

The State of Gun Control in America

BY COURTNEY CHURCHILL
Staff Writer



George Walker IV, AP News

Protesters march at the March for Our Lives, an anti gun demonstration, outside the State Capitol in Nashville, Tenn.

On March 27, a shooter opened fire inside The Covenant School, a small and private Christian school with about 200 students located south of downtown Nashville, killing six people.

According to the Washington Post, there have been 377 school shootings since the Columbine High School shooting in 1999. The term mass shooting is defined as an incident in which four or more victims are injured or killed simultaneously by firearm, according to the Gun Violence Archive.

Prof. Edward Shea of the criminal justice department said that there are two root causes of gun violence: mental health challenges and easy access to weapons.

“When we study these cases, we have a lot to look at. I think mental health issues are prevalent. We often find physical abuse or some sort of childhood trauma, sexual abuse, domestic abuse, something of that nature,” said Shea. “So, there are warning signs. They build up to this, often a traumatic event that puts them in a downward spiral and they’re not getting enough help to deal with that problem.”

The topic has become heavily politicized, which Shea saw as one of the main problems with this issue.

“There’s no united front other than our national politicians saying that they understand the scope of it. There doesn’t seem to be a collective effort to really dive into it and maybe it’s because they can’t,” said Shea. “I think that the country is so divided politically that we can’t come to an agreement, and we’ve reached a point in society where we can’t even listen to it.”

There is an ongoing question of whether Congress is taking adequate measures to address this national issue, especially after yet another school shooting.

President Biden signed a bipartisan gun safety bill into legislation in June 2022, according to the Associated Press (AP). The Bipartisan Safer Communities Act was signed just weeks after the school shooting in Uvalde, Texas that killed 19 students and two teachers. This was seen as a bipartisan breakthrough.

According to NPR, the new law intended to expand background checks for those ages 18 to 21 seeking to purchase a gun. The Second Amendment is continuously interpreted and debated upon as it pertains to the issue of gun violence, which implies a citizen’s right to bear arms.

“There have been efforts at the state level to control the most dangerous weapons, but most of these efforts have run up against a Supreme Court that perversely interprets the Second Amendment’s language about state police powers and muskets to mean an individual right to

stockpile semi-automatic weapons,” said Professor Steven Michels, chair of the department of political science and global affairs.

Shea reflected upon the history of the Second Amendment that is now challenged in modern-day America.

“We are historically a nation of weapons. The United States was founded on rebellion. At the time that they crafted the Second Amendment, the world was a totally different place than it is now. I think the challenges were different, what our founding fathers were concerned about is different than what the challenges of the world today are and that’s why they crafted that,” said Shea.

The Second Amendment isn’t the only issue when debating the topic of gun control. The National Rifle Association (NRA), who defends the Second Amendment lobbies against any form of gun control.

According to BBC News, the NRA suggested heavier security in schools rather than stripping away gun ownership rights following the Nashville school shooting.

The Assault Weapons Ban, also referred to as the Public Safety and Recreational Firearms Act, banned the transfer, manufacture and possession of certain firearms that were labeled as assault weapons, according to the National Institute of Justice.

“The national government should have renewed the Assault Weapons Ban after it expired in 2004 but failed to do so, primarily because a large section of Congress is supported by money made from selling guns,” said Michels.

Many state governments have responded differently in combating this national issue.

“Connecticut has one of the most restrictive gun laws in the country and they’ve added some new ones. They’re at the forefront of restricting access to guns and making it more difficult for people to get them, requiring more training, better storage of weapons and increasing penalties,” said Shea.

According to AP News, Biden has promoted the benefit of red-flag laws especially for law enforcement. The laws are designed to remove guns temporarily from people who exhibit violent behavior in order to prevent them from hurting themselves or others.

Shea said that the state of Connecticut has red flag laws that enable law enforcement, if they observe that an individual is a threat to themselves or others, to apply for a risk protection order. If the individual attempts to apply or purchase another weapon, they could be denied due to the utilization of a database that collects information, however these laws do not exist on a national level.

There have been investments made and bills proposed to improve school safety. According to AP News, the bills being proposed enhance the requirements of schools nationwide to install advanced technology such as video surveillance and panic buttons.

Sophomore Caroline Miller said her feelings of fear immediately reactivate when she hears of another school shooting.

“If I had a child right now, I would be really scared to send them to school. This has been an ongoing issue for years and years and years, and there has been no change, so I think that speaks for itself,” said Miller.

In another recent example, on April 10, police responded to a call of a shooter who was an employee at Old National Bank in Louisville. The suspect killed five people and eight victims were injured, according to ABC News.

“At what point do we say, ‘enough is enough’? We have to resolve this. It’s not about your gun ownership rights, that’s a separate issue,” said Shea. “It’s about understanding that certain people shouldn’t have access to weapons and people need help when they’re getting into those situations. These people want to harm themselves and others and that’s a problem.”

HEY SENIORS!

COUNTDOWN TO GRADUATION:

25 DAYS

WATCH THE PIONEERS IN ACTION:

WEDNESDAY 4/19:
BASEBALL VS UMASS
AT 3 P.M. IN
BRIDGEPORT, CONN

SATURDAY 4/22:
MEN'S LACROSSE VS
CANISIUS, STARTS AT
12 P.M. ON CAMPUS
FIELD

SUNDAY 4/23:
WOMEN'S RUGBY
AT QUNNIPIAC
UNIVERSITY IN
HAMDEN, CONN

SUNDAY 4/23 & MONDAY 4/24:
**WOMEN'S GOLF NEC
CHAMPIONSHIP**
IN DAYTONA BEACH, FL

News

Trump Brings in “A+” Defense Lawyers for Indictment

BY ERIN CLARK
Staff Writer

On Thursday, March 30, Donald Trump faced an indictment from a Manhattan grand jury facing 34 counts in relation to falsifying business records. These charges mark the first time a former president of the United States has faced criminal charges.

“Given his track record,” said Trump biographer Michael D’Antonio in an interview with the Associated Press (AP), “I had trouble imagining he would ever be held accountable.”

The charges being faced include a felony offense related to hush money payments from Trump to women, specifically porn star Stormy Daniels, during his 2016 campaign.

“The parties are very divided regarding perceptions of the indictment and the 34 counts,” said Dr. Gary Rose, a political science professor. “We have definitely entered a new era in our nation’s politics with this indictment.”

Trump attended his arraignment in a New York courthouse, the first arraignment of a former president in U.S. history. On April 4, Trump pleaded not guilty to all charges.

“What this means can be viewed in two ways,” said Rose. “Absolutely nobody is above the law, including the former president of the United States, or that the law is being used for political purposes for the purpose of diminishing the credibility of a major presidential candidate.”

Donald Trump’s lead defense attorney is Joe Tacopina, who spoke at Sacred Heart a few years ago. Trump has a legal team of many defense lawyers and claims he has nothing to conceal about the success of his multi-billion-dollar company.

“I believe his defense team is so talented that the charges might end up being dismissed,” said Rose. “I’m not suggesting that no crime was committed, but I am suggesting that he has an A+ set of lawyers representing him.”

Trump has chosen to utilize his Fifth Amendment right of refusing to answer any questions many times throughout this process.

A deposition was held in private on Thursday, April 13.

“I do not fully find the arrest to be in good faith,” said sophomore political science student Anna Macaulay. “I believe politics did play a role in the case against the former president and are attempts to deter him from his run for the presidency.”

Alvin Bragg is the district attorney in this case. According to The New York Times, he had never previously held office before last year, and he now finds himself in the spotlight of the case that is the first in history to involve a former president.

“Bragg has his work cut out for him,” said senior Jack Kurnik. “If he fails to convict the former president, the voters will show their skepticism of establishing political figures like Bragg by resoundingly responding in the ballot box come November 2024.”

Trump has explicitly declared that he is running for president in 2024. He has said that he finds this lawsuit to be ridiculous and another election interference case that has been brought against him.

The next step in this process is a trial, where Trump’s lawyers must prove that he is not guilty beyond a reasonable doubt. This process can take several months, his next hearing is scheduled for Dec. 4.

“His followers will remain committed... In fact, they are even more committed because of this,” said Rose. “Millions of dollars are now flowing to his campaign because of this indictment, it could very well help him win the Republican party’s nomination for President.”

The Associated Press contributed to this article.

Spend Less and Study More at the Library

BY ANGUS HENDRICKS AND MADISON BEEKMAN
Staff Writer and Assistant News Editor

Beginning in the fall 2023 semester, the Ryan Matura Library at Sacred Heart University will be offering a service known as “SHU Reads for Free” that allows students to reserve library-provided textbooks for three hours at a time.

The program’s inception came from Alejandro Ramos, the university’s Student Government Association (SGA) president and The Spectrum’s Spotlight editor, this past fall.

“This program originated when I first became student government president and I wanted to really put to use the textbooks that were collected and were left in my office at the beginning of my term. We had thought about donating them outside or maybe even throwing them away but I said what better way to serve the students than making textbooks more affordable and accessible to them,” said Ramos.



Sacred Heart University Photo by Tracy Deer-Mirek

The Ryan Matura Library located on Sacred Heart’s main campus.

Students can use textbooks for their classes and assignments without having to purchase the books. This program will be featured on all campus syllabi beginning in the fall.

“The program combines SGA-lead textbook drives on campus with a new library collection called ‘Textbook Reserves.’ Donated textbooks will become part of this lending collection,” said Susan Luchars, the Resources Development and Assessment Librarian at the Ryan Matura Library.

There are currently 168 textbooks available in the reserve, and Luchars said that they are hoping to collect as many textbooks and required readings as possible over time.

Sophomore Benjamin Shea had some concerns about textbook availability, specifically around exam times, as the reserve is just starting out.

“I have a feeling that it may be difficult to acquire one of the textbooks from the library due to the high demand, particularly given the amount of time each student has with the textbook,” said Shea.

Despite this, Shea thinks that this will be a helpful program in many ways.

“The short-term loaning of textbooks allows for the students to be able to use them for an adequate time, and it will also be beneficial to both myself and all students as it has the potential to relieve some financial strain that comes from buying or renting textbooks every semester,” Shea said.

The latter is the intention of the program: to offer assistance to the university students and to attempt to ease any financial strain that may come from having to purchase textbooks.

“Textbook affordability is a big issue on all college campuses. I heard that 85% of college and research libraries have a program that supports textbook availability. We are committed to helping students obtain their required readings in any way we possibly can. While the textbook reserve does require students to read the books in the library, it does present an option for them,” said Luchars.

Need a Doctor? They’re Right Down the Street!

BY JEFF MILLER AND MADISON BEEKMAN
Staff Writer and Assistant News Editor

Sacred Heart University and Yale New Haven’s North East Medical Group (NEGM) have partnered to open a new health center for SHU students. This center first opened on August 22 in a temporary space at the Park Avenue Medical Center, but officially opened in the larger and newly remodeled space on March 12.

“I am excited for the new health care center,” said sophomore Sebastian Ford. “It’s nice to see that Sacred Heart cares about the health of their students and wants to provide them with top-of-the-line facilities.”

The new facility, which is fully dedicated to SHU students, is 2,000 square feet, and includes four exam rooms and a lab, according to the university’s website.

“This partnership has been great for the University,” said Dean of Students Larry Wielk in a SHU press release. “Our students have more health care options and a wider range of services as a result.”

“Yale New Haven Health is very excited to expand our partnership with Sacred Heart,” said Anne Diamond, executive vice president of Yale New Haven Health and president of Bridgeport Hospital, according to the university’s press release.

The center is open Monday-Friday, from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Students have the option to shuttle there, or if they have their car, they can park in any space designated for patients. This includes three parking lots, and a free parking garage, according to Sacred Heart.

“I recently went there because I was feeling sick, and the rooms were really nice, and the whole place was run well,” said sophomore Chris Simpson. “The people who worked there were really nice, and I was in and out quickly.”

Not only are Sacred Heart students getting a new facility, they also gain access to a wider variety of health services. Students now get the benefits of all of Yale New Haven Health and Bridgeport Hospital resources. This includes over 6,000 physicians in more than 100 different

specialties, according to Sacred Heart’s press release.

According to Yale New Haven Health’s website, “At Park Avenue Medical Center, you will find a wide range of coordinated medical services in one location. All designed and delivered with the care, compassion, and expertise you expect from Yale New Haven Health.”

Sophomore Isabella Mulholland is looking forward to the new partnership.

“I like how many doctors we can get access to now,” Mulholland said. “I really hope I do not need to go there often, but if I do, I have confidence in the service I am going to get.”

SHU and Yale New Haven Health officials are also looking forward to the partnership and the care it will bring to students.

“This new location will allow for easy access to health care for students, is close to campus, and will allow for seamless transitions to higher level care if ever needed,” said Diamond in SHU’s press release.



Sacred Heart University Photo by Tracy Deer-Mirek

Members of Sacred Heart and Yale New Health signifying the opening of the new center with a ribbon cutting ceremony.

Features

Students Banding Together with Green

BY GERALDINE PAGLIA
Staff Writer

The Green Bandana Project originally started at the University of Wisconsin-Madison Campus to promote a stigma-free and supportive environment, led by students with the aim of raising awareness and promoting a caring culture for those facing mental health issues or crises.

“The goal is to shift the culture at Sacred Heart University to a place that’s supportive and compassionate,” said Peer Education Coordinator, Karen Flanagan. “In a place where we really just look out for one another and to create just a culture that normalizes the idea of mental health, certainly there are times where students feel a stigma around seeking help for mental health issues.”

Student Wellness Education and Empowerment Team (S.W.E.E.T), a group of students at Sacred Heart University on campus that provides information on important issues students care about, have adopted this project.

When a student wears a green bandana, it signals that they are informed about relevant resources and are equipped to provide help if necessary.

“Having the green bandana is there to make their peers feel comfortable talking to them about mental health and where to find the resources for it,” said senior Kailee Welch.

The Green Bandana Project acts as a conversation starter, prompting discussions on mental health, and erasing the stigma associated with it.

Student leaders still strongly encourage students to seek immediate professional help in a crisis, but the green bandana offers comfort and a sense of solidarity in that moment of vulnerability.

For those interested in making the pledge, S.W.E.E.T’s in-person therapy dog event offers students the chance to sign up on the spot. Welch said, “Therapy dog events or if we are planning some pop-up events for the project, there is a QR code that can also be sent out to everybody to sign up, and once you sign up, there is a super easy pledge.”



Contributed by Kailee Welch
A furry friend spreads awareness by wearing their green bandana.

Several colleges and universities around the world have expressed interest in implementing similar programs on their campuses. The Green Bandana Project resonates with students worldwide, as it provides a platform where they become part of the solution regarding the prevalent issue of mental health.

Senior Lauren Torres said, “I think it’s a great initiative, but I don’t know how it is perceived through the perspective of people truly struggling with their mental health.”

The project doesn’t only tackle the issue of mental health head-on, but also creates a sense of community and togetherness. It reminds students that they are not alone and that they have the resources and a support system ready and willing to listen, understand and help.

The issue of mental health has been a growing concern among college students. With studies showing that one in every four college students is struggling with a mental illness, it has become imperative to tackle this concern.

Flanagan said, “The project is a very simple way to create a visual presence of supportive students on campus and in supportive of student mental health.”

According to the Foundation for Suicide Prevention, ninety percent of people who die by suicide have an underlying and potentially treatable mental health condition.

“I think it definitely brings initiative to students wanting to ask for mental health help or just to talk to other students about resources available on campus” said Welch.

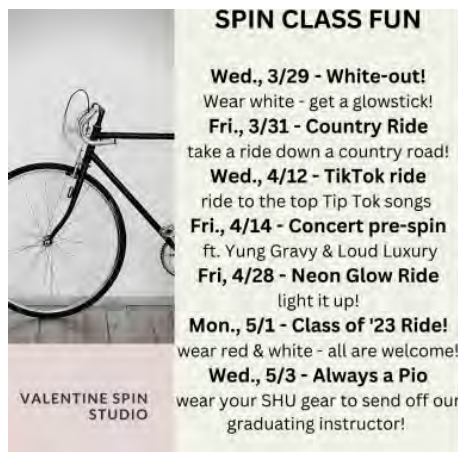
If you or anyone you know are struggling with mental health, please reach out to someone you feel comfortable talking to or to the Sacred Heart Counseling Center at (203)-371-7955.

A Healthy Spin on Cycling Classes

BY DANIELLA BALDINO
Staff Writer

Are you looking for a new way to work out and exercise but are having a hard time finding the motivation? Well, Bobby Valentine’s Health and Recreation Center (Bobby V’s) is currently hosting themed spin classes.

“I think themed spin classes are a great way to get more students to participate and look forward to class,” said junior spin instructor Caroline Onderko. “It’s a way for students to add input into the classes they’re going to and increase participation.”



Contributed by Liz McGreevy

Poster for the themes of the weekly spin classes at Bobby Valentine Health and Recreation Center.

The first themed spin class was held on Wednesday, March 29, and the theme was “White Out.” Students were encouraged to wear white colored clothing, and if so, they would receive a glow stick for attending and participating with the class.

The next class that took place was the “Country Ride.” This class was held on Friday, March 31. “We were very curious to see how the Country Ride would turn out and were happy to have more than half of the bikes

filled,” said Associate Director of Club Sports & Recreation, Liz McGreevy.

Spin classes are held weekly at various times for SHU students on the bottom floor of Bobby V’s.

“They are fun and bring a fresh take on class. The music will be a new mix and when you add any kind of theme you can add props like glow sticks or even costumes,” said McGreevy. “For someone new to class, it can engage them more and encourage them to become a regular.”

Students have a variety of classes throughout the week at various times to choose from.

“I love going to spin classes. They are such a fun way to get active,” said junior Brianna Russo. “I usually go to the night classes because they are a good way to end my day.”

“I always ask my classes what kind of music they want to listen to, and I ask for recommendations because I think it makes it more fun for the students when they get to listen to the music they want to hear,” said Onderko.

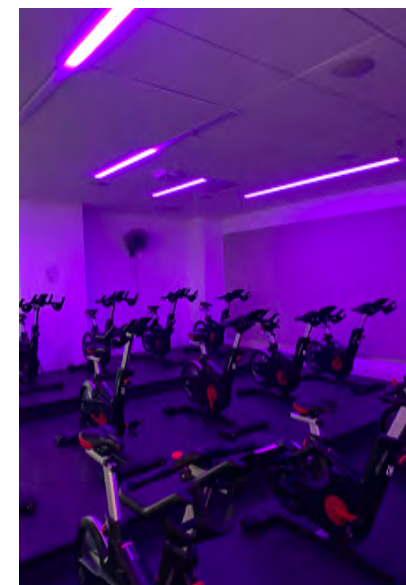
There are still three more themed classes to attend this semester and are being held on Friday, April 28, a “Neon Glow” class; Monday, May 1, “Class of ‘23” ride; and Wednesday, May 3, “Always a Pio” ride.

“I think my instructor running the “Always a Pio” ride is viewing that ride as bittersweet as this is her last year teaching here,” said McGreevy.

If you are interested in any of the themed classes or just want to attend a regular weekly class, you can visit the SHU fitness classes schedule on the website and register for a class.

“You can also go to @healthypioneer on Instagram and the link for class registration is right at the top of the page,” said Onderko. “The page also gives gym hours and class updates for all of the fitness classes so you can stay up to date on any changes to the schedule.”

Visit https://shuclub.prestosports.com/Class_Registration for more details and class registrations.



Daniella Baldino, Staff Photographer
The spin room at the Valentine Center where the weekly classes take place.

Audrey's Corner



Remembering Audrey Niblo

By Jessica Fontaine, Contributing Writer



Audrey Niblo was a Sacred Heart University student who suddenly passed away in May of 2018 from a heart condition. She experienced bullying growing up, but never let it dwindle the positivity she embodied every day.

In September of 2013, Audrey told the Greenwich Time about being bullied in middle school for her weight and for having attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. After eventually becoming bully-free in high school, she expressed her passion for uplifting other students who have been bullied.

Audrey was a cherished sister in Theta Phi Alpha Fraternity. As a staff writer for The Spectrum and Her Campus, she was a voice for bullying victims in her community. She was outspoken about helping people of all walks of life on social media.

Audrey's Facebook profile picture in September of 2017 showed her holding up a sign that said, "I have food, I have a home, I'm helping those who don't."

In June of 2014, she shared a post on Facebook that read, "You think you know them. Guess what? You don't! Re-post if you are against bullying."

"I think it's awesome that she was so open about it," said senior Sofia Debrot, an elementary education major. "It's really important nowadays for kids to be more open about it because that's how we can learn and prevent it."

Audrey frequently expressed her loving personality on Twitter, especially when it came to her dog. An April 2018 tweet says, "There are some days that I really wish I had my doggo at school."

Dr. Michael Alfano, Dean of the Farrington College of Education, just arrived at SHU when Audrey passed and was present for her memorial services.

"She was a very impactful student while she was here, so I was very saddened," Alfano said. "I will say this, the way that the community came together when she passed was very humbling to see and very emotional."

The Farrington College Education Program has been redesigned to educate future teachers about bullying. Debrot believes the program is effective and honors Audrey's memory.

"I definitely think they're doing right by her," Debrot said. "Just from what I've observed in the schools that I'm in and the classes I'm in, they definitely make an effort to teach us teachers about ways to prevent it."

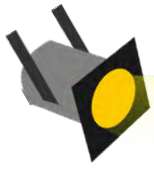
According to Alfano, The Farrington College prioritizes social and emotional learning, emotional well-being and belonging.

"I'm very proud of that, and I can only hope that we would be doing her right, and what we're doing is in support of her memory," Alfano said.

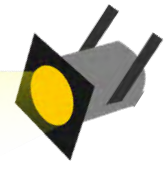
According to Audrey's obituary on Dignity Memorial, her family and friends remember her for her contagious smile, sparkly eyes, big hugs and being the hardest working person they know.

Alfano said, "I would hope that she would be very proud of what we're doing."





Spotlight



THE 32ND ANNUAL
UNIVERSITAS SACRI CORDIS
MCMXXIII
CAMPUS LIFE LEADERSHIP AWARDS

Wednesday,
April 26, 2023
Edgerton Theatre
6PM

Save the Date!

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JAKE CARDINALE
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| MANAGING EDITOR
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PROF. JOANNE KABAK |

Upcoming Events on Campus in April!

- WEDNESDAY 4/19:
EVERYTHING UNDER THE SUN
WITH S.E.T AT 4 P.M. ON THE 63's
LAWN.
- THE POWER OF MINDFULNESS &
MEDITATION**
IN HC103 AT 8 P.M.
- SHU-PARDY FOR THE JUNIOR CLASS**
AT THE EASTER THEATER, 9 P.M.
- THURSDAY 4/20:
TIE-DYE T-SHIRTS
WITH S.E.T. ON THE 63's LAWN AT 4
P.M.
- SATURDAY 4/22:
HABITAT FOR HUMANITY SLEEPOUT
ON THE 63's PATIO, STARTS AT 11 A.M.

- SHU DANCE SPRING FINALE**
AT THE EDGERTON, STARTS AT 8 P.M.
- MONDAY 4/24:
PIONEER VOTER REGISTRATION
IN THE 63's HALLWAY, BEGINS AT 11
A.M.
- LIP SYNC BATTLE**
WITH S.E.T. AT 8 P.M. IN MARTIRE E145
- TUESDAY 4/25
SENIOR PUB NIGHT AT RED'S
OUTSIDE ON THE 63'S PATIO, STARTS
AT 8 P.M.
- THE SPRING FEST CARNIVAL WILL BE
HELD ON APRIL 28TH AT THE CURTIS
HALL PARKING LOT AT 5 P.M.**

Arts & Entertainment

The Fourth Installment of John Wick

BY BRAD HUTCHISON
Staff Writer

Ten years have passed since the first “John Wick” movie was released in theaters, and now the iconic character is back as he sets out on a new fight in a wild finale to his story.

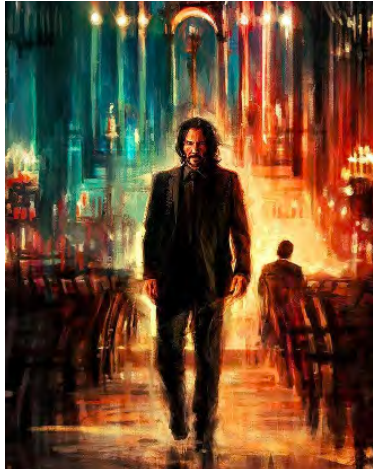
From gun fights to car chases in the rain, this movie has all the ingredients of a thriller. “John Wick: Chapter 4” officially released to audiences on March 24. This installment in the film series follows Wick as he tries to defeat the twelve crime bosses that run that underworld’s most powerful crime organizations, which go by the name of “The High Table.”

“This movie was hands down the best one that I have produced,” said junior Stone Cofini. “I remember loving the third movie when I saw it in theaters for its release, so I was waiting a long time for this fourth movie to drop, and after seeing this one on opening, I can definitely say that this was well worth the wait.”

Keanu Reeves returns to play his role of Wick. Some other stars that have returned are Ian McShane as Winston and Lance Reddick as Charon.

Chad Stahelski is back as the director, as he has directed the first installment, as well as the three sequels. Some of his other credits include: “The Matrix Resurrections,” “The Matrix Reloaded,” and a stunt coordinator for over 70 well-known films.

With this being the fourth movie in the series, Stahelski wanted to raise the stakes and answer some unknown questions that fans



Instagram, @johnwickmovie
Promotional poster for John Wick Chapter 4, which released on March 24.

have been pondering for years. When coordinating this film with the creative team, he wanted to focus on the mythology that ties into the storyline, and this made for it to be the longest movie to date.

According to Collider, the movie is closing in on a franchise box-office record. As of publication date, the film has surpassed \$300 million at the global box office. North American locations are contributing most to its success, and this could increase even more as it has not yet been released in South Korea or the Middle Eastern countries.

Sophomore Sean Ryan saw the film recently, and his opinions line up with the 94% rating the film received on Rotten Tomatoes.

“It was genuinely a masterclass of all the action movies I have seen,” Ryan said. “I couldn’t keep my eyes off the screen the entire time and the action sequences proved to be some of the best the industry has ever seen.”

According to the Hollywood Reporter, the fourth movie in the franchise was intended to be its last, but because its massive success “a fifth film is back on the table.”

But fans do have something to look forward to for now in the John Wick realm. Set to release in 2024, “Ballerina” will be making its way to the big screen. This spin-off prequel film will answer some mysteries about Wick’s upbringing, and it will feature cameos from all the major actors.

Spend a Night at the Theater!

BY NICK RUBANO
Staff Writer



As the house lights dim and the velvet curtain begins to rise, the stage at the Sacred Heart University Community Theatre is set for a full lineup of varying artists to greet local audiences. Upcoming events at the entertainment hub vary from dog shows to live orchestras to comedians and more.

According to CT Insider, the theater originally opened in 1920 as a vaudeville house, later being repurposed as a cinema, declining and finally closing its doors in 2011. The building was given new life in 2021, just over a century after first opening its doors, by a partnership between SHU and Kleban properties to fully renovate and restore the property.

Since then, Sacred Heart has been fostering the arts in the historic 400 seat venue with the talents of guest stars the likes of Megan Hilty and Liz Callaway, who are both actresses and singers. The performance space is also regularly home to SHU’s “Thought Leader Series” and several learning enrichment programs for kids and teens.

The SHU Community Theatre’s website details that the restoration was completed with respect to the historic architecture of the building, with design elements emphasizing the classic “bones,” while modernizing the space with state-of-the-art sound and technical equipment.

One upcoming program, “Movie Maker Workshop: A Summer Film Program,” welcomes high school students into the world of film making through a three-week intensive camp course, culminating in a screening of

students’ own films.

Students in the program will work hand in hand with SHU Community Theatre staff; they are a professional team of artists, musicians, and technical experts who have worked behind the scenes on Broadway, in regional theaters, and on national music tours.

According to the Today Show, a Fairfield native, Julie Benko, will be on the stage Friday, May 19 at 8 p.m. in a solo concert. Benko quickly rose to Broadway stardom this year after making her debut as an understudy in “Funny Girl,” with critical and audience acclaim landing the actress a position as the permanent alternate for the role.

Senior Abby Palmer said, “As a theater fan, I’ve loved Julie for months. She just seems so genuine and down to earth. I never even knew she was from Fairfield. It’s so exciting to have her performing at our theater.”

David Cross of “Arrested Development” will also be bringing his “Worst Daddy in the World” Tour to the Community Theatre on Saturday, June 10 at 8 p.m. with \$2 of each ticket benefiting the Innocence Project for criminal justice reform.

In a different spirit, the theater will also host expert criminologist Scott Bonn, Ph.D. as he discusses “The Psychology of Serial Killers and Why They Captivate Us” on Saturday, May 13 at 8 p.m.

“I listen to true crime podcasts all the time and never really thought about why I find it interesting. I’m interested in going, but I honestly had no idea the Community Theater hosted events like that,” said junior Jordan Pita.

The full list of scheduled performances and tickets are available for purchase online at

Instagram, @shucommunitytheatre

The SHU Community theatre is currently offering an exciting opportunity to high school students with an interest in film making.

SHUcommunitytheatre.org.

Art From Inside the Cell

BY JESSICA BALOGH
Staff Writer

The nonprofit organization Community Partners in Action (CPA) is holding its annual Prison Arts Show. According to Eastern Connecticut’s website, this exhibit showcases 350 drawings, paintings, sculptures and carpentry projects created by Connecticut’s current or formerly incarcerated inmates. Several pieces of art are made through uncommon materials such as soap, woven paper bags and food packaging.

The Hartford Courant described examples of specific types of art on display including cartoons, abstracts, acrylic splashes, paper models of buildings and giant fiber-glass sculptures.

“Art provides a universal language that gives voices to individuals and communities and is accessible across social boundaries,” said Prof. Mary Treschitta, a professor in the Art and Design Department at Sacred Heart University.

Prison Arts, which was founded in 1978, is CPA’s and the United States longest-running program of its kind.

According to CPA’s website, the organization’s mission is to “build community by providing services that promote accountability, dignity and restoration for people affected by the criminal justice system.”

The program works directly inside and outside Connecticut prisons as individuals return to the community. Partners include prison staff, community organizations, state agencies, and professional artists as stated on CPA’s website.

An important element of the program is their work with former prisoners, who often when released, come back to continue their work with Prison Arts.

“People face enormous challenges when they re-enter society from prison. Minimizing the stigma and repairing the trauma is essential to a healthy lifestyle outside of prison. Arts can certainly facilitate that successful re-entry,” said Dr. James McCabe, a professor in the criminal justice department at Sacred Heart.

According to CPA’s website, Prison Arts arranges an annual show and an annual alumni show which is called “Out of Prison, Making Art.” CPA has an extensive permanent collection that is displayed

in various locations such as schools, libraries, and community centers.

While this year the annual show is being held at Eastern Connecticut State University, other sites for rotating exhibits include the Hartford Community Court, the main offices of the CT Court Support Services Division and the Osborn Correctional Institution visitors waiting room.

The exhibits offer an enlightening view into the world of prison and a deeper understanding of art, artists and art making in general, according to CPA’s website. It allows an opportunity for the artists to be heard, considered and be active members of the community.

“Art helps the prisoners learn how to express themselves in a new way. It establishes their worth and regains a sense of purpose,” said Treschitta.

According to CPA’s website, it changes the lives of those incarcerated and the overall prison environment by encouraging creativity and self-discipline along with improving communication skills and thoughtfulness.

“If we don’t focus on rehabilitating those incarcerated and focusing on why they committed the crime in the first place and give them something to put their thoughts and efforts into then we will just see a revolving door,” said Dr. Analisa Gagnon, a professor in the criminal justice department at Sacred Heart.

Programs like Prison Arts are also located outside of Connecticut.

One example is Arizona State University (ASU), where Gagnon received her doctorate. Under Kevin Wright, associate professor in the criminology department and director of the Center for Correctional Solutions, there have been several art shows for charity organized over the last couple of years according to ASU’s website.

“I would absolutely be a part of a program like this because it helps create connections and allows the prisoners to get involved outside of prison. Just because a person is imprisoned doesn’t mean they do not deserve opportunities to embrace their feelings through activities,” said sophomore Marketing Chair of the Criminal Justice Club, Victoria Felton.

The “New Bruce” is Back

BY ALANNA WUNSCH
Staff Writer

The Bruce Museum in Greenwich, Conn. reopened its doors on April 2, showing off its \$60 million renovation. The museum is a world-class, community-based art and science institution that features hundreds of modern and classic pieces through fully curated exhibits.

“I love going to different museums and the various exhibits that each offer. I am excited to visit the Bruce Museum in the future,” said freshman Isabella Defrancesco.

According to its website, the expansion allowed for the museum to add 40,000 square feet to the facility, showcasing brand new exhibits.

The “new Bruce” will feature additions such as the Steven and Alexandra Cohen Education Wing and the William L. Richter Art Wing. On the ground floor, there will be the new Museum Store, Museum Cafe with indoor and outdoor seating, a large auditorium and meeting spaces. This floor will be free to the public during regular museum hours.

The renovation granted the museum space to showcase works from major artists including Picasso, Matisse, Warhol and more. Thanks to a loan from William L. Richter, a prominent Greenwich resident, pieces like Picasso’s “Bouquet of Flowers” and Matisse’s “Self Portrait” are on display until October 15. While many new pieces and displays, characteristics of “the old Bruce” are still there—showing off the history of Connecticut geology and wildlife.

One of the most talked about exhibits is “Penguins! Past and Present.” According to their website, this exhibit will showcase fossils, videos, immersive dioramas, taxidermy and a 3D life-size model that you can take apart and put back together.

It explained that, “This exhibition was chosen as the opening science show for the New Bruce and is curated by Dr. Daniel Ksepka, an internationally recognized expert in penguin evolution who has published groundbreaking research on penguin fossils, feathers, and genomes.”

Some may wonder what penguins have to do with art, but the museum strives to display how art and science intersect. According to their website,



Instagram, @brucemuseum

Pictured is the Bruce Museum, who have just reopened their doors in Greenwich, Conn.

the Bruce Museum’s mission is to “promote the understanding and appreciation of art and science to enrich the lives of all people.”

Junior graphic design major Dyoe Hostin said, “The penguin exhibit stood out to me. Seeing the difference between penguins then and now is amazing. How these birds adapt and use their color to camouflage and survive is fascinating to me. This is an example of seeing art and science intersecting.”

Junior Amanda Palma, Co-President of the Art Club at Sacred Heart University said, “Oftentimes in science, creativity is drawn upon. The museum really showcases this intersection in an interesting way. The natural cycles exhibit looks really interesting to me because it shows the cycle of life, while doing it artistically.”

According to their website, The Bruce Museum showed off its first ever exhibit in 1912, featuring works by local artists known as the Greenwich Society of Artists. Since then, the museum has collected nearly 15,000 objects representing the arts and sciences.

If interested in visiting, the Bruce Museum is located at 1 Museum Dr Greenwich, Conn. It is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday. Admission is \$20 for adults, with discounts for senior citizens, children and students. For more information visit their website,

<https://brucemuseum.org/>.

Sports

Women's Lacrosse Undefeated in Conference Play

BY CRISTIAN MARTINEZ
Staff Writer

"It's a great feeling to start the conference play on a winning streak. We haven't had a winning record like this since 2010 and it's been exciting and definitely another motive towards everyone showing up and being better every day," said graduate student Lydia Werlau of the Sacred Heart women's lacrosse team.

The women's lacrosse team sits at the top of the Northeast Conference (NEC) with a 6-0 start in conference play. This is the most successful start to conference play the team has seen in over a decade.

"We learned a lot in our non-conference games," said Head Coach Laura Korutz. "It was very productive for our team in finding out what was working for us and what we needed to spend more time improving at."

Despite beginning the season on a five game losing streak, the women have been able to make a turnaround.

"We were adding plays to our offense, switching our primary defense, and making necessary adjustments to set our team up for success in conference," said Werlau. "All these changes have helped turn our season around right in time for conference play."

Werlau has been a key part of the offense this season as she leads the team with 45 goals. During their most recent game against Fairleigh Dickinson University (FDU), she contributed five goals to go along with four assists.

"I believe a lot of my success has come from the players I'm surrounded by and the way my teammates want to set each other up for the success of the team as a whole," said Werlau.

She is just one part of this team that is taking the NEC by storm. The women attribute their success to hard work, teamwork, and unselfishness.

"The players are executing the scouting report and really working well together on the field," said Korutz. "We are limiting turnovers which helps. Everyone is doing their jobs and that is what's making us successful. It's not one player, or one unit; instead, it is the team as a whole."

With just two games left to play in the regular season, the team has only one goal in mind: the NEC Championship.

"We feel that we have the right chemistry this year to make that happen."

The women take on Long Island University on April 22, then come home for their final game of the season against Merrimack College. Their quest for an NEC Championship begins May 4.



Sacred Heart University photo by Greg Vasil
Graduate Student Grace Reinold runs through her teammates high-five tunnel during pregame warmups.

Hurley and the Huskies Cut Down the Nets

BY TYLER CIAVARELLA
Staff Writer

The University of Connecticut (UConn) men's basketball team finished the job on April 3, when they captured their fifth National Championship, defeating San Diego State University (SDSU) 76-59.

Many students on Sacred Heart's campus were ecstatic about seeing a team from Connecticut winning a national title.



Instagram, @marchmadness
The Connecticut men's basketball team won the NCAA Championship on April 3.

"It was awesome to see a team like UConn, a team I grew up watching win the national championship," said freshman Jason Palmieri. "Connecticut, being the small state we are no matter what school we go to, we root for Connecticut teams."

UConn had not won the National Championship since 2014 where they defeated the University of Kentucky.

Following the retirement of long time head coach, Jim Calhoun in 2012, UConn has struggled to find a steady coaching replacement.

Calhoun built the UConn men's basketball program from the ground up, achieving three national championships during his tenure.

Kevin Ollie was named his successor, but only lasted six seasons. Dan Hurley replaced him in 2018 and led the team to a championship this past year.

Hurley's lack of postseason success during his first

six seasons worried many UConn fans. However, Hurley silenced those critics with winning it all this year.

"The future is very bright," said sophomore Zachary Hrubiec. "The last couple seasons Hurley has got a top ten recruiting class and he has enforced himself heavily in keeping top basketball prospects in New England home and playing for the home state. I can only see continued success going forward."

In this year's tournament, UConn went on one of the most dominant tournament runs ever seen. On route to victory, four-seeded UConn defeated several powerhouse teams including one-seed University of Arkansas and three-seed Gonzaga University. They won every game by at least 13 points or more.

UConn's championship victory was unlike many we had seen before. The only other team to punish teams by a margin that large was the 2018 Villanova Wildcats.

On April 8, 45,000 students and fans attended the victory parade celebrating the team's victory.



Instagram, @uconn
The 2023 UConn men's basketball team celebrating their victory over San Diego State.

2023 NBA Playoffs: Kings & Knicks in the Mix

BY JENNA LETIZIA
Co-Sports Editor



Instagram, @nba
Seeding for the 2023 NBA Playoffs, featuring the best of the best in professional basketball.

Following the conclusion of the NBA regular season on April 9, the NBA began gearing up for the start of the playoffs on April 15.

This season was filled with many surprises and disappointments in both individual players and teams.

"The Sacramento Kings were the most surprising team, finishing as the three seed in the West and making the playoffs for the first time since 2006," said junior Casey Russell. "As far as players, Lauri Markkanen on the Utah Jazz was a huge shock, averaging 25 points a game where just last year he only averaged just 14 a game."

Another team that many Sacred Heart students anticipate will have success is the New York Knicks. The

Knicks finished the regular season fifth in their conference and made the playoffs for

just the second time over the last ten seasons. They were led by offseason acquisition Jalen Brunson.

"He's always played well when he filled in, started -- and just having been around him, what he did at Villanova," Knicks head coach Tom Thibodeau told NBA.com. "Big games. He's always played his best in big games. We all knew that. That's just who he is."

One team that disappointed many fans were the Brooklyn Nets. The Nets had many great players on their team, but still struggled. They traded away star Kevin Durant and Kyrie Irving at the trade deadline because of these struggles.

The Dallas Mavericks also missed the playoffs even with the acquisition of Irving from the Nets.

"A few teams that disappointed in the regular season were the Dallas Mavericks, who missed the playoffs even with top players in Luka Doncic and after trading for Kyrie Irving," said Russell.

In between the end of the regular season and the start of the playoffs, the NBA held the play-in tournament from April 11-14. The teams that finished between seventh and tenth in both conferences play a mini-tournament to determine which teams will be seeded as the seven and eight seed in the playoffs.

The Atlanta Hawks advanced to the playoffs as the seven seed and the Miami Heat eight seed in the Eastern Conference. In the Western Conference, the Los Angeles Lakers advanced as the seven seed and the Minnesota Timberwolves became the eighth seed.

With the playoffs having already started, it will be interesting to see which team can bring home the Larry O'Brien Trophy for the 2022-23 season.

Thomas Marrone Mussio contributed to this article.

Knicks finished the regular season fifth in their conference and made the playoffs for

Editorial



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