in students. Students must believe in themselves and put in the time and work to accomplish their dreams. Just like she believes the sun will come up in the morning, Jassmann said she starts out believing every student can accomplish what they want. But she said in the end, it is the students who must believe in themselves and do the work to succeed at whatever they want.

Economics: A Class that Solidifies Adulthood

Yasser Perez, staff writer

As college students work towards taking classes to fulfill diploma requirements for their respective majors, many classes are tailored to specific degrees. With ECO 202, however, this is not the case. Not only does this economics course help students, principally adults, in understanding the financial world that surrounds them, but it also provides crucial business skills that could be beneficial down the road, regardless of chosen career paths.

The course, Principles of Microeconomics, whose class number is 33572, will meet synchronously online on Mondays and Wednesdays from 2-3:15 p.m. The class is taught by the Assistant Professor of economics at the University of Lynchburg, who is an adjunct professor at PVCC, Dr. Michael Schnur. He has a doctorate in financial economics and has been teaching since 1987.

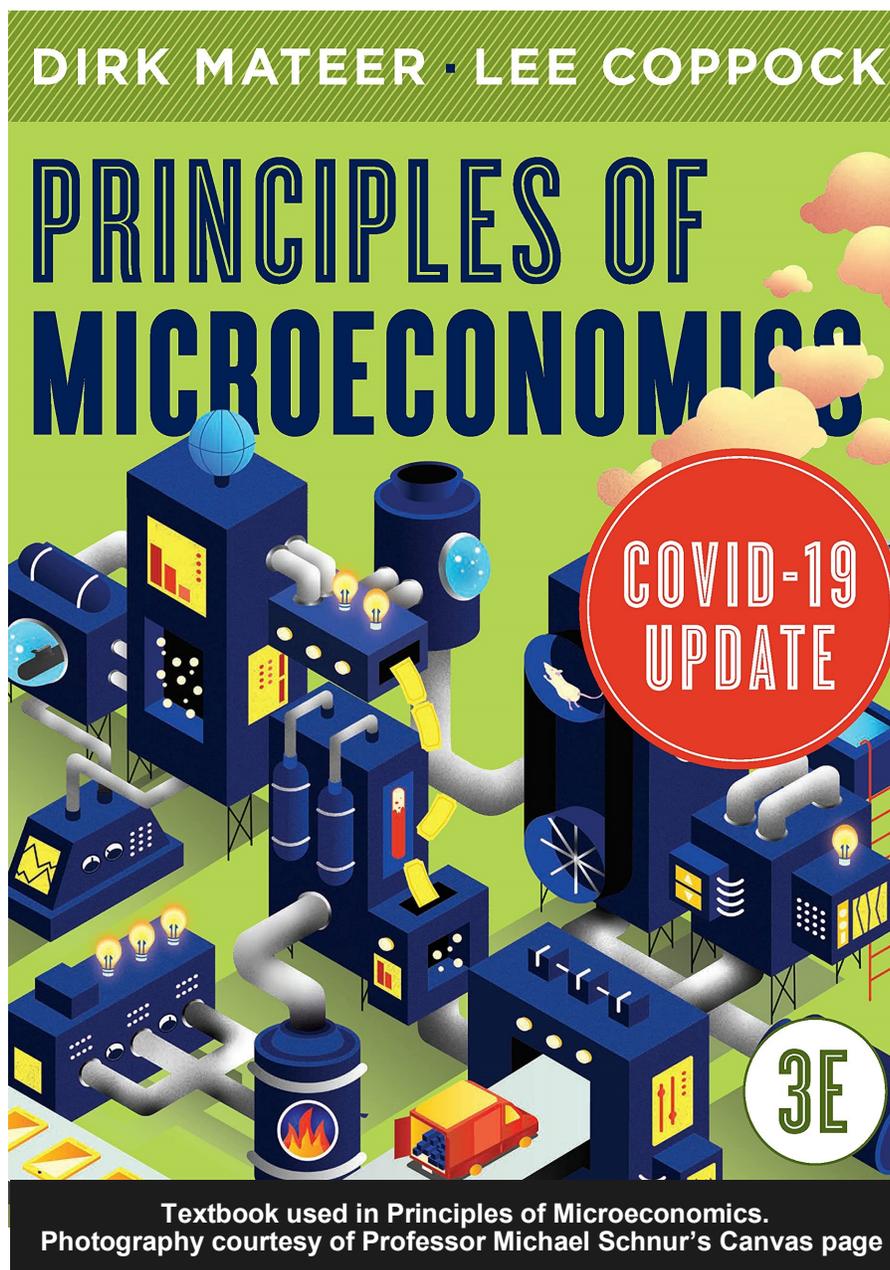
“A lot of students work, have a life, it gives people the availability of an education,” said Schnur, when explaining why he chose to teach this course online this semester amidst a global pandemic.

The class is based on a lecture format, and the professor utilizes presentations, videos, graphs, anecdotes, and articles pertaining to the subject matter at hand to expand on information discussed in class.

Topics covered in this class include elasticity (how income influences spending habits), market structures, supply and demand, and how major corporations incorporate these concepts into their everyday business models. Not only do these

concepts play a huge role in our everyday lives, but understanding these topics help the students become better equipped to navigate the financial world.

In regards to what students can expect after taking this course, Schnur says, “It’s trying to give you the foundation ... it’s not here to give all the answers, but it’s trying to let you understand based on market structures how the economy is impacted. Inflation and rising gas prices, adult level problems like we’re seeing today, the cause of these events are discussed in this class.”



Creating Art Through the Mind and Pencil

Laurel Molloy, staff writer

Art and imagination come into play in the ART 121 Drawing I class. Next semester there are introduction to drawing three classes, two of which are online. The only in-person class in the spring is led by the Assistant Professor of art Aaron Miller. In this art class, people learn basic drawing skills to bring the paper to life.

Miller said, “I think anybody can learn how to draw.” He said it is like any other skill; you must practice it to get better. He said it is like the piano: at first it sounds strange, but once you practice it and hone the simple skills needed to play, it sounds great. In ART 121, people work on the basic skills like making straight lines and drawing things in perspective. Miller said that they usually work a lot with still life objects for ART 121.

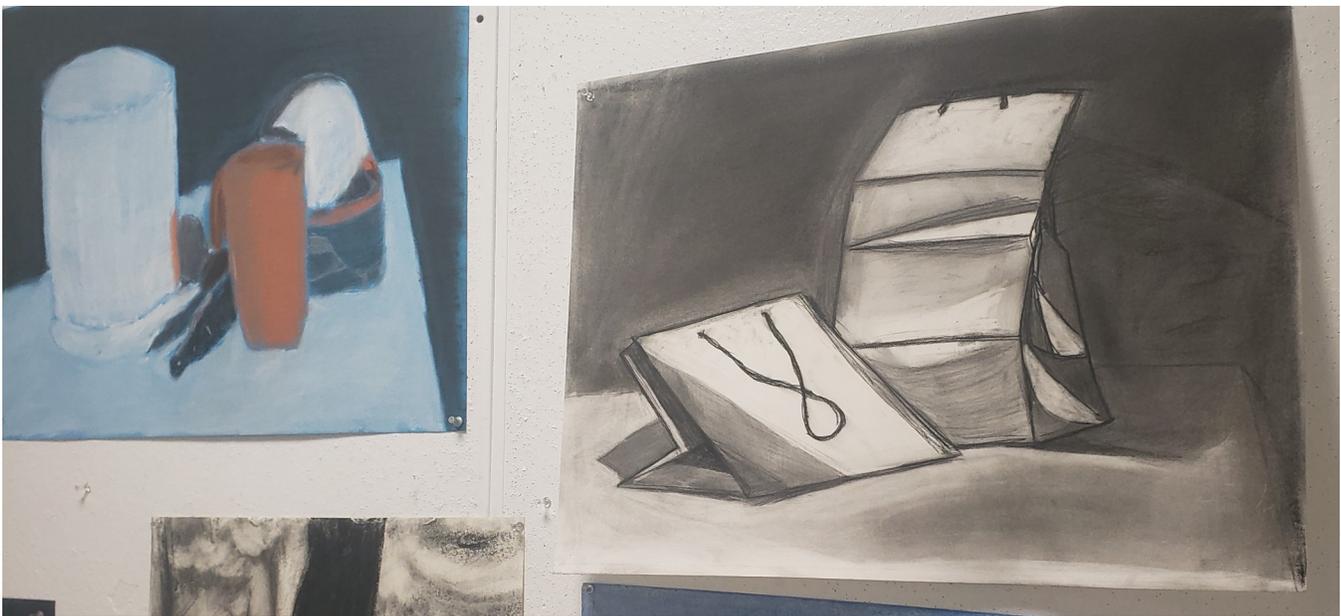
Miller has been teaching art for over seven years. He said every year and every class is different and unique. Students often form a community within the class. They sometimes do field trips to see art exhibits. One of Miller’s favorite parts of the class, however, is when students show off their final portfolio at the end of the semester. He said it is “exciting how each person has developed.”

Every class usually has three elements within the four-hour time slot. They start with a critique of homework, then a short lecture talking about new concepts, and lastly, they practice drawing. Miller said that he wants people to practice drawing as much as possible during class. He grades drawing pieces not by their potential to go in an art gallery but by if the drawing shows the new skills people are practicing.

In the spring semester, the in-person Drawing I class will meet on Tuesdays from 1-5 p.m. in room 118 in the Dickinson building. It is a hybrid class, which means people meet in person and must do things online as well. Its course number is 33479.

Miller said that drawing can take a lot of time and effort, and “you never end your process of learning how to draw.” But if you like to draw or just want to learn more, Miller said that the class is a lot of fun and a great community. You learn a lot about the basics of drawing and have fun while doing it.

Stop by the Dickinson building to see examples from other drawing classes. It brings the hallways to life as worlds of imagination hang across the walls. From shapes, teapots, and Pokémon creatures, the mind can fashion anything onto the page.



Artwork pinned up on the walls in the Dickinson building. Photography by Laurel Molloy

The Anime Club: A Gateway into Worlds of Art

Laurel Molloy, staff writer

The lights dimmed in room M174 as the Anime Club started to watch a show on Friday Oct. 29. The screen lit up as vibrant scenes danced across the display. Simple lines created fast paced sword fights and panning shots of sun capped villages.

Anime is a style of Japanese film and animation. It stems from manga, which is an art style of Japanese books much like western culture's comic books and graphic novels. Anime comes in many forms from Shonen, which is mainly about fighting and adventure, to Shoujo, which is more about drama, romance, and journeys. Popular kids shows like Pokémon are considered anime. But Maria McCormack, the anime club president, said that anime is not just geared towards kids. People of all ages watch and enjoy anime.

McCormack said that each club meeting is unique. Members discuss what they want to watch and talk about during the meeting. McCormack said, "People come and just chill out and watch anime." She said she likes the social aspects of the club the best. She likes being able to talk to people about anime that not everyone might know.

On Oct. 29, only five people showed up, including the club President. It was a small number of people, but everyone voiced their opinions. The atmosphere was talkative and free. There was a discussion on what horror anime to watch and which people liked best. People spoke up about *Avatar the Last Airbender*, groaning at how awful the live action movie was. The topics even strayed away from anime and manga as people talked about RTS (Real-Time Strategy) games and songs. Everyone listened to the songs

"Soldier, Poet, King," by The Oh Hellos and "Gas Gas Gas." Everyone had a lot of passions that they shared and talked about during the meeting.

The Anime Club meets every Friday in room M174 from 2-4 p.m. to discuss and watch anime. Meetings have been going on for over ten years. They are now looking to have another meeting time, but have not figured out when yet. At their meeting on Oct. 29, they started the meeting by watching an anime called Demon Slayer. They finished episode four last meeting, so they watched episodes five and six this time. Demon



The title of the Demon Slayer anime. Photography by Laurel Molloy

Slayer had color changing blades, colorful fight scenes, and strange and unusual demons.

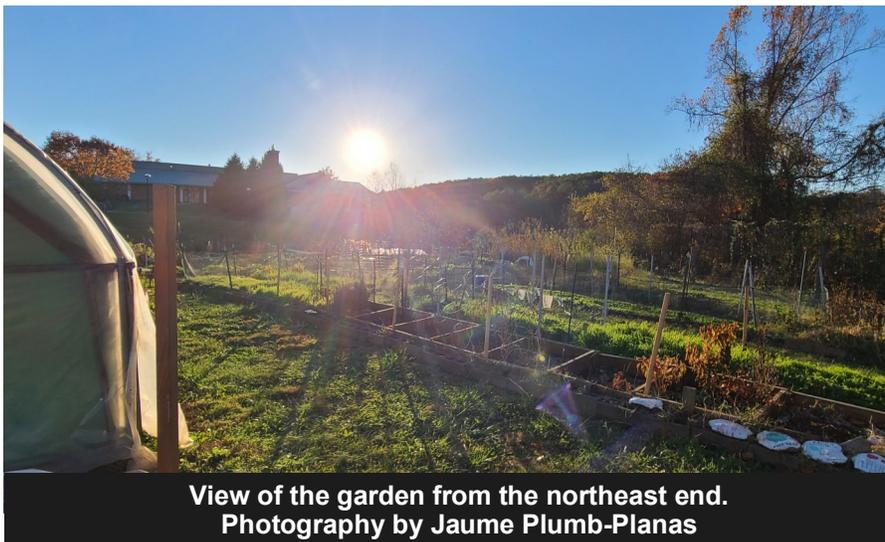
The Anime Club does not have any events planned, but McCormack said, "We are hoping to maybe do a Comic-Con." She wasn't sure if the club would be able to attend the event any time soon, but it is a hopeful option for the future and a way to have fun and get out in the anime community.

"Even if you just want to come check us out and you have no idea what [the club] is, you are more than welcome," McCormack said. "It's just a social space for people to come and bond over shows and things that they read. You don't really have to know what it is to come."

Growth from Community: The Horticulture club

Jaume Plumb-Planas, staff writer

For over a decade, a small tamed patch of the PVCC grounds has been growing and evolving.



**View of the garden from the northeast end.
Photography by Jaume Plumb-Planas**

What began as a garden started by a single student and a few co-advisors, with plants being grown directly out of bags of soil, has evolved into a community of its own.

“We started out with no fence, no beds,” said one of the club’s co-advisors, Director of Student Success and Retention David Lerman, “We tried to plow up the ground, but it’s all fill from when Dickinson building was built, so it’s too rocky. Eventually, we came up with the raised bed model.”

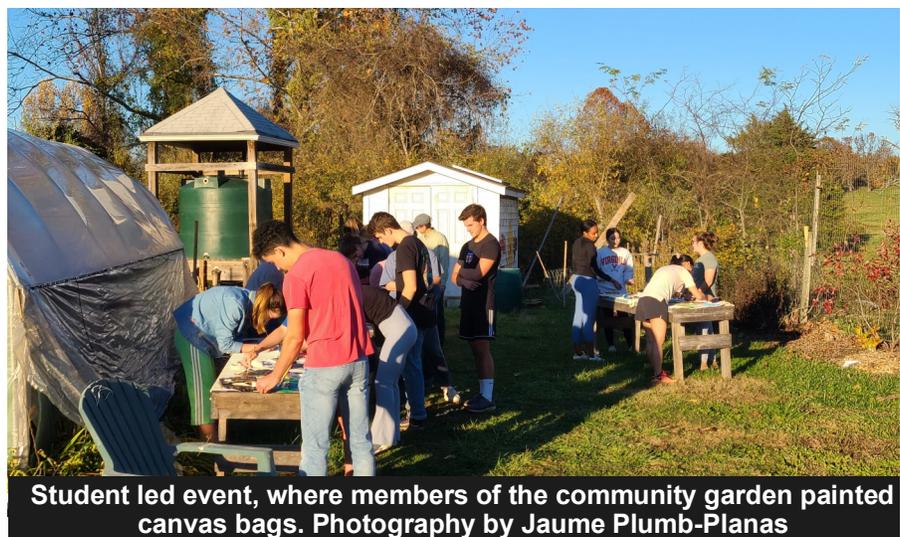
From there the community pitched in. A construction academy that used to be at PVCC built the shed they use for storing tools, a UVA service fraternity raised money for hoop houses (a type of small greenhouse), and a pump and underground water delivery system were added to the garden.

The club not only seeks to be a community project, but also a way for individuals to give back to their community while

gaining a hands-on education. “The club’s initial impetus for being was trying to feed the hungry in the community, and we’ve tried to stay pretty close to that mission. Because we’re at an educational institution, there’s also a component to education ... so some piece of what we’re trying to do is we connect people with the joys of growing their own food. Teaching them sustainability,” said Lerman.

The garden is student led, and they take the initiative when it comes to hosting events. Whoever has permission to grow in a bed can basically grow whatever they want. Students, teachers, and community members grow everything from indigo to sorghum. During the winter, students grow in the greenhouse or in hoop houses and plan out what crops and expansions they would like to see for next year.

“That’s kind of the delight of watching a community garden; it’s that it’s truly organic. It shifts and it ebbs depending who’s involved in it ... I would encourage people who are curious and want to know more to come on down and visit the garden and to contact me, and I’ll give them the tour. Garden@pvcc.edu is the easiest way to reach me,” said Lerman.



Student led event, where members of the community garden painted canvas bags. Photography by Jaume Plumb-Planas

Using Dance to Promote Voter Registration

Chloe Boutin, staff writer

There are many different ways Greek-letter organizations use to raise money for their philanthropy. The Upsilon Beta chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc. at Christopher Newport University (CNU) hosted a dancing competition, Stroll to the Polls, on Saturday, Oct. 23 in order to raise money to promote voter registration awareness.

Greek-letter organizations give students many opportunities within their school and their local community to raise awareness for their particular cause. Each organization has a specific cause to raise awareness and money for which is their philanthropy. While Greek life on the surface looks like a social club for students to find a group of friends, it is also important to remember the reason they exist.

The Upsilon Beta chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc. is an all-black fraternity founded on Dec. 4, 1906. It was formed at Cornell University by seven male students who believed they needed a strong brotherhood for African descendants in their community. It started off as a study and support group but eventually grew to become what it is today. CNU's involvement website The Compass says, "While continuing to stress academic excellence among its members, Alpha also recognized the need to help correct the educational, economic, political, and social injustices faced by African-Americans."

The event took place at the Ferguson Performing Arts Center at CNU. Admission was \$10 for people who bought tickets online ahead of time and \$15 if bought at the door. The audience

was filled with members of all the different sorority and other Greek groups participating in the event who came to cheer on their fellow sisters and brothers. Many students had signs with pictures of their sisters faces on it to hold during their performances. It was clear that this was a big event for the Greek organizations and many people came out in support.

The dances the groups performed included specific dance moves called "strolling." Strolling is a form of dance that Greek Organizations in the National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC) showcase at special events. For this event specifically, groups were given permission by the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity to use these specific dance moves, but made it clear in their introduction speech that use of these dance moves outside of these events is not appropriate.

Eight Groups performed, including the Latino Student Association, Gamma Phi Beta Sorority, K-pop choreography & performance group, Alpha Sigma Alpha Sorority, Delta Gamma Sorority, Phi Mu Sorority, Alpha Delta Pi Sorority, and Alpha Phi Sorority. Along with the groups, two guest speakers came to speak in between some performances.

The first speaker was Cameron Bertrand, a CNU graduate and an Alpha Sigma Alpha Alumni. The second speaker was the mayor of Newport News, McKinley Price. Both speakers talked about the importance of getting involved in our community and having a voice when it comes to ways we can improve it. They spoke about how crucial it is for everyone to vote and make their voices heard because it can have such a big impact on everything around them.

The group that ended up winning the entire competition was the Alpha Phi Sorority. Their performance was well choreographed, and they had the largest and loudest section of sisters and students cheering for them. Although all of the groups that performed did a good job, it was a well-deserved win for the Alpha Phi Sorority.

This event was a great way to promote voter registration while also keeping everybody engaged with the performances. It helped educate people while also giving them a show full of talented dancers. This has been an extremely popular event for the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity and hopefully will continue to be in the future.



Photo from CNU Instagram

Drinks and Astronomy on a Starry Night

Lamont Robinson, staff writer

On the windy and star-filled night of Oct. 26, Speakers from UVA and guests came to talk about astronomy and play trivia games in an event called Astronomy on Tap. The event took place at the Champion Grill location in Stonefield. With the event being close to Halloween, costumes were encouraged; The host, Matthew Pryal, even wore a Buzz Lightyear costume. The event started around 7 p.m. with the first speaker being Yao-Lun Yang, a postdoctoral fellow at the department of astronomy at UVA.

Yang talked about the James Webb Space Telescope, which is planned to launch Dec. 18. The James Webb Space Telescope is tasked to be the successor to the Hubble Space Telescope. It will help people have a better understanding of things like star formations and the universe. He said with this telescope, “We can see much fainter stuff that was previously obscured by dust molecules and allows us to have a totally different view which gives us a way to dissect what’s happening in these star-forming regions.”

After Yang’s talk, a trivia game called Higher or Lower was played. The guests were given two astronomy facts and had to decide whether the second fact given had a higher or lower distance or time compared to the previous question. Guests received prizes for winning, such as lanyards and stickers.

After the trivia game, the next speaker was UVA Astronomy Professor Ed Murphy. Murphy showed the constellations in the sky and told the audience the story of Cassiopeia to explain the names of the constellations, like how Cassiopeia’s constellation is upside down as punishment from the gods. He jokingly said, “Compared to other Greek stories, it’s a great story to tell to your kids.” Murphy also mentioned a partial lunar eclipse scheduled for Nov. 19 where the moon will turn a “deep red color.”

Due to time constraints, the grab-bag trivia game was skipped and the final speaker was up. Graduate research assistant at UVA, Molly Finn, who studies the formation of stars, talked about two irregular dwarf galaxies which can only be seen from the southern hemisphere called The



Magellanic Clouds, which are as old as The Milky Way Galaxy. The two clouds were not originally associated with Ferdinand Magellan, known for his circumnavigation of the world in 1522, and were called names like Nubecula Major and Minor. Magellan became associated with the clouds when sailors would use the name in his honor. Finn said, “Because of its common usage, it eventually worked its way up until the 1850s when John Herschel first used a scientific reference to the common name Magellanic clouds.”

Finn also showed a bridge of stars which connects the galaxies known as The Magellanic Bridge. She said, “[It] further implies that there’s a bunch of strong interactions happening between these two dwarf galaxies,” that are orbiting each other and causing activity among the stars.

After Finn finished her segment, Pryal thanked all the speakers, volunteers, and members of the Charlottesville Astronomical Society who loaned their telescopes for the people who wanted to observe some of the objects in the sky. Pryal also said to check them out on Facebook and Twitter and “Hopefully we’ll have another event coming to you guys in December.”



Photography by Max Walpole

Let There Be Light Exhibition Shines Bright

Maxwell Walpole, assistant editor

On Dec. 10, the grounds around the V. Earl Dickinson building on PVCC's main campus resembled something out of a folktale. Billowing plumes of fire shifted hues from red to purple to green. Yellow lanterns hung from a tree like strange glowing fruit. Flowers flickered gently like candles. This was not a scene from a fairytale. It was the night of a celebrated Charlottesville tradition, the 15th annual Let There Be Light exhibition.

The Let There Be Light exhibition provides a creative space for artists of all backgrounds, from PVCC students and faculty to students from other schools. Each artist is allowed a great degree of artistic freedom to create pieces centered on the unifying theme of light. In fact, light was about the only thing the various artworks at Let There Be Light had in common.

The medium and subject of the exhibits varied wildly. There was a statue of a glowing figure standing over the lake behind the Dickinson building, its reflection making it appear as if an identical figure lurked just beneath the water. Neon signs depicting two purple roses and a rabbit with wings sat on the lawn to the side of the building. A section of the lawn was transformed into a fairytale garden, with large red and white-spotted mushrooms and small winged fairies suspended from a nearby tree. All throughout the exhibit, hundreds of people walked through the dark, stopping to cluster around each piece, drawn to the light like moths to a flame.

However, Let There Be Light nearly did not happen at all. In addition to the problems posed by COVID-19, rainy weather threatened to disrupt the outdoor event. Fortunately, the rain held off just long enough for the event to proceed as planned. "I think [the event] went remarkably well, especially since the weather was a little iffy," said Associate Professor of Art Fenella Belle, one of the exhibit's two curators.

The decision to go ahead with the event despite predictions of rainy weather was a difficult one, but Belle was ultimately glad she chose to proceed. "It was lovely because people came out, and they weren't deterred by the



Photography by Max Walpole

weather at all. I'm still trying to figure out about how many people came out, but I think it was between 1500 and 2000," said Belle.

Another challenge the organizers had to contend with were how to adapt the event to meet COVID-19 safety guidelines. While a bulk of the event was outdoors, thus reducing the threat of transmission, some changes still had to be made to the eating arrangements. In the past, food had been served inside the Dickinson building, which made it an ideal place for attendees to congregate.

"We decided to get some food trucks to come up here instead, and we decided to still do the free hot cider," said Belle, "One of the ideas behind the event is to make it a gift to the community, not just the Piedmont community but the Charlottesville community, so having some free refreshments is a part of that gift."

While Belle was careful not to give any one exhibit preferential treatment, one particular piece held special significance for her and for the wider PVCC community. "There were a few pieces that were very specifically designed to pay tribute to Beryl Solla, the professor who passed away last year, and one of them was the one with the flying bunny and the two roses. That one is one of my favorites," said Belle.

Now that the exhibit is over, Belle and her fellow organizers have begun drawing up tentative plans for next year's Let There Be Light event. "My hope for next year is that we continue to make it a little bit bigger than it was this year and keep getting schools involved with their teachers, and I would like the community event to end up being a little bit bigger," said Belle.

A Christmas Carol: The Live Radio Play



Laurel Molloy, staff writer

The Victory Hall Players, a local acting troupe based in Scottsville, brought the classic *A Christmas Carol* play, adapted for the stage by Joe Landry, into a new light. They took the old tale of Ebenezer Scrooge and his humbugging ways and told it through the lens of a live 1940's radio broadcast full of old-time commercials.

The live radio play debuted on Thursday, Dec. 9 at 7:30 p.m., it went for about 90 minutes and had a 15-minute intermission. It played Dec. 9 through 11 at the same time. The play was held at Victory Hall Theater in the center of downtown Scottsville, right near Baine's Books and Coffee and the James River Brewery. It was hosted by the Scottsville Center for Arts and Nature (SCAN), a non-profit organization whose mission is to create a love of learning, nature, and arts.

Kristin Freshwater, the artistic director of theater at SCAN, explained why the radio play format was chosen. Freshwater said that the radio play format was first chosen because it has less cost, time commitment, and elaborate costumes needed. Everyone is busy toward the holiday season and the approaching end of the school semester. She said, "The format also creates a relaxing environment that is super fun and interactive for the audience."

Tickets were available online or at the entrance of the theater on the nights of the performances. The show is kid friendly and wheelchair accessible. Prices for tickets range from \$5 to

\$15. Children under 12 years old are \$5, seniors 65 years or older and students 13-17 years old are \$10 each, while adults are \$15. Because of COVID-19, everyone in attendance was asked to wear masks. Freshwater explained that the theater is only seating 75 people with social distancing between each group.

"We will be producing Courtney Walker's 'The Mom Journals' May 13th & 14th, 2022. Courtney is a local playwright and a member of 'Victory Hall Players,'" Freshwater wrote. They are still working out the details and will give more information later. The Victory Hall Players try to have several events throughout the year.

Last year the Victory Hall Players did the same radio play before Christmas. The audience laughed at commercials for outdated merchandise as they were pitched, and the stage was full of energy as actors played their different roles with gusto.

"You get to really explore the role that sound and voice plays in storytelling. The live on-stage sound effects help to create a fun and immersive atmosphere for the actors and the audience," Freshwater wrote.

The radio play brings a creative twist to Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* story. It is an event aimed for all ages and backgrounds filled with song, laughter, and Christmas spirit.

Freshwater said, "There's nothing like transporting yourself back to the 1940s to immerse yourself in a classic Christmas story. What could be more nostalgic?"

Live Theatre Returns to Harrisonburg

Yasser Perez, staff writer

Since 1960, Valley Playhouse has provided live entertainment to the city of Harrisonburg. The COVID-19 pandemic, however, brought their nearly 60-year streak of plays and other theatre performances to a screeching halt. Live performances at Court Square Theatre, the Valley Playhouse's outlet for in-person entertainment in Harrisonburg, were discontinued for an indefinite amount of time due to the effects of COVID-19. On Oct. 23, two years to the date of their last live performance, Court Square Theatre was able to present the city of Harrisonburg with a community performance of *Alice in Wonderland*.

Alice in Wonderland is a well known literary work popularized by Broadway productions and various media adaptations, especially Tim Burton's 2010 film adaptation which starred Johnny Depp and Anne Hathaway. It is a family favorite which was evident by the considerable number of children in attendance with their parents and grandparents. With all of Alice's kooky interactions with talking animals and the fantasy world she is trapped in, it is no wonder children's imaginations are captivated by such an eccentric story.

The performers and crew of the production spent two months vigorously preparing for their public presentation of the play, and their hard

work was undeniably evident. Among all of the inhabitants of Wonderland, including the Mad Hatter and the White Rabbit, the most prominent roles belonged to Alice and the Narrator. Alice was played by Jandilee Ramos Richards, who delivered a strong performance throughout the entirety of the play. Jandilee Richards is an eighth grader who has previous experience performing in Court Square Theatre productions playing Roxie in *Annie*. Michael G. Richards, an older gentleman, took on the role of the Narrator and his performance truly helped maintain the continuity of the plot displayed by each of the characters. Michael Richards has also participated in previous works at Court Square Theatre, playing Franklin Delano Roosevelt in a production of *Annie*. Despite the age differences across the cast, all the performers meshed well and truly put on a solid performance with no individual trying to steal the spotlight.

After two years of theatrical absence, Harrisonburg residents were able to indulge in one of the most beloved forms of entertainment among the community. Buttered popcorn, hearty laughs, and a temporary escape from life's stressful obligations were shared in the safe space of the theatre. If current COVID-19 trends continue, these performances are something that will continue to be shared for the foreseeable future.



The cast of *Alice in Wonderland*. Photography by Yasser Perez

Dune: An Uncommonly Ambitious Sci-fi Epic

Max Walpole, assistant editor

On Oct. 22, Denis Villeneuve's long-awaited sci-fi film *Dune* was released in theaters and on HBO Max. With an ensemble cast including Timothée Chalamet, Zendaya, Oscar Isaac, Rebecca Ferguson, Stellan Skarsgård and Javier Bardem, *Dune* follows the struggles of the noble house Atreides in the year 10191. Led by Duke Leto Atreides, his concubine Jessica, and son Paul, house Atreides are given stewardship of the desert planet Arrakis, the source of a valuable drug known as spice. Set up for failure by the emperor himself, the Atreides must contend with the machinations of their bitter rivals house Harkonnen, the designs of the mysterious Bene Gesserit sisterhood, and Paul's destiny to become a psychic super-being, the kwisatz haderach.

Since the original *Dune* novel was released in 1965, over the years many directors and writers have tried their hand at adapting it to the silver screen. Cult director Alejandro Jodorowsky's attempt in the mid-1970s catastrophically collapsed before it had even entered production. And David Lynch's 1984 adaptation was a massive critical and commercial flop, crippled by executive meddling and Lynch's frustration with the project. It seemed as if *Dune* was too impossibly strange and unwieldy to be corralled into the confines of a Hollywood blockbuster. Any time a director tried, the source material eluded their grasp, like desert sand spilling out from a desperately clenched fist.

Taking all this into account, it is nothing short of a miracle that Denis Villeneuve's *Dune* is as cohesive and comprehensible as it is while still preserving the dense worldbuilding and surreal strangeness that makes *Dune* so unique. It is an almost impossibly delicate balancing act, deftly navigated by a sharp script that shows and tells in nearly equal measure. The careful balance between the alien and the familiar also extends to the human characters. They are immersed in a world staggeringly different from our own, but there are many examples of vulnerable, wonderfully human displays of emotion throughout the film. The effectiveness of these emotional moments owes as much to the script as it does to the acting.

Dune is an exceedingly well cast film. There

are no weak links, only actors I wish had more screentime. Timothée Chalamet plays Paul Atreides as a thoughtful, sensitive character, almost underselling his performance. His normally soft-spoken and brooding performance makes his intermittent intense displays of emotion all the more impactful. Oscar Isaac is completely captivating as Duke Leto Atreides, carrying himself with the stubborn, ethereal nobility of a figure from legends of kings and queens of old.

Similar to Chalamet, Stellan Skarsgård's performance as Baron Harkonnen is subdued, his voice barely rising above a gravelly murmur. But with the Baron, it is a different kind of quiet, denoting his cunning and cruelty. What few words he does speak are as calculated as they are dripping with contempt. Rebecca Ferguson displays terrific range as Lady Jessica, one of the most challengingly multi-faceted characters in the film. Ferguson is completely believable as a member of the enigmatic, seeming supernatural Bene Gesserit sisterhood, as a devoted companion to duke Leto and a loving mother to Paul. Even characters with scant few moments of screentime, like Zendaya's Chani and Stephen McKinley Henderson's Thufir Hawat leave a lasting impression.

The soundtrack by Hans Zimmer is easily his most daring and original work yet. The soundscape Zimmer creates is impressively diverse, with guttural hammering percussion, stirring strings, gentle synths and exotic wind instruments all working together in delicate harmony. The heavy usage of female vocalists, their voices distorted into ethereal chants or spine-tingling wails, gives *Dune*'s score an imposing, spiritual quality. In an IMAX theater with speakers that rumble your seats, the majesty and mystery of Zimmer's score is visceral and overwhelming.

Dune is a startlingly unique film that earnestly manages to adapt seemingly impossibly complex source material into a thought-provoking and engrossing 2.6 hour cinema experience. With stunning effects, a star-studded cast and an ambitious and complex story, *Dune* feels truly deserving of being called an epic.

Dune was released on streaming platforms on Dec. 3 and returned to IMAX theaters for a limited time on Dec. 3.

Ghostbusters: Afterlife Offers Nostalgia

Lamont Robinson, staff writer

Jason Reitman's *Ghostbusters: Afterlife* continues the story of the original *Ghostbusters* franchise after the audience backlash to the 2016 *Ghostbusters* movie. Callie (Carrie Coon) and her children Phoebe (Mckenna Grace) and Trevor (Finn Wolfhard) are forced to move to an old farmhouse in Oklahoma that was owned by Callie's father. The children soon learn that their grandfather was a Ghostbuster, specifically Egon Spengler (Harold Ramis), one of the original Ghostbusters. The children discover why Egon moved to Oklahoma and what he was trying to stop.

The characters are the strong point of the movie. Grace gives a great performance as Phoebe, who takes after Egon with her genius intellect and socially-awkward personality. Mr. Grooberson (Paul Rudd) gives some great comedic moments while also giving exposition to the kids. However, it is strange how he is one of the only characters that remembers the existence of the original Ghostbusters crew. Podcast (Logan Kim) provides great scenes with his energetic

personality and chemistry with Phoebe. All of the characters in the movie provide some comedic and heartwarming moments and give new and old fans a somewhat fresh cast to bond with.

However, one of the biggest problems with *Ghostbusters: Afterlife* is the constant nostalgia pandering throughout the movie. Whether it is a character saying, "Who you're gonna call" or bringing back the Stay-Puft Marshmallow Man for no logical reason, the movie spews references and has such a similar story to the original *Ghostbusters* that it makes the movie feel unoriginal.

One of the only ghosts you see in the movie, the Muncher, might as well be the Slimer, except it eats metal. Some parts of the movie feel too forced, for example, near the end of the movie, a scene that should be exciting feels weak due to how abrupt the scene is.

Ghostbusters: Afterlife gives a younger generation a chance to get into the series while also giving older fans many references to the original movies, but the nostalgia pandering can be too much for its own good and makes the movie seem too scared to try anything different.



The Stay-Puft Marshmallow Man. Photo courtesy of Sony Press kit

Venom: Let There Be Carnage keeps it simple

Lamont Robinson, staff writer

Instead of being a sequel that attempts to live on a grander scale, *Venom: Let There Be Carnage* focuses on the strengths of the previous film in order to make a more enjoyable movie-watching experience. While struggling to coexist with his symbiotic companion known as Venom (Tom Hardy), Eddie Brock (Tom Hardy) attempts to reconcile with his ex, Ann Weying (Michelle Williams) and revive his journalism career by interviewing the convicted serial killer Cletus Kasady (Woody Harrelson). After a physical confrontation with Brock, and a taste of his blood, Kasady transforms into the bloodthirsty symbiote known as Carnage. After breaking out of prison, Kasady goes on a rampage to find the person he loves. Brock and Venom must settle their problems and work together to stop Carnage.

The relationship between Venom and Brock is the star of the movie. While Brock wants to lay low due to the events of the previous movie and

live a normal life, Venom wants to fight criminals and eat their brains. Even though they have a rocky relationship, Brock and Venom do care about and support each other. Brock wants to prevent Venom from being found to keep him safe while Venom tries to help Brock any way he can, he even helps Brock find where Kasady hid his missing victims. Harrelson delivers a great performance as Kasady and Carnage, making them an intimidating foe for Brock and Venom.

However, it is a shame that Kasady does not have a more noticeable reaction towards his new powers. He walked out of the prison like he did not turn into a monster with tendrils, claws, and a nastier attitude than his own.

The action scenes are wild and a treat to see, but they can be confusing to look at when most scenes take place at night. In 90 minutes, *Venom: Let There Be Carnage* provides a simple, yet entertaining movie with chaotic action, enjoyable characters, and humor to keep your eyes on the screen.



Carnage killing a guard. Photo courtesy of Sony Pictures press kit

Eternals Dazzles in Opening Weekend



Yasser Perez, staff writer

For many years, *Thor: The Dark World* was considered the worst installment in the Marvel Cinematic Universe, amassing a Tomatometer of 66% among critics on the movie review website *Rotten Tomatoes*. With the arrival of *Eternals*, however, it has now dethroned *Thor: The Dark World* as the worst Marvel movie to ever exist in the MCU according to critics.

Negative reviews began to appear a week prior to the film's official release, and critics immediately began bashing Marvel's newest team of superheroes. Critics can be unnecessarily negative at times, so I had to check out this movie for myself upon its release. I saw the movie on Friday, Nov. 5, and Saturday, Nov. 6, to investigate for myself if the movie was as bad as critics made it out to be.

The movie is two hours and thirty-seven minutes long, which is not unbearable by my standards and almost necessary to tell a story as complex as those of the *Eternals*. According to Marvel, the official synopsis of the film is as follows: "The Eternals, a race of immortal beings with superhuman powers who have secretly lived on Earth for thousands of years, reunite to battle the evil Deviants." While watching the movie, this was truly the case, but it was also so much more.

There are 10 superheroes who make up what is ultimately known as "Eternals," and although

they are not human, they still face much of the same challenges humans face when trying to seamlessly coexist within a large group. While the Eternals functioned as a cohesive group for a long period of time, their individual personalities still persisted and even broke through during inopportune moments, causing chaos at times and irreversible consequences.

Compared to past MCU team-up films such as *Avengers* and *Guardians of the Galaxy*, *Eternals* is much like a new iPhone and its predecessors, incredibly similar yet vastly different. Not only does *Eternals* introduce new cosmic villains and characters, but it also introduces never before seen forms of bonding in the MCU. The film's director, Chloé Zhao, manages to maintain her signature style and still have the film feel like a Marvel movie.

"There are many different ways a human can be heroic. I want audiences to see themselves in these heroic moments and feel they can relate," Zhao said in an interview with *Wired*. Not only does Zhao use the characters in *Eternals* in unique ways, but she also features the most diverse cast in recent history when it comes to superhero movies, including an openly gay superhero and a deaf superhero.

Eternals felt like a completely different film compared to its other Marvel predecessors, but it is because of this difference that the movie is not only enjoyable, but an amazing film in its own right.

Stepping Back in Time at the Paramount



The Paramount sign at day. Photography by Laurel Molloy

Laurel Molloy, staff writer

The Paramount theater celebrated its 90-year anniversary with a showing of Charlie Chaplin's 1936 film *Modern Times* on Saturday Nov. 27. For this celebratory event, ticket prices were taken back to older times at only \$0.25 a person. The show started at 4 p.m. and went for about an hour and a half.

The Paramount has displayed many films ever since its opening on Thanksgiving Eve 90 years ago. It is a bright staple in the middle of the Downtown Mall. Its glowing signs light up the night traffic along the walking mall as people pass by.

"Enjoy the movie," the ID checker called out as people walked into the Paramount theater on Nov. 27. COVID-19 protocols at the Paramount theater ask everyone to wear masks unless actively eating or drinking in the theater, and before entering everyone must show their vaccination card and a form of ID.

Once people step inside the festive hallway and show their tickets, they can explore the theater and its raised balconies. The theater glowed with Christmas trees and warm lights. People could buy popcorn and warm tea at the concession stand among other goodies to warm themselves from the chill.

Chaplin was a famous comedian, actor, and producer from the early twentieth century. He

mainly worked on silent films like *The Great Dictator*, *The Kid*, *Modern Times*, and *The Gold Rush*. *Modern Times* is a comedic film about finding work and trying to fit into modern life in the 1900's. All spoken lines that are vital to the film are portrayed on cards flashed across the screen; everything else is acted out in comedic fashion.

The Paramount theater will be showing several events in December. They will present the classic Christmas tale of *A Christmas Story* on Dec. 19 at 1 p.m. Tickets for that show can be found online at the much more modern price of \$8 for adults and \$5 for children under 12 years old. The Paramount will also present a live broadcast of *The Magic Flute* for opera lovers on Dec. 22 at 2 p.m. and many other fascinating events.

"That was fun," an audience member remarked about Chaplin's *Modern Times* film. Many people seemed to agree because laughter sparked and jumped throughout the theater as Chaplin and the rest of the cast performed on the large screen.

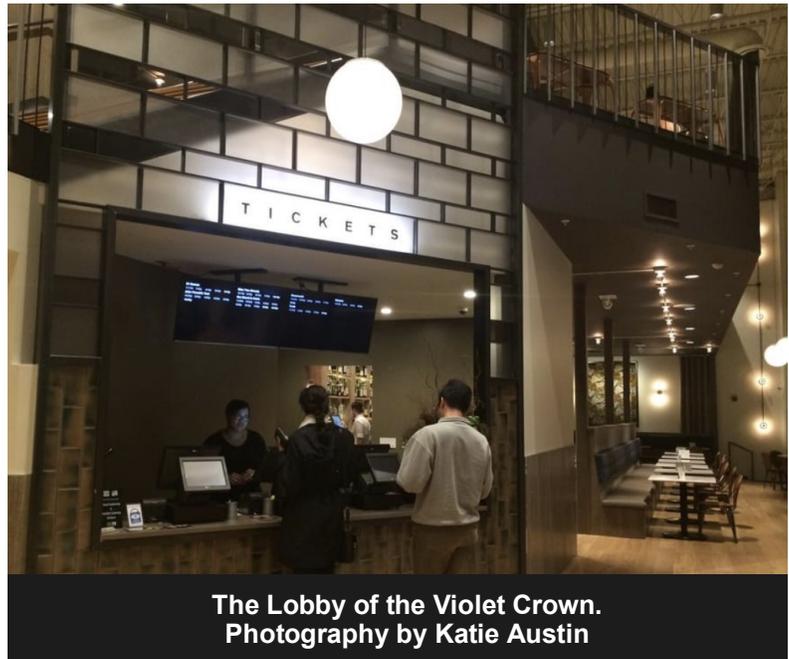
The Paramount theater has brought laughter and excitement for 90 years, and they plan to continue throughout the holiday season and onward. The Paramount theater shows old films and new films alike. Films like *Modern Times* still bring smiles and laughter to people and transport them into a different time and place.

Finding Gucci in a Movie Theater

Katie Austin, staff writer

On Nov. 29, I went to one of my favorite movie theaters in Charlottesville at the downtown mall area: the Violet Crown. Violet Crown surely fits the expectations it holds from their reviews. Even their concession stand holds up to scrutiny, from sodas, candies, hot dogs, pretzels, pizzas, coffee, espresso, and tea. The meals and drinks do not go higher than \$12 and no lower than \$3. For moviegoers who are over 21, they have a nice IPA (\$9) and an amazing La Marca prosecco (\$9 per glass or \$34 for the bottle). The menu is available on their website.

House of Gucci tells the story of an Italian woman named Patrizia Reggiani who was an outsider that started from humble beginnings. Then she marries into the well known family, the Gucci family. Patrizia has unbridled ambition which begins to unravel the family legacy and triggers a reckless spiral of betrayal, decadence, revenge, and ultimately murder. Overall this movie has become a favorite because every single scene puts the viewer at the edge of their seat. The movie has so much drama,



The Lobby of the Violet Crown.
Photography by Katie Austin

passion, and emotions for each character and scene that has been laid out for this movie. Lady Gaga (Stefani Joanne Angelina Germanotta) really gives her character Patrizia Reggiani life and drama. The amount of emotion that Stefani gives to the person who she is portraying is perfect. She truly knows how to get viewers to feel the emotion of the characters.

My review is simple, the whole place just keeps on getting better every time, from the amazing food and drinks to an amazing atmosphere. The experience of wining and dining while laying back in a reclining comfy chair is my favorite part. Also the staff was very kind, so warm when greeting patrons, and did an amazing job of keeping the place clean. They truly never disappoint and make it a pleasure to come while never wanting to leave.

Overall, the Violet Crown movie theater has brought true elegance to a simple movie experience, from the amazing food to the drinks and the reclining chairs. You could not ask for more high-end experience at a movie theater today. It is truly a place that I recommend going and enjoying what they have to offer.

The tickets are \$11 for students. *House of Gucci* is rated R.



Photography by Katie Austin

Time Traveling in Cville's Retro Arcade

Laurel Molloy, staff writer

Screens glow throughout Decades Arcade as people play pinball, Mrs. Pacman, and many other games. Customers talk as they go from game to game. After the entry fee of \$12, all games are free to play.

There are myriad games. People can compete against each other in Mrs. Pacman as she munches her way across the screen. Cruis'n World is a fast-paced car driving game where the brakes are almost never used. The main room had an assortment of different pinball tables to choose from. Of thirty-five pinball tables, "our eldest table is Silver," said Josh, the attendant on duty. He enthusiastically explained that Silver has been around since 1957. A bunch of the games are vintage, though the arcade has some new games as well like their Mandalorian Pinball table.

Five rooms were packed with games, laughter, and soft robotic noises. "The blue room is where you will find skeeball, air hockey, a miniature bowling alley, [and] a couple of other games," said Josh. An upstairs also has more games, a couch, and a jukebox where patrons can pick from a variety of songs. People can plug in the song they want and listen as the lights glow around them. Artist choices include Neil Diamond, Frank Sinatra, The Cure, Sting, and many more.

Decades Arcade is in Kathy's Shopping Center on Carlton Road near Beer Run, Belmont Pizza, and the train tracks. It is in a large warehouse, sharing space with Champion Brewery and selling some of the beer themselves as well. It is open to the public Friday 5-10 p.m., Saturday 1:30-10 p.m., and Sunday 1:30-6 p.m., but people can book events for a single party on Monday through Thursday. For pinball lovers, Tuesday is also open for the Dominion Pinball league at 7 p.m.

Josh said that they have been in business for almost four years, and during that time all high scores are kept on a scoreboard. The high scores on most games are never reset, so you can compete to overthrow real people's titles on the scoreboard.

Throughout Decades Arcade, many precautions against COVID-19 are in place to keep all the gamers safe. Scattered near games and throughout the different rooms are hand sanitizer stations that ask everyone to use it before and after playing a game. Many fans and air purifiers also get the air moving. All customers are asked to wear masks as they play different games and talk. As one more safety measure, Decades Arcade also has UV germicidal lights perched atop some of the games to act as a disinfectant.

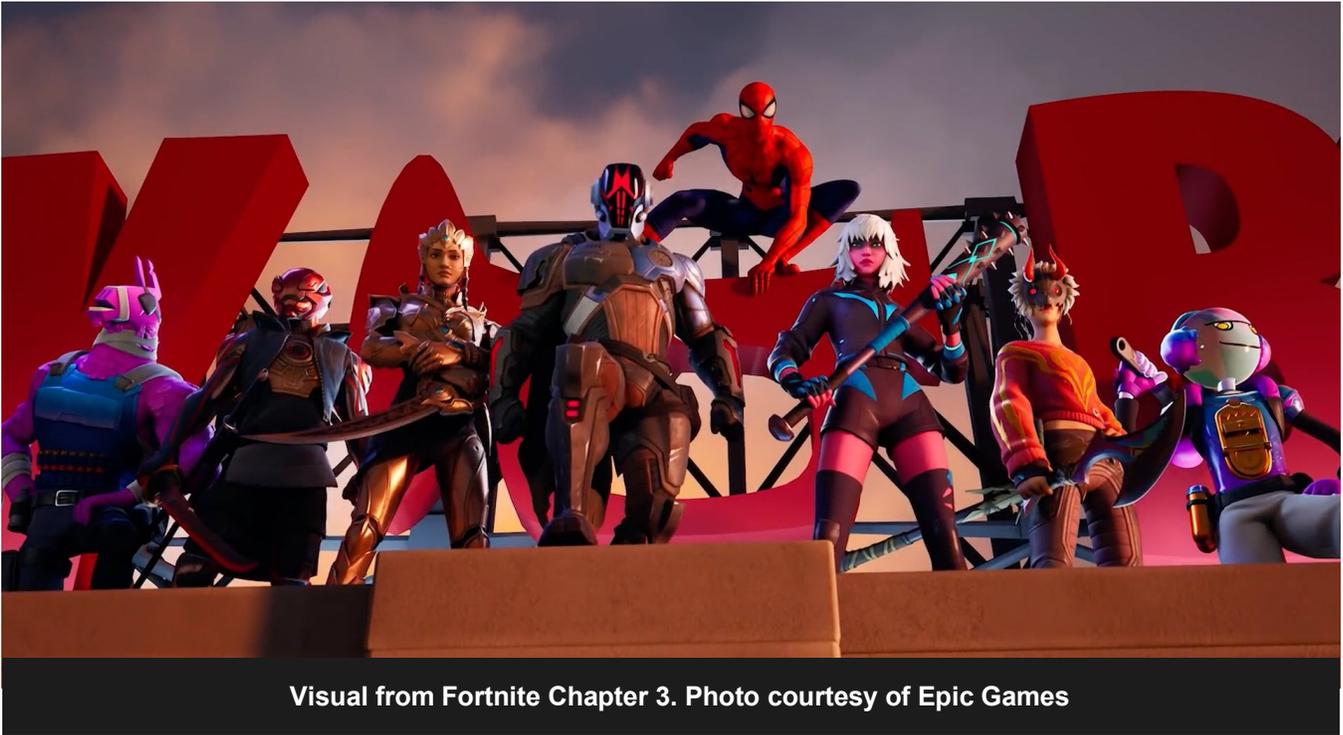
Josh also said, "Probably once a weekend we spray down the games... but these lights do the cleaning for us." They are trying very hard to keep the space safe for everyone with many precautions in place. Food is not allowed to be brought into the arcade either, but near the back they have a vending machine for drinks and snacks if people get thirsty or hungry. People wear wristbands so they can come and go to get food outside the arcade .

No place in Charlottesville is quite like Decades Arcade. For \$12 a person, people can spend all day playing games and hanging out with friends. The building is filled to the brim with bright displays, old games, and soft music. It is a place where childhood never dies and games are for all times.



Ms. Pacman screen. Photography by Laurel Molloy

New Update Maintains Fortnite's Popularity



Visual from Fortnite Chapter 3. Photo courtesy of Epic Games

Yasser Perez, staff writer

On Dec. 5, Fortnite introduced a new chapter to their game titled Chapter 3. In Fortnite, chapters are distinguished by their seasons; Chapter 1 had 10 seasons, Chapter 2 had eight seasons, and Chapter 3 is still yet to be determined. Each season brings with it a BattlePass: an addition which can be purchased and which grants exclusive rewards such as skins and V-bucks, Fortnite's in-game currency, as one levels up throughout the season.

Fortnite made its debut in the gaming scene in July of 2017, and its popularity grew rapidly. According to an article by Culture Vultures, by August 2018 Fortnite had reached its peak with 78.3 million concurrent players, an impressive feat, since most games are predominately popular upon release. Video games are a lot like blockbuster movies, once the next big thing is released a lot of consumers jump to the newest item on the market; but that is not the case with Fortnite.

There are two main reasons for Fortnite's longevity and popularity: its pop culture references and its building feature. Fortnite is a third-person shooter game that loves to include as

many pop-related features as possible. These include emotes (dances and gestures) that are popular on TikTok, guest concerts from well known artists such as Ariana Grande, and skins (player cosmetics) from popular movies and TV shows such as Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) characters and Naruto characters. With the introduction of Chapter 3, Spiderman has entered the game as a playable character, joining a huge list of famous comic icons. Additionally, building has become a game changer. In most other shooting games, cover is acquired from the player's own surroundings, but in Fortnite, one can build their own cover, providing opportunities that are unavailable in other traditional shooter games such as Call of Duty.

Upon the release of Chapter 3, millions experienced technical difficulties due to the massive amount of players trying to enjoy the release. Fortnite stated, "by far the most players we've ever seen at the launch of a season," in a statement on Twitter addressing the reason why so many players were having trouble playing the game. With many new items and features introduced in Chapter 3 drawing old and new players in, Fortnite is showing no sign of slowing down.

Where Creativity and Coin Collide



Maggie's Pottery stand. Photography by Laurel Molloy

Laurel Molloy, staff writer

Tucked between murals and sculptures, stalls were scattered throughout IX art park for the farmer's market on Dec. 5. People crowded amongst the art and tents perusing the merchandise all morning. The Farmers Market at IX is an event on Thursdays 4-8 p.m. and on Saturdays 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Many stalls showed off a variety of products on Dec. 5. Local farms like Soul Soleil Farm, Agriberry Farm, and Free Union Grass Farm, had vegetables, mushrooms, and other fresh produce to put on the table.

An assortment of art stalls like Lena's Craft Corner, Maggie's Pottery, Bellavance Ink, and Crescent Moon Confections had jewelry, pottery, and other vibrant arts. There were also food trucks supplying lunch for all and baked goods to snack on.

One delectable stand was Odyssey Chocolate. It is a local Charlottesville business that takes cacao beans from all over the place and turns them into chocolate. "We sorted the beans from all over the world," said the person managing the booth. She gave out samples of Ugandan, Venezuelan, Bolivian, and Colombian chocolate bar blends. All chocolate bars were \$11.50, except for their wine infused bars, and if someone

bought three chocolate bars, it was \$30 instead. The booth manager said the chocolate is also available in Rebecca's Natural Foods and other local places along with being found online on their website.

The art stalls also drew people's attention. People gazed at Lena's Craft Corner, a floral and pineapple themed stand bursting with bright colors. Lena makes flowers, hair clips, and many other lively products out of Duct Tape. She had pens with flowers on the end, each petal curled around the next, and sunny pineapple earrings. Lena said, "I will be here next week and the week after." People can check her out on Instagram to see her products and keep up with where she will be.

The farmer's market was active. A lot of dogs looked around curiously and investigated all the smells as their owners perused. Kids peered about themselves as they walked through the crowds with their parents. Music was also heard throughout the market as a man played his violin. Smells and sounds wafted around the farmer's market.

All of IX had a spirited atmosphere as the soft music played and people talked as they passed paintings of birds, sculptures of squids, and stands of food alike. Come by IX on Thursdays and Saturdays to experience the market.

Pop-up Market: Art Calling to the Senses

Laurel Molloy, staff writer

The sun warmed the morning chill away as people strolled down Stonefield at the Pop-up Market Craft Cville on Saturday Oct. 23. A breeze swept the street as people tried to sell their colorful wares. The market was organized by Craft Cville, a group that celebrates vintage, handcrafted items and art in this community.

A collage of white and blue tents dotted in front of Regal Stonefield IMAX and Screen X, Duck-Donuts, and the other permanent shops. An assortment of items were sold including handcrafted soap, scarves, cutting boards, paintings, fresh vegetables, and much more. The sellers stayed at Stonefield from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday, watching people come and go.

Several shops participated in a door prize giveaway through Instagram. After commenting and tagging two people in a post, shoppers had a chance to win free credit or items. Each of the sellers taking part in the door prize had a post on Craft Cville's Instagram account giving directions on how to win.

A stall called Bud and Thorn sold scarves with zippered pockets and masks. The tent was draped with colorful cloth of checkered flannel, bright cottons, and simple dark colors to go with most outfits. The seller pointed out the pockets. They were big enough to fit a large phone, car keys, and a thin wallet all at once. Along with selling their wares in person, Bud and Thorn has an Etsy shop with over a thousand sales. They also participated in the door prize giveaway.

Another stall sold carpets with moths embroidered on them, pottery, and slug figurines by Abigail Treece. Treece said that this was her second event in Charlottesville. She said Craft Cville's next event is Nov. 20. More information can be found on Craft Cville's Facebook page when the event nears.

Amy Shawley Paquette sold drawings of birds, from black vultures to blue herons. The drawings fluttered in the strong breeze, their small eyes watching the passersby. She explained that she is part of the Charlottesville birding community. "I work from all my own photographs," she said.

Shawley Paquette said it is a challenge to find

different types of birds to photograph then draw. Sometimes she goes into the woods to capture pictures of birds, and other times they come to her birdfeeder. Paquette sold 4x5 prints of her drawings for \$4 and 8x10 prints for \$15. Her Etsy account is called KeswickForest.

The pop-up market had almost everything. It had handmade wooden pens from DSL Woodturning and goat milk soap from Moth Wood that moisturizes and cleans all at once. Kristina Parker from K.P. Knitwork was garbed as a buccaneer selling felt hats and embroidered towels. Art caught the eye as it hung in the sun. Canvases of painted pumpkins and flowers had brightly colored glass stuck to them. Shoppers could find CBD products from Albemarle Hemp Co. and The Little Flower Field's body work selections. Vintage albums from Styx and Stones was a busy attraction.

"I enjoy craft markets like this. I get to find unique gifts and just see and appreciate things people are making locally," said a local shopper. Many people seemed to agree as a steady flow of people passed through the stalls as lunch came and went. Conversation dotted down the street as people looked at the numerous crafted items. People smiled as they glanced at the shining art and sweet-smelling creams.



A rack displaying colorful art.
Photography by Laurel Molloy

Is Dave Chappelle Uncancellable?



Yasser Perez, staff writer

The internet can be an incredibly judgmental place, and in recent years, judgment has only increased, especially towards high-profile celebrities. Not many people can be considered “uncancellable,” but Dave Chappelle may have just survived one of the harshest backlashes of 2021.

In early October, Chappelle released his most recent stand-up comedy special on Netflix titled *The Closer*. In the special, Chappelle made some jokes about the LGBT community that sparked a lot of controversy from the community and their supporters. The transgender community was the most vocal, expressing their outrage about the special’s content and Netflix’s support of the special.

According to the Washington Post, Netflix’s CEO, Ted Sarandos, expressed his support of the special stating, “Our members enjoy it, and it’s an important part of our content offering.”

It seemed that Chappelle had his back against the wall and that his career was done for, after all, few people have been able to keep their popularity and career intact after upsetting the LGBT community. Chappelle, however, managed to not only survive the controversy, but also profit off of it quite comfortably.

Chappelle set out on a limited national tour to promote his documentary *Untitled*, which was produced during the pandemic. Chappelle claimed that this documentary would set the record straight and determine if he was indeed the awful, insensitive person the LGBT community suggested him to be.

The 11-city tour ended in his hometown of

Washington, D.C., in Capital One Arena to a sold-out crowd on Nov. 23. The show provided a screening of his documentary, a musical performance from his dear friend Erykah Badu, and a small stand-up set after the conclusion of the documentary. Phone use was prohibited during the event, and phones were locked up in Yondr pouches upon entry (small, lockable pouches to prevent access to cell phones during the show).

Chappelle’s documentary was filmed during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic in his current residence of Yellow Springs, Ohio. Like many small towns, Yellow Springs was feeling the devastating economical effects of the pandemic. Chappelle’s documentary demonstrated how he sprung into action and hosted stand-up comedy shows on a nightly basis in a corn field to bolster his small town’s economy. Not only did Chappelle and his team follow COVID-19 guidelines with social distancing and rapid testing, but the small businesses in Yellow Springs began to see increased foot traffic due to his shows.

Untitled unequivocally portrayed Chappelle as not only a caring member of his community, but incapable of being the awful and inconsiderate person he was described to be. The sold-out crowd roared with laughter and genuine enjoyment was felt throughout the arena for the five plus hour event. Despite the enormous amount of internet hate, Chappelle’s therapy, in the form of comedy, was still greatly needed and appreciated in these unprecedented times.

Although Chappelle may have taken a huge blow to his career with his recent special, he has proven that he is, in fact, uncancellable.

Classifieds

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Contact Us

The Forum

501 College Dr.
Charlottesville, VA 22902
twhyte@pvcc.edu
www.piedmontforum.com

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The Forum Staff

(Listed alphabetically)

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