

THE MIRROR

Week of October 2, 2024 | Vol. 52 Issue 3

Independent student newspaper

fairfieldmirror.com



The anonymous app, Fizz, has become an outlet for students' to express their opinions on candidates running in the upcoming state election. Posts include endorsements, as well as criticism related to false claims about candidates' ability to interfere with student traditions. The following candidates are featured (from left to right): Robert Blanchard, Tony Hwang, Jennifer Leeper and Alexis Harrison.

Campus Crime Report Notes Increase in Sexual Offenses

BY KATHLEEN MORRIS
Managing Editor

The 2024 Annual Campus Security & Fire Safety Report became available for viewing on Monday, September 30. The report is compiled in adherence with the federal Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act (Clery Act). This report consists of two basic parts: disclosure of the University's crime statistics for the past three years and information about the University's current campus security, fire safety and related policies.

The origins of the Clery Act are rooted in tragedy, as it was established following the rape and murder of Jeanne Clery in her college dormitory in 1986. Her parents were unaware of the danger their daughter faced, prompting the pair to lobby for policy changes to initiate open dialogue about campus safety.

For the past two years, the report has been compiled by Sgt. Mike Santos. In a conversation with The Mirror, Santos acknowledged that the process is "strenuous" and can only be completed by an individual who has completed Clery Act Training Seminars (CATS). According to the Clery Center, the seminars "are multi-day, in-depth Clery Act training offered in three modalities: in-person, virtual, and self-paced." Santos and the entire Department of Public Safety (DPS) are committed to ensuring that "the entire university community stays as free as possible from crime while pursuing their academic endeavors to the fullest," as indicated on the Fairfield University website.

The Mirror has identified a few standout incidents from 2023.

1.) There was one incident of weapon possession in a student residence.

2.) The number of reported sexual offenses increased from 3 to 8 between 2022 and 2023. Seven of these incidents took place on campus.

3.) There were three reported incidents of "Sexual Assault: Rape." Two incidents took place in student residences and one occurred in an off-campus facility.

4.) There were four incidents of forcible fondling in student residences.

5.) Five incidents of stalking took place on university property. Three took place in student residences.

DPS was able to provide insight on the weapon possession, stating that a group of students released a "Molotov cocktail" on Grauert Field. Britannica defines the "Molotov cocktail" as "a crude bomb, typically consisting of a bottle filled with a flammable liquid and a wick that is ignited before throwing." The students, who created the bomb with experimental intentions, were promptly arrested by the Fairfield Police Department.

The Mirror sought additional insight on these statistics from DPS. They were referred to Vice President of Marketing and Communications, Jennifer Anderson '97, MBA '02 for comment. Anderson did not reply in time for print. The Mirror will continue to investigate and provide updates once available.

The most current version of the Annual Campus Security & Fire Safety Report can be accessed digitally at fairfield.edu/clery. Paper copies of the Annual Campus Security & Fire Safety Report are available at the Fairfield University Department of Public Safety.

Connecticut Candidates Comment on Effect of Misinformation on Election

BY SAMANTHA RUSSELL
Executive Editor

With state elections nearly one month away, political discussion has reached the Fairfield University campus. Students are expressing their opinions on Connecticut Senator Tony Hwang and potential candidate Robert Blanchard, although a majority of this conversation has taken place anonymously over Fizz and is spreading misinformation.

"I think it's incredibly important and healthy for students to be engaged and involved in what happens on their campus, in their community and their world as a whole," Blanchard said. "It's equally important that they ensure that the information they either share or receive is accurate and factual."

On September 21, a Fizz user claimed the motives of "liberal bureaucrat Rob Blanchard" to shut down Santacon. The user then endorsed Hwang and his support for student rights on the beach.

Another user pinned "town liberals" as trying to ruin beach parties, encouraging students to vote for Hwang. Contrary to these beliefs, Blanchard clarified that state senators have no influence on the outcome of college beach parties.

"While I have no say or control over the future of any Fairfield University student events or beach parties as a member of the Fairfield Representative Town Meeting (RTM) or if I was elected to the State Senate," he said, "I support the university and town coming together to find ways to ensure annual events continue in a way that's fun and safe for students and residents and more organized, just as I did during parties in my college years."

Connecticut State Representative Jennifer Leeper supports Blanchard and his plans as a state senator, additionally stating her lack of involvement with student life at the beach. She and Blanchard hope Fairfield students will attend their candidate forum at 6:30 p.m. on Oct. 9.

Leeper discouraged the use of anonymous apps to spread political misinformation. "Gaslighting students using anonymous accounts with misinformation, is one of the more cynical things I have seen

in my time as a public servant," she said. Still, she and Blanchard acknowledge its success in increasing student Election Day Registrations during the last election cycle.

Regarding the information being spread about him on Fizz, Blanchard stated it is "bogus" and a sure sign that Hwang's campaign has reached a "desperate and frantic low point."

Continuing this condemnation, he said: "At a time when the town and university ought to be strengthening their relationship, it's troubling that Senator Hwang would seek to drive a wedge between the two and create political divisiveness through misinformation for his own partisan gain."

However, Fizz is not the only place where political discussion has entered Fairfield's campus. In the Class of 2025 GroupMe chat, Off-Campus Student Leader (OCL) Colin Richards sent a flier encouraging students to vote for Alexis Harrison for State Representative. However, Richards did make clear that he is not specifically endorsing the candidate. The flier was provided to Richards by Pete Collins, owner of The Seagrape Cafe.

Associate Dean of Students Allison Berger appointed Richards as OCL during the summer, after sending a notice to all off-campus students in July requesting a letter of intent for those interested in the position.

“Facing uncertainty in the job market and saddled with student loan debt, I sympathize with what they may face upon graduation.”

-Robert Blanchard, Democratic Senate Candidate

"Qualities of students who hold this position have strong communication skills, welcome input and feedback, are open to guidance, are in good

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Annual Campus Security & Fire Safety Report STANDOUT STATISTICS	
• There was 1 incident of weapon possession in a student residence.	
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• There were 3 reported incidents of " Sexual Assault: Rape. " 2 incidents took place in student residences and one occurred in an off-campus facility.	
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MEAL SWIPE HOURS:



MON-FRI: 7:30AM-8PM
SAT-SUN: 8AM-8PM



SUN-THURS: 4PM-10:30PM
FRI-SAT: CLOSED

MEAL SWIPES AVAILABLE FOR IN-PERSON ORDERING UNTIL 9:30PM AND FOR GRUBHUB DELIVERY 8PM-10PM



MON-FRI: 11AM-9PM
SAT-SUN: 3PM-9PM



MON-FRI: 11AM-8PM
SAT-SUN: CLOSED



MON-FRI: 8AM-3PM
SAT-SUN: CLOSED



MON-FRI: 8AM-4PM
SAT-SUN: CLOSED



MON-FRI: 7:30AM-3PM
SAT-SUN: 8AM-3PM

MEAL SWIPES AVAILABLE ON THE GRUBHUB APP MONDAY-FRIDAY: 1PM-3PM



MON-FRI: 11AM-9PM
SAT: CLOSED
SUN: 4PM-8PM



Compiled by Kathleen Morris

Information contributed by the Department of Public Safety

- 9/25
8:05 a.m.
A Meditz student contacted DPS to report that she and another student were stuck in an elevator. It was determined that the buttons inside the elevator were not working. But, DPS was able to use to the outside buttons to rescue the students. The company was called for repair.
- 9/26
12:10 a.m.
A student vandalized and tore down an exit sign in a hallway in Gonzaga. The footage is under investigation and the student has yet to be identified. DPS reminds students that such acts of criminal mischief are classified as felonies.
- 9/26
4:20 p.m.
While conducting a Health and Safety check, Residence Life found a bong and paraphanelia in a Regis Hall room. The student in possession of these items was reported to the Dean of Students.
- 9/27
DPS reports that four students were identified for "alcohol intoxication by a minor" at the Presidential Ball. These students were evaluated and eventually released.
- 9/28
12 a.m.
The Area Coordinator for Townhouse 12 Block requested assistance with an argumentative male student. When DPS arrived, the student had fled. He was found later and referred to the Dean of Students.
- 9/30
9:20 a.m.
A mother of a student reported a road rage incident with a university bus driver. The incident included excessive horn beeping and brake-checking. It is under investigation by DPS and FPD.
- 10/1
9:05 a.m.
A member of grounds crew staff hit a parked car with his tractor, inflicting minor front end bumper damage. No injuries were reported.

FUSA Senate Candidates Anticipate Election Results

BY SOPHIA COSSITT-LEVY
Assistant News Editor

Each year, members of the first-year class at Fairfield University have the opportunity to run for Senate in the Fairfield University Student Association, better known as FUSA. This year, five first-years are running for five positions in the Senate. The election closed on Oct. 1 at 5 p.m.

As members of the Senate, students listen to the concerns of their peers and work with the administration, staff and faculty to make improvements at the University. They meet frequently, with committee meetings occurring weekly and Senate meetings occurring twice each week.

In preparation for the election, the candidates have had the opportunity to share their platforms and meet the peers who will be voting for them.

Sophia Bellini, a first-year Finance and Economics double major from Long Island, New York, has been part of student government since the third grade, which culminated in her role as student body president her senior year of high school. "I was the voice of all the students," Bellini says about her previous experience.

St. Anthony's High School, where Bellini attended, is a large school, with about 2,500 students. While there, she planned events and worked with students on a variety of issues. "In a big school, you often feel like you don't have anything to say or you feel like no one's listening to you, but I was able to bring their voice to [administration]," Bellini says.

“In a big school, you often feel like you don't have anything to say or you feel like no one's listening to you, but I was able to bring their voice to administration”.

-Sophia Bellini '28, FUSA Senate Candidate

At Fairfield, Bellini wants to be able to achieve similar things. She wants to plan events on campus and continue to be "that go-to person" for her peers. And, it seems Bellini has already made lots of connections with fellow first-year students. She's met many other students by joining clubs, such as Women in Business, and she also plans on running for the Inter-Residential Hall Association (IRHA).

Evan Molé is a first-year Politics major from Carmel, New York. "Who better to represent you than a Politics major?" he jokes. He plans to enter the Senate as a "blank slate," focusing on what his fellow students want to see happen around campus.

To best maintain this "blank slate," Molé says, "I'll have people be able to send their requests to me, either anonymously, or they could attach their name to it if they

want." Additionally, it's important to Molé that his peers are aware of everything he does as their representative, so he plans on maintaining transparency with them via an outlet he's working on. This will also be where students can submit their feedback or concerns.

Molé hopes to gain experience as a representative for a future in politics during his time in the Senate. "It's something I care about ... I want to hear what the people want, and I want to give them what they want," he says.

James Stiehl is a first-year Accounting and Finance double major from Westchester, New York with prior experience in student government. He was active in his high school's student government, where he was the Senior Class President.

Stiehl also had many other leadership roles, as president of the technology club, treasurer of the English Honor Society, and founder of the debate club.

"I've always had [an] interest in connecting with my fellow peers and advocating for what they care about," Stiehl says.

Christopher Nuzzolo is a first-year student from Freehold, New Jersey, majoring in Integrated Business Engineering. "I am here to talk to and immerse myself with my peers and the student body to further our common interests and beliefs," Nuzzolo says. It's important to him that his fellow students reach out and share what they want to see happen around campus. If elected, he plans to send surveys to students as a way to hear their ideas.

"I believe that you need somebody who is honest, who is truthful and who is willing to put in the hard work and dedication to be able to get things done," Nuzzolo says.

Nuzzolo has already started getting involved and connecting with other students on campus, thanks to what he describes as a great first month at Fairfield. So far, he has participated in various service opportunities and joined the Italian club.

Kyla Santulli is a first-year Politics major from Woodbridge, Connecticut. "I love finding new ways to get involved in my community... I've always been interested in politics, as that is my major. I see this as a learning opportunity and a way to make a difference on campus," Santulli says.

She also has prior experience, as she was part of her school's student council. Recently, Santulli completed an internship at a law firm, and via FUSA's Instagram, she says, "I plan to utilize what I learned at my internship to actively get involved on campus."

The results were announced on Oct. 1 at 6 p.m. at an election party held in the Lower Level BCC for the winners. The results were not released in time for the print publication of this article, but they will be published in the online edition.

THE MIRROR

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Sophia Bellini, Christopher Nuzzolo, Evan Molé, James Stiehl and Kyla Santulli are the first-year candidates for FUSA senate (from top left to bottom right). Voting ended on Oct. 1 and students await results.

Photo Courtesy of FUSA47 Instagram

Election Cartoonist Sheds Light on Political Apathy at Fairfield University

BY ERICA SCHINDLER
Assistant News Editor

Fairfield University is often described as a politically apathetic campus. In recent coverage of the 2024 presidential election, some students expressed that they stay away from politics due to the stress it causes them. Several other students who were reached out to for comment explained their hesitancy to speak out for fear of judgment. A lack of interest in national politics on campus is nothing new, either. A 2007 article featured in *The Mirror* argued that political apathy is abundant at Fairfield.

A recent on-campus event centered around politics was met with a large number of attendees, although many students were there as part of a class obligation. Unlike the library's debate watch party last month, last week's presentation by political cartoonist and illustrator Sean Kelly was highly attended.

With the 2024 presidential election just over one month away, Fairfield University is hosting an array of events focused on politics. Last Wednesday's event, titled "Serious



Illustrator Sean Kelley spoke to Fairfield faculty and students about the history of political cartoons. Even though the event boasted a packed auditorium, many students did not attend the event by choice, instead were there with a class.

Erica Schindler/The Mirror

Elections, *Funny Pictures: How Humorous Images Have Influenced Political History*," was hosted by the Fairfield University Art Museum.

Students, faculty and others filled the seats of the DiMenna Nyselius Library auditorium for the lecture, which began at 12:00 p.m. and lasted for just over an hour. Attendees included students from Philip Eliasoph's class on propaganda and Prof. Karla Barguiarena's Broadcast Communications course.

Kelly was met with engagement from students during his presentation on the history of political cartooning, perhaps a sign of increased interest in politics from students—or at least those enrolled in related courses.

While weaving in references to current politics throughout his humorous slideshow, Kelly also touched on the changing landscape of cartoons.

"Video, I think, is the new editorial cartoon," Kelly said while showing the audience several clips of political parodies from *Saturday Night Live*, which started its 50th season last Saturday.

Long before SNL and TikTok, editorial cartoons in newspapers were platforms for political satire. Kelly walked viewers through some of The United State's most notorious political cartoons, from the origins of the donkey and elephant to Uncle Sam.

Kelly's presentation garnered lots of laughs from the audience, which may come as no surprise considering his resumé. Published in 2017, Kelly illustrated comedian Stephen Colbert's book "Midnight Confessions." However, the cartoonist made sure to note the seriousness of some political illustrations, including Bill Mauldin's cartoon depicting the Lincoln Memorial crying after the assassination of John F. Kennedy.

The slideshow presented by Kelly also made reference to the recent layoffs of some political cartoonists. Kelly explained the weakening of editorial boards due to backlash and threats, including the attack on employees at the French magazine *Charlie Hebdo*.

"In France, in January of 2015 a number of cartoonists were shot dead by terrorists," Kelly said. "It was a real tragic thing for France, for the world and for the world of cartooning."

At the conclusion of his lecture, Kelly took a couple of questions from the audience—yet few students raised their hands. Looking forward, Kelly warned of the potential threat of AI and the dangers of misinformation, defining the latter as "both false and harmful." While the future of political cartoons may be unclear, there's at least a semblance of an audience for them at Fairfield, evident by the seats taken at Kelly's event.

It remains to be seen how upcoming events, including the Quick Center's Open VISIONS Forum featuring political commentators Alyssa Farah Griffin and Molly Jong-Fast, will be received by the student body. As the election inches closer, time will tell whether Stags will become more politically involved.

Anonymity on Fizz Amplifies Election Misinformation

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

standing, are well-respected by their peers and have the time to commit to the position," she said, also stating that upon hearing of the responsibilities, most applying students decide not to accept.

Although he has no say in the verdict of future beach parties, Blanchard made clear his sympathies and support for college students post-graduation.

"Facing uncertainty in the job market and saddled with student loan debt, I sympathize with what they may face upon graduation," he voiced. "That's why I am focused on ensuring we build an economy that retains and attracts employers who will allow us to build a jobs pipeline from colleges and universities, like Fairfield University, to prospective employers, so that they can have more employment opportunities after graduating."

Leeper added that there are regular Stakeholder Meetings between students,

neighbors, police, university and town where issues like beach parties and their solutions are discussed.

Student involvement in democracy is something that Blanchard deems critical. "Their voices ought to be heard," he said. Because he is the youngest running candidate in Fairfield, he has tried to engage with voters in more innovative approaches such as through social media and in the press. Moreover, he thinks for voters sharing their opinions, it is important to stand by what one believes:

"It's important to publicly stand behind your claims or opinions if you believe them rather than hide behind anonymity."

Head News Editor Ashley Devlin is an intern working for Jennifer Leeper and thus did not read, edit or have any part in the creation of this article before publication.



Ohio Senator J.D. Vance sparred onstage against Minn. Governor Tim Walz during The Vice Presidential Debate was held Tuesday Night on CBS

Election 2024 Update: Vice Presidential Debate

BY ERICA SCHINDLER
Assistant News Editor

Last night, Ohio senator J.D. Vance and Minnesota governor Tim Walz faced off in the first and only vice presidential debate of the 2024 election. Republican Vance and Democrat Walz sparred on the issues during the live debate, which was moderated by Norah O'Donnell and Margaret Brennan of CBS News.

Fairfield University students had the opportunity to watch the debate at the DiMenna-Nyselius Library's watch party, part of the university's ongoing Stags Vote! initiative. The library hosted a similar event for last month's presidential debate and was met

with low student turnout. Ahead of last night's event, research and outreach librarian Jennifer Mottolese expressed her hope for this debate.

"While [we] did not have a huge turnout for the presidential debate viewing in September, it is possible that students chose to watch the debate elsewhere," Mottolese said. "Our hope is that by promoting this upcoming debate and hosting it at the Library, students will be aware of it, no matter where they chose to watch it."

For more information on upcoming Stags Vote! events, students can visit Life@Fairfield or fairfield.edu/library. Stay tuned for ongoing election coverage from *The Mirror*!

PLEASE FILL OUT THIS ANONYMOUS ELECTION COVERAGE SURVEY!



Opinion

Editor: Trent Ouellette

The Zyncident: “Real Men Do Nicotine”

By **MAX LIMRIC**
Editor-in-Chief

The “Zyncident” title isn’t originally mine. Instead, the Zyncident has its origins in a somewhat smaller Catholic High School in Connecticut. There, a student popped a few Zyns and threw up all over his first-period class. What does this story have to do with Fairfield University? Well, after listening to that stereotypically high school moment when a sophomore threw up because of nicotine, I can’t stop seeing Zyns everywhere on campus. Whereas high school is a little bit more of an acceptable time to join all the drug fads and not care about the ramifications, once college begins, such behavior is embarrassing. From Zyns coating first-year residence hall stairwells to caked into men’s urinals, Zyns are a biohazard and just outright gross. It’s like when someone spits on the sidewalk, but this time, that spit is in the form of a non-biodegradable nicotine pouch.

Zyns are also an environmental disaster when they’re left on sidewalks and strewn across the campus grounds for animals to ingest and potentially die from. For the negative human health effects, I’m not even going to get into them because I’m not a medical professional, but I’m pretty sure it’s common knowledge that Zyn’s—just like all the fads before it—are not good for the human body.

What draws all the Fairfield students, primarily male students, to Zyns? Well, I doubt that it’s because they’re chain smokers looking to find a better alternative to their harmful smoking habits, which Zyn’s are marketed for. In my opinion, it’s a lust for hypermasculinity—to be viewed as “more of a man,” whatever that means. But it makes sense. Just like many of our fathers dipped and chewed tobacco in college, the generation of today has turned to popping in “an upper decky lip pillow.”

As the male youth of today become more and more conservative and tune into right-wing influencers like Tucker Carlson who asserts that “real men do nicotine,” young men feed into Zyn’s advertising campaign directed to exploit their desire to appear masculine. Tucker Carlson also claims that “Zyn is not a sin,” and is in fact a work enhancer, as well as another type of enhancer, probably not appropriate to include in a university newspaper; both of the claims have been debunked, however.

But I’m not an expert on hypermasculinity and if you want to use Zyns, by all means, please

do. Your body, your money, your choice. I’m not even going to pretend that it matters if you’re 21 or not. No one bats an eye at other substances with age restrictions, and given the frequency they’re found on the floors of first-year dorm halls, it seems to be the same case. However, when your choices infringe upon others and the environment, it might be time to grow up and put down the “Zynneutron.”



Photo Courtesy of MaxLimric

The use of Zyns and other nicotine products have been more noticeable amongst Fairfield students. Zyns littered the floor of the 2024 Presidential Ball, as well as residence halls.

Architecture on Campus is a Mixed Bag

By **CONOR DOONAN**
Contributing Writer



Photo Courtesy of @ffld_reslife

The opening of Dulles Hall this year has reopened the conversation on the University’s architectural style. Over the last decade, Fairfield has adopted a glass heavy, modern style that many feel lacks continuity with many of the older buildings on campus.

With enrollment skyrocketing, Fairfield University has been building housing at an unprecedented rate. Soon enough, they may even have to build more classrooms. But how have their recent projects affected the feel of the campus? From McAuliffe Hall to the new student residences, the campus has a wide range of architectural styles. Some of these styles work, others do not. I, dear readers, am here to share my two cents on the matter.

In this writer’s opinion, there are a few buildings that comprise the gold standard Fairfield should be aiming for. Dolan Hall, with the attached Dolan House, and Bellarmine Hall are obvious standouts, but the Barone Campus Center and the Dolan School of Business are also great designs. Why do these work? The first two are stately and impressive. Distinguished stonework and windows that offer some of the campus’ most stunning views. They practically scream higher education. The latter two are sleek and modern, but still timeless, welcoming students and guests alike to a 21st-century campus. They represent the two paths the University should be taking when building. Either stick to the classics, or, if going the modern route, do it right.

Have they achieved this?

Yes and no.

The most recent residence halls are a perfect example. Dulles Hall is the better of the two. At the very least, it matches neighboring Faber Hall, which, for those who haven’t seen it, is one of the few residence halls that does not have brick siding. There’s a theme. Consistency. As far as residence halls go, it works. Although, living inside the building is a little less desirable, as one of our other writers has noted. That’s the good. Bowman Hall, attached to the Quad, is the bad, or perhaps the ugly. Luckily, most people never have to see it, as it is almost entirely hidden behind Regis. But for those unfortunate residents

of Jogues, such as myself, it is something of an eyesore. The pattern of bricks is reminiscent of house wrap. It feels unfinished. Bland. Corporate. Rather than a complex pattern of bricks, like Gonzaga or Regis, they went with a handful of dark bricks within a sea of beige walls. Unlike the other residence halls, there isn’t anything to break up the shape of the building, either. It’s a beige cube with windows. The only good thing that can be said about it is that it makes Loyola look less terrible, so long as you forget the lack of air conditioning inside the place.

As new buildings go, the best of them is by far the Leo D. Mahoney Arena. It’s impressive, which, with a price tag to the tune of \$51 million dollars, is somewhat expected. Note the sweeping steel ceiling beams in Stag red. Note the colossal air ducts that are somewhat reminiscent of a spaceship. Note the massive half-arch at the front of the building. Note that, unlike Bowman Hall, the brick pattern is complex and interesting, which breaks up the huge walls and prevents them from becoming an eyesore. Perhaps my only complaint is that, with 3500 seats, the building can’t seat the whole student body, but with space a consideration, even that is a trivial matter. It is a genuine pleasure to watch games within the Mahoney Arena, and it is a worthy addition to the campus.

What I can say is this: many students, particularly in their early years on campus, see very little of Fairfield. It’s easy to fall into a routine, walking the same paths every day from your dorm to your classes and back again. So much of the campus is out of the way, that it is not hard to miss things. When you have the time, give yourself a tour. Eat lunch on the porch of Bellarmine Hall. Walk through the zen garden hidden between the trees. Check out the Dolan House. There are some exceptionally beautiful spots on campus. You just have to look for them.

Tropical Paradise Theme Saves PresBall

By JACQUELINE RIGAZIO
Copy Editor

Fairfield University's annual Presidential Ball this past Friday night was full of bright colors, Hawaiian leis and quirky sunglasses. With the theme of "tropical paradise," Bellarmine Lawn was accordingly transformed into the beach vacation of our dreams. As a senior who has attended PresBall for all four years of college, I definitely think that this year's PresBall theme was the best one I have experienced.

Typically, I feel that the PresBall theme is poorly executed and underwhelming. Whenever the theme is announced I usually pay no mind, as it never influences my time at the dance in any way. In years past, themes like "The Great Gatsby" and "2000s throw-back" were fun ideas, sure, but they were not well executed in the actual event. I would never have known that PresBall was themed if I had not read the email advertisements. I had always been very underwhelmed by the PresBall themes and never saw a need for this event to be themed in the first place.

This year's PresBall changed my mind, however, as I was pleasantly surprised at how well the tropical paradise theme was incorporated into the event. Right when I first walked into the huge tent on Bellarmine lawn, members of FUSA were happily handing out colorful leis and fun sunglasses in the shapes of pineapples, flamingos and all things tropical. I grabbed a blue and white lei for myself and a pair of pineapple sunglasses and was ready to boogie on the dance floor.

In addition to the beachy accessories, the beverage table was also adorned with themed decorations. Tropical fruit punch was served and the table was decorated with flowers, big leaves and fake grass which gave the beverage table a unique Tiki look. There were also colorful straws to make the drinks even more fun.

While the music on the dance floor was not luau-themed, inflated beach balls were being thrown around the dance floor. This created a fun beach party vibe while everyone danced around with their friends. Although I did get hit in the head by multiple beach balls while dancing, I definitely appreciated how the theme was still prevalent while on the dance floor. It was also really cute to see everyone on the dance floor wearing their FUSA-provided leis and sunglasses.

I definitely think that this year's FUSA theme was the best one I have ever seen. I'm really glad that my senior year PresBall went out with a bang, and I will always remember this one as my favorite PresBall. When I was initially planning on writing this article, I was ready to speak about how PresBall shouldn't even have a theme, but Friday's tropical paradise theme really changed my mind. Going forward, I think FUSA should use the 2024 Presidential Ball as the precedent for how a theme should be executed.

Director of FUSA Programming Emily Aschenbrenner '25 shared, "Generally, we do a theme just as something fun for decor and giveaways—the same reason you would do a theme with any party!" She continues that a PresBall theme is "just a fun way to attract

people to the event rather than just calling it a dance."

When asked why FUSA specifically chose the theme of tropical paradise, Aschenbrenner shared, "This theme in particular we picked because it's one we haven't done in a little while, and it's always a classic event theme that people enjoy. Especially for a school like Fairfield, which is on the beach, the tropical theme is always a fun one to celebrate."

I think FUSA's pick of tropical paradise was the perfect theme for this year's PresBall. When I look back on my four PresBall experiences, this one will always stand out in my mind as my favorite.



Photo Courtesy of Erin Resnick

A table full of leis met Fairfield students as they entered PresBall on Friday night. The tropical paradise theme, unlike prior years, added something unique to the Presball experience.

Hockey Should Have A Home At Fairfield

ISABELLA DIANGELO
Contributing Writer

A prevalent debate at Fairfield University is whether we should have a D1 hockey team. Many people fail to recognize that Fairfield does not have a Varsity team, rather Fairfield has a very good, and well-formed club hockey team. There was an anonymous survey put out asking the question, "Would you want to see D1 hockey at Fairfield?" and 400 members of the student population voiced their opinions on whether or not Fairfield should step up to the plate and create a team. In an overwhelming response to this question, 95.8% of students said that Fairfield University should have a D1 Hockey team, while 4.2% of students said that they should not.

Why do students believe we should have a hockey team?

"We're in the northeast and so many people come from playing hockey as a kid or watching hockey from big colleges around them or pro teams and [Fairfield] would feel



Photo Courtesy of Fairfield University

more like home for people that come from those backgrounds," one response from the survey indicated, mentioning the school's location in relation to its hockey background hub.

Fairfield is located in the center of five major hockey powerhouses: The Boston Bruins, New York Rangers, New York Islanders, New Jersey Devils and the Pittsburgh Penguins. The majority of students at Fairfield come from Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania where there are major teams that students grew up watching.

Another anonymous student response noted the school's location. "I have always loved to watch hockey, and have seen the community that it builds and attracts. I know for a fact that a lot of people would apply to Fairfield if they could come to see hockey games, as they are a big thing at many Northeastern schools."

Schools in the northeast dominate the hockey scene. Half of the top 20 NCAA schools are from the North East area. Coming in second and third, was Boston College, and Boston University. In sixth, came Fairfield's neighbor, Quinnipiac, and in ninth, Cornell. Others in the top 20 were the University of Maine, the University of Massachusetts Amherst, Providence, RIT and the University of New Hampshire. 94.6% of students polled believed that Fairfield would be able to compete with other universities, both in sports and drawing in more applicants for new undergraduate students.

Another big question about getting D1 hockey at Fairfield is if people would want to go to the games. What would the community be like? Students, without hesitation, commented on the community that they believe would be seen at Fairfield University hockey games.

"I don't think attending sporting events is a lot of students' priority right now because of lack of interest, but I think a lot of students would love to support a hockey team. Hockey game environments are very fun for students and it would be a good way to form relationships and build the community," a survey respondent asserted.

Another student response said that it is an "Exciting environment and brings together the school community."

Many students believe that having more school spirit around hockey in college in New England is one of the better ways to get students involved with sports, as hockey is a fan favorite in New England.

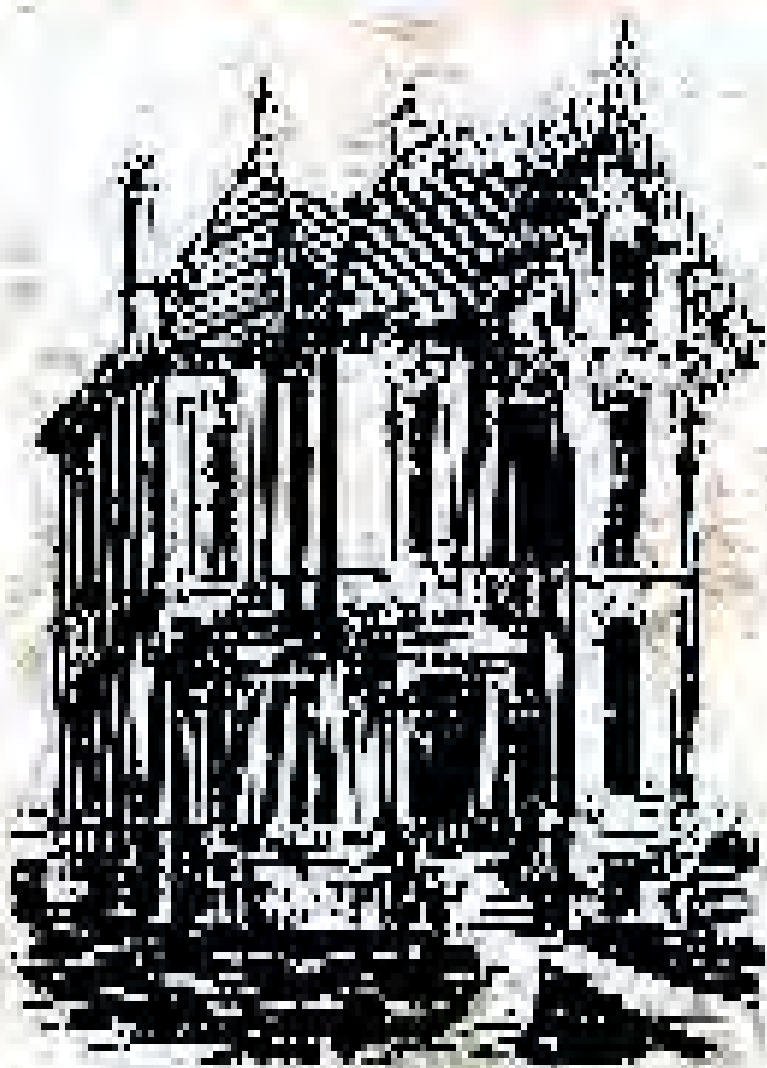
Other students mentioned that the school would see a spike in people attending other sporting events, as students begin to create a community that is centered around hockey. Many even said, in a 93.5% to 6.5% vote, that they would go to an off-campus site to watch hockey games if transportation was provided by the school.

So, will students at Fairfield see their desired hockey team in the near future? Or will Fairfield University remain one of the very few Division One Northeastern schools that do not have a Varsity hockey team? As students said in the survey, "If SHU has it, why don't we?"

Fairfield boasts a club hockey team that competes against other colleges throughout the Fall and Spring semesters. If Fairfield ever took the step up to NCAA D1 there would certainly be a core fanbase of students willing to support the team.



The Vine
Editor: Caitlin Shea



Pres Ball: A First Year's Experience



BY LIZZIE FREEMAN
Contributing Writer

This past Friday, Fairfield students of all class years had the opportunity to dress up and attend the 21st annual Presidential Ball. Of all the events hosted in the first month of school, this is one of the most well-known and widely discussed. For first-years, it was the first school dance of their college experience, and many were unsure what to expect. Nevertheless, the well-loved tradition was a highlight for all students, first-years and upperclassmen alike.

Hosted by the Fairfield University Student Association, the event took place on Bellarmine Lawn under a large tent. The tradition began in 2003 and has occurred almost every year since then, each year prompting a new theme including "The Great Gatsby," "Hollywood Walk of Fame" and this year's "Tropical Paradise."

For most first-years, the night began with getting dressed up, hanging out with friends and taking pictures in dorm hallways or under the lights in the quad. When they were ready to take the walk up to Bellarmine Lawn, they were met with smiling volunteers ready to offer them a festive lei or sunglasses after greeting the President and his wife for

pictures. As students filed in and a crowd began to form, many stopped by the table of delicious finger foods and drinks.

By the time the lights turned down and the music turned up, the dance floor was packed, and the students were ready for hours of dancing and hanging out with friends.

The ball's exciting atmosphere was amplified by the pounding music, the sparkling lights and the billowing steam that emanated from the DJ's platform. It was clear from the students jumping up and down to their favorite songs or lifting one another on their shoulders that guests were having a great time.

When asked about her experience, Grace Gunning '28 answered, "There was fun music and dancing and food, and I enjoyed talking with my friends and just roaming around and dancing."

Pres Ball wasn't just a fun night for first-years, though. New Student Leader Rebecca Mattei-Brown '27 commented, "I had a great time! It was so nice to have a fun occasion to

get dressed up with friends!"

In addition to the excitement, the night was made even better by the perfect weather.

Last year, it rained for much of the day before the ball, and although the muddy ground couldn't stop students from showing up and having fun, the weather this year was certainly an improvement. The clear skies and pleasant temperature made it possible to wear almost any outfit without feeling too hot or too cold.

It's safe to say that the ball was all that first-years hoped it would be. Gunning agreed, "Pres Ball lived up to my expectations and exceeded it."

The event kicked off the school year with a bang, and it's sure to remain a positive memory for Fairfield students, no matter their grade.

Mattei-Brown says, "Overall it's one of my favorite Fairfield memories!"

The 21st annual Presidential Ball was a stunning success! So many stags showed out and brought their moves to the dance floor!

The DJ electrified the stage, playing banging hits that everyone knew and loved. Students now look forward to next year's event!



Photo Contributed by Fiona Wagner

Stags of all ages hit the dance floor for this year's tropical themed Pres Ball.

The Mirror at Pres Ball



Photos Contributed by The Mirror

