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University hosts 'Take Back the Night' rally Event in honor of Sexual Assault Awareness Month

By Caitlin O'Halloran
Reporter

The Violence Prevention, Victim Advocacy and Support (VPAS) Center held their take back the night on April 12.

Take Back the Night is a worldwide movement to stand against sexual

violence and shatter the silence and stigmas.

"April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month and especially with COVID going on, it's just increased the amount of sexual violence and domestic violence that we're seeing," said the VPAS Center graduate intern Rachel Ellis, "especially around

college-aged students, so it's very important for us to be out here and be visible and just show the community that no matter how distanced we feel because of COVID, that it's still a real issue and there is still support out here for them."

Throughout March and early April, the center

held tabling's throughout campus for promotion of the event where students and those on campus could learn more about the event. Those who stopped by the tablings were able to create messages of support for survivors that would then be displayed at the virtual event.

The event began on the Buley Patio, where students had a chance to create signs in support of survivors.

"This whole entire event is centered around uplifting and hearing the stories of many, either students or just people in general, who are survivors of sexual violence," said social work major Jurea McIntosh, a junior and VPAS student worker. "We definitely took months of preparation for this event."

Students from multiple different clubs and organizations gathered around tables to make signs.

"Personally, I'm here to support my friends and family that I know have been affected by this, my other fellow classmates that have been affected, and just to raise awareness

about this issue," said social work major Maria Bernabucci, a sophomore who was representing Omega Zeta Pi and Active Minds.

"It's just a great way to support survivors, especially those who haven't, you know, even spoken about their assault. It's just an opportunity to even come in silence and seeing other people speak out, even if you don't want to speak out is so important for survivors because it's definitely a topic that is very triggering and represses the survivor to go back to the situation," said public health major Mariah Villanova, a senior and VPAS student worker.

A march began at 2 p.m. and those participating

marched over to the Residence Life Quad where a Tree Dedication event began.

"This tree is for those who held their truth in silence," said Sexual Assault and Violence Prevention Specialist, Melissa Kissi. "We dedicate this tree to the silence-breakers."

At the Tree Dedication, there were supportive

speeches given by VPAS members, and a poem written and read by Ellis.

After the Tree Dedication, the virtual Take Back the Night event began via WebEx at 7 p.m. VPAS members read different anonymous submissions from survivors of sexual assault and sexual violence, then proceeded to a slideshow of supportive artwork that had been submitted to the center for those survivors.

"It shows so much support, so much community at Southern and I like to be very family-like when I do these events because, you know, we're all Southern. We are all that Southern family," said Villanova.

Throughout the three different events in honor of Take Back the Night, the center always emphasized the support they had, always available to students who have suffered through these experiences.

"We join together, heal together, fight for what is right together," chanted Villanova along with students on the Residence Life Quad.



PHOTO | CAITLIN O'HALLORAN

Students and student leaders making support signs during the event.

Lavender Graduation honors eight LGBTQ+ students

By Ellis McGinley
Copy Editor

The university honored eight 2021 graduates at its April 5 Lavender Graduation, hosted by the SAGE Center and featuring keynote speaker President Joe Bertolino.

A Lavender Graduation recognizes the accomplishments and commencement of LGBTQ+ students. It is a 26-year-old tradition, dating back to the 1995 works of Dr. Ronni Sanlo at the University of Michigan.

Sanlo is a "Jewish lesbian denied the opportunity to attend the graduations of her biological students because of her sexual orientation," Aaron Morabito, SAGE Center graduate intern, said.

While working as a professor, Sanlo saw the struggles of her LGBTQ+ students in higher academia. After her own experience with her children's graduations, she worked with the University of Michigan to host the first Lavender Graduation in 1995, with just three students.

"Lavender is the

combination of the pink triangle gay men were forced to wear in concentration camps and black triangle designating lesbians as political prisoners in Nazi Germany," Morabito said.

"The LGBTQ community civil rights movement took these symbols of hatred and combined them to make symbols of color and pride."

The graduation is a complement to the university's formal commencement ceremony, not an alternative, and participation is optional. Students may collect the regalia (a lavender cord, rainbow tassel, and lapel pins) without participating in the ceremony. This year, they were also given the opportunity to participate in-person or remotely.

Biographies written by each student were read by volunteers, and if they chose to attend, they were welcomed on-stage.

"I'm really proud of the work we have done here and that we continue to do for our queer community," Bertolino said.

"When I was a student," he said later when



PHOTO COURTESY | JOAQUIN SELMESKI

Graduating seniors pose with President Joe Bertolino in front of a celebratory banner after the ceremony.

discussing the changes in LGBTQ+ civil rights, "the thought of being 'out' and walking across stage to get your degree was unheard of."

Bertolino identified himself as a gay man. He has been married to his husband, Bill, for 28 years. They share a son and two grandchildren, with a third on the way.

"Anything related to the queer community equaled 'no.' And so to stand here, almost 35 years later, and to know queer equals 'yes,' is really something to

celebrate."

The LGBTQ+ and queer community has faced stigma over the decades. In the United States, the AIDS epidemic of the 1980s created cultural misconceptions of gay men. In 1969, LGBTQ+ people, especially transgender women of color, sex workers and lesbians, rioted at the Stonewall Inn in New York. The riots were sparked by decades of police brutality and laws which targeted homosexuality, wearing clothes of the 'opposite

sex' and other LGBTQ+ identities and customs.

"There are a whole bunch of people, way before me, who paved the way for me to be here and with understanding that history comes responsibility," said Bertolino. "I ask you not to take that for granted."

Bertolino discussed his journey towards accepting his own sexuality, coming out to his friends, family and eventually pursuing his career in higher education.

Chloe Lecy, English major and Lavender graduate, said she participated in the ceremony for two reasons.

"The first was to graduate with two of my closest friends at SCSU who also identify in the LGBT+ community. Because we belong to different disciplines, we are unfortunately unable to graduate all together. Lavender Graduation gave us the opportunity to celebrate who we all are, as well as celebrate our accomplishments together."

The second, she said, is because she is "bisexual;

however, I never had the opportunity to be open about my sexuality with anyone outside of my friend group. As I approach the end of my undergraduate career, I want to begin to learn how to come to terms with my identity and learn how to celebrate myself as a member of the LGBT+ community."

Lecy is one of the eight 2021 graduates recognized in the ceremony. In her time at the university, she received the English Literary Studies Essay Award, the Outstanding Women and Gender Studies award and was a Dean's List student.

"Participating in Lavender Graduation allows individuals like myself to celebrate how far they've come despite facing barriers as people in the LGBT+ community. Being able to overcome four plus years in the once-exclusive institution of higher education is worth celebrating," said Lecy. "I am thankful that the SAGE Center provides the opportunity for individuals to celebrate their accomplishments."



PHOTO COURTESY | JOAQUIN SELMESKI

Jose Vega (left), senior, Chloe Lecy, senior, President Joe Bertolino and Joaquin Selmeski, senior, pose after for a photo.

Geese, cats around campus

By Madeline S. Scharf
Reporter

As spring arrived on campus, so did the geese. The Canadian goose, though in Connecticut year-round, was especially popular this year as they flew back to Canada for the summer.

Canadian geese are migratory birds, flying south during the winter and north in the summer. They are also quite inconvenient. According to National Geographic, the Canadian goose is “often aggressive,” and “they litter their waste in human-made environments.”

Many students have seen the effects of these geese, with the sidewalks being littered with excrement. “A 50-geese flock can produce a staggering two-and-a-half tons of poop per year,” claims National Geographic. Such effects can still be found, even now that the Canadian geese no longer roam the grounds.

“I personally like them,” said Perez. “They remind me of being home in Massachusetts, and I like birds. Obviously, they leave a mess behind, but I don’t mind them as long as I wear good boots.”

The birds are fun novelty for others. Art education major Sara Lareau, a freshman, said, “I really like looking at

them.” Their seasonality may make them a fun staple on campus not normally seen in large cities such as New Haven.

The groundskeepers at the university work hard to ensure students will not track the geese’s remanence throughout campus. “I think, on the walking paths, the school keeps the mess handled,” said Perez. “But there really was an indescribable number of geese some days.”

Geese are not the only critters to be spotted on campus. Stray cats have also been noticed this semester. “I have seen 2 or 3,” said Perez. “During the winter semester, I actually saw little pawprints in the snow on campus.”

Students who have spotted the cats so far have had no complaints about the critters. “I don’t mind them on campus as long as they aren’t being hurt,” said Perez. “I love cats, but I worry about them when the weather gets bad.”

The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) documents what life may be like for these “community cats,” cats with no set home. An article stated “They must endure weather extremes such as cold and snow, heat and rain.” They also “face starvation, infection and attacks by other animals.”

Large cities like New Haven are known for having a large stray animal population. Many enjoy seeing the cats, but do not know how to help the homeless critters. According to the ASPCA, the best thing people can do for these homeless cats is to “contact local shelters or welfare groups,” to find out more information on feeding, housing, and spaying/neutering community cats in a local area.

Students feel conflicted on if the school should do anything about these wild cats around campus. “I honestly don’t know,” said Lareau. Seeing the cats in the wild can be distressing, but to Lareau it is not necessarily the school’s responsibility to ensure their safety.

Other students would be interested in a small initiative to ensure the safety of these local cats. “I’d really like if some water or food was put out for them,” said Perez. “Maybe even little shelters for bad weather.”

Whatever the position, the animals on campus are likely to continue to be a recurring feature. From Canadian Geese to wild cats, this campus is host to many different critters. “I just ask that people be nice to the general life that share campus with us,” said Perez.



Residential Quad sidewalk covered with geese.

PHOTO | ELLIS MCGRINLEY



Geese spotted on a snow-covered area of the Residential Quad.

PHOTO | ELLIS MCGRINLEY

SGA hosts weekly meeting

By Caitlin O’Halloran
Reporter

The Student Government Association (SGA) held their weekly Friday meeting on April 16.

President of SGA, Sarah Gossman gave the President’s report where she informed the board of the Undergraduate Curriculum Forum approved of the Racial and Intersectional Justice Studies minor.

“It provides students the opportunity to develop an intellectual foundation necessary to recognize both the roots of systemic oppression and injustices in contemporary society and integral role of resistance, social movements and social policy to engage to enact social change,” said Gossman.

Vice President of the Board of Student Experience Brandon Iovene re-discussed a topic the board brought up last week. Regarding the concerns about security and transportation to vaccine sites. The issue is the Johnson & Johnson vaccine was the one going to be distributed to college campuses and now there is a recall on it in Connecticut for a investigation of blood clotting.

“We thought that providing just ride service gift cards, we considered Uber to probably be the best one as they have more accessible ADA vehicles that are wheelchair accessible and accessible for students with

disabilities,” said Iovene.

The way things will work is there will be five \$25 gift cards purchased for students that need those services and if they run out, five more will be purchased and the gift cards will cap out at \$500. If all of the \$500 is used, SGA will bring this motion back and approve another \$500 of funds for the gift cards.

The meeting was then brought to Madison Miceli, the Vice President, to give the Vice President’s report, where she went over the elections that will begin Monday, April 19, end on Friday, April 23 and results will be released Wednesday, April 28.

Secretary of SGA Sam Widomski then gave the Secretary’s report about an event SGA will be holding to make blessing bags on April 21.

“The audience for this particular scholarship, it’s going to go to two incoming students and two pre-existing students who are aspiring leaders, so it’s geared towards people who are on a leadership journey and looking for more motivation to keep going and build themselves up as a leader,” said SGA’s Treasurer Paige Tetro, while presenting the Treasurer’s report.

Then, Iovene discussed the board reports, including how he and Gossman will be in touch with Erin Duff, the COVID-19 Coordinator, about the T-shirts that will be distributed to students discussed at their last meeting about the final quote and the

requirements that are needed for the purchase order.

During announcements and concerns, Representative at Large, Andreina Barajas, mentioned an issue that the campus police would be beginning to use Clearview AI, an American facial recognition company, but was told the information was false and would not be happening by Student Conduct and Civic Responsibility director Christopher Piscitelli.

“I’m hardly in the library this semester, but the few times that I am, included this past Wednesday, I’ve noticed that masks are not that enforced in the library,” said Vice President of the Board of Academic Experience, Lupita Barajas. “Where I was sitting, I could clearly see across, I think it one of those public study rooms you can go into, like the silent one, these two girls, these two students did not have their masks on at all.”

The board began discussing how they would reach out to different people working at Buley Library and the Library Committee to ensure that those who enter the library to be wearing masks.

“Everyone has to access their level of comfort and address it if they can, and if not find someone who works here and have them address it,” said Piscitelli. “If they address it and people don’t respond, then we will take more action including removing them from any particular

‘Solve Climate by 2030’ event

By Donovan Wilson
Reporter

The university, along with UConn, commit fully to solving the worldwide climate issue by 2030.

“Solve climate audiences are hearing from local leaders and making concrete steps to solve climate change and create needed income for everybody,” said Eban Goldstein, organizer of Solve Climate by 2030.

Solve Climate By 2030 is an initiative hosted by the university and UConn for the last two years and is now on an international level. The event hosted last Wednesday was specifically to focus on the Connecticut perspectives of where they are going as a state climate wise.

The event was streamed on YouTube rather than on a government website and then recorded and put up for viewing so it could be as accessible as possible.

“Here in the south, we are proud to be the only college in North America to declare climate as an emergency,” said Miriah Kelly, moderator of the panel.

A huge part of the Solve Climate By 2030 initiative is an integration with education to reach the young people of America and get them involved with solving climate problems. A huge part of this is the “#makeclimateaclass” movement. The point of this movement is to make lower education integrate climate education and encourage secondary education to include

optional climate oriented classes.

“Since that time, I’ve made UConn’s role in addressing the climate crisis a focus of my presidency,” said Thomas C. Katsouleas, current president of UConn.

UConn has made it a mission of theirs to help solve climate issues a part of that is cutting down on their carbon emissions. UConn’s efforts have placed them in the top 10 most sustainable campuses both nationwide and worldwide. Their goal is to remove all use of fossil fuels and have virtually no carbon use by what was originally the year 2050 and is now 2040 or sooner.

“We cannot have an ethic of care for each other unless we care about our planet and our climate, the two are inextricably linked,” said President Joe Bertolino.

Just like UConn, Southern has focused on carbon reduction. Some of the initiatives put in place to achieve this is the use of LED light bulbs, automated sensors and the composting of all food waste. The biggest thing the university is currently working towards as part of its initiative to solve climate problems is introducing a net zero energy school of business in only a few months, according to Bertolino. Southern has committed to net-carbon neutrality by 2050, and actively engaging campus and surrounding communities in climate resilience and adaptation.

“Reducing carbon emissions, but at the same time stimulating

our economy and improving the air we breathe,” said Katie Dykes, commissioner of Connecticut Department of Energy. The website for the organization reads, “university and high school students across the planet, along with civil society, faith organizations and businesses, will tune into 100 events in 50 countries, university-hosted regional webinars critical to our future.”

The department’s biggest focus right now is a program called (TCI) the Transportation Climate Initiative. The TCI is essentially designed to implement practices into transportation that would cut down on the carbon produced by transit in Connecticut. These practices include building more roundabouts, lowering the costs of public transit and eventually replacing all public transit buses to electric buses.

“We’re recognizing our nation’s strength is in its diversity,” said Bryan Garcia, the president of Connecticut’s Green Bank.

Garcia and the Green Bank’s major focus is on the concept of green liberty bonds. Green liberty bonds are payments which, over time, increase in value and the money goes towards solving the climate issues. This concept is based on the war bonds from around WWII, which were, but proceeds went towards assisting the USA in the war.

Goldstein said, “For students listening, you are the leaders.”

University gives students option to get vaccine



By Abby Epstein
Managing Editor

These are the opinions of The Southern News Editorial Staff.

Vaccine appointments fill up fast. The university has teamed up with different vaccination sites to give students the opportunity to receive the vaccine.

Many vaccination sites are booked and can take weeks to get an appointment. I have friends that would be checking daily for appointment times. Some have received them, while others are still searching.

Students who receive the vaccine through the school are saved from much of this hassle. I personally did

not want to search multiple places waiting for an appointment to open up. Setting up an appointment through the school saves me time.

Also, the locations of the vaccination sites are in a reasonable distance for most students. The location I want to try and get is the Floyd Little Athletic Center, which is not even five minutes from campus.

The other locations are in Bridgeport and Uncasville. Bridgeport is 30 minutes away and Uncasville is an hour, but with

the university being a big commuter school, this may be more convenient for some students.

To make it even more convenient for students, there will be transportation from the university to Floyd Athletic Center. It could not have been made any easier for students to receive the vaccine.

The only competition for students will be other students. The university sent out a code to type in that lets the website know a Southern student is looking for an appoint-

ment. I am excited about this, because I am an out of state student. If the university was not offering the vaccine for students, then I would have probably just waited until I got back home to get the vaccine.

Students should take advantage of this opportunity. The more students that are vaccinated, the more the university will be able to get back to normal. This will allow the university to have more in-person classes, allowing the campus to fill up with more students.

If students receive the vaccine now, they will fully be vaccinated before going home to their family and friends and will be less likely to get COVID-19 or give it to someone, if they do happen to get it.

I think the university making arrangements with vaccination sites and offering transportation to one of them is great. This gives students almost no excuse not to get the vaccine. It also gives students who really want the vaccine easy access to getting it.

Townhouses remain closed, reopening unknown

By Sam Tapper
Editor-in-Chief

The Pine Rock Townhouses have been sitting vacant just off campus vacant for almost an entire school year, after the property was abruptly shut down in August due to financial struggles as a result of the pandemic.

In the memo sent out to tenants in August — of which I was a recipient — PR Student Housing LLC said they would be “shutting down our apartment complex until such time as things return to normal,” outlining their hopes to reopen once the end of the pandemic comes. However, the end of the pandemic is more of an idea or mindset than it is an exact date, and it

is unclear what the plan is for the townhouses during the 2021-22 academic year.

All 30-plus units sit empty on the property with the gate closed and locked, but the advertising banner still hangs on the front of the building facing Pine Rock Avenue, and flyers advertising the apartments remain stapled to power line poles along the sidewalk towards North Campus.

Yet their Facebook page, aptly named “Rock Pine,” has been silent since August of 2019, signifying no public plan of reopening for next year at this time. At this point, we must wonder if apartments which have been tenantless for, potentially, two years or more is safe and smart.

I was a tenant in Pine Rock for two years, ultimately until the pandemic sent us all home, so I have seen all the good, the bad and the ugly these apartments had to offer. I enjoyed my time there and they were nice enough, but even when they were fully operational, rodents and bugs ran wild throughout the buildings. My unit never had much of a problem with mice, but our neighbors constantly reported them.

Not to mention, these units will require a load of maintenance if they reopen — maintenance the current management does not have. It took me over a month to get a towel rack replaced, and all they did was drill the bar into a piece of plywood which

was then drilled into the wall. It was to no fault of the maintenance man they had. His name was Al and he had to be in his 60s, but regular maintenance was a lot for him. How would he be able to pull all this off?

All the units’ appliances will have sat untouched for over a year, no water has been run and no doors or windows opened for air to filter through. I remember when I went to officially move my belongings out of there for good; the toilets were low on water, but the water that remained was black. That was just from a few weeks of being idle. I can only imagine what they look like now.

I have my own thoughts on what will become of my old residence, because I do not believe you will

see this place open back up again. The memo sent out had said management attempted to partner with the university before closing and the university said no.

Initially I had questioned the move, because the property could be a valuable asset to Residence Life. But then I remembered all my dealings with the management.

My long-term prediction — with absolutely no insider knowledge — is that Pine Rock will eventually shut down for good and the property will be sold, with the university as a potential buyer. Rather than try to restore an already lost life, the current buildings, including my

old apartment, will be demolished and replaced with what could be used as a graduate school housing.

This likely will not happen due to the pandemic’s effect on enrollment, housing and the budget, but the apartment style Pine Rock offers is something the university claims to have as well, but really does not. By expanding campus by a few feet, graduate students are given the chance to live in their first apartment, but still be on campus and connected.

At the very least, I do not believe we will be seeing the apartments leased to students again as it currently stands. And until something changes, the buildings will continue to rot away, empty.



PHOTO | SAM TAPPER

The empty Pine Rock Townhouses on Pine Rock Ave.



PHOTO | SAM TAPPER

A flyer posted still advertising the Pine Rock Townhouses.

SOUTHERN NEWS

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Corrections:

The staff of the Southern News strives for accurate reporting and editing of all stories, photo captions and headlines, but when we get it wrong we will offer a correction or clarification. We regret the errors.

A story in the April 14 edition discussed changes to the U-Pass system. The CSU Board of Regents did respond to The Southern News’ request, but was unable to comment by press time. In the same story, the college referenced was Quinebaug Valley Community College. Quinnipiac University is not in the CSU system.

Also in the April 14 edition, a page 2 headline incorrectly stated the cost of a U-Pass. The pass is currently \$20, but is billed as a tuition fee.

PHOTO

April showers are bringing Flowers



Students walking across campus in the rain.



A robin sitting atop a balcony on campus during the rain.



Tables in front of Connecticut Hall drenched from the heavy downpour the campus experienced this past week.



Bright purple flowers blooming along Farnham Ave.

By Roma Rositani
Photo Editor

As the semester transitions into the spring season, April brings its

annual showers.

Flowers and trees have been blossoming all over the campus. Not only have flowers been blooming, all sorts of birds and wildlife

can be spotted coming out for the warmer and rainy weather.

Students have bundled up in coats and rainjackets, preparing for the climate.



Cherry tree blooming in front of Connecticut Hall.



Cherry blossom trees have been blooming all over the university.

Softball team back in the win column Owls have successful week behind Perucki's pitching, offense

By Mike Neville
Sports Editor

After a cold streak put a damper on the softball teams hot start to the season, the Owls are once again back in the win column after a split in the doubleheader at home.

Despite a strong pitching performance in game one by Jazmyn Martinez, the Owls were not able to get the bats awake, taking the loss 1-0 to Adelphi University.

Things started falling into place tremendously during game two. A strong pitching performance by Jessica Perucki, accompanied by a few big hits, capped off the victory.

"When I am throwing pitches, I want to make sure the batter cannot get a good handle on them," said Perucki. "I have been focusing more on my hitting. It has been coming out more throughout the week."

Of the 31 batters faced, Perucki was able to strike out eight of them. She also accounted for her first collegiate home run, a three-run blast to center

in the first inning.

"The homerun kind of just happened. I was thinking base-hit and to hit it up the middle. That's the mindset I had while up at bat," said Perucki.

The Owls' 8-4 victory over the Panthers was a long time coming. The last time the Owls got the best of Adelphi was 2016.

Head Coach Jillian Rispoli who has been at the helm since 2014 said it was good to see her team have success on both sides of the spectrum.

"It feels good to see the bats come alive the way they did," said Rispoli. "Our defense has been stellar making big plays in big situations. In game two it got away from us a bit but we were able to bounce back which was very reassuring to see."

Graduate student and shortstop Sara Buscetto went 1-for-3 including a walk, three stolen bases and three runs scored. She continues her quest to be the Owls' all-time stolen base holder. Freshman outfielder Emily Lange went 2-for-3 with one RBI.

Junior Jaqueline Dumont, who took over

designated hitter duties for game two, shined the brightest, going 3-for-4 with an RBI double and a line-drive homerun to center field.

The homerun was Dumont's third on the season. She leads the team in the category.

"I get up to bat with the sole purpose to get on base," said Dumont. "The past 16 years, I have put in the work and time and I just have to trust my hands and know that I know what I am doing when I get up there."

The Owls' onslaught

of runs came early in the game and proved too much to handle for Adelphi, despite a comeback attempt in the late innings.

"We really showed up and played together as a team. We were coming off two wins against Pace,

played together and we will continue to do our jobs," said Dumont.

The Owls now have an overall record of 12-8 after winning the weekend series in Massachusetts at American International College, 3-1.

Looking ahead to the rest of the season, the Owls have 12 games remaining on the season, ending the 2021 campaign in Albany, New York versus Saint Rose College.

"To prepare for these last few games, we have jacked up the speed on pitching machines to have the players catch up," said Rispoli.

The Owls currently hold the number three spot in the Southwest Division standings in the Northeast 10 Conference Division. A playoff push is on Rispoli's mind, looking to grab her first title.

"Everybody wants to play for a championship," said Rispoli. "Now that all these teams are going to be in the playoffs, everyone is firing on all cylinders. We're thrilled, excited. We want the chance to play and can't wait to get back out there and compete."



PHOTO COURTESY | WWW.SOUTHERNCTOWLS.COM

Jessica Perucki, sophomore, had her first career homerun vs Adelphi last week.

Eng a threat at plate for Owls

By Mike Neville
Sports Editor

Baseball legend Mickey Mantle once said, "the hardest thing to do in sports, I think, is to hit a homerun."

For Owls' outfielder Andrew Eng, a little bit of luck and raw talent proved to be an exceptional ally for his first season with the team.

Eng just broke a school record with four home runs in four straight games, going into each at-bat with a positive mindset.

"Going into each at-bat I am just trying to do whatever I can to contribute to the team," said Eng. "My barrel just kind of ran into a couple of balls and I got a little lucky and hit a few out of the park."

A deep home run to right field in a game vs. Felician from a few weeks back solidified Eng's spot in the

lineup, accompanied by a defining bat flip rivaling one of Barry Bonds.

"I had a couple home runs in the Adelphi game. It wasn't the best time to show up the pitcher at the time and get the boys riled up," said Eng. "It was a rainy day, I said now was the time, the pine tar stuck to my hands well and everything fell into place."

Before he was hitting towering home runs, and taking the Northeast 10 Conference by storm, Eng had another home.

Prior to this season, Eng competed at Division I Binghamton University and the will to win is the biggest difference.

"Division II is more gritty. It is baseball in its purest form and guys are here for the love of the game and it is great to see," said Eng.

Someone who has been at the Division II level for an exceptional amount of

service time and knows about the power and agility Eng possess is Tony Zambito.

The two have known and played with each other since they were both juveniles. Zambito played an extensive role in making Eng an Owl.

"When he entered the recruiting pole, our assistant coach texted me asking if I knew anything about Andrew," Zambito said. "A couple days later Andrew sent me a text saying your coach shot me an email and said to call him back."

No more than a week later, Eng was shown around the Southern campus, familiarizing himself for the next chapter in his life.

Head coach Tim Shea gave props to Zambito as the messenger to bring Eng to the Owls.

"I had no idea who Andrew was Tony was

the millman," said Shea. "Andrew was looking for a home and blind faith played a part, since we couldn't see him in person due to COVID."

When Eng came knocking at the door for an opportunity, Shea said he was not afraid to give the power bat his chance. He said he has never seen someone quite like Eng.

"He has tremendous power. I haven't seen anything like it in my 30 plus years," said Shea. "He can hit the ball the other way just as far."

Every player has their starting points, those who they look up to. Eng did not have to look far when finding his role models.

"Baseball was something my dad and brother introduced me to. It inspired me to continue to play, I owe them," said Eng.

See Eng Page 6



PHOTO COURTESY | WWW.SOUTHERNCTOWLS.COM

The baseball team during a 2019 game.

Baseball collects one win over AIC

By Edward Rudman
Sports Writer

Baseball lost three of its four games in their weekend series against American International College on Saturday and Sunday at Pelz Field.

The Owls are now 4-5 on the season overall and 3-5 in Northeast 10 conference play, while AIC moves to 7-11 on the season and 6-4 in NE10 conference play.

"Earlier on in the series, we got out of our 'Owls hitting' in a sense. I don't think we were sticking to our approach too well," said outfielder Andrew Eng, a junior. "I think, me especially, got a little big in some sorts and trying to win a ball game with one swing. Towards the end of the series, we started to come together, started to string along at-bats, some

good defense, have some good pitching and carry that momentum over and try to score a couple of runs, which we did in that last game."

The Owls were unable to add to the win column until the final game in the series, played on Sunday afternoon, grinding out a 3-1 victory.

The doubleheader on Saturday to kick off the series featured two completely different games: a 6-5 nail biter and a 15-1 loss where the offense couldn't get anything going.

In the first game, the Owls headed into the eighth inning with a 5-4 lead but were unable to hold on, relinquishing it by allowing AIC to score two runs and taking a 6-5 lead. The Owls couldn't answer back in the final two bottom innings.

See baseball Page 6



PHOTO COURTESY | WWW.BINGHAMTONBEARCATS.COM

Andrew Eng (batting) during his time playing with Division I Binghamton University.

Program Council hosts paint night for students

By Donovan Wilson
Reporter

The Programs Council put together their first in-person paint night of the semester.

"Programs Council is split into committees that way we can handle nighttime and daytime activities, me and Luke and Chris who isn't here are night time programmers," said Kimberly Roig, one of the nighttime Programs Council programmers.

Programs Council often puts on events, either during the day or during the night to bring students together. As of late, many of the events involve art and entertainment because it is easy to conduct remotely.

There was another paint night before this one, but the previous was done virtually, where students painted together over the internet from their own spaces.

Roig said, "we're not sure yet on bigger events, but we are starting to offer in person events as campus opens up more. We possibly have a movie night next week."

This paint night was the first one held in-person rather than virtually. It was held at the table in the Student Center outside of the theater last Tuesday night. Programs Council plans on offering many more in-person events with a movie night and much more to come.

"These types of events are good because everything is nice and socially distanced. You can be with your friends and still be protected," said Luke Sampson, another one of the Program Council's nighttime programmers.

A big component that must be present in an in-person event nowadays is the must to follow COVID-19 guidelines.

This is why the Student Center was perfect as the tables already have the large plastic dividers and are nicely spread apart in order to adhere strictly to the COVID-19 guidelines. As with anywhere else on campus, students attending and even the students running the event had to have a mask on.

"I've been painting frogs. I must add to my frog collection,"

said Nicole Thomas, a sophomore attendee at the event.

Thomas, along with Tracy Nham, another sophomore attendee, have been attending many on-campus events and have somehow always end up at the painting events. Thomas said she once saw a frog painting on Etsy and has been inspired to try to do the same picture but better. She said she has five pictures in her collection with the

painting from this event being attempt number six.

"We've been doing a lot of painting events and we gravitate towards them," said Nham.

Nham and Thomas often attend many events together. Nham has mentioned that they gravitate heavily towards these painting events. Two weeks ago in a previous interview, Thomas commented they also always attend the Residence Hall

Associations' scavenger hunt events. {One of the major goals of these events is student engagement and that is accomplished if two of these students are attending so many of these events.}

"I am an artist in my personal life and I have a chronic illness that causes joint pain so that's an odd dichotomy but I still do art. Also, I'm going to try running for student government so I've been

stalking Owl Connect," said political science major Sam Mann, a junior who attended the event.

Paint nights can bring out a variety of students and encourage them to mingle in a fun and safe way during our new COVID-19 world.

Roig said, "I encourage all students to just always check owl connect. It is a great way to be involved with the university through campus events, and to make friends."



Members of Program Council setting up for the paint night event.

PHOTO | SOFIA ROSITANI

Baseball

"It's tough to talk for the entire team. I think for some it was a little gut wrenching to lose a close game, I mean it always is," said Eng. "I think we definitely didn't do a great job battling back in the second game. I think it was a mixture of a lot of things, AIC playing some good ball and us not really sticking to our plan of attack."

Eng continued his hot offensive start to the season, driving in four runs in the series, bringing his team leading total on the season to 14 in nine games played, according to Southern's athletic website.

The Owls split the second of the doubleheaders in the series on Sunday, losing a close first game 4-2, but bounced back to win the final game of the series 3-1.

The team came into the weekend without Head Coach Tim Shea and Assistant Coach Ed Bethke, who were both in quarantine at the time, which left Assistant Brian Hayden as the lone coach on staff at the games.

"We had a talk with Coach Hayden who was all by himself this weekend and he was basically like, 'listen guys, I don't have any assistant

coaches, I need my older guys to take charge and do the little things that we would be able to do without thinking with three coaches there. We had to coach ourselves a little bit and step up and keep guys in control," said middle infielder Tony Zambito, a senior.

Zambito was able to extend his team-leading hitting streak to seven games and went 7-for-12 in the series, three of his hits being doubles, according to the university's athletic website.

"I honestly believe we

should've been able to beat them three times, maybe the second game they were actually starting to hit," said middle infielder Tyshaun Diaz, a sophomore. "The first game, we just played sloppy baseball to start off with, which is what killed us, both the first and third game. I honestly think the outcome of the last game should've been the outcome of the first and third games, so it really came down to us playing sloppy baseball in the beginning. We just need to make adjustments for."



Zambito went 7-for-12 in the weekend series.

PHOTO | WWW.SOUTHERNCTOWLS.COM

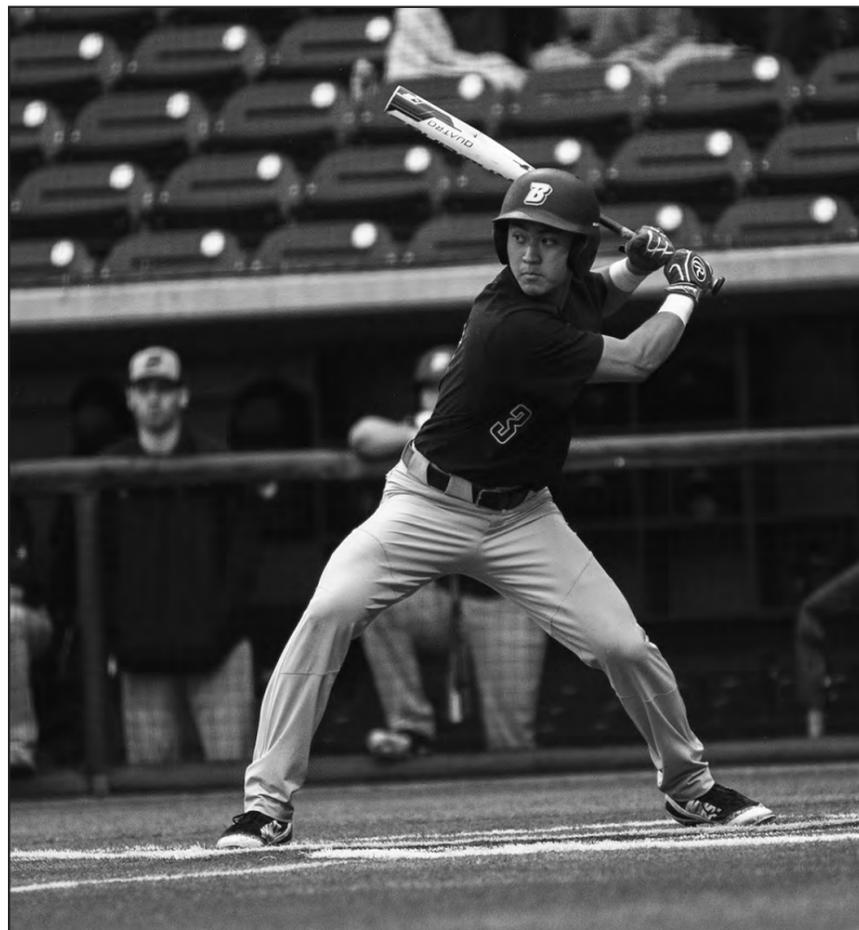
Eng

Matsui is an athlete who has made a name for himself at the big-league level. This is a feat that

Eng said could always be a possibility.

"I think it's crazy to think any college athlete doesn't have aspirations to make a career out of it," said Eng. "I have to

keep my nose down and see what happens. At this point in my life it is not exactly on the top of my list but it's always in the back of my mind. Whatever happens."



Andrew Eng loads up for a pitch during a 2019 game at Liberty University.

PHOTO | WWW.BUBEARCATS.COM

Men's soccer begins out-of-season scrimmages

By Edward Rudman
Sports Writer

As spring sports continue their seasons, out-of-season programs continue to prepare themselves for the chance to play next year, including men's soccer.

While there may not be a competitive season at hand this year for the soccer program, they are not taking for granted this extra time and opportunity to fine tune and develop themselves for a successful season in the coming fall.

The program has been able to play two scrimmages against the University of Bridgeport and University of New Haven.

However, the team is not at full strength, missing many of its international players and others who have opted out for the time being in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Due to the situation, the team has had to rotate players in new positions and play without any substitutes, an irregularity in soccer.

"We've been preparing our bodies since way before the season and are working on conditioning our bodies to play with our lack of numbers," said midfielder Hideki Morales, a sophomore. "It's not the best feeling when you really need a substitute mid-game and have no one on the bench, but

we're undoubtedly getting stronger and growing physically and mentally from this."

In their scrimmage against UB, the Owls played the entire game a man down which forced them to play with a different strategy than they normally would have with 11 men on the pitch. In the end, they were able to draw 1-1 against a team who had substitutes and a full roster out on the field.

Morales scored the single goal of the game from outside the box to tie it up at one apiece. It was his first career goal as an Owl. Morales said it was an electrifying feeling to see the ball touch the back of the net.

"Obviously coming into the game, we knew it would be a challenge playing a man down. However, I felt like we put up a great performance despite our lack of numbers," said Morales. "Being our first competitive game as a group in over a year and a half, I was very content with how our team has handled the adversity and were able to pull off a draw."

The Owls most recent scrimmage was against rival UNH on Friday, April 19 at Jess Dow Field. Once again, the team played without substitutes but did not have to play a man down for the game.

Forward Matt Surette,

a sophomore, scored a header towards the end of the game.

"It's just so good to get back out on the field and to be with the guys," said

Surette. "This spring is just a step towards the fall and what we're trying to accomplish, ultimately getting to the NEIO tournament."



Hideki Morales during a 2019 game at Jess Dow Field.

PHOTO | WWW.SOUTHERNCTOWLS.COM

Blue Crew hosting tailgates again

By Caitlin O'Halloran
Reporter

The Blue Crew attended the softball game on April 13 to support the team and offer free Garden Catering wraps for all students.

The Blue Crew is considered the spirit commission of the Student Government Association (SGA) and Campus Recreation. They represent the university's pride.

"Basically, Blue Crew is kind of like our spirit committee on campus so our department oversees Blue Crew but basically the main goal for Blue Crew is basically to get spectators and a lot more engagement with our athletic programs and kind of just school spirit on-campus in general, but we do partner with athletics," said the Graduate Intern for Recreation and Fitness Audrey Pancak.

Campus Recreation and Fitness is responsible for assisting with the oversight of what the Blue Crew does with events on campus.

"I think it's important

because it gets students out and it gives them a break from their classes or staying in their dorms, they could come out and watch a game and enjoy food or prizes that we give away," said sport management major Gianna Spino, a junior.

The Blue Crew represents campus by showing school spirit and finding ways to celebrate the university.

They are also represented by the Office of Student Involvement, which offers a variety of different organizations that help students to get a fulfilled college experience and allow them to be able to engage with other students throughout their time on campus.

"We started this last year, so we always called it 'The Tailgate Tour' so we always had some type of food or giveaway or something like that," said Pancak. "So, we just wanted to bring it back now that they said they were going to allow Southern spectators so we

thought, might as well try to bring it back and give something for the students to do."

Some of the past events that the Blue Crew has held were things like gymnastics tailgate tour, hockey fights childhood cancer event, football tailgates and many more.

"So basically, it's just a way to get the students engaged with all the different NCAA sports because a lot of the times you know, football and basketball are like huge, a lot of people go to those all the time, but something smaller like softball or the lacrosse games, you don't see as much attendance so it's kind of a way to just get more students here," said Pancak.

At the events and sports games that Blue Crew attends, they often will offer students free food or free prizes they can get if they show up.

"It's just something to get students involved, get them excited about various events on campus whether

er is getting warmer and events such as sports are somewhat returning to a more normal state after the pandemic, students are able to stop by these events and join the Blue Crew in showing their school pride and getting involved with different events being offered on campus.

"So, we'll be at, I believe, women's lacrosse next week, we'll be at a lot of home games over the next few weeks actually and then in normal times, you could find us around move in day for Res Life, stuff like that," said Neilander. "You know, pretty much any big event on campus, we'll be around."



PHOTO | CAITLIN O'HALLORAN

Students attending the Blue Crew tailgate at the softball game.

S'mores night at North Campus

By Donovan Wilson
Reporter

As the S'mores night would show, the new fire tables at North Campus have brought students out and together as the campus opens up and the weather warms up.

"We planned for these to be in both the res quad and North Campus," said Nora Anderson, hall director of North Campus.

North Campus has installed two new fire tables; one in front of the main building and one in front of the townhouses. A fire table, is a protected table that has propane to start a fire rather than having a fire pit where students would have to play around with kindling, firewood and flames. An event was held last Tuesday night where students were given materials to make s'mores and were encouraged to sit around the fire and eat s'mores together and just socialize.

Anderson said, "We are always looking for more outdoor equipment."

Anderson is also a major part of residence life and with how much focus they put into their outdoor equipment as it gets warmer, especially during COVID-19 where it becomes much easier to host events when they can be outside. One of their biggest components up until now have been the volleyball court and basketball court located near the underclassmen dorm buildings. They offer things more pertinent to each building, such as chairs to be checked out and used to lounge outside.

"I feel like there should have been more, especially during COVID but I do like it," said biology major Syrenitee



PHOTO | DONOVAN WILSON

Students enjoying the fire pit by North Campus.

Kee, a junior.

Some of the students complaints comes from feeling like the fire tables are a good start but not enough. There has been a focus on creating more outdoor activities for students while in a COVID-19 world and students recognize that. However, Syrenitee and the group of friends she was with feel as if just two fire tables for the whole campus simply is not enough.

Kee said, "I would just add more, we definitely have the space. We should have like 4. We don't want to sit with people we don't know. Add a time limit per group."

One of Kee and her friends' biggest notes was the amount of fire tables. They thought it would be more user friendly if there were four instead of two. They detailed not wanting to sit with people that they did not know and would prefer to just be among themselves. However, their biggest suggestion was to add a time limit because they consistently feel as if they will go out to use the fire table and it'll will be occupied and then they

will return hours later and find the same people there.

"The Hamden Fire Marshal was more okay with that idea as long as we have guidelines in place," said Marvin Wilson, an associate director of residence life.

The original goal was to have the fire tables in both the residence quad near the underclassmen dorms and where they currently are, as Anderson previously stated. The issue was that the New Haven Fire Marshal would not budge on allowing that, which Wilson stated was interesting considering Yale has fire pits. However, the Hamden Fire Marshal was open to it as long as certain guidelines were followed and thus the fire tables were implemented.

Wilson said, "We've done a few things, both on the traditional residence hall side and north side. Our students wanted more outdoor spacing and seating in the last few years. COVID-19 expedited that. Based on guidelines, we realized it was better to do things outside."

Competence club profile

By Madeline S. Scharf
Reporter

Founded in 2014, the Cultural Competence Club has been an organization focused on social justice and understanding, specifically within the healthcare community.

Joan Black, an instructor for those learning about communication disorders, is also the club advisor. She opens each meeting, but "The club is majority student driven. My goal is to empower the students' decisions."

Club President and communication disorder major Jane Marlor, a senior, oversees the club's agenda and plans. "I send out emails and reminders every other week for our Zoom meetings on Thursdays," said Marlor. "There are certain topics every time."

The topics vary greatly, but often surround the subject of healthcare. "This club mostly consists of future healthcare providers," said Marlor. "Our main goal is to educate deeply on the topics of minorities in these systems."

Despite the club being focused on those in healthcare, it is not exclusive to that career path. "Everyone can benefit from this club," said Marlor. "From future healthcare workers to people looking to understand those of different backgrounds."

The club is very

encouraging of new members from all fields and levels of cultural competency. "If you are in, say, marketing for example, you will have to deal with people from all walks of life. If you are dealing with people, this club can offer you growth," said Black. "We encourage people to stop in for one of these meetings. We will help educate people with any level of cultural competency."

The club explores many different issues that people in healthcare, and real life, may face. "This week, we are discussing undocumented immigrants and their place in American healthcare," said Marlor. "This topic effects not only those in health services, but those politically active as well. We will also be discussing the COVID-19 vaccine for undocumented immigrants as well," said Marlor.

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected the club both in topic discussion and activities. "I have only been president during this semester," said Marlor. "My classes, everything, is online. It is strange. But we have been doing things virtually, safely. Our topics also surround the pandemic, too."

Despite bi-weekly Zoom meetings, the pandemic has taken a toll on the Cultural Competence Club. "I think right now it's a difficult time to have outreach," said Marlor, "I hope I can

usher in an era post-COVID where there can be more things, fundraisers and such."

The club use to be more service-oriented. Black described an event that was planned where students "would make support bags for the homeless." It was a communal event where anyone would be able to make bags, but due to the pandemic, it had to be cancelled.

Key social and political events spurred the change in the once service-driven club. "The protests and unrest last summer showed that their needed to be a shift in our societies cultural understanding," said Black. "This change was really student driven, they wanted to know more information."

For now, the club remains more information-based. "Credit to Jane (Marlor) — she does an amazing job of putting together readings and topics," said Black. The meetings are spent reviewing readings and going over these informative materials.

However, as the vaccine rollouts continue to succeed, and life begins to take a sense of normalcy, there is hope for more active club participation. "We want to do more outreach with underserved populations," said Black.

"Having these conversations help," said Black. Having the space to discuss important issues for people from all walks of life is vital in an everchanging world.

The club is not going to stay strictly information-based forever. Black looks towards fall semester with hope. People who want to be more active in the community will be able to get involved in the coming months. "Service events will probably come back again soon," said Black.



PHOTO COURTESY | @SCSU_CCCLUB ON INSTAGRAM

Emily Earnshaw, graduate student, at 2018 club fair.

Weekend drive-in ‘Bad Boys for Life’

By Madeline S. Scharf
Reporter

On Saturday, Apr. 17, Weekend Warriors and Residence Hall Association brought the big screen to students on campus. “Bad Boys for Life” played in the Residence Quad, starting at 8 p.m.

The staff for both Weekend Warriors and Residence Hall Association collaborated to pull off this event. Graduate intern Reaunna Bartell works as a coordinator for Weekend Warriors events and helped put on the programs first movie night. “This is the first movie night I have ever done,” said Bartell, “but from past movie events held on campus we are expecting a good turn-out.”

Students assisted in choosing the film for the evening. Sociology major Lynden Johnson, a sophomore and residence hall employee, explained how students participated in movie selections. “We put out a poll on Instagram,” said Johnson. “Bad Boys for Life was most liked, so we went with that one.”

“Bad Boys for Life,” which came out in 2020, is the third movie in

the series. According to IMDB, it was produced by Columbia Pictures and has an estimated budget of \$90,000,000. Its star-studded cast includes Will Smith, Martin Lawrence, and Vanessa Hudgens.

Critics gave positive reviews for the 2020 film. According to Rotten Tomatoes, the critics consensus for the movie was positive. “Loaded up with action and a double helping of leading-man charisma, Bad Boys for Life reinvigorates this long-dormant franchise by playing squarely to its strengths,” said the website. Students gathered in the quad to watch this action-packed movie.

To show movies to audiences this large, the university needs licensing. “We use Swank to get licensing to play the movie,” said Bartell. Swank provides movie licensing to many different places, from cruise ships to college campuses. It allows places to screen copyrighted movies.

Also needed to screen movies is a movie screen. The school turns to outside contractors to set up the screen. “On campus we

use a service called FUN Enterprises,” said Bartell. “We use them for events, they have a lot of things we can use for programs.” The company has been used in the past for events with inflatable rides and pictures.

Students seem to enjoy having events to attend. exploratory major, Kaitlyn Gerckens, a freshman, was excited for the free things and outdoor activity. “Me and my friends really wanted this Southern Residence Hall merch,” said Gerckens, patting a blanket given out by the organizers. “I also try to attend as many events as possible.”

The event provided more than just a movie and blankets. Students were also allowed to pick from many different candies and popcorn. “These events always have a good turnout,” said Johnson. “People love snacks and such.”

During the COVID-19 pandemic, there are more limits to what events and programs can be held. Still, the Weekend Warriors and Residence Life hope to put on a good event. There is less fear with this movie event. “The event is safe,”

Bartell said. “It is held outside, socially distanced. Unless eating the snacks, students are to wear masks as well.”

Students understand the need for caution. “I feel that there are currently enough events, with COVID and it’s restrictions,” said Gerckens.

“Residence Hall is really doing as good as they can with the restrictions.”

The event was large, garnering many students. Bartell had “hoped people would attend,” and many did, the residence quad being dotted with students reclining and watching the

movies, socially distanced.

Students enjoyed the event as well. “I want to enjoy my freshman year,” said Gerckens. She wants to attend as many events as possible for her first year of college. “I am really excited to see what SCSU’s future holds.”



PHOTO | MADELINE S. SCHARF

“Bad Boys For Life” showing in the Residential Quad for the drive-in movie night.

Thomas Rhett is ‘Country Again’ with new album

By Sofia Rositani
Arts & Entertainment Editor

Thomas Rhett has done it again with releasing new music, but this time it is not just one song, instead, it is a whole new album. His new album titled, “Country Again (Side A)” is a small portion of a larger double album.

This double album will have 11 songs and will feature “What’s Your Country Song,” previously released in November of 2020.

“This is one of my favorite records I’ve ever gotten to make,” Rhett said in a video announcement

via Instagram Stories. “I feel so centered as a person. A lot of these songs were written about the lessons I’ve learned over this decade, and for sure in 2020 ... I’m just so excited,” according to Taste of Country.

This album was very surprising for me because I had no idea it was coming out until I saw it recommended to me on Spotify. As an avid Thomas Rhett listener, I was extremely excited to hear it for the first time, as it is very refreshing to hear him talk about life and how it changes. Like in the song “Growing Up.”

“Guess you get a little older, get a little wiser. A little more turn that cheek. Little less what I want, and more what I need these days, I Still get a little crazy. In a lot of ways, I’m still the kid I was. Just a little less Jack in my cup. Oh, I guess I’m growing up. Yeah, I guess I’m growing up,” Rhett sang in the song.

One thing I really enjoy about his music is that he uses nostalgia or his family as an inspiration, which makes it even more personal and relatable. His title track “Country Again” is relatable and emotional, like many of his songs, he talks about his family and

how happy he is to be, well, country again.

My favorite part in the song was how he talked about trading his days in Nashville, TN with days in Los Angeles, CA. He also added how he put away his cowboy boots because they did not feel like they belonged to him again, but recently he put them back on. My favorite part of the song is when he talks about his wife and how he was not really paying attention to her but recently have been doing a lot more together with her.

“I traded sunsets with my wife, for hours on my phone and even when I

was right beside her, I still wasn’t really home. But last night, we built a fire, watched the moonlight kiss her skin I thought, man, it feels good to be country again,” sang Rhett in the song “Country Again.”

Rhett was born and raised in country music, with his dad, the famous country singer Rhett Akins, being his biggest influence. Because of this, he started playing and listening to country music from a young age.

On April 30, Rhett will be doing a virtual concert, “Thomas Rhett One Night Only from Nashville.” this concert will happen the

day the rest of his album comes out which will have seven more songs being added to what it already has. Knowing Rhett’s music, I know I will need tissues for at least two or three of his songs for they are extremely emotional and remind me of a time when I was free of responsibilities. I hope to hear more of his music soon because he is my favorite country artist and has so much heart in his music that many other country artists lack.

Rhett sang, “I saw the light, I found the way home Thank you Lord, Amen. Man, it feels good to be country again.”



PHOTO | SOFIA ROSITANI

Thomas Rhett’s music video for “Country Again” in his new double album.

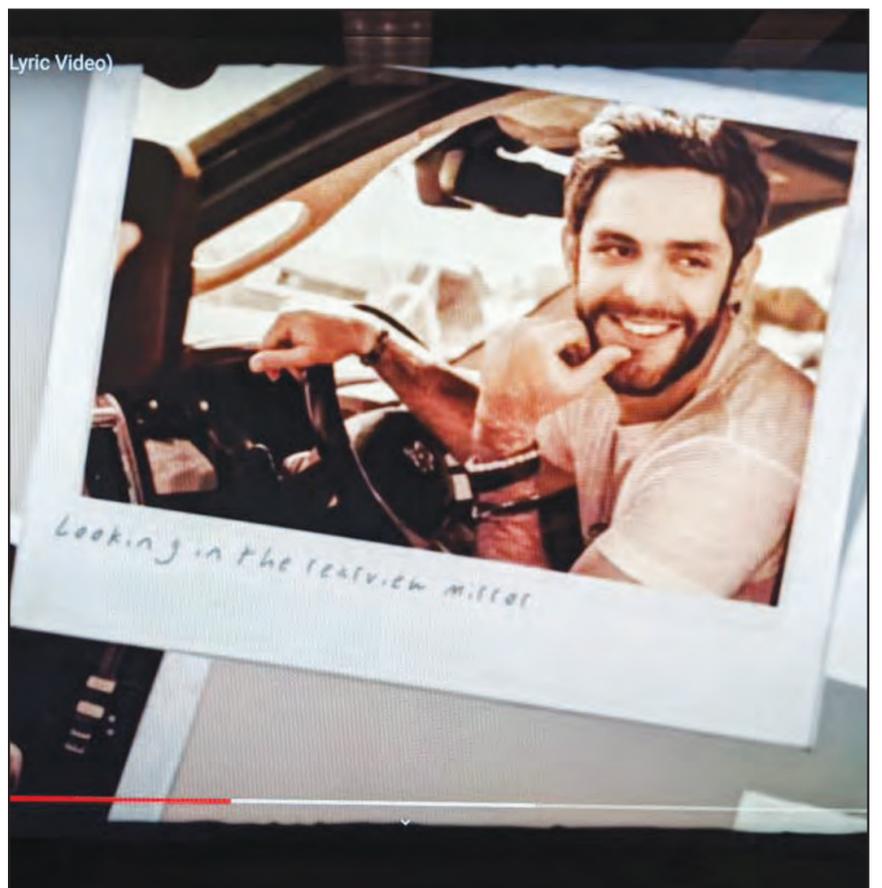


PHOTO | SOFIA ROSITANI

Thomas Rhett “Growing Up” lyric video, showing old and new photos of him.