



A flyer urging the use of condoms hanging in Bannow Science Center. The same flyers have been spotted in several buildings on campus despite the availability of condoms on campus.

Flyers Promote Use of Contraception on Campus

BY CLAIRE DEMARCO ERICA SCHINDLER  
Copy Editor Assistant News Editor

Among the many club and academic posters that we see littering our academic buildings' halls, is an anonymous poster titled "Top 10 Reasons to Use Condoms." Labeled "In Honor of World Aids Day" (which is Dec. 1st), the poster is complete with 10 reasons to use a condom.

In descending order, the University's unapproved poster lists reasons – some cheeky, some genuine and some borderline offensive – to use condoms. Benefits covered in the list include the lower price compared to birth control pills, the ease in comparison to a shot of Penicillin – commonly used to treat Syphilis – and that it can save your life.

Some other points take a more playful approach, with the complicated spelling of many STDs and the fact that parents may not be prepared to be grandparents yet. However, where the sign's messaging may get clouded by its wording is number two, which may earn a laugh, but is not necessarily appropriate. The messaging is entirely distracted by the language choice in points five ("Your date was lying when he said he was a virgin")

and six ("Your date was lying when she said she'd never done this before"), which branch into the use of universal shaming and fear to encourage the use of condoms.

This poster had raised eyebrows in Canisus and Egan (where it has been seen since as early as December) not necessarily because of its topic, but because of its method of expressing its message. When the university's campus is littered with posters and messages about health and wellness, this being the university's only messaging on contraception is cause for student and faculty concern.

Current University policy states the following regarding contraception or birth control on campus: "Fairfield University, a Jesuit Catholic institution, is committed to the dignity of the human person and the goodness of sexual expression as found in the teachings of the Roman Catholic faith ... as a Catholic institution committed to the dignity of the human person we (Fairfield employees, students or club members acting in an official capacity, organizations

and events sponsored by the university) will not sell or offer any contraceptive devices or birth control ... " The full statement on contraception can be found on page 104 of the 2023-24 Student Handbook.

As explained in the handbook, it is against University policy for anyone to sell or give out condoms or other forms of birth control on campus. But what about hanging a poster like the one recently found around campus? According to page 14 of the Student Handbook, students are permitted to post items such as posters around campus. However, they should check with the administrative offices of their desired building before doing so.

The policy also reads that all posters should have a University disclaimer and that posting flyers in violation of university policy is prohibited. This indicates that the "Top 10 Reasons to Use Condoms" poster would not have gotten university approval.

Fairfield University's official stance on sexual health promotes little other than abstinence. This type

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

FUSA Presidential Election Takes Surprising Turn

BY ASHLEY DEVLIN  
Head News

Fairfield University's Student Association elected a new president on Feb. 27. In a turn of events Andrew Mejia '26 and his running mate, Bryan Santos '26 won the presidency through write-in votes.

Prior to this announcement FUSA hosted a debate on Thursday, Feb. 22 in the lower level of the Barone Campus Center. Although the audience presence was fairly low, most members had many questions for the candidate.

Throughout the process, there was only one candidate officially running for president: Giovanni Young '25 and his Vice-President Connor Hernon '25. Due to this circumstance, the debate was very one-sided, where Young answered the majority of the questions and Hernon contributed at points. While Hernon is currently in Australia, he was present on Zoom and added to the discussion.

The debate was divided into sections. Young began with an opening statement that detailed why he was running for president.

Young said, "We all came here for a specific reason: one-on-one engagement with professors, a tight community of peers and strong academics."

However, with the growing number of applicants and students, many are worried that the school environment is changing, making Fairfield an institution that they might not have applied to if they were in the current applicant pool. Young reassured that he is trying to preserve the nature of the university in his opening statement.

When he was asked about over-acceptance and a severe lack of housing, he explained that "the University is aware of the problem" and they are trying to fix it through current construction projects, but they still should be doing more.

Regarding concerns about academics, Young described that the Dolan School of Business currently has programs that allow easy career exploration that he hopes to bring to the College of Arts and Sciences and the Engineering School. These would help build upon the current career

offerings each school has.

The FUSA committee then moved on to the next portion of the debate, where members of FUSA asked about Young and Hernon's campaign platform. Junior Devone Martin asked why Young wants to be FUSA President and what makes him a unique candidate fit for the role. Young stated that he is part of every aspect of student life and can tell specifically where "the student body is hurting".

The committee continued to ask questions regarding his platform, where he revealed that he wanted to reduce the overall cost of textbooks for students to \$250. Currently, textbooks can cost up to \$1,000 each semester. For many, this is a heavy financial burden that Young and Hernon wanted to alleviate.

Young and Hernon were hopeful to create many new, progressive programs, including late-night food trucks from 10 p.m. to 12 a.m. throughout the week. This would provide students with late-night classes a dining option. Currently, many students are forced to order food after their late-night classes.

Students agree with Young's plan for dining options on campus and Sophomore Gabriella Fideleo stated, "This would've been really nice to have last year and this year."

The current budget for FUSA is \$400,000. They believe they can utilize this better by cutting smaller programs that have historically low attendance rates. When asked about how he would respond to students who excitedly attend these smaller events, Young said, "we can incorporate similar ideas into bigger programs that have high attendance so we're not wasting any resources and we can allocate more money to larger events, like Pres Ball."

When asked about the rising ticket prices of events, like President's Ball and Clam Jam Young said, "an expanding student population allows us to lower prices for events, like Pres Ball and Clam Jam" and cutting smaller programs allows for "a reallocation of the budget that better benefits the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



SPRING BREAK HOURS:

FRIDAY, MARCH 1ST - SUNDAY, MARCH 10TH



FRI. 3/1: CLOSSES AT 2PM  
SAT. 3/2 - SAT 3/9: CLOSED  
SUN. 3/10: 4PM-8PM



FRI. 3/1 - SUN. 3/10: CLOSED



FRI. 3/1: CLOSSES AT 7PM  
MON. 3/4 - FRI. 3/8: 9AM-2PM  
SAT. 3/9: CLOSED  
SUN. 3/10: 4PM-9:30PM



FRI. 3/1 - SUN. 3/10: CLOSED



FRI. 3/1 - SUN. 3/10:  
CLOSED



FRI. 3/1 - SUN. 3/10:  
CLOSED




FRI. 3/1: 7:30AM-3PM  
SAT. 3/2-SUN. 3/10:  
CLOSED

FOOD TRUCKS

FRI. 3/1 - SUN 3/10:  
CLOSED

STAGSHospitality





### CRIME BEAT REPORT

Compiled by Kathleen Morris  
Information contributed by the Department of Public Safety

2/22  
8 a.m. - 12 p.m.  
An elevator in Bannow Science Center caused three entrapments over the course of the day. The individuals who were trapped were released and the company rectified the issue.

2/23  
1 a.m.  
A fire alarm was set off in Meditz Hall, forcing students to evacuate the building. The cause for the alarm has yet to be determined.

2/23  
1 a.m.  
DPS identified a female student for underage intoxication. The student was identified at the checkpoint on Loyola Drive, as she was found unconscious in an Uber. Fortunately, a transport was not necessary.

2/24  
1 a.m.  
Residence Life contacted DPS due to disorderly content in Regis Hall. After a rowdy gathering had been shut down, a student became uncooperative with a Resident Assistant and was referred to the Dean of Students.

2/25  
1:45 p.m.  
A student was stranded in an elevator in Regis Hall. The company was called and the student was rescued.

2/26  
12:30 p.m.  
A student reported that their vehicle had been struck in the rear while driving. The perpetrator did not stop, which led the accident to be labeled as a hit and run. The incident remains under investigation.

# Beta Alpha Psi Leads Initiative for Il Ngwesi Resource Center

BY BRIDGET KEOHANE  
Assistant News Editor

Fairfield University’s Beta Alpha Psi (BAP) chapter organized a service initiative on Feb. 10 that involved packing books for the Il Ngwesi Resource Center, a conservancy located in the Central Highlands of Kenya.

BAP, the National Accounting Honors Society, was founded in 1919. Fairfield’s chapter is led by accounting professors Milo W. Peck, Jr., CPA and Jo Ann Drusbosky, CPA who help promote BAP’s mission of “ ... providing opportunities for self-development, service and association among members and practicing professionals, and encouraging a sense of ethical, social, and public responsibility.”

Members of BAP tend to be active volunteers in the Fairfield community as all members are required to meet a minimum of seven service hours and seven professional hours each semester. This month, BAP’s service coordinators Matthew Adamski ’24 and Meghan Morrissey ’24 organized the service initiative for the Il Ngwesi Resource Center in an effort to help its expansion of central library satellites that support schools and communities.

On Feb. 10, six members of BAP alongside other volunteers packed around 30 boxes of books from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. for the Kenyan community served by the Il Ngwesi Resource Center. Mary Ann and Ralph Stroup, founders and leaders of the nonprofit Kenyan Health Care Initiatives, have worked closely with this community for years and have identified the need to improve literacy in Kenya.



Photo Courtesy of FairfieldDolan Instagram  
On Feb. 10, members of Fairfield’s Accountng Honor Society Beta Alpha Psi spent the morning packing around 30 boxes of books that will help the effort to lift literacy in Kenya.

In a July 22 Facebook post on the INRC’s page, Mary Ann Stroup commented “ICRC is working to lift literacy. They are most excited that satellite libraries will be established in each of the seven conservancy villages.” By the time all donations are collected this year, the Il Ngwesi Resource Center is hoping to ship out about four times the amount of boxes packed on Feb. 10.

When reflecting on her day packing books for the center, BAP member Madison Gioffreda ’24 stated, “Volunteering for individuals as selfless as Mary Ann and Ralph really puts things into perspective”

She continued, “As soon as we walked into their home, they made an effort to learn each of our names, shake our hands and personally thank us. They gave us coffee and pastries while they talked about their initiatives and the difference they want to make. They also showed us their incredible collection of Kenyan art displayed around their home—gifts and purchases from those who they’ve helped.”

The Stroups’ Organization – Kenyan Health Care

founded in 2008 after Ralph Stroup traveled to Kenya to facilitate an HIV/AIDS training workshop for healthcare workers in the area. The nonprofit not only works to combat challenges Kenyans face in health care, but also works to make clean water more accessible, promote female advocacy and continue to achieve its goal of literacy education. To get involved or for more information, individuals are directed to contact [info@khci.org](mailto:info@khci.org).

In addition to this service initiative, members of BAP have also left an impact on the greater community through volunteer work at soup kitchens, local schools and by making cards to send to various groups and organizations. They are especially active during this time as the induction for new members takes place April 21.

BAP members have reflected on the importance of giving back and the invaluable feeling that comes with it, especially during their time packing books for Kenyans in need: “ ... when everything was done, you felt a sense of pride. You feel like you have spent the morning participating in

## THE MIRROR

Incorporated 1977

Max Limric, *Editor-in-Chief*  
Samantha Russell, *Executive Editor*  
Kathleen Morris, *Managing Editor*  
Claire DeMarco, *Copy Editor*

**Editors**

Ashley Devlin, *Head News*  
Erica Schindler, *Assistant News*  
Bridget Keohane, *Assistant News*  
Roisin McCarthy, *Opinion*  
Natalie Dripchak, *Assistant Opinion*  
Caitlin Shea, *Head Vine*  
Fiona Wagner, *Assistant Vine*  
Ryan Marquardt, *Head Sports*  
Crystal Arbelo, *Assistant Sports*  
Daniel McElroy, *Assistant Sports*

**Staff Photographer**  
Shea Burns

**Business Department**  
Email: [info@fairfieldmirror.com](mailto:info@fairfieldmirror.com)  
Natalia Adamski, *Chief Financial Officer*

**Advisor**  
Tommy Xie

**Contact Information**  
Fairfield University  
1073 North Benson Road, BCC 104  
Box AA, Fairfield, CT 06824  
General email: [info@fairfieldmirror.com](mailto:info@fairfieldmirror.com)

The Mirror is the recognized student newspaper of Fairfield University. Opinions and ideas expressed herein are those of the individual student authors, and not those of Fairfield University or its Board of Trustees

# Write-in Candidates Win 77th FUSA Presidency

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

whole of the student body.”

This rising population takes away from the small school atmosphere that is core to Fairfield’s identity. Young previously stated that he hoped to curb the rising student population to preserve the culture of the school. This either contradicts his plans for slashing ticket prices to benefit students or his goal of preserving the ambiance and character of the school. One has to be chosen over the other or Young and Hernon would have needed to reevaluate their stance to create plans that preserve the small-school vibe and lower ticket prices to be more affordable for students.

The debate did not only consist of Young and Hernon’s ideas for future programs but also focused on current controversial issues, like the recent incidents of hate speech occurring on platforms like Fizz.

Young said, “the most important thing that we can do is signify that every person is welcome on Fairfield’s campus.”

Similarly, Young and Hernon were asked about how they plan to bridge the gap between Bellarmine and North Benson students since there has been tension among both groups. He said that

he hopes to get Bellarmine students acclimated to life on North Benson’s campus using a program similar to First Year Experience but revised to fit the needs of Bellarmine students who already have college experience.

Most importantly, Young was asked how he plans to uphold the integrity of a democratic system being the only candidate officially on the ballot.

He responded, “We need to prove that we’re putting in the legwork and that we are worthy of the office even more.”

Young also believes that his experience losing the election last year has made him even more “committed to the student body” and his experience will allow him to better understand and implement programs that better the student population.

Junior Maddie Cook said that she is “certain Gio and Connor will live up to all of their promises they talked about in the debate” and she has “a lot of faith in them,” so she is not worried about them being the only option on the ballot.

While Young and Hernon are the only official candidates on the ballot and were the only ones present in the debate, they were no longer the only candidates running. As of Feb. 26, four days after

voting began, Andrew Mejia ’26 and Bryan Santos ’26 became candidates for FUSA through word of mouth. However, they were not listed on the ballot and had to be written in by students.



Photo Courtesy of FairfieldDolan Instagram  
Andrew Mejia ’26 and Bryan Santos ’26 celebrated their victory after winning FUSA Presidency through write-in ballots.



# Sex Ed. Posters Displayed on Campus Despite Ban on Condom Sales

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

is prohibited. This indicates that the “Top 10 Reasons to Use Condoms” poster would not have gotten university approval.

Fairfield University’s official stance on sexual health promotes little other than abstinence. This type of policy has long been questioned; teaching abstinence – only as a form of sex education is widely criticized as ineffective or even unethical. Some Fairfield students believe that the school does not do enough to promote sexual health and safety.

“I’m disappointed that [Fairfield doesn’t] have free contraception,” Dean Hartl ’25 said. “To take on the abstinence model is to completely deny access to safety for people who are going to do things you don’t want them to.”

In accordance with the guidelines laid out in the Student Handbook, Fairfield’s on-campus Student Health Center states the following on their website: “... [The Student Health Center] as part of a Catholic university, follows the Church’s teachings on reproductive issues. The Student Health Center does not provide contraception or contraceptive devices.”

While the Health Center may prescribe birth control to some student patients “as part of a medically indicated treatment plan,” students are otherwise unable to access contraceptives on campus.

On other college campuses across the country, policies regarding birth control vary. Nearby Sacred Heart University makes no mention of contraceptives in their student handbook. Fordham University in New York, a Jesuit university like Fairfield, has a similar stance to Fairfield, stating in its handbook that distribution of any form of contraception is prohibited on campus.

Across the board, many universities, particularly Catholic or Jesuit ones, offer little information to students about sexual safety and birth control.

When it comes to approaching this discussion surrounding condom use and contraception, how can it be effectively communicated, if at all?

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) makes it clear that

sexual safety is a pressing issue, namely for those between 15 and 24 years old. In the United States, as of 2018, 1 out of 5 people have a Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI), and those aged 15 to 24 made up half of new STI infections, according to the CDC. Not only is there a prevalence of STIs, but it’s overwhelmingly teenagers and young adults who are getting infected.

One Fairfield professor has done research in the area of sexual safety communication, as a part of his research on deceptive affection. Sean Horan, Ph.D., Chair of the Communication Department, published a 2017 study titled “Condom Communication” that individuals have a “tolerance” for sensitive topics like these, and respond best to communication that fits within their tolerance.

The study echoes this idea, stating that “individuals may avoid communication about condoms, or have an aversive reaction if condom communication exceeds their tolerance.”

Horan’s research continues to identify the areas in which misconceptions exist surrounding condom use, specifically, the risk of not using condoms. Of the 119 participants involved in this 2017 study, when asked about their reasoning for not using condoms, 65 reported it was due to a “misconception of risk”.

The results of this study found, overwhelmingly, that “sexually active adults did not appear to understand how to conceptualize risk,” even going as far as to describe the “nature of their activity,” that is, sexual activity, as “not warranting safety measures.” What becomes increasingly apparent is that there is a cycle of both misunderstanding and avoidance that fuels each other to create a culture of silence.

At a Catholic institution, this creates a struggle for health and communication professionals as they struggle to communicate (if at all) with young adults about sexual safety and condom use. The University has a plan regarding other risk behaviors, including drugs and alcohol, and how to best care for their student base in that way.

Horan, when asked about broader health communication to college students, states, “We’re not talking to young adults about young adults’ health issues”.

He continues, referring to sexual safety, that, “We need to meet people where they are. There are people choosing to be abstinent, and there are people choosing not to be abstinent, how can we serve both groups? Looking at the risk behaviors of college students, we have resources for drugs and drinking, do we have resources for sex? I don’t know that we do.”

“We need to meet people where they are. There are people choosing to be abstinent, and there are people choosing not to be abstinent, how can we serve both groups?”  
-Dr. Sean Horan, Chair of the Communication Dept.

In regards to the improvement of communication on sexual safety, and condom use in particular, Horan’s research provides some insight into what future focus can be. His 2016 study “Further Understanding Sexual Communication” stresses the importance of open communication in conversations about sexual safety.

Horan states that “sexual education programs should work on further integrating the role of communication and sexual safety during sexual activity.”

Research has backed the benefits of open communication and education on sexual safety issues. Whether it be understanding methods of engaging in protected sex, in addition to their importance, or further understanding of STD and STI testing, identification and treatment – studies show that young people need health communication. Yet, unapproved posters with blatant stereotypes and very few facts stand as the only communication Fairfield University students receive about condom use, sexual safety and protected sex.

## From Harlem to Fairfield: Dr. Don C. Sawyer III’s Journey and Vision for Diversity

BY KATHLEEN MORRIS  
Managing Editor

The Dolan School of Business (DSB) Event Hall echoed with applause as Don C. Sawyer III, Ph.D. approached the podium to address attendees of the Black Student Union (BSU) Gala on Saturday, Feb. 25.

Sawyer’s steps were supported by his signature pair of Air Jordans. Although, his flair for stylish sneakers was not the mainstay of his presentation. Rather, Sawyer captivated his audience by painting an image of his urban upbringing.

“I’m from a small village,” he began. “I’m from Harlem before Whole Foods.”

He traced the roots that enabled him to assume his role as Fairfield’s Vice President of Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging. Sawyer acknowledged the grittiness of his setting, as he grew up during a tumultuous period of New York City’s history.

“Statistically speaking, I’m not supposed to be standing here before you,” he reflected. “The path that was charted out for a young Black boy living in New York City in the housing projects during the height of the crack cocaine epidemic was not supposed to [lead me to] be here with this audience.”

He tied the past to his present, in which he teaches a weekly “Sociology of Hip Hop” course at the MacDougall-Walker Correctional Institution in Suffield, CT. After stating the jarring sum of his students’ combined prison sentences, he recognized the possibility of a role reversal. He underscored that, if the people had not viewed him “through a lens of possibility,” he may have found himself

“I want to be able to produce graduates who are going to be able to go into the world and have an impact because they have experiences that have been shaped by interactions with people from all walks of life”

-Don C. Sawyer III, Ph.D  
Vice President of Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging

imprisoned and in the seat of his pupils.

Sawyer’s supportive network fueled his pursuit of a greater purpose. He entered the realm of higher education, receiving a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology at Hartwick College and a Ph.D. in Sociology at Syracuse University.

In an interview with The Mirror, Sawyer meditated on the unique relationship he developed with his roommate at Hartwick.

“We were political opposites,” he admitted. “I’m this Black man from Harlem and he’s a white man from Manchester, CT. But, we created a space to ask questions and debate because we believed we would grow from it.”

By engaging in difficult dialogue as an undergraduate, Sawyer learned to coexist and navigate interactions with individuals with differing worldviews. These experiences shape his understanding of collegiate culture. At Fairfield, Sawyer hopes to guide students to have necessary conversations that will challenge their assumptions.

“I want to be able to produce graduates who are going to be able to go into the world and have an impact because they have experiences that have been shaped by interactions with people from all walks of life,” he explained. “Those are the people who are going to be successful when they leave here. When you go out into the field, everyone is not going to look like us or believe the same things that we believe and that’s fine. We have to know how to interact in those spaces.”

Sawyer will inaugurate his position at Fairfield, which includes serving as chair of the President’s Working Group on Diversity and Inclusive Excellence. Beginning in July, he has been on a “listening tour” on campus

To acclimate himself to his new environment, Sawyer is fostering relationships with students, faculty and staff. In this year of collaboration and growth, he has identified the connection between the pillars of diversity, inclusion and belonging with the overarching Jesuit mission. He recognizes the necessity of connecting with individuals of every background.

“When people hear terms like ‘DEI’ or ‘social justice,’ there’s an assumption that the role is there just for students of color and people from underrepresented populations,” he noted. “But, the role is more universal.”

Previously, Sawyer held a similar title as the Vice President for Equity, Inclusion, and Leadership Development at Quinnipiac University. The newness of his role at Fairfield enables him to have a sense of freedom as he works to



Photo Courtesy of Fairfield News

Don C. Sawyer III, Ph.D., holds the inaugural role as the Vice President of Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging at Fairfield. He assumed the role in July and has build partnerships with students and faculty.

fulfill needs specific to the institution.

“I need to respect what was done in the past and honor the work that was done,” Sawyer asserted. “But, I’m charged with setting the landscape and the path forward for the institution as we think about the future.”

As a formal introduction, he will be hosting a Town Hall on Wednesday, Feb. 28 with 220 faculty members. The location of the event had to be changed due to the large number of registrants, an optimistic sign that the community is ready to embrace Sawyer’s presence on campus.

“As an institution of higher education, this is the place where we’re supposed to be learning and moving and growing,” he declared. “We’re going to make mistakes. But, how do we respond to those mistakes? And how do we help people grow?”

Sawyer reiterated the necessity of addressing issues as a University, particularly in light of recent acts of discrimination nationally and at the local level.

“We know that racism exists. We know that homophobia exists. We know that sexism exists,” he stated. “As an institution, we are not immune to those things. We can’t avoid it. We can’t prevent it. But, we have to respond to it. We don’t want people to be harmed or their humanity to be questioned.”

As he continues to build his legacy at Fairfield, Sawyer’s primary goal is to amplify students’ voices and break the barriers built by ignorance. He is prepared to make strides in the right direction, driven by determination and equipped with a fresh set of Nikes.

# Opinion

Editor: Roisin McCarthy  
Assistant Editor: Natalie Dripchak

## Pope Francis, The Moral Traditionalist?

By **TRENT OUELLETTE**  
Contributing Writer

If you pay any attention to news surrounding the Catholic Church, you have probably heard someone call Pope Francis liberal, woke, a leftist or all three. Many traditionalists believe he is a modernist, and secular media often heralds him as a progressive.

Just recently, Pope Francis came under fire for *Fiducia Supplicans*, a document issued by the Dicastery for the Doctrine of the Faith. The declaration, which the media portrayed as an approval of blessings for same-sex unions, acted as confirmation in the minds of both traditionalists



Photo Courtesy of NPR

Pope Francis pictured waving at the crowd ahead of him. He recently deemed same sex marriage legal in the Catholic Church, which caused some controversy.

and progressives for their already established opinions regarding the Supreme Pontiff.

In a follow-up press release, however, Cardinal Fernandez clarified that the declaration did not allow “any type of liturgical rite or blessing similar to a liturgical rite that can create confusion” and it did “not intend to justify anything that is not morally acceptable.” In other words, the blessing of two individuals in an irregular relationship was not a blessing of the union, but rather a blessing of the individuals who happened to make up that union.

In the same way any individual, regardless of how grave a sin they may have on their souls, could receive a blessing, individuals participating in a sinful relationship may receive a blessing.

While *Fiducia Supplicans* was confusing at first glance, subsequent clarifications have made it clear that the Vatican, and Pope Francis, did not alter church teaching to align with modern cultural norms.

Despite this, many used the declaration as an excuse to condemn or praise Francis as a progressive.

It is true that Pope Francis has adopted an inclusive and slow-to-judgment pastoral approach, but this does not make him a modernist. In fact, the Bishop of Rome, as I would like to show in this article, has been quite orthodox in his public statements regarding gender, marriage, and the family. It is rare to see anyone call the current Pope a traditionalist, and in many respects, he is not, but on these moral issues I believe he is.

Back in 2018, Francis stated, “The human family as an image of God, man and woman, is only one. It is only one.” For anyone who looks past how the media portrays Francis, this comment should be of no surprise.

It falls in line with paragraph 2202 of the catechism which teaches, “A man and a woman united in marriage, together with their children, form a family.”

Less than a year ago, in May of 2023, Pope Francis called gender ideology “one of the most dangerous ideological colonizations” because it “blurs differences and the value of men and women.”

This view of modern gender ideology may seem foreign to many, especially those living on a college campus, but again, it aligns with church teaching.

Pope Francis is teaching that men and women are equal in value and complementary in nature.

The final comment from Francis that I would like to mention essentially kills the idea that he is a progressive attempting to change church teaching to align with modern leftist values. In a General Audience address in 2019 regarding the topic of abortion the Pope explained, “it is not lawful. Never, ever eliminate a human life” and would go on to say that abortion is “like hiring a hitman.” I do not believe a modernist would say something like this, yet many still want to paint Francis as one.

To me, this is an expected comment from a Pope aiming to uphold traditional Catholic teaching. Echoing what I said above, in many respects, Pope Francis is not as traditional as his predecessors.

However, the current successor to St. Peter does remain as an adherent to historical church teachings. Whether you agree or disagree with something the Pope has said or taught, we should all strive to be charitable in our opinion of Francis.

At the end of the day, he is the Supreme Pontiff, the bishop we all must be in communion with to call ourselves Catholic.

We should remember that Francis must lead over one billion people in his ministry and may, from time to time, be confusing in his words or vague in his teachings.

When this happens, instead of scrambling to accuse him of being a heretic, we should exercise patience and remember his many previous public comments that are clearly in line with tradition.

Like the 265 Popes before him, Francis is not perfect, and that is okay. St. Peter was far from perfect when he denied Jesus three times, yet Christ still built the Church upon him.

## Artists We Would Go Mad For at the Spring Concert!

By **BROOKE LATHE**  
Executive Writer Emerita

The annual Fairfield University Student Association’s (FUSA) Spring Concert is always one of my most anticipated events each year. Between finding out who we’ve booked and actually getting to sing throwbacks with my friends, I find it to be the perfect night out.

I honestly don’t think anything can top Flo Rida’s appearance in 2022, but in a perfect world where FUSA had unlimited funds to hire whoever, these artists would be my top picks for Fairfield’s 2024 Spring Concert headliner.

### Khalid

Khalid would be a fun soul to have on stage since he’s such an unproblematic and kind artist. Although his booking fee varies from around \$999,999 to 1,4999,999, and therefore would be out of our budget, his songs “Young Dumb & Broke,” “Location” and “American Teen” could be a set almost everyone would enjoy. His live vocals never let anyone down and based on tour videos, he gives an entertaining performance.

### Pitbull

I have always wanted Pitbull to come to Fairfield—he has an endless list of songs that everyone knows by heart and the Stag community can belt

with ease: “Give Me Everything,” “Hotel Room Service,” “Time Of Our Lives,” “Fireball,” “I Know You Want Me,” etc. His stage presence is always energetic and I just know the same spirit would be passed onto the surrounding crowd. Too bad he would cost FUSA \$500,000-875,000, otherwise I know he would’ve been number one on our list.

### Ke\$ha

Ke\$ha took over the 2010s with her album “Animal” and would without a doubt bring back the same energy if she took to the Fairfield stage with songs like “We R Who We R,” “Tik Tok,” “Die Young,” “Blow,” “Your Love Is My Drug” and “Timber”. Her fee is pretty reasonable as it ranges from \$150,000-299,000, but with her 2023 tour and previous mental health battles, I’m not sure if we would be able to convince her to sing her throwbacks at a college university.

### Tyler the Creator

I already know Tyler would never be an option because you can’t control his wild, out-of-pocket comments once he steps on stage and the Jesuits would not be a fan, but it would be super chaotic and fun. His personality would fit well with a younger crowd and most people sing along to his hits “EARFQUAKE,” “See You Again,” “She” and “911 / Mr. Lonely” for the decent price of \$150,000-299,000.

### Sean Kingston

This would’ve been THE person if it hadn’t been for his sexual assault case in 2014. Sean Kingston is super affordable as he only costs around \$50,000-100,000, probably because of his disappointing history, but his songs “Beautiful Girls,” “Fire Burning,” “Take You There,” and “Eenie Meenie” would be electric to hear live and shout as a group.

### SZA

So she’s SZA, no explanation needed. But if you’re looking for one, her goddess-like vocals would bless any

arena. Since her songs have gained traction on TikTok, I have no doubt that people who buy tickets could sing along with ease. Her booking price claims to be \$1,5000,000, but with her recent Grammy win I would argue that that isn’t the most accurate and she is definitely out of budget.

No matter who FUSA ends up securing for April, however, I know that I will still have the time of my life. It would, of course, be amazing if we could have any of these five...nevertheless, the anticipation begins!



Photo Courtesy of Fairfield University

Fairfield University hosted rapper Fetty Wap in 2019. Students loved this performance and are anxiously waiting for FUSAs announcement with their 2024 spring concert artist.



# FUSA Needs More Candidates

By TJ CRAIES  
Contributing Writer

How can FUSA get more participation for leadership opportunities?

The FUSA elections are underway! Last Thursday, Feb. 22, the Fairfield University Student Association (FUSA) held its annual presidential debate in the lower level of the Barone Campus Center.

This is a great opportunity for candidates to respond to questions, allowing voters a chance to understand the priorities of the individuals seeking the position. In last year’s debate, there were two candidates who fielded questions, whereas this year only one student is running: Giovanni Young-Annunziato ‘25, who also ran last year.

This lack of involvement and interest in running raises the question about the amount of engagement with FUSA events and leadership positions as a whole as well as what can be done to increase their reach across the Fairfield University community.

FUSA could start by improving its communication methods. The emails sent to students by FUSA lack appealing visual elements, making it easy for students to overlook them in their inboxes.

Along with this, back in January, the email to enroll for the FUSA Presidential Election was sent only a day before the declaration period started.

If a student who was interested in the position saw this email without knowing the opportunity existed before, this most likely would not provide them ample time to start developing their campaign strategy.

In addition to the association needing to do a better job at promoting its events and leadership opportunities, the FUSA website blog hasn’t been updated in almost four years, with its last article being released on March 30, 2021.

On the other hand, their Instagram account is active with over 2,000 followers, but pushing that out to the student population would be a great way of getting more engagement at these events and participation in leadership positions.

It wouldn’t be fair to put a majority of the reasoning behind this issue solely on the shoulders of the FUSA team.

Could it be that there is just not a large interest in the role of FUSA president?

This does go along with the idea that promoting the association would encourage people to explore the advantages of joining and consider potential benefits, like for their resume and overall satisfaction of the student body.

Perhaps demonstrating to students that running for president and pitching their ideas would serve as an effective method to ensure the implementation of desired changes on campus could be beneficial as well.

There’s no denying FUSA’s significant effort in offering an inclusive and event-filled college experience for all students, but improving their communication methods and ramping up the promotion of their events and positions is crucial to getting the most participation possible.



Photo Courtesy of Facebook

Fairfield University Student Association works to better the life of the student body. The FUSA Presidential debate and election were held this week and a winner was announced on Feb. 26..

# Get Your Sweat On!

By ROISIN MCCARTHY  
Opinion Editor

Every Tuesday and Thursday, I walk out of the RecPlex covered in sweat and with a bright red face. I adore the RecPlex spin classes, specifically with instructor Terre. When I first took her class last year, I became addicted to it.

The energy that fills the spin room in the basement of the RecPlex is something I have never experienced before.

Spin classes at the Recplex are truly the best classes that they have to offer students and faculty.

It not only is one of the most intense workouts you will ever have, but the atmosphere is like no other.

Every spin instructor creates an ambiance in the room that makes you feel empowered.

Terre turns all the overhead lighting off and has colorful disco lights that make you feel like you are at a fun disco party.

Classes also tend to have a theme that helps the instructor pick out the music for the ride. I recently went to one of Terre’s spin classes and the playlist was based on the anatomy of a relationship. It started with songs that describe the beginning of a relationship. I sang my way through the class.

The last song, “Since You’ve Been Gone” by Kelly Clarkson, had the whole room screaming the lyrics.

Terre also just hosted a Beyoncé versus Rihanna ride which was electric. Working out is immensely better when the music is something you can sing and dance along to.

This goes to show how much of a safe space

these spin classes are. You can come in with whatever baggage you have and feel safe enough to be yourself whilst doing an intense workout.

It’s easy to talk to your neighbors and encourage each other, which

I think is very special and something that cannot be found in other RecPlex workout classes.

I love the passion the instructors have while teaching. Going back to my favorite instructor Terre, during class she will come off the bike and sing and dance for us. She also is the most motivational person I have ever met.

I have had a lot of coaches and teachers as I was an athlete growing up, and I have never felt so inspired and seen. She pushes us to our limits while also making us feel empowered and strong

. Another instructor, Peter G, does an amazing job at motivating everyone. He is a great storyteller who helps distract the imminent pain that your legs feel.

An instructor can make or break a class, and all the spin instructors at Fairfield University create a welcoming environment for all.I cannot imagine a week where I didn’t go to a spin class at the RecPlex.

It provides me with stability, discipline and a sense of accomplishment that I feel like other classes don’t give me. I feel so powerful whenever I finish a forty-five-minute cycle. I have tried other workout classes at the RecPlex, but nothing compares to spin classes. The community is unmatched by any workout class I have been to.



Photo Courtesy of Janae Staltaro

Zumba instructor Janae Staltaro poses with her workout group for one of the participants birthdays. The RecPlex on campus offers free workout classes to all students on campus. Anyone can sign up through IMLeauges.

# Should Fairfield Keep Random Roommate Policy?

By NATALIE DRIPCHAK  
Assistant Opinion Editor

The first year of college already has so many stress factors, why add another by feeling the need to pick the “perfect” roommate?

There are many colleges across the U.S. that allow first-year students to pick their own roommates for the first year of school. Recently, though, there have been many colleges that are deciding to change this policy, like New York University and Duke University, according to an article from Georgetown University.

Fairfield University has been one of the few colleges that has utilized the random roommate process for first-years for a significant amount of time. Some people



Photo Courtesy of Towers Golde

All first years live in the "Quad". There are five dorms that house first years.

are not a fan of this rule placed by the University, but on the other hand, many do love this arrangement.

Of course, there are many different circumstances that prevent people from having an enjoyable first-year roommate experience. This isn’t to say that the policy the University has put into place should be changed, it just means that it may not be the best experience for everyone.

I was lucky enough to have been matched up with the most wonderful roommate I could have asked for! Not only is my roommate amazing to live with, but she has also become one of my closest friends!

The one thing that allows my roommate and I to have such a good living situation is the fact that we aren’t afraid to communicate with each other. We are very open and honest with each other regarding the room and our biggest thing is, “just ask”.

This policy we have of “just ask” means that we don’t really have many set rules because if one of us needs something or wants people over, we just ask the other person.

This system has worked well for us thus far because we are also people who have very similar living habits. We both go to bed around the same time and we both

wake up early. Most of the time, we aren’t in the room at the same time or even in the room at all.

I am not the only one who has had a good first-year roommate experience. Another first-year student, Saorise Logan, said, “We are super close. Random roommates really worked out for me and I am very happy with my experience.”

Many students I know loved their first-year roommate and I think it is something that Fairfield should keep in place. I was very stressed before leaving for college and the one thing that made the transition less stressful was knowing I didn’t have to pick a roommate.

When you have to pick your own roommate, you might start to overthink your decision. I know many people from other schools who chose their roommate and did not have a good experience. With Fairfield, however, if you have a bad experience with your roommate it isn’t necessarily your fault because you didn’t choose them yourself

Regardless of the first-year roommate experience for some people being successful or not, the policy that Fairfield has implemented should stay. This is an amazing



Photo Courtesy of Fairfield University

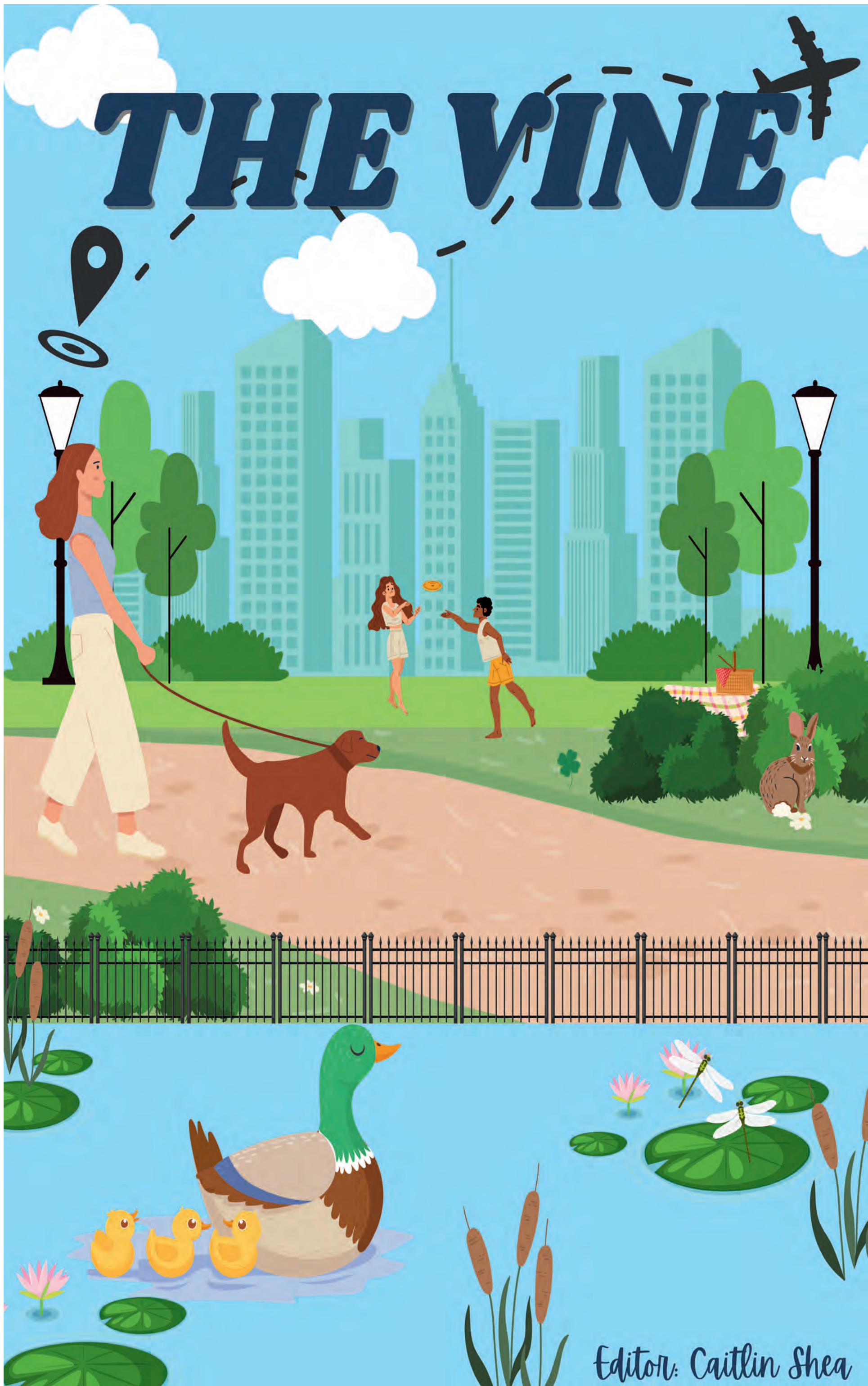
Fairfield first-years are not allowed to pick their roommates. Random roommates are assigned after a survey is completed..

opportunity to meet new people and to form relationships with people you may not have necessarily been friends with!

College is all about meeting new people and trying different things and experiences. It’s important to learn how to compromise with others and to work on your communication skills. These skills are not only necessary for success in college but success in the real world, too.



# THE VINE



Editor: Caitlin Shea





# SPRING BREAK PLANS UNVEILED:



# STUDENTS SHARE THEIR EXCITING ESCAPADE

BY BROOKE LATHE  
Executive Editor Emerita

When Andy Williams said it’s the most wonderful time of the year during Christmas, college kids around the world broke out in tears.

Because, obviously, spring break is!

Whether it’s travel plans or just a simple breather from the middle of the semester, Stags are booked and busy for the first week of March.

Some Stags like Kayla Smith ‘25 are getting a head start on their senior capstone. For Smith, her thriller short film for the FTMA department will remain under wraps for now, but she knows that she will be chipping away at her first draft back in Chicago.

The same goes for Kevin Collazo ‘25. He plans to use the week of freedom “not skipping leg day and possibly making a short film with his friends.”

Sophomore Ricky Lawlor is staying pretty close to school as well as he plans to head up to “somewhere in upstate Connecticut to ski.”

Nevertheless, he’s “excited to go with [his] friends as well as spending time with [his] family at home.”

On the other hand, a few Stags have mentioned traveling around the United States to some of the more tropical areas.

Puerto Rico’s bright sun and warm

weather will welcome Emma Jardin ‘24 with open arms.

“I’m really excited to surf and be

be “surprisingly cheaper than a trip to the Caribbean thanks to the fact that [his girlfriend] and her family are from Honolulu.”

Overall, “I’m looking forward to the beaches, time spent with her



with my friends,” Jardin exclaimed.

Junior Justin Sabagol is setting sail for Hawaii and we’re all jealous!

Of course, the warm weather is a plus when traveling anywhere outside of New England, but Sabagol also shares that he is grateful that such a wonderful place can

bagol said.

While some Stags are staying on the more local side, others plan to utilize their passports and acquire some new global stamps!

Senior Meghan Morrissey is visiting her best friend Maggie

Heintz ‘25 who is studying abroad in Galway, Ireland for the semester. “I’m so excited to travel internationally for the first time and experience a different culture with amazing people,” Morrissey shared.

Junior Reese Ranno bought her ticket to Colombia some time ago.

She explained her enthusiasm to “spend quality time with [her] boyfriend and enjoy the beautiful sights that Colombia has to offer.”

Two Stags, Molly Cotjanle ‘24 and Steven Burns ‘24, are off to Spain early this Friday!

“I’m looking forward to going back to Europe after studying abroad in Florence, Italy last year,” Contjanle stated.

“This time I’m ready to relax and enjoy the food and sights in a more vacation-like setting.”

As for me, I’ll be staying in the comfort of my friend’s beach house to avoid the ridiculous housing fees and continue to commute to my NYC internship.

I can only hope that some of you bring back the warmer weather with you – I’ll need it for walking in the streets filled with brutal city winds!



# QUEEN BEY GOES COUNTRY:



# BEYONCÉ'S NEW MUSICAL FRONTIER

BY ROISIN MCCARTHY  
Head Opinion Editor

Who would've ever thought our Queen B would come out with a country album?

Not me, but I couldn’t be more excited to see what she has up her sleeve for us.

To say I love Beyoncé would be an understatement.

She is truly an icon in the music industry and has paved the way for so many artists to start their music careers.

To think she has been in the studio working on a country album as an Act II of “Renaissance” gives me butterflies.

The last two weeks have been incredible due to the release of Beyoncé’s two new songs, “Texas Hold ‘Em” and “16 Carriages”.

I listen to “Texas Hold ‘Em” at least five times a day and it is constantly stuck in my head.

When I walk out of class I dig through my pockets to find my AirPods so I can walk back to “Texas Hold ‘Em”.

It is an extremely catchy song that makes me so incredibly happy to sing it.

I get a strong urge to start line dancing when I hear her new country songs, and I

know many others do as well.

I wonder if Blue Ivy would get on stage and line dance for her mom’s next tour?

Personally, I think Blue Ivy would blow everyone’s socks off with her newfound country dance moves.

During the Super Bowl, Beyonce announced her new country album “Act II”, which begs the question, why did Yonce go country?

Let’s not forget that our Queen B was born and raised in Houston, Texas, and actually has released a country-style song in her album, “Lemonade,” called “Daddy Lessons”.

Her shift to the country genre may seem shocking, but it seems that country music runs through her blood.

Basically, she was born to be a country music star, so it makes sense that her new singles are masterpieces.

Beyoncé is now the first Black woman to have a number-one song on the country charts.

This is a cultural shift in country music that has been well-awaited.

“Texas Hold ‘Em” also debuted at num-

ber two on the Hot 100 chart, right below Jack Harlow’s “Lovin on Me” and right above Kanye West and Ty Dolla \$ign’s new song “Carnival.”

Beyoncé has now opened the door for many other Black country artists, as that genre of music is currently dominated by white males.

She has made her voice heard, loud and clear.

Beyoncé is a breath of fresh air in country music that is going to redefine what country music is and should be. This country album is going to flip the music industry upside down and turn it inside out at the same time.

It amazes me that I like Beyoncé’s country songs here more than a lot of my favorite country artists. She truly has done it AGAIN!

I cannot wait to hear this new album, as I know it will

be a massive success and a beautiful work of art. How lucky are we to get to witness Beyoncé make history once again?



Queen Bey takes the world by storm upon announcing her newest country album.





# THE LUCK OF THE IRISH:



## ST. PATRICK'S DAY TREATS AND TRADITIONS

BY FIONA WAGNER  
Assistant Vine Editor

St. Patrick’s Day, in my opinion, is one of the best holidays. It’s that one time of year when the world is painted in vibrant shades of green and everyone is just a little bit Irish, even if it’s just for the day. It’s filled with shamrocks, leprechauns and pots of gold at the end of a rainbow – at least that’s what I like to believe. I grew up in a town that



went crazy for St. Patrick’s Day – Everyone was up at the crack of dawn to head over to the town’s huge parade to honor the Irish. In elementary school, we would hold “St. Pat-

rick’s Day” costume contests and host parties filled with chocolate gold coins and green shamrock treats. For me, the best part of the holiday is McDonald’s Shamrock Shakes and my homemade Irish potatoes.

I know, I know, Shamrock Shakes are so bad for you, but they are pure gold in my eyes. As soon as Valentine’s Day is over, I race to my local McDonald’s to indulge in that whimsical emerald delight that makes my taste buds do a little Irish jig. Don’t let the extremely bright green color scare you away, one sip and you will be transported into a world filled with minty goodness and holiday cheer. Shamrock Shakes are essentially vanilla ice cream mixed with mint syrup, so if you don’t like mint, maybe this isn’t the drink for you. I would still advise you to give the drink a try – you never know, you might end up loving it.

I have already gotten my annual Shamrock Shake this year, however, I also tried something new: the Oreo Shamrock McFlurry. This mashup of minty marvel and chocolatey goodness has been around since 2020, however, I have never tried it before this year. I saw it on the menu and decided

that it was time to give it a taste. It takes the classic Oreo McFlurry but instead of just plain vanilla ice cream, mint syrup is added. I thought it was the perfect blend of flavors to make the ultimate drink. I still favor the original Shamrock Shake, but that is just because it tastes like my childhood, filling me with pure nostalgia.

Besides Shamrock Shakes, another one of my favorite St. Patrick’s Day traditions is making Irish potatoes. Irish potatoes are very commonly loved in Pennsylvania, where I’m from, but since coming to college in Connecticut, I have learned that no one knows what they are here. Certain types of Irish potatoes serve as actual food filled with real potatoes, but the ones that I know and love are candy desserts. The recipe is fairly simple and quick to make. All you need is:


- 4 ounces cream cheese, softened
- ¼ cup butter, softened
- 4 cups confectioners' sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 ½ cups flaked coconut
- 1 tablespoon ground cinnamon

There are many recipes online to rec-


reate this Irish delight, but all you have to do is mix all of those ingredients in a bowl, besides the ground cinnamon. Once all the ingredients are mixed together, form little balls and roll the balls in the cinnamon. I always put mine in the fridge afterward, so they harden a little.

Irish Potatoes are one of my favorite aspects of St. Patrick’s Day and I look forward to making them every year. Eating them feels like uncovering a delicious secret, leaving you grinning like a leprechaun who just found a pot of gold at the end of a candy rainbow! If you have never heard of this spectacular treat, I highly suggest making some this year.

So, whether you're indulging in Irish potato candies, sipping on Shamrock Shakes or simply reveling in the green-tinted festivities, St. Patrick's Day is truly a magical time where everyone can feel a little luckier and a lot more festive. St. Patrick's Day is like a pot of gold at the end of a rainbow – filled with laughter, love and a touch of Irish charm. If you have overlooked St. Patrick's Day in the past, I hope you now consider all the wonderful things the holiday has to offer.



# Top Tips for Surviving the City From a NYC Native



BY LUIZA SPERLING  
Contributing Writer

New York City is a bustling, culturally diverse metropolis that thrives as a global center of commerce, culture and innovation.

Fairfield University takes pride in its proximity to New York City, providing students unparalleled access to incredible job opportunities and enriching experiences. However, the allure of New York City extends far beyond its employment prospects, as it stands as a massive tourist destination in its own right.

Born and raised in the heart of Manhattan (I know, it’s wild), I’ve always been a proud New Yorker through and through. My love for this city knows no bounds, and I love every opportunity I get to share its wonders with others. From its vibrant neighborhoods to its rich history and endless array of experiences, there’s nothing quite like the energy and spirit of New York City.

Here are my five tips for surviving a city day trip:

### WALK FAST

One thing New Yorkers HATE is slow walkers. These people move leisurely, seemingly oblivious to the chaos around them. They block sidewalks and flood subway staircases, creating obstacles for those in a hurry. During rush hour, these slow walkers can be particularly frustrating when people try to get to work and school on time. Never, and I mean never, stop in front of a big crowd to take a picture – maybe move to the side first.

I can’t count the number of trains I’ve missed due to them, and their inconvenience has caused me to be late to school several times, especially when certain trains only arrive at a station every 10 minutes or so. In the long run, it can cause people to be late by an extra half hour if the train is also facing a delay.

### PAY ATTENTION TO YOUR SURROUNDINGS

You might get yelled at if you’re walking shoulder to shoulder with four friends

on a busy sidewalk or checking a map on the last step of a subway entrance. Yes, New Yorkers are known for being rude, but we’re only rude if you’re in the way. This city is crowded, the streets are small and people are usually in a hurry.

### PIZZA

You can find good pizza anywhere in New York City. One of my favorite places is Joe’s Pizza on Carmine Street in Greenwich Village (I know basic, but it’s so good).

### –SOHO

One of my go-to shopping destinations is Soho, particularly along Broadway, where all the good stores such as Garage, Zara, Brandy Melville, Aritzia, Pacsun and more await. Despite New York City being super expensive, the pleasure of exploring Soho doesn’t necessarily require a shopping spree; the experience of being there is truly magical for me.

### –BODEGA



Make it a priority to get to know a quintessential New York institution: the bodega.

Head straight there and treat yourself to a classic Bacon, Egg and Cheese sandwich, or indulge in a chopped cheese – you’ll savor every mouthwatering bite, embracing the authentic tastes of the city like a true New Yorker. Trust me, it’s an experience not to be missed.



# The Bachelor Season 28: Six Ladies Left

BY CHRISTINA SILVESTRI  
Contributing Writer

**Read With Caution: The Bachelor Season 28 Spoilers Ahead!**

This year, I decided to live out the ultimate 21st century college girl experience - I've decided to watch "The Bachelor." To be honest, it was the spinoff, "The Golden Bachelor", that initially sparked my interest in the show. Here is where I was introduced to the current Bachelor - Joey Graziadei. He made a guest appearance on "The Golden Bachelor" and provided the contestants with some tennis tips - because of course, he is a tennis coach. When the season ended and Theresa won (much to our chagrin), my friends and I decided that we needed another trash TV show to cure our "Golden Bachelor" hang-over. We needed Joey Graziadei to grace our screen once a week.

The season premiered Jan. 22 with a record high of 32 contestants. Now, with six episodes having aired, there are six women left: Rachel, Daisy, Jenn, Maria and both Kelseys. I can say with 100% honesty that I would be completely content with any of those women winning. Apart from Maria, these girls have not been involved with any drama so far. That being said, Maria's name has been dragged through the mud this sea-

son by no fault of her own. Many of the other girls were jealous of Maria's connection with the Bachelor, Joey. Instead of working on strengthening their own relationships, girls like Sydney and Lea focused their energy on painting Maria in a bad light to Joey - to put in Bachelor Nation terms - they were "putting her character into question". These villains never had a meaningful connection with Joey that was palpable through my TV screen. Let's just say when those two got sent home, there was a ballad of cheers coming from my house.

Maria has the most romance connection with Joey, but Jenn has the best conversations with him. Daisy appears to be the crowd favorite on social media and yet I can't help but root for Rachel and the Kelseys, too. Again, all of these women are great options for Joey. If I had to guess who is going home next Monday, I have to say goodbye to Kelsey T. While I love her, last week Joey took her on a one-on-one date to do gymnastics while he took Maria to pick out an evening gown (which was ugly - sorry!) and to ride a helicopter, with a vintage white limo as transportation.

I have been rooting for Rachel since day one. She is beautiful, a hard-working nurse,

and seems like a down-to-earth person. Additionally, she lives in Hawaii - where Joey lives. The location should be a deciding factor, as the couple has to consider logistics for after the season ends and they start their lives together. If I had to pick a runner-up, I would say Jenn. Their one-on-one date was the best in my opinion. Joey taught her to surf and they spent the day on the beach. I can see them being an endgame.

All of the six contestants that are left seem to be there for the right reasons. They are not interested in petty, made-up drama. They want a husband. No matter who wins (I'm looking at you Rachel), I am happy that Joey was keen to vote out all of the crazies already. All of the remaining six would make a wonderful match for this season's Bachelor.



Season 28's Bachelor Joey Graziadei has a big decision to make as he contemplates his match.  
Photo Courtesy of StyleCaster

# Luck of the Stylish: St. Patrick's Day Outfit Inspiration

BY GIANA RUSSO  
Contributing Writer

As St. Patrick's Day approaches, it's time to embrace the festive spirit and add a splash of green to your wardrobe.

Whether you're planning to celebrate at Sham Jam, attend a cozy gathering with friends or simply want to infuse a bit of Irish charm into your day, here are some outfit ideas to ensure you stay in the good graces of the leprechauns.

**Classic Casual Chic:**

Opt for a cozy green sweater paired with dark jeans or leggings. Accessorize with a statement necklace or a pair of fun shamrock earrings. This look is perfect for a laid-back celebration with friends at a local bar or a casual get-together at home. Comfortable yet stylish, it will keep you pinch-free throughout the day.

**Playful Patterns:**

Embrace the holiday spirit with playful patterns like shamrocks or Celtic knots. A green and white striped shirt or a dress with subtle Irish motifs will make a cheerful statement. Pair it with neutral accessories to



let the patterns take center stage.

**Dress to Impress:**

For those planning a fancier celebration, a green dress is a classy and festive choice. Whether it's a sleek emerald sheath or a flowy maxi dress, go for something that makes you feel confident. Add some sparkle with gold accessories for a touch of luxury, and you'll be turning heads like a pot of gold.

**Accessorize with Flair:**

If you're not a fan of an all-green ensemble, incorporate the color through accessories. A green scarf, hat, or even green shoes can add a pop of color to a neutral outfit while keeping you in the St. Patrick's Day spirit. Mix and match your accessories for a personalized touch.

**Leprechaun-Inspired Fun:**

For those who want to go all out, consider a leprechaun-inspired outfit. A green top hat, suspenders, and a pair of playful green socks can create a whimsical and memorable look. This is perfect

for those who want to fully embrace the holiday with a touch of humor.

**Kiss Me I'm Irish:**

A St. Patrick's Day classic, spread the love with a "Kiss Me, I'm Irish" t-shirt. Pair it with some fun dark green shamrock glasses, a festive hat, and your favorite lipstick for a day full of fun! Not Irish? Do not worry! Try out a "Here to Paddy" shirt to let everyone know you're ready to have the time of your life!

**Gold at the End of the Rainbow:**

Want to go all out? Dress from head to toe in gold! A gold suit, a gold hat and even gold shoes could have you shining brighter than the pot at the end of the rainbow! To take this look even further, carry around a pot of your own. Fill it with chocolate coins and become the life of the party!

Remember, St. Patrick's Day is all about celebrating Irish culture and having fun with friends and family. So, whether you choose a classic green sweater or a leprechaun-inspired ensemble, the key is to enjoy the fes-





# “What Happened to the Beach?”: Declan Mckenna Album Review



BY CAITLIN SHEA  
Head Vine Editor



Declan Mckenna's new album cover, released on Feb. 9.

The search for buried treasure can be a hassle, especially when you’ve left behind your metal detector. If you did not come equipped, do not fear, because after four years of searching, UK singer-songwriter Declan Mckenna has sifted the sands of your local beach and discovered more than one extraordinary gem.

Rising to fame in 2015, the then 16-year-old astonished the world of music with his platinum record, “Brazil”, an indie-pop track that meditated on the corruption seen within the soccer industry. Continuing on this path, the young artist utilized his platform to explore the harsh themes and big questions faced by many teenagers today. Commentaries on police brutality, media corruption, and youthful alienation can be seen throughout each of his albums. These motifs are explored through whacky rock beats that are sure to create everlasting earworms.

After nearly a four-year hiatus, Declan Mckenna washed ashore on Feb. 9, disgruntled, out of sorts and ready to share his newest

masterpiece.

Stepping out of his indie-pop box, “What Happened to the Beach?” contains the instinctive spirit of Declan, masterfully transitioning between psychedelic pop, funk and lo-fi. Leaving lyrics more abstract, these tracks allow the listener to come to their own conclusions on topics such as online manipulation, the contrast between authenticity and presentation and the harsh realities of environmental issues.

**“Wobble”**

Acting as the opening track, “Wobble”, possesses whacky and jagged digital beats that invoke psychedelic feelings within the listeners. Speaking to the emotions of isolation felt by many during the 2020 lockdown, Declan’s lyrics discuss the changes observed in the environment, questioning “What happened to the beach?/Looks like it’s changing”, addressing how we used to breathe fresh air, and “Now it’s “Thanks, pass the gas tanks”.

**“Elevator Hum”**

Capturing the nostalgic innocence of a waning friendship, “Elevator Hum” expresses the freedom and playfulness of being beside those that you love, but emphasizes the reality of having to go your own way in life. Calling the listener to open up and have the willingness to go on this journey, Declan communicates, “I want you to believe/You’re just like me/I want you to be free/To be happy”, asserting that while he doesn’t want to let go, he does not want to hinder the happiness of his loved ones by holding them back.

**“I Write the News”**

The third track on the album, “I Write the News”, steps away from its counterparts, as it is backed by a unique guitar and a lo-fi drum beat. Providing a profound commen-

tary on the corruption of news media outlets seen presently, Mckenna takes on the persona of a journalist, repeating the lines, “I write the news”, expressing how they can write whatever they feel without repercussions.

**“Sympathy”**

As the lead single, “Sympathy”, provides a contrasting upbeat and joyous tone to the album. Acting as a call to action, the singer-songwriter urges his listeners to “Make peace and discover” the harmony within our polarized world. Combining an energetic keyboard with fast pace drums and funky horn beats, it’s sure to play on repeat in your head.

**“Mulholland’s Dinner and Wine”**

One of my personal favorites, track number five adds some indie-pop into the mix. Addressing the personas people present online, lyrics such as, “I’m not satisfied with what I want” and “I get what I want” mirror the harsh reality of consumerism in modern society. Emphasizing a dreamlike state, soft whistles and funky harmonies can be heard.

**“Breath of Light”**

A combination of odd chanting, whacky beats, and space-like sounds, “Breath of Light” speaks to the diminishing authenticity of people, as they “[pick] at the plastic pimples” on their skin.

**“Nothing Works”**

A euphoric tune, “Nothing Works” mocks the idea of having to please others for the sake of your own morals. Explaining that “I try to fix myself but nothing works”, Mckenna urges listeners to stay true to themselves. A fast paced backing track leaves the listener feeling as if they have to get up and take action for themselves.

**“The Phantom Buzz (Kick In)”**

Spunky and fast-paced, this track speaks to the harsh realities of the necessity of phones, and the “phantom buzz” of addiction.

**“Honest Test”**

Revealing “[His] honest testimony”, Declan comments on the lack of authenticity seen in today’s world through an ethereal backing track. Whacky fluctuating beats leave the listener feeling as if they are floating in a cloud.

**“Mezzanine”**

One of my other favorite songs, “Mezzanine” is a youthful dance track that adds to the dreamlike atmosphere of the record. Recalling a time “When you were someone no one else could be”, the track highlights the negative impact of social media on young minds.

**“It’s an Act”**

Another one of my favorites (I know - this is getting repetitive but, trust me, all these songs are worthy of the title), the singer-songwriter highlights the ups and downs of fame through dreamlike beats, expressing that “You call it a show, [but] it’s an act”.

**“Four More Years”**

Ending the album off with, “It could be a cool end to-”, “Four More Years” leaves listeners questioning whether or not the euphoric forty-eight-second song is a commentary on the elusiveness of time, or simply Mckenna’s melancholic reaction to England’s loss of the World Cup.

While many of you may only know Declan from his tik-tok phenomenon, “Brazil”, his music is so much more than a wacky one-hit-wonder. The perfect album to listen to while relaxing over Spring Break, I encourage each and every one of you to answer the question, “What Happened to the Beach?”, while listening.



# March Melodies: The Ultimate Playlist to Kick Off Spring



BY SOPHIA COSSITT-LEVY  
Staff Writer

As we get closer to March (and hopefully, warmer weather), some may be looking for a few new songs to add to their playlists. Personally, I tend to listen to different songs depending on the season or the weather, so here are a few of my favorites for spring.

**“You Signed Up For This”** by Maisie Peters – This was one of the first songs that got me ob-



sessed with Maisie. The music is so upbeat and so much fun. I love it so much, and going for a walk while listening to this will make you feel like the

main character.

**“As It Was”** by Harry Styles – I can’t explain it, but this song and the album Harry’s House totally reminds me of spring. I had this song on repeat when it first came out, and I expect to have it on repeat again this spring. The music radiates positivity and it’s perfect for the first windows and sunroof-down drive of the season.

**“All Of The Girls You Loved Before”** by Taylor Swift – This song is a little more summer in my opinion, but it’s just too good to not include. It feels like your first walk on the beach in the warm weather with the sun shining on your face. It’s such a wholesome song, and I can’t believe it took Taylor so long to release it.

**“Starting Line”** by Luke Hemmings – I adore this song. It was my top song on Spotify in 2021 when it came out. I love the music so much, and the piano at the beginning is perfect.

**“Heartbreak Weather”** by Niall Horan – This is one of my favorite Niall songs. It instantly puts me in a happy mood with its upbeat music. I love listening to it in the car or dancing to it with my friends.

**“Keep Driving”** by Harry Styles – Another

iconic song and probably my favorite from Harry’s House. The bridge is so iconic and so fun to scream with your friends in the car. The music is so chill and casual, too, which I love.

**“Dreams”** by The Cranberries – I listened to this song (and only this song) on repeat for an incredibly long time when I was first introduced to it. It’s fabulous, and Dolores O’Riordan slays with the vocals.

**“Fearless (Taylor’s Version)”** by Taylor Swift – Fearless the album is very spring to me. Though it’s a popular one, I absolutely love this song. The lyrics are so cute, and it’s such a perfect song to dance to.

**“When You’re Gone”** by Shawn Mendes – I got my driver’s license in the month of March, and this was one of the songs I played on my first solo drive to my best friend’s house. It’s such an upbeat song, and 16-year-old me had the time of my life screaming this in the car with the windows down. A spring (and summer!) song for sure.

**“Aurora”** by Daisy Jones & The Six – The day this song came out was one of the best days of my life. I originally read the book Daisy Jones & The Six by Taylor Jenkins Reid before the show and al-



bum came out, so hearing this song specifically was a long time coming. It did not disappoint – it’s so catchy and made the queue all the time for my drives home from school.

Hopefully, you were able to find at least a few songs to add to your March playlists. If you want to listen to this playlist exactly as it is, it’s on Spotify: March Songs for the Mirror.





# COFFEE BREAK

GAMES, PUZZLES AND MORE  
Editor: Matthew Rohles



## SUDOKU



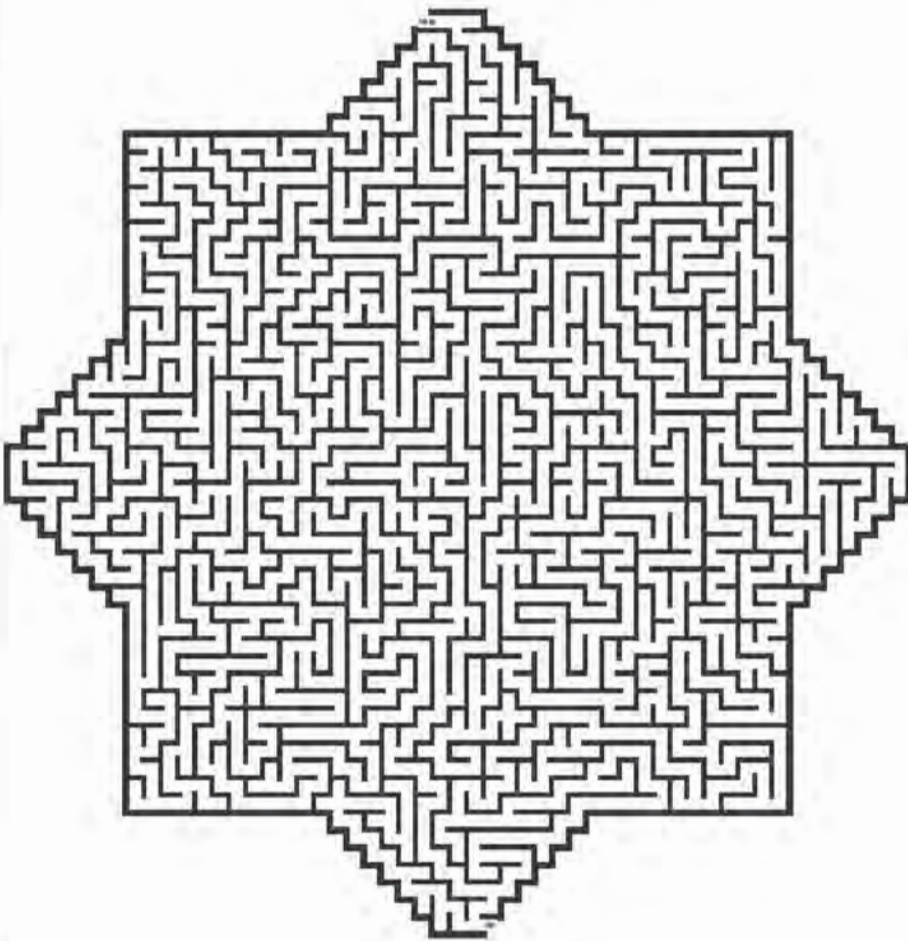
3	8		2		7	5	1	
	1	5			3	9	2	
	2		9	5		3	8	
2			3		5			
6			1		4		3	
1			8		2			5
9							7	
5				3	6	8	9	1
	7	3		1		6		2

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

## MIRROR COLORING



## MIRROR MAZE





# Pair of Wins Vault Stags to the Top of the MAAC

By SEAN BELLAMY  
Contributing Writer

The Fairfield University men’s basket- ball team got two big wins this past weekend, against Quinnipiac University on Friday and Siena College on Sunday. The Quinnipiac game was played at M&T Bank Arena, with a final score of 85-81. The Siena game was played at home in the Leo D. Mahoney Arena, with a final score of 88-64.

Additionally, Quinnipiac (19-8, 11-5 Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference) lost for a second time this past weekend, falling to Rider University (12-16, 9-8 MAAC) 78-88. The Stag’s (18-10, 12-5 MAAC) blowout win over Siena (4-23, 3-13 MAAC) now puts them at first place in the MAAC.

One more thing to note is that Fairfield’s win over Quinnipiac also now gives them the tiebreaker over the Bobcats. This could prove to be very crucial for the future playoff seedings.

The game against Quinnipiac was an in- stant MAAC classic. The game was hard fought, and at no point in the game could one tell who was going to come out on top.

Fairfield was led by senior guard Jalen Leach, who racked up 27 points, 6 rebounds, and 4 assists. Leach was backed up by fellow guard, graduate student Caleb Fields who fin- ished with 19 points and 5 assists.

Graduate student Matt Balanc led the Bobcats with 23 points and 9 rebounds. Junior guard Doug Young added 17 points of his own in the losing effort.

On Friday night, it was made very clear to the Stags that they were not welcome in the arena. A decent amount of Fairfield fans made the trip up to Hamden, but there was a lot of blue and gold in the stands that night.

Junior forward Birima Seck helped set the tone early on the defensive end. On Quinni- piac’s first possession of the game, Seck stole the ball from guard Savion Lewis. This was the first of the Stag’s ten steals on the night.

The game was a very close affair through- out the entire game, as neither team could pull away from the other. Leach knocked down his first three pointer of the night at the 15 minute mark to give Fairfield an early nine point lead.

However, this would be the largest lead of the game for either team. The Bobcats would slowly but surely cut Fairfield’s lead down, and from then on it was a back and forth affair.

Quinnipiac’s Amarri Tice hit a last-second three-pointer to tie the game up at 39 a piece going into the half. The second half was when the game would really start to heat up.

The Stags were moving the ball well in the second half. On one possession, Fields was doubled, but he kept his eyes up and hit Seck with a nice pass for a wide open slam dunk.

Quinnipiac came out shooting hot to start the second half, but a series of steals and nice shots from Fairfield kept the game close. With just under 10 minutes left to play in the game, the score was 61-57 in favor of Quinnipiac.



Photo Courtesy of @fairfieldmbb Instagram

Senior Louis Bleechmore is averaging 8 points per game with 4.5 rebounds per game on 44.5% shooting from the field.

The Bobcats were looking to pull away from the Stags, and a steal from Lewis gave Quinnipiac a fast-break opportunity to do just that. However, guard Brycen Goodine came up from behind and got a monster block, spik- ing the ball off the backboard and into Leach’s hands. Leach pushed the ball up the court by himself and got a transition bucket with a nice finish at the rim.

A big factor in this game was the rebounds, on both the offensive and defensive sides of the ball. Part of the reason the game was as close as it was was due to both teams rebounding effec- tively and getting second chances on offense.

Interim head coach Chris Casey echoed this sentiment after the game. “I thought they came up with some offensive rebounds in the second half that we needed to dig out,” said Casey. Still, though, the Stags got some good boards of their own, so they “didn’t get hurt badly on the glass” according to coach Casey.

The game ultimately came down to the wire. With just three minutes left in the game, Fairfield held onto a six point lead (76-70), but Quinnipiac would not go down easily.

At this point in the game, with time

winding down, Quinnipiac needed to make a play. Unfortunately however, in the final two minutes of play, Balanc turned the ball over on two consecutive possessions, which proved to be very costly.

After this, Quinnipiac could do little but foul and watch as Fairfield made their free throws to effectively put the game out of reach.

One of the big highlights of this game was that it got flexed to ESPNU, a nation-wide sports channel that reaches millions of Americans. After the game, the team seemed particularly excited about the big win.

I spoke with Leach after the game and we discussed how it felt to get such a big win on na- tional television. “It feels great,” said Leach, “... and they’re the number one team, so it’s a great feeling for our team.”

The game against the Siena Saints was relatively less eventful. The Stags won in com- manding fashion, taking care of business in a 24 point blowout.

Leach led the Stags once again with 21 points and 9 rebounds. Redshirt senior Brycen Goodine came off the bench and added 15 points of his own.

Siena’s scoring was led by sophomores Mason Courtney and Brendan Coyle who each finished with 13 points.

Fairfield also shot 49% from the field, and 48% from three point range. When compared to Siena’s 39 percent FG% and 23 percent 3P%, it’s easy to see how the game got so out of hand for the Saints.

The first half was a bit slow, with an initial back and forth. Fairfield began to pull away after the first ten minutes of play, going into halftime with an eight point lead.

The Stags would really open up the game in the second half, scoring 55 of their total points in the second half. Fairfield never looked back, and showed why they’re at the top of the conference.

The Stags have now won three games in a row and six out of their last seven. The MAAC is very tightly contested this year, and the Stags seem to be getting hot at just the right time.

The next game for the men’s basketball team will be this Friday against Marist at 7 pm in the McCann Arena. The game will also be streaming on ESPN+.

## In this week’s issue...

- Opinion: Why the Yankees Are Serious World Series Contenders (Page 14)
- Stags Split: Secure First Win vs Wagner (Page 15)
- Baseball Continues Slow Start to 2024 Campaign (Page 15)
- Women's Basketball Clinches Regular Season MAAC Title (Page 16)



# Opinion: Why the Yankees Are Serious World Series Contenders

By **RYAN CANFIELD**  
Contributing Writer

After a dreadful 2023 season that saw the Yankees go 82-80 and miss the postseason, they went out and made big additions to the lineup and starting rotation.

But before we get into the 2024 roster, let's review what went wrong in 2023.

The first place to start is on the injury front. Captain Aaron Judge only played in 106 games after crashing into the wall in Dodger Stadium, tearing a ligament in his right big toe. Hard to find more of a freak injury than that.

First baseman Anthony Rizzo was off to a fantastic start (.304/.376/.505 with 11 home runs) before Fernando Tatis Jr. banged into his head and unknowingly at the time concussed him.

After that incident, Rizzo was literally one of the worst hitters in baseball for two months (.174/.272/.227 with one home run) before being put on the injured list for post-concussion syndrome.

Big money free agent addition Carlos Rodón dealt with forearm tightness in spring training, back tightness that delayed his first start until July 7 and then also a hamstring injury that sent him back on the injured list after his season debut.

All in all, Rodón's first season in pinstripes could have gone much worse. When he was on the field, he pitched to a 6.85 ERA in 64.1 innings. In his final start against the Royals Rodón failed to record one

out while allowing eight runs and turning his back to pitching coach Matt Blake during a mound visit.

After a season in which Nestor Cortes was an All-Star in 2022, he battled injury and ineffectiveness. Cortes started 12 games and pitched to a 4.97 ERA.

Frankie Montas made one appearance all season, and it was in the final series of the year against Kansas City; Montas signed a deal with the Reds hoping to rebuild his value on a shorter-term deal.

Luis Severino also struggled last season, pitching to a 6.65 ERA in 89.1 innings pitched before signing the Mets this offseason on a short-term deal to rebuild his value.

Harrison Bader missed a chunk of time and Jose Trevino played through a wrist injury before being shut down and missing the back half of the season.

The Yankees were riddled by injuries, but not something uncommon to these recent Yankees teams.

Ace Gerrit Cole said this year in spring training that the Yankees as a team get injured too much and need to improve on it. He is spot-on, but a lot of Yankees did not perform to the back of

their baseball cards in 2023.

Giancarlo Stanton battled injuries and had the worst season of his career. In 101 games he hit .191/.275/.420 with 24 home runs. In the offseason general manager Brian Cashman said that getting injured appears to be a part of Stanton's game.

DJ LeMahieu from opening day through July 4 hit a paltry .221/.287/.363

with seven home runs. At the end of the season, Cashman said he thinks LeMahieu's slow start may have been due to having to rehab his toe injury from 2022.

From July 5th to the end of the season LeMahieu stepped up his production in a big way hitting .268/.372/.421 with eight home runs.

The lack of actionable depth crushed the Yankees, making the injuries and underperformance too much to overcome.

The Yankees were forced to rely on Franchy Cordero, Billy McKinney, Jake Bauers and Willie Calhoun, and their record reflected that.

All those factors contributed to the Yankees' worst season since 1992.

It is why Cashman's hand was forced to make a big move (or moves) this offseason.

For 2024 in comes Juan Soto, Alex Verdugo, Trent Grisham, Marcus Stroman.

Anthony Volpe should take a leap in year two.

Aaron

Judge posted a .284/.452/.614 line with eight home runs in September following his toe injury.

There have been multiple reports of LeMahieu being more 'explosive' as he did not have to rehab his toe injury this offseason.

Rizzo says the concussion issue is behind him. Stanton showed up to camp looking noticeably trimmer with a stance change.

Rodón has reportedly touched 97 MPH in his bullpens already, whereas this time last year he was around 92-93 MPH. Rodón also looks trimmer compared to where he was last season.

Gleyber Torres posted a .800 OPS last season and was the Yankees' best hitter outside of Judge last year.

The lineup is going to feature two of the top five hitters in the sport in Soto and Judge, a major upgrade in the outfield with the addition of Verdugo.

There is much stronger depth when the injuries inevitably come with Grisham in the outfield, and Oswaldo Cabrera and Oswald Peraza in the infield.

Let's not forget, Gerrit Cole was the unanimous AL Cy Young Award winner last season.

The Yankees have without question improved their roster by adding Soto, Grisham, Verdugo, and Stroman. Coupled with that is the fact that it is hard for the Yankees to follow up what they did last year on the injury front.

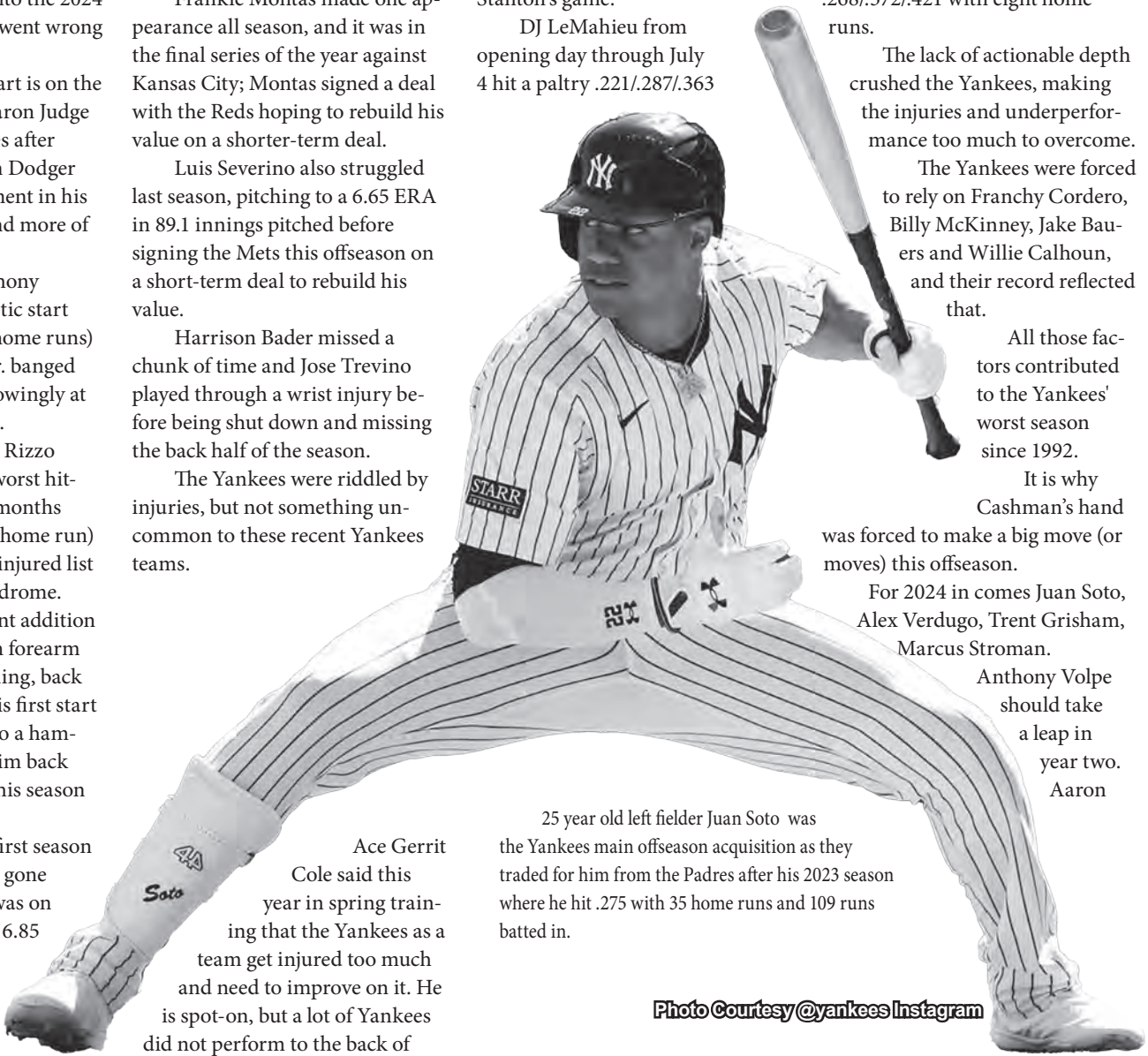


Photo Courtesy @yankees Instagram

Read full article at [www.fairfieldmirror.com](http://www.fairfieldmirror.com)

## The Weekly 5x4

Five People. Four Questions. Because we have witty things to say.

	Max Limric Editor-in-Chief	Samantha Russell Executive Editor	Kathleen Morris Managing Editor	Claire DeMarco Head News Editor	Natalie Dripchak Assistant Opinion Editor
What are your plans for Spring Break?	Going home to cry.	Going to Italy, yay!!!	I'll be heading up north to hit the slopes!	Go home and see my sister!!	Not anything exciting...just going home.
How have you been taking advantage of the warm weather lately?	It's been warm one day hehe. But I guess being able to walk peacefully.	It's still not warm enough for me...	I've enjoyed shedding some layers, much to the chagrin of my friends raised in	Constantly saying "Omg I love this weather" when I literally don't.	I still wear my huge winter jacket...it's not that warm yet...
What's the best movie you've watched in 2024?	Yikes, I have no movie! I feel like I haven't been in 2024 too long and yet it's been 3 months ...	I watched "May December" on Netflix and it was actually really good.	I rewatched "E.T." for the nostalgia and now I'm craving Reese's Pieces.	Tie between Marcel the Shell With Shoes On and The Witch. Very different films.	Anyone but you! The best romcom to come out since How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days.
Any words for the Women's Basketball team?	All I can say is, "Who run the world?"	Amazing game played on Saturday against Niagara – go girls!!!	Unreal. (and a special shoutout to 10-time MAAC Rookie of the Week, Meghan Anderson!!!). a Fenway Frank at	Show 'em how it's done ladies!	So excited for them! Such an amazing accomplishment!



# Stags Split: Secure First Win vs Wagner

By NATALIE DRIPCHAK  
Assistant Opinion Editor

This past week the Fairfield University men’s lacrosse team had two games resulting in one loss and one win. Wednesday’s game was against neighboring school, Sacred Heart University, and Saturday’s game was against Wagner.

The Wednesday night game against Sacred Heart ended in a 13-9 defeat.

Sacred Heart started the game with the first three goals. Late into the first quarter, senior Cam Barisano scored the first goal for Fairfield.

The second quarter started with Sacred Heart scoring two points which allowed them to have a 5-1 advantage over Fairfield.

Graduate students Dean Ford and Bryce Ford both scored, but Sacred Heart followed up with another four goals which put them in the lead. The score was 10-5 at the end of the half.

Fairfield stuck it out in the third quarter with B. Ford scoring two goals, while Sacred Heart did not score.

Going into the fourth quarter the score was 10-7 which allowed Sacred Heart to have the upper hand, scoring three times. Fairfield scored twice from B. Ford and Will Consoli ‘26, which resulted in the final score of 13-9.

The Stags had another game this past Saturday to make up for their loss on Wednesday. The Mirror talked to Julian Radossich ‘27 who said “Coming after three losses we wanted to find our groove for our next game so we really tried to stick to the basics during practice”.

This mentality helped the Stags this past Saturday with their win over Wagner with the final score being 14-9.

B. Ford played as an essential player



Photo Contributed by The Sports Information Desk

Junior FOGO Dylan Smith has a 42.6% faceoff win percentage through the first four games of the year with 13 ground balls.

in this game with his second consecutive five-goal game.

Senior Jake Coleman contributed three assists and scored twice. Sophomore Jake Gilbert added two assists and two points, and Consoli and Sophomore Jason LaMay Jr. both contributed with two assists and one goal.

Other scorers in the game were senior Reilly Sullivan, senior Brady Strough and Junior Rory Thompson with one goal each. Senior Luke Okupski and Keegan Lynch ‘27 each added an assist.

Fairfield’s defense had a tremendous effort on Saturday. Senior Braden Lynch had four caused turnovers and three

ground balls and Eli Adams ‘26 had three caused turnovers and four ground balls. Graduate student Danny Manning also added two caused turnovers and starting LSM, Radossich had one caused turnover and five ground balls.

With his best performance yet at the dot Dylan Smith ‘25 won 15 of 23 draws with seven ground balls. Thompson also won a faceoff.

Sophomore goalie Will Snyder contributed to the Stags win with six saves and a ground ball.

The Mirror spoke with Lars Heimlich ‘27, who accredited the team's momentum shift to “speeches from the captains and

coaches and making sure we all take time as a team to reflect on our past games”. The Stags have worked hard to obtain their first win of the season which can be accredited to lots of dedication and hard work.

The Fairfield University's men's lacrosse team record has now improved to 1-3. Their next game will be on Conway Field at Rafferty Stadium on Saturday, March 2 against Providence at 1 pm.

For more information regarding the Fairfield University men's lacrosse team, please visit [www.fairfieldstags.com](http://www.fairfieldstags.com).

# Baseball Continues Slow Start to 2024 Campaign

By CRYSTAL ARBELO  
ASSISTANT SPORTS EDITOR

The Fairfield University baseball team spent the weekend on the road once again for a series against the James Madison University Dukes, to which the Stags were unfortunately swept and have yet to collect their first win of the 2024 season.

The Stags seem to have gotten to a slow start this season, despite explosive displays on the offensive side.

In the first inning of the series opener, catcher and graduate student Ethan Hibbard hit a bomb to center field bringing in first baseman Matt

Bergevin ‘24 and shortstop Dean Ferrara ‘25 to put the Stags up by three runs. The Dukes responded with a single and scored on an infield error, but the Stags quickly made up for it by bringing home another in the top of the 2nd inning.

The Duke's offense did not falter, though, as they kept scoring consistently. Their third baseman homered in the 3rd and 5th innings, rivaling Hibbards and evening out the score to 5-5 going into the 6th inning.

Thanks to a left fielder TJ Schmalzle ‘26 single, designated hitter Matt Lussier ‘27 and third baseman Luke Nomura ‘26, the Stags were ahead, but not for long as JMU

clapped back and scored five runs in the 7th inning. Fairfield tried to rally it back, but was ultimately stopped at nine runs after Lussier hit a RBI single and pinch hitter JP Kuczik ‘26 hit a RBI double to bring Lussier home and a scoreless 9th inning; the final score was 9-10.

On the pitching end, Fairfield saw four pitchers on the mound. Starting RHP Colin McVeigh ‘24 had a final line of 4 IP, 9 H, 4 ER, 1 BB and 5 K. Coming in to relieve McVeigh in the bottom of the 5th was RHP Peter Ostensen ‘24 who had a final line of 2.2 IP, 7 H, 5 ER, 0 BB and 1 K and collected the loss. RHP Peter Phillips ‘26 and graduate student RHP Jack Erbeck both went

one inning or less to close the last third of the game.

The next game saw a relatively low-scoring and broken-up game on Saturday and Sunday afternoon. In the first two innings, the Stags were scoreless while starting LHP Bowen Baker ‘24 went two innings and unfortunately gave up three earned runs from a sequence of a single, a wild pitch and a home run. Play was suspended in the second inning due to inclement weather, and was resumed as a doubleheader on Sunday.

Graduate student RHP Kyle Lesler was put in to start the resumed game in the bottom of the 3rd.

After four scoreless innings for the Stags offense, they showed signs of life and took advantage of poor pitching as Sturino hit a 2 RBI triple down the right field line to bring home Bergevin who was hit by a pitch and Hibbard who walked. JMU did not leave these runs unanswered, though, as they themselves were beneficiaries of being hit by a pitch and a passed ball to which they singled and picked up another run.

Both teams were unable to score past the fourth inning, and a mini-pitching battle ensued. RHP Kevin Kell ‘26 was put in for Lesler, and his fresh arm took a minute to warm up but was supported by the defense to collect all three necessary outs without giving up a run. Lesler then heated up by the 6th inning, striking out 3 in a row looking to close the side. Kell put up an impressive line of 4 IP, 3 H, 0 ER, 2 BB and 4 K. The final score was 2-4.

For the last game, the Stags had a deficit of four runs by the top of the 3rd and finally answered with two singles and an RBI from Hibbard. Following that was a homer in the bottom of the third and a 3 RBI homer in the bottom of the fourth, making the score 1-8 by the fifth inning.

Bergevin crushed a 3 RBI home run to center field, bringing the Stags up to four runs, which they remained for the rest of the game.

In terms of pitching, starting RHP Ben Alekson ‘27 had a final line of 2 IP, 6 H, 4 ER, 1 BB and 3 K. LHP Blake Helmstetter came in as reinforcement for two innings and gave up 4 earned runs. RHP Ryan Maiorano ‘27 faced 4 batters in the bottom of the 5th and gave up 4 earned runs, to which graduate student LHP Chris DiFiore was put in to stop the bleeding for the last 2 innings, who also gave up 4 earned runs. The final score was 4-16.

Despite the sweep, there are highlights that are glimpses of the full potential yet to be reached by this season’s squad. Kell’s outing was just as impressive as his first in Fairfield’s first series, and he holds opposing hitters to a .158 average when pitching. Hitting is still growing strong, as Lussier, Bucciero Bergevin and Sturino are steadily hitting. Ferrera is currently batting .500.

The Stags face the George Mason University's Patriots next, traveling to Virginia for a three-game series next weekend.

w



Photo Contributed by the Sports Information Desk

Junior infielder Nick Sturino has started off his 2024 campaign batting .227 with a .320 on base percentage.



# Women's Basketball Clinches Regular Season MAAC Title

By **DANNY McELROY**  
Assistant Sports Editor

A celebratory roar erupted from the Leo D. Mahoney Arena crowd last Saturday as guard Janelle Brown '24 galloped around the floor, a new trophy held high in her hands.

Fairfield women's basketball picked up yet another pair of victories last week, extending their win streak to 22 games and clinching the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference regular season title.

The new hardware is just the latest achievement in a long line of accolades the Stags have accrued this season, including the record-setting win streak and the program's first ever votes received in the Associated Press's national poll.

It took wins over the two closest competitors in the MAAC standings for the Stags to officially claim the trophy, beginning with a road test at Siena on Thursday night.

Much like their recent contests against Mount St. Mary's and Saint Peter's, the Stags were pushed to their limits against the Saints, trailing by as many as nine points in the second quarter. A three-pointer from road runner Meghan Andersen '27 and a final minute layup from guard Kaety L'Amoreaux '27 helped cap a run that cut the deficit to one point, but it was still the second straight game trailing at halftime for the Stags, an unfamiliar spot for them to be in this season.

"I think we're a very disciplined team," L'Amoreaux said. "Our biggest thing is, it might take two minutes, it might take 30 minutes, and it might take the full 40...so I think our whole team was able to stay together, stay connected, and know that we were gonna get the job done in the end."

The mental fortitude was evident, as Andersen buried two more threes to start the third quarter and give the Stags a five point lead. Siena would answer back though, and after several lead changes throughout the frame, it was Andersen who spearheaded yet another run that

culminated in a 56-50 advantage to begin the fourth quarter.

Still, the Saints would not go away quietly, scoring baskets on four straight possessions inside the final four minutes. As they have all year, however, the Stags found a way to respond, as Brown and road runner Emina Selimovic '25 joined L'Amoreaux in connecting on key baskets down the stretch to ice a hard-fought 71-67 win.

"I think what's different about this team is that nobody gives up," said guard Kendall McGruder '25, who missed the game against Siena with an injury. "Everybody shows grit, and the fact that we can come together and get these dubs shows a lot about who the team is."

Brown and Andersen paced the Stags with 19 points each, followed by L'Amoreaux with 14. Brown also had five steals on the night, leading a defense that forced 16 Siena turnovers.

The stage was then set for a return home to Mahoney Arena on Saturday afternoon, where the Stags hosted the second-place Niagara Purple Eagles. And with a chance to clinch the regular season conference title on the line, it was a prime opportunity for the team to return to the dominant form they've displayed for much of the season thus far.

"We wanted to have a statement game, where we're like, 'we're done with the tight games, this is who we are,'" L'Amoreaux said. "Especially going into the tail end of the season and the MAAC tournament, I think we wanted to get back to playing the way we know we can."

The Stags made their intentions clear right from the opening tip, jumping out to an 8-0 lead in just over a minute of action thanks to some forced turnovers and up tempo offense.

The Purple Eagles did their best to cut into the lead, using a late first-quarter flurry to trail by just five heading into the second stanza. From that point on though, Mahoney Arena was treated to a stunningly one-sided affair.

The Stags outscored Niagara 74-49



First-year Meghan Andersen is averaging 16.4 points per game in her first season as a Stag.

through the rest of the game. After pouring in a career-high 30 points when the two teams met in January, Andersen gave an encore performance to the tune of 26 points and nine rebounds en route to her tenth MAAC Rookie of the Week award.

Perhaps most impressive was the Stags'

ability to overcome Niagara's defensive pressure. The Purple Eagles lead the country in forced turnovers per game, and while they were able to come away with 23 on Saturday, the Stags responded with 24 assists on their own side, matching their team-high total this season.

"Niagara does a really good job of speeding teams up," said McGruder, who along with L'Amoreaux, tied her career best with six assists in her return to the floor. "But I think that we showed great poise in finding our open teammates, and that really helped us seal the game."

Supplementing Andersen's huge game was a 15 point outing from Brown, as well as 14 point afternoons for L'Amoreaux and Selimovic.

McGruder and guard Izabela Nicoletti-Leite '24 also got into double figures, with 11 and 10 points respectively. In the end, the final tally of 95-65 served as a triumphant culmination of the Stags' sprint to the regular season conference title.

"[Winning the MAAC] means a lot, because that's what we've been working for this season," L'Amoreaux said. "It's important we don't lose sight of how significant that is, but we know the job isn't done. Winning the regular season title is awesome, but it's not the end goal."

That honor is reserved for a MAAC Tournament Championship and a bid to March Madness, which is no guarantee despite the tremendous year the Stags have had so far, and the team knows the importance of staying locked in through their final four games in order to check off those boxes.

"It's just gonna take consistency, on and off the court," McGruder said. "When we live up to our Stag standards every single day, and play for one another and just enjoy being in each other's presence, that will help us through the tournament."

The Stags have four more games left before they get there, with the first coming this Thursday at Mahoney Arena against in-state rival Quinnipiac. Opening tip is at 7 P.M.



Photo Contributed by The Sports Information Desk

The Stags clinched the regular season MAAC title on Feb. 24 with a win over Niagara as they extended their win streak to 22 games shooting 63% from the field.