



Incumbent Elicker wins mayoral primary



BY MIA CORTÉS CASTRO AND YURII STASIUK
STAFF REPORTERS

Incumbent mayor Justin Elicker won the Democratic mayoral primary Tuesday night, crushing challenger Liam Brennan with over 70 percent of the primary votes.

In total, 5,176 New Haven Democrats supported Elicker's nomination, while 2,176 cast ballots for Brennan. Elicker received the majority of the votes in all of New Haven's thirty wards.

The incumbent will now proceed to the general election on Nov. 7 as the Democratic nominee, additionally endorsed by the Working Families Party. In the general election, Elicker is being challenged by Republican-endorsed mayoral candidate Tom Goldenberg.

"These things cannot be done alone, and let's be clear about that today," said Elicker. "This wasn't just a victory. But we got bigger. We got over 70 percent of Democrats that voted today supporting this campaign. That is a huge, huge feat. We can only persevere if we do so together. And because we have worked not just today, but for the past four years together."

Walking into his election afterparty at BAR New Haven on Crown Street with his wife and daughters, Elicker enthusiastically waved and thanked people on his way to deliver his victory speech. The room of approximately 100 people included alders Kampton Singh, Eli Sabin, Ellen Cupo and Ron Hurt, as well as members of Local 34, New Haven Rising and other unions around the city. Elicker and

With over 70 percent of the primary votes, Elicker becomes the Democratic nominee for the November general election. / Mia Cortés Castro, Contributing Photographer

SEE ELICKER PAGE 5

Morrison wins re-election in Ward 22

BY KENISHA MAHAJAN
CONTRIBUTING REPORTER

Six-term incumbent Jeanette Morrison won Tuesday's Democratic primary election for Ward 22 alder, beating out challenger Anthony Geritano Jr. '20 with 82.7 percent of the vote.

The election yielded a decisive victory, even with dramatically lower voter turnout than in 2019 — the last cycle in which the mayoral nomination was concurrently contested in New Haven. Despite strong support for Morrison's work among New Haveners, voter turnout dropped nearly 40 percent in the ward.

In the 2019 primary election, 372 New Haveners cast ballots in Ward 22. This year, only 225 out of a total 841 eligible voters — including from undergraduates living in six of Yale's residential colleges — turned out for Tuesday's primary.

"The community says that they trust me. You know that those numbers mean trust," Morrison told the News.

Morrison, a 30-year Dixwell resident, emphasized the importance of her relationship with these constituents, which she said propelled her to win. Ward 22



SEE MORRISON PAGE 5

Six-term incumbent Alder Jeanette Morrison won re-election over Anthony Geritano '20 with 82.7 percent of the vote. / Laura Ospina, Contributing Photographer

How to get flu and COVID-19 vaccines

BY ALEXANDRA MARTINEZ-GARCIA
STAFF REPORTER

The start of the school year marks the beginning of vaccination season at Yale.

An updated version of the influenza vaccine is currently available to all Yale students, faculty and staff, while the updated iteration of the COVID-19 vaccine is set to be available on campus by October.

The new COVID-19 vaccines will be available nationwide later this week, following their approval by the Food and Drug Administration and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on Monday and Tuesday, respectively. The booster shots' arrival on campus coincides with an uptick in COVID-19 cases in the Yale and New Haven communities, which has raised concerns among Yale public health experts who spoke with the News.

How do this year's COVID-19 and flu vaccines work?

While last year's version of the COVID-19 mRNA vaccine was a bivalent booster that protected against two separate variants, the vaccination's latest update will be monovalent and focused on providing protection against the XBB.1.5 omicron variant alone.

According to Richard Martinello, medical director of infection prevention at Yale New Haven Hospital and Yale New Haven Health, XBB.1.5 is no longer the most common circulating variant. However, recent data has demonstrated that the updated vaccine still helps the body to generate an effective immune response against the Omicron variants that are circulating.

SEE VACCINES PAGE 4

Dining halls kick Coke, pick Pepsi

BY TRISTAN HERNANDEZ
STAFF REPORTER

No longer will Coca-Cola flow from dining-hall drink fountains. Instead, beginning this semester, students will find a new line of PepsiCo products in their residential college serveries.

The University switched its beverage deal from Coca-Cola to PepsiCo this year after operating on a three-year extended agreement with Coca-Cola from 2020 to 2023. The new contract brought swift changes to the University's beverage-dispensing infrastructure. By the start of September, large Pepsi-branded drink machines had begun replacing Coke machines in residential college dining halls.

Students have expressed mixed reactions to the change.

"Coke and Pepsi are completely different things," Norah Laughter '26 said.

"Anyone can distinguish between Starry and Sprite. I am actually really upset about it."

Brands included in Pepsi's current drink lineup include Starry, Bubly, Gatorade, Brisk Iced Tea and Tropicana Lemonade.

Eleven of the residential college dining halls have switched to Pepsi, while Grace Hopper, Jonathan Edwards and Berkeley colleges still have Coke products as of Tuesday night, per the News' investigation.

Gerry Remer, director of sourcing and procurement for Yale Hospitality, told the News that the University's beverage deal expired in 2020, and since then, the school has maintained an extended agreement with the company due to COVID-19 constraints.

Remer said that the University conducted an "extensive" review to select a new beverage.

SEE COKE-PEPSI PAGE 4

CROSS CAMPUS

THIS DAY IN YALE HISTORY, 1983. A firefighting class, sponsored by the Undergraduate War Council and given by the city fire department, is held at the fire department's drill tower. The class is open to all University students.

INSIDE THE NEWS

José García-León appointed dean of the School of Music
PAGE 9 ARTS



PAGE 3 OPINION
PAGE 6 SCITECH
PAGE 7 NEWS
PAGE 9 ARTS
PAGE 10 SPORTS

POLLUTION Yale researchers have uncovered that Black communities are especially vulnerable to harmful air pollutants.
PAGE 6 SCITECH
FOLK FESTIVAL Edgerton park in New Haven hosted the 30th annual folk festival.
PAGE 10 NEWS

BULLETIN

GRACE HOPPER COLLEGE TEA

VENTURE CAPITAL AND TECHNOLOGY STARTUP ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN SILICON VALLEY
with **ZACH CHERIAN**

A conversation on the significance of AI, the global impact of software, the evolution of venture capital, and themes in technology startup entrepreneurship

Zach Cherian is a technology investor who most recently worked at ICONIQ Growth, where he helped deploy investments into global software startups, with a particular focus on enterprise infrastructure and AI companies. Zach holds a BA in History from Dartmouth College.



TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 4 PM

Grace Hopper College House
189 Elm Street



SILHOUETTE E13: CARTER KING ON COSTUME DESIGN, INDIGENOUS OBJECTS, AND MUSEUMS.

Carter King '24 talks with Suraj Singareddy '25 about how he began designing costumes, working as an indigenous dress consultant on a TV series, and doing research in museum archives. Plus, his tips for dressing well! Produced by Suraj Singareddy '25. Music by Blue Dot Sessions.



CLARISSA TAN is a sophomore in Branford College.
Contact Tan at clarissa.tan@yale.edu.



ALICE MAO is a junior in Morse College.
Contact Mao at alice.mao@yale.edu.

A Brilliant Move

Avery Long

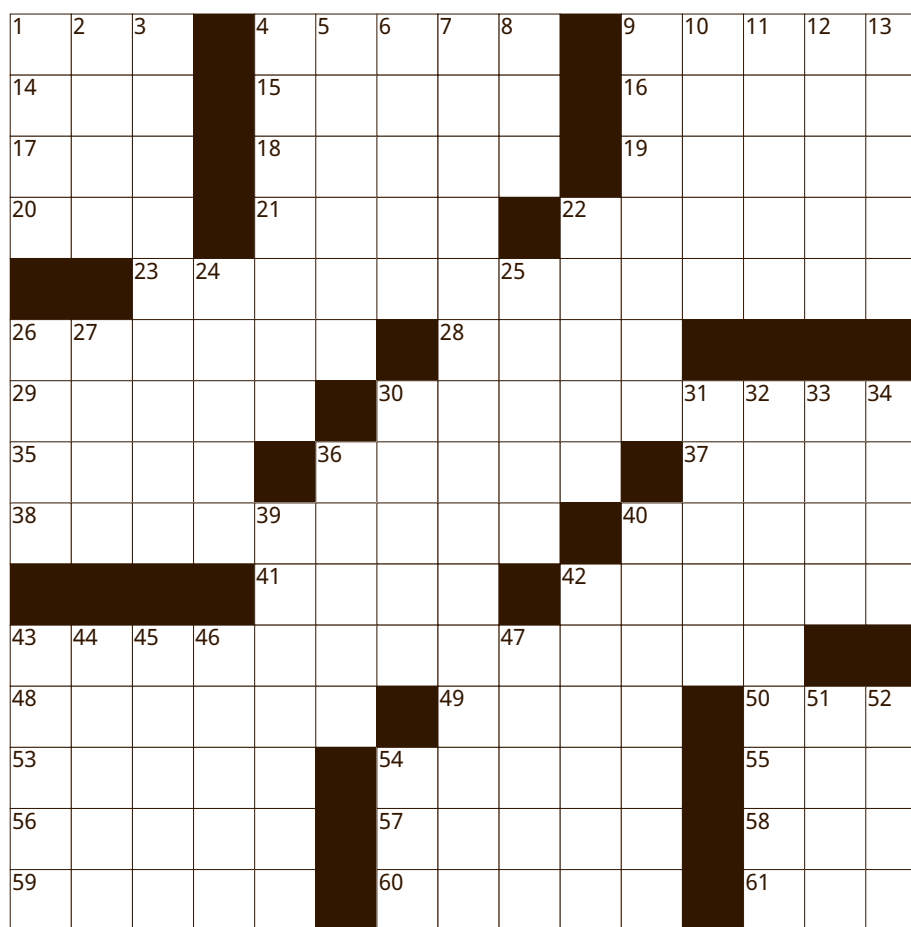
ACROSS

- 1 Network of Peaky Blinders, for one
- 4 To seize the diem
- 9 Motown singer Terrell
- 14 Don't get excited now
- 15 One repetition
- 16 Small Greek theatre
- 17 Frazier's rival
- 18 Expanses
- 19 To fix, as of a boot
- 20 Jean brand
- 21 This, to a Spaniard
- 22 Ethnic group found in New Orleans
- 23 When you come to one of these, take it
- 26 Capital of Kazhakstan
- 28 Between elementary and college aged
- 29 With Roebuck, a famous catalog
- 30 Distinctive feature of a Yankees uniform
- 35 A French friend
- 36 Watery defenses
- 37 What Watt is to power
- 38 They Might Be Giants name inspiration
- 40 Speaker Bercow's one word retort
- 41 Wight, e.g.
- 42 Painter Monet

- 43 The place over where we watched the sun set
- 48 Oliver Queen, e.g.
- 49 Height, abbr.
- 50 22.4 mol/L @ STP
- 53 Water powered scoop wheel
- 54 The original Yellow Ranger
- 55 Sixth sense technical term
- 56 One serenade
- 57 One more?
- 58 Sioux of Dance Moms fame
- 59 Projecting flat surface
- 60 Talking Heads lead singer
- 61 Sun-induced production of melanin

DOWN

- 1 Elijah slayed 450 of his prophets
- 2 Grizzly arms?
- 3 Powerful leader
- 4 Well known example in Carlsbad
- 5 One State?
- 6 Swiss sauteed potato dish
- 7 U got it?
- 8 Compositions that aren't quite the length of albums
- 9 A rapid influx, of water or data
- 10 One buck
- 11 Social movement that spread via hashtag



- 12 Dough
- 13 Phrase of a spoiled child
- 22 A beautiful game, and a clue to 23A, 30A, 38A, and 43A
- 24 Had a row
- 25 Past and present camping gear?
- 26 One tool
- 27 Of trucks and circles
- 30 Hermano of Breaking Bad
- 31 Sparsely populated
- 32 Gracious in response to requests
- 33 Of a piper from Hamelin
- 34 Raison d' _____
- 36 Hoarder
- 39 How a Prius might beat a Ferrari
- 40 Green neosilicate mineral
- 42 White wine grape also known as a Cugnette
- 43 Venetian passage
- 44 One perennial
- 45 Small cod or other whitefish
- 46 Goes with any and some, but not none
- 47 One dissembler
- 51 One continent?
- 52 Distance measured by a hand
- 54 Picked up at a bar?

FROM THE FRONT

"August rain: the best of the summer gone, and the new fall not yet born. The odd uneven time."

SYLVIA PLATH AMERICAN WRITER

Yale Dining halls kick Coke in soda machines, pick pepsi

COKE-PEPSI FROM PAGE 1

age service provider. In this process, Yale Hospitality collaborated with several University stakeholders, including central procurement and general counsel, which are the University's purchasing and legal offices, respectively.

"After three years, this multi-faceted process has concluded with our embarking on a journey with Pepsi," Remer wrote to the News. "Students now have access to some of the most popular bottled drinks they used to pay for in cafés, which they can now enjoy without additional spending."

Nationally, Coca-Cola products are more popular than Pepsi — in 2018, Coke held 17.8 percent of the beverage market share, while Pepsi held only 8.4 percent. According to a poll conducted by Mashed, out of 36,000 respondents worldwide, 64 percent of people said they preferred Coke to its globe-logoed competitor.

Yalies seem to hold similar views. According to a poll posted to the anonymous social media app Fizz on Sept. 9, 65 percent of respondents — which amounts to 1,054 Yale student voters out of a total 1,622 — supported Coca-Cola products over Pepsi, as of Sept. 13. Fourteen percent of respondents threw their weight behind Pepsi, while the remaining 21 percent chose the "Neither/results" option.

While some students, like Laughter, prefer the old Coke drinks to the current offerings, other Yalies expressed ambivalence about the shift to Pepsi.

Ashley Sottosanti '26 said that while she does not drink soda often, she does miss the Lip-ton tea machine in the Pierson College dining hall, which was removed when the new Pepsi machine arrived.

"I don't personally care that much, but I did once I found out about the iced-tea machine," Sottosanti said. "Now that's my main concern. It doesn't really affect my life that much, but I would say that this is sad."

PepsiCo was founded in 1965 and Coca-Cola in 1886.

Contact

TRISTAN HERNANDEZ at
tristan.hernandez@yale.edu



Yale Hospitality switches to PepsiCo products after finishing a three-year extended agreement with Coca-Cola./ Ellie Park, Photography Editor

How to get flu and COVID-19 vaccines at Yale

VACCINES FROM PAGE 1

"We have a very good understanding of the safety of these mRNA vaccines now," Martinello said in an interview with the News prior to the CDC's approval of the new COVID-19 vaccines. "So we're very comfortable anticipating [the vaccines] becoming available."

The vaccine protecting against the flu, on the other hand, is a quadrivalent vaccine, Martinello explained. It contains components that provide protection against four different types of the flu: the H1N1 and H3N2 strains of influenza A, and the Victoria and Yamagata strains of influenza B.

Additionally, unlike the mRNA-based COVID-19 vaccine, the flu vaccines are made up of a protein called hemagglutinin that is purified away from the four different strains of influenza the vaccine provides protection against.

"It's been well-known that this hemagglutinin protein is very immunogenic and can help, when vaccinated, to produce a protective response against the virus," Martinello said. "So when we get a shot of a flu vaccine, it's actually those proteins that are purified from the virus itself that help to immunize us and protect us."

Who should get the COVID and flu vaccines?

According to a University-wide email sent by Madeline Wilson, the chief campus health officer and chief quality officer at Yale Health, everyone over the age of six months should receive the flu vaccine.

The CDC also recommends that people in that same age range receive an updated COVID-19 vaccine, according to a news release published Tuesday.

Martinello highlighted addi-

tional versions of the flu vaccine that are specifically formulated for different age groups. A half-dose pediatric formulation is available for younger children, while a higher-dose formulation is recommended for individuals over the age of 65.

Depending on their position at Yale, certain individuals will be required to receive the flu vaccine, both Martinello and Wilson said. Yale health care workers and health care students are required to receive the updated flu vaccine by Dec. 1.

However, the University has not yet made a decision as to whether the new version of the COVID-19 vaccine will be mandated for all students, faculty and staff. The primary series and additional booster vaccines are currently required.

Martinello said the University expects to engage in "further discussions" regarding any changes to the mandate after hearing new guidance from the FDA and CDC.

"Even if we do not mandate the new vaccine, I would really strongly encourage everybody to get out and get vaccinated," Martinello said, "because we know how beneficial that vaccine is not only in protecting people against COVID, but for those who do get COVID."

Where and when can I get the COVID and flu vaccines?

Because this iteration of the COVID-19 booster vaccine has just received approval, Yale does not yet have it in stock, Wilson explained.

In an email to the News, Wilson said the University expects supplies by October, "if not sooner." She added that an email with information about vaccines is scheduled to arrive in students' inboxes later this week.

Students, faculty and staff can periodically check for updates on the availability of the vaccine through the

Yale Vaccine Program website and, once Yale receives a supply of the vaccine, will be able to make appointments to receive it. Wilson noted that the University made some of these appointments available for October, but that all the October appointments have already been booked.

While the COVID-19 vaccine will not be immediately available on campus, appointments to receive this year's flu vaccine are readily available. Students, faculty and staff can schedule their vaccinations at any one of a number of locations, including both adult and family flu clinics. An option to receive a flu shot at an already-scheduled appointment with Yale Health, unrelated to getting the vaccination, is available as well.

Why should I get vaccinated?

Martinello and Wilson strongly emphasized the importance of getting vaccinated against both COVID-19 and the flu.

In her University-wide email, Wilson cited the capacity of the flu vaccine to prevent infection or decrease the severity of illness if one contracts the virus. She also emphasized the vaccine's ability to provide protection to not just the recipient, but to everyone around the recipient as well.

"Vaccine reduces the risk of spreading infection to vulnerable members of your family and community, including infants, pregnant people, older individuals and those with weakened immune systems," Wilson wrote.

In a college campus setting, where students and staff may interact with dozens of people per day, Wilson said, such community protection is vital to allowing classes, extracurriculars and other activities to move forward without posing any danger to those involved.

Ned Swansey '25 agreed with Wilson's sentiment, citing stu-



Following the CDC's recent approval of updated COVID-19 vaccines, boosters should be available on campus by October./ Zoe Berg, Staff Photographer

dents' responsibility to not just their own health but to that of their peers and professors.

"As a large and relatively insular community, there's a lot of potential for illnesses to spread if people don't get vaccinated," Swansey wrote to the News. "I believe that as students, we have a responsibility to get vaccinated not just for our own health but also to protect other students, faculty and staff."

A risk for significant complications and a recent increase in the number of hospitalizations due to COVID-19-related illness also factors into the importance of getting vaccinated, according to Martinello.

As COVID-19 becomes endemic in a similar way to the flu, he explained, the public should take the lessons learned from the pandemic into their wider mindset towards preventing the transmission of

respiratory viruses.

"During the years of COVID, we've come to learn that the transmission of these respiratory viruses is in large part preventable through what we would call non-pharmaceutical interventions — so, doing things like keeping your distance, staying home when you're sick and wearing a mask," Martinello said. "And I think not only should we continue to apply those behaviors when we're concerned about COVID, but I think we should think more broadly about them to include other respiratory viruses, especially influenza."

The Campus COVID Resource Line is available at (203) 432-6604 from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Contact

ALEXANDRA MARTINEZ-GARCIA at
alexandra.martinez-garcia@yale.

Yale researchers identify racial disparities in clean air access



ERIC WANG/CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER

A team at the Yale School of Public Health and Yale School of Medicine has uncovered that Black communities are especially vulnerable to harmful air pollutants.

RICHARD GEORGE

CONTRIBUTING REPORTER

In a new study, Yale researchers have found persisting racial disparities in access to clean air, calling into question the effectiveness of decades of clean air policy.

Kai Chen, an epidemiology professor, and Yiqun Ma, a doctoral student at the Climate, Health, and Environment Nexus — or CHEN — lab, led a team of researchers at the Yale School of Public Health and Yale School of Medicine to investigate racial differences in exposure to fine particulate matter, also known as PM 2.5. In their study published in the journal *Nature*, Chen and his team found that Black people are exposed to fine particulate matter at higher rates than white people.

By analyzing cardiovascular mortality and particulate matter concentration across 3,103 U.S. counties from 2001 to 2016, the researchers discovered that in areas where white and Black com-

munities inhale the same number of pollutants, Black people are three times more likely to die from cardiovascular disease.

For Chen, their analysis suggests that existing U.S. clean air policies have not addressed long-standing inequities between Black and white Americans in access to safe, breathable air.

"We have seen a dramatic decrease in pollution due to the Clean Air Act, but does that reduction in air pollution bring the same benefits to each racial-ethnic group?" Chen asked. "If we continue the same clean air policies, it won't solve the relative racial disparity."

A major pollutant in the earth's atmosphere — "fine particulate matter" — includes particles of dust, soot and smoke that are 2.5 micrometers or smaller. When the particulate matter enters the bloodstream, it triggers systemic inflammation, disrupts cellular function and causes cardiovascular diseases, such as stroke. Chen

believes PM 2.5 is the main driver of poor air quality globally, with its victims totalling seven million people per year.

Ma argued that U.S. environmental air policies have decreased the concentration of particulate matter in the atmosphere. Still, Black communities in the United States face the greatest burden in pollution and environmental damage.

Emma Zang, a sociology and biostatistics professor at the YSM, noted that decades of U.S. policy and redlining have targeted Black communities by isolating them to nearby highways and major pollution sites. At the same time, policymakers pushed white communities to live in cleaner communities.

"Environmental racism is most widely understood as the disproportionate exposure of communities of color to environmental hazards," Ma said. "While other forms of racism may focus on issues such as discrimination in employment, education and housing, environ-

mental racism primarily concerns the discriminatory policies and practices in environmental policy and planning."

Chen and his team maintain that these downstream effects of "structural racism" are not genetic or behavioral, but rest squarely in racially discriminatory practices.

Harland Krumholz '80, a professor of medicine, told the *News* that particulate matter exposure "is varied by the color of your skin" and economic standing.

"It is emblematic of the fact that where you are and your social context can put you in a position that your exposures drive health risks in a way that is unfair," Krumholz said.

The racial divide in PM-attributed cardiovascular death is due to two factors: exposure and vulnerability. Exposure refers to the amount of particulate matter one inhales, but vulnerability describes the disproportionate impact of the same exposure on different populations.

In the same region, Black people experience more health effects from the same exposure to particulate matter than white people. Chen and his team believe that this is caused by preexisting conditions, community-level factors and social determinants of health, among other things.

"The distinction between exposure and vulnerability is very important," Robert Dubrow, an epidemiology professor at YSPH, wrote to the *News*. "These two factors combine to multiply the adverse effects of PM 2.5 exposure. Thus, Black people with the exact same exposure to PM 2.5 as non-Hispanic White people endure greater cardiovascular mortality due to vulnerability factors such as a higher prevalence of pre-existing medical conditions, ... poorer nutrition, less access to opportunities for physical activity, the mental stress of living in a racist society, and poorer access to healthcare."

Still, in the face of these challenges, the researchers believe that there are potential solutions.

They identify two primary routes: governmental regulations and targeted policies to address disparities in exposure and vulnerability for Black communities.

"We have to address racism at the structural level, both micro and macro," Zang said. "If we adopt an intersectional approach, it could provide us useful insights to help us accurately find the most vulnerable populations that need help."

Ultimately, the team encourages researchers to acknowledge that marginalized communities are not homogenous.

Zang emphasized that their recent insights on population health have only occurred through a collaboration of social scientists and epidemiologists that centers a social lens in inquiry.

"What we are trying to illuminate is the strong effects of social context and the targets to eliminate these disparities," Krumholz said. "We are not making progress. Over 20 years, 80 million years of lives were lost by the Black community due to increased mortality risk. We are no better off than we were 20 years ago, and these things demand action."

The CHEN lab is located at 60 College St.

Contact **RICHARD GEORGE** at richard.george@yale.edu.



ILLUSTRATION BY MIA ROSE KOHN

ARTS

“Life starts all over again when it gets crisp in the fall.”

F. SCOTT FITZGERALD, AMERICAN WRITER

Student author Coco Ma to release third book

BY KAMINI PURUSHOTHAMAN
CONTRIBUTING REPORTER

Coco Ma '25 MUS '21 is set to release her third young adult novel, “Nightbreaker,” later this month.

Balancing a Bichon Frise puppy who often rests in her handbag, Ma spoke with the News about how she balances school with her blossoming literary career. Launching at The Yale Bookstore on Sept. 23, the novel follows Rei Reynolds, a Chinese American teenager who attends an elite New York preparatory school and faces off against ferocious “deathlings.”

“Nightbreaker” is set to be Ma’s third published novel and her first published by Penguin Random House. The fantasy novel is the first in a duology, both of which are inspired by Manhattan, Ma said.

“[It is] an aged-up Percy Jackson with a New York-based mythology rather than a Greek one,” Ma said. “I moved to Manhattan when I was in grade 11 to do piano at the Juilliard School, and during that time, I was given a lot more independence and freedom by my parents. I went on a lot of misadventures, so that definitely inspired ‘Nightbreaker.’”

While Ma’s adventures were limited to the laws of the natural world, her protagonist fights “deathlings” — monsters that torment subway-riders in the city.

Ma told the News that she is drawn to the fantasy genre because of its escapist qualities and proximity to the real world.

“I think it’s really a boiling down of the struggles and griefs of everyday life,” Ma said. “Elevating them to a fantastical level kind of makes us put things in perspective and makes our own problems seem a little more manageable.”

A prospective cognitive science major, Ma has a busy schedule, but she noted that her professors have been very understanding. She cred-

ited her professor Derek Green and his class, “The Art and Craft of Television Drama,” with helping make her book a reality.

Ma said that Green spent at least an hour with her after almost every single class, flushing out the plot, letting her bounce off ideas and challenging her constantly. Ma said that the second half of her book would not have been possible if not for Green’s continued encouragement.

Green said the combination of Ma’s work ethic and her willingness to accept criticism truly made her story come alive.

“Coco’s really good at creating suspense on the page,” Green told the News. “She knows how to inhabit a place. The location of the book is kind of like its own character.”

Ma’s process has evolved over the years. She started writing in middle school when she was inspired by a classmate who crafted fanfiction about fellow students. Ma joked that her peer’s popularity sparked a competitive desire to become her rival.

A few years later, Ma wrote her first book, “Shadow Frost,” after receiving a short-story prompt in her tenth-grade English class. The story centered on a princess fighting demons, which she continued working on beyond the class assignment.

“It kept growing longer and longer,” Ma said. “It was like 50,000 words, and I was like, hold on a second, this isn’t a short story anymore. So I decided to turn it into a book and keep going at it.”

That book became part of a trilogy, of which the first two books have been published. Since partnering with Penguin Random House, Ma has adopted a more stringent writing process and now tries to write at least 1,000 words a day.

The major publishing house has alleviated many of the stresses that come with independent publishing, Ma said. She

added that Penguin has helped her find the perfect voice actor to portray her cynical protagonist in an audiobook in addition to managing publishing and promotion for the novel.

Ma said that the producer Penguin assigned to the audiobook was “understanding” when Ma expressed her request that the protagonist’s audio actor be Chinese due to the inclusion of Mandarin words in the novel. Carolyn Kang, a New Yorker and Asian American actress and advocate, was someone Ma felt embodied her protagonist the best.

Before publishing, beta readers — literature-enthusiasts Ma has connected with throughout her career — read over the story. Later in the process, sensitivity readers also scoured the pages, ensuring the contextual information was factual. Ma lauded her agent, Holly Root, for the publishing arrangement, calling her “a literal superhero.”

“A duology felt like a comfortable balance for me,” Ma said. “As a writer, I never want to drag the story on to milk it.”

In the unfinished sequel, the “stakes” are higher, as the protagonists’ belief system from the first book were “irrevocably shattered,” Ma added.

Beta reader Sophie Licostie '23 SPH '24 said she felt “Nightbreaker” was refreshingly distinct, highlighting the unique way Ma portrayed a dystopian Manhattan.

Ma reached out to Licostie, who was adopted, to gain insight about portraying adopted characters authentically.

“I had a couple of suggestions that were pulled from my personal experience,” Licostie said. “She was more than happy to integrate them and also make them her own.”

Both Licostie and Green



COURTESY OF COCO MA

In two weeks, the latest young adult novel from Coco Ma '25 MUS '21 — the first text in a new duology — is set to be published with a release party at the Yale Bookstore.

praised Ma’s ability to connect her story to broader societal themes.

Green said he felt the story “captured the anxiety and isolation of the pandemic,” during which Ma first wrote the bulk of the novel.

Additionally, Licostie thought Ma’s incorporation of her protagonist’s cultural background “actually fit with the story.”

“That’s what good writing does,” Green said. “It tells its own story but it also relates to something bigger in the culture, and I think Coco’s firing on all those cylinders.”

Ma’s book is currently available for preorder, with an official release date of Sept. 19.

Contact **KAMINI PURUSHOTHAMAN** at kamini.purushothaman@yale.edu.

José García-León appointed dean of the School of Music



COURTESY OF YALE SCHOOL OF MUSIC

The School of Music welcomed José García-León as the new dean of the School of Music, marking the end of Robert Blocker’s nearly three-decade tenure as the Henry L. and Lucy G. Moses Dean.

BY TOBIAS LIU
STAFF REPORTER

José García-León officially assumed his new role as the dean of the School of Music on Sept. 1.

García-León served as The Juilliard School’s dean of academic affairs and assessment for nine years. He succeeds Robert Blocker, who had a 28-year tenure at the School of Music.

“The school is in a wonderful place right now,” García-León said. “I arrive with a sense of awe and admiration. My goal is to honor the school’s great history and reputation while finding ways to invigorate the general training and establish new paths towards the future.”

Born in Seville, Spain, García-León graduated from the Conservatorio Superior de Música de Sevilla with highest honors before earning his bachelor’s degree in music from the State University of New York at Binghamton and his doctorate in piano performance from the Manhattan School of Music.

Prior to his time at Juilliard, García-León was associate dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of New Haven.

His decision to switch from a professorship to an administrative role was “sparked” by his goal of helping students and faculty in a “more substantial way” by working within the administration.

Emily Bakemeier, vice provost for arts and faculty affairs at Yale, chaired the University’s search committee. The search process, which she described as “very rigorous,” combined efforts from two groups: Bakemeier’s Yale search committee, composed of faculty from the School of Music and other related areas of the University, and Isaacson, Miller — an external search firm that includes professionals who specialize in the arts.

The Yale search committee first engaged in “stakeholder conversations” with School of Music faculty, staff, students and alumni before writing a position description. Then, after they received applications, the

committee interviewed applicants and nominees, narrowing down the field to a few candidates before sending the names to University President Peter Salovey for the final decision.

“The Yale School of Music is the premier school of music in the world, so we were looking for the best in the world,” Bakemeier said. “We wanted someone who is a leader in the arts, and, for the music school in particular, a musician himself, who understands a complex, educational institution and its workings and has the highest standards of excellence for a school of music.”

Alec Chai MUS '24, a student involved in the search committee’s stakeholder conversations, cited the School of Music’s renowned faculty and the full scholarships and stipends that it provides its students as “an incredible gift” from Blocker’s tenure.

But there are “opportunities for growth” that Chai hopes García-León will address during his deanship.

“I’ve heard students express a desire for expansion in certain programs, such as performance of baroque, contemporary and jazz music,” Chai said. “Many of us performers also wish there were more opportunities for individual and chamber music performances.”

García-León’s scholarly research focuses on the similarities and differences between Argentine tango and tango flamenco, the roots of multiculturalism in flamenco music and music composition. As dean, he hopes to balance “well-versed tradition” with “new expertise in the latest trends in the field.”

He said that this balance is even more important today, noting that the “pace and range of change” of transformation in the world of classical music has “increased greatly” over the last several years.

“We are in the midst of a time of renewal in the profession, both in the ways music is shared with audiences, be it recorded or live, and in terms of which music should be prioritized and showcased in performances,” García-León said. “The curriculum needs to be as current and relevant to the profession as we can possibly make it.”

García-León is in “complete agreement” with Chai’s hopes for additional performance opportunities and expanded programs in baroque, contemporary and jazz.

He looks forward to having many conversations with current students and alumni like Chai “to incorporate their feedback and suggestions in [his] planning.”

“Musicians can only benefit from having the choice to expand their training to include a variety of styles and traditions,” he said. “Not only will it help them be more versatile as performers, but I firmly believe it will also help them understand more deeply their own craft in classical music.”

He also hopes to develop more performance opportunities for students. To this end, he wants to “create and nurture” a sense of community beyond the school, a quality that he believes is tied closely to “welcoming and engaging” student events and performances.

For García-León, collaboration and openness are integral to expansion in more non-traditional programs. García-León said that collaboration is key to “where music is heading.” He hopes to connect the School of Music with other areas of the University and beyond.

“We need to start with enhancing collaboration from what is closest to us, within the [School of Music], but also — and very importantly — with other areas of the university,” García-León said. “So that, as it develops, it can expand to the New Haven area and beyond. I hope students will relish the opportunity to create community wherever they are, starting at the [School of Music] and Yale, and later on, wherever they go.”

García-León has performed as a solo piano recitalist at prestigious venues around the world, including the Big Hall at the Tchaikovsky Conservatory, the Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall and the St. Petersburg International Music Festival. He is a member of the Northeast Chapter of the College Music Society and the Music Teachers National Association.

“It is an honor and a privilege to serve [the students and faculty at the School of Music] in every way I can,” García-León said.

The School of Music offers three graduate degrees: master’s degrees in music and musical arts, and a doctoral degree in musical arts.

Contact **TOBIAS LIU** at tobias.liu@yale.edu.

SPORTS

FOR MORE SPORTS CONTENT,
VISIT OUR WEB SITE
yaledailynews.com
Twitter: @YDNSports



YALE DAILY NEWS · FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2023 · yaledailynews.com

“My vision [for the team] is this pyramid of who we are and everything we do. At the top it says ‘150 being an elite team,’ and that’s the goal we’re working towards,”

WANDE OWENS '24 YALE FOOTBALL CAPTAIN AND DEFENSIVE BACK

M GOLF: Bulldogs begin new era with a victory

BY TOMMY GANNON
CONTRIBUTING REPORTER

In their opening tournament of the 2023-2024 season, the Yale men’s golf team dominated en route to a first-place finish at the Alex Lagowitz Memorial Invitational.

Blake Brantley '25 and Will Lodge '26 shared co-champion honors, helping lead Yale to victory under new head coach Keith Tyburski. After finishing as runner-up at the event last year, the Bulldogs were looking for more.

“I think we all came into this season with a real hunger for victory,” Lodge said. “Last year, despite playing some really solid golf on numerous occasions, we weren’t able to seal the deal on

a win. Having not won last year we all really wanted to get out to a hot start and remind ourselves and others that winning is what the YGT does.”

The win was especially sweet for Lodge, who, despite an impressive freshman campaign with multiple top-five finishes, had not yet secured his first win as a Bulldog. For Lodge and the rest of the team, last season’s results were top of mind going into the start of the new year.

By the time the competition had wrapped up at the Seven Oaks Golf Club on Sept. 3, the Blue and White had posted a 54-hole total of 853, good for 11 under par and

SEE M GOLF PAGE 11



YALE ATHLETICS
The Yale golf team started the new season with both team and individual wins at the Alex Lagowitz Memorial Invitational.

M SOCCER: Bulldog's rollercoaster first win



YALE ATHLETICS

The Yale men’s soccer team beat intrastate rival UConn at home before losing to Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas in the closing minutes later in the week.

BY JOAQUÍN FERNÁNDEZ-DUQUE
STAFF REPORTER

With the shot clock winding down on The Yale men’s soccer team had an eventful weekend.

On Friday, the Bulldogs defeated the University of Connecticut Huskies with a final score of 2-1. It was a contest full of goal-scoring chances for both teams, and it proved captivating enough to keep the crowd’s attention through nearly two hours of rain delays.

The game was originally set to start at 7 p.m., but inclement weather pushed kickoff to 7:35 p.m., with neither team aware that there would be further delays.

“It’s easy to get distracted when your pregame routine is thrown off,” Yale goalkeeper Chris Edwards '24 said. “We had to stay extra focused.”

Despite the delay, the teams were sharp from the first whistle,

and both goalies were put to the test within the first ten minutes of play. Edwards made the night’s first save in the sixth minute, which UConn’s Jayden Hibbert matched with a double save in the eighth minute. Edwards continued his stellar start with an impressive kick save in the 29th minute, preventing a counterattack goal and keeping the game scoreless.

At roughly 8:25 p.m., with seven minutes left to play in the first half, fans and players alike went from confused to disappointed as the game was delayed once more due to lightning. Attendants at Reese Stadium waited patiently as the announced recommencing time changed from 8:50 to 9:15 to 9:30 p.m.

“The delay in the middle of the game slowed everything down and took some energy from the game,” Edwards said. “But it also gave us almost an hour to make

adjustments and discuss the things that were working and the things that weren’t.”

After the delay, the teams finished the first half scoreless. The second half would prove to be a different story. Just five minutes into the second half, a cross from Max Rogers '24 found its way toward the back post where Quanah Brayboy '25 played a one-touch pass to Yale striker Eric Lagos '24. Lagos converted the chance and gave the Bulldogs their first goal of the season.

Just two minutes later, Yale took advantage of this momentum and quickly doubled its lead. After Joseph Farouz '27 won the ball near half field and found Kai Moos '24 on the right wing, Moos crossed the ball into the box. Lagos, in true #9 fashion, buried a header into the UConn net to complete his brace and put Yale up 2-0 in the 52nd minute of the game.

SEE M SOCCER PAGE 11

W VOLLEYBALL: Bulldogs excel at home invitational



YALE ATHLETICS

Volleyball extends win streak to four at home invitational

BY MEREDITH HENDERSON
CONTRIBUTING REPORTER

The Yale women’s volleyball team (4-2, 0-0 Ivy) emerged as the dominant team in their home opener, the Yale Invitational, at the John J. Lee Amphitheater inside the Payne Whitney Gymnasium last weekend.

Coming off their inaugural tournament at West Point the previous weekend, with losses to High Point (6-3, 0-0 Big South) and Liberty University (7-2, 0-0 ASUN), the Bulldogs looked to improve their record with games against Sacred Heart (1-7, 0-0 NEC), the University of Rhode Island (1-9, 0-0 A10) and the University of Connecticut (4-5, 0-0 Big East).

Head Coach Erin Appleman told the News the team returned for their home opener after hard weeks of practice.

“They’ve been working really hard in practice for about two weeks, so I think that’s been really good — the practices have been really intense and they’re all getting better, which is what you hope for as a coach,” she said.

Yale began their homestand against Sacred Heart, the Northeastern Conference preseason favorite, with a timid win during the first set of 25-20. The Pioneers battled back against the Bulldogs to win a close second set 27-25, but Yale quickly took care of business in the next two sets, 25-17 and 26-24.

SEE W VOLLEYBALL PAGE 11

XC: Big Bulldog win amid Big Three

BY PETER WILLIAMS
STAFF REPORTER

This weekend, the Yale men’s squash team (10-3, 3-3 Ivy) competed in the College Squash Association Team Championship to close out their team season.

The men competed at Trinity College’s George A. Kellner Squash Courts in Hartford, Connecticut. The Bulldogs entered the tournament as the No. 4 seed and finished third in this year’s Potter Cup with wins over the University of Virginia (13-4, 0-0 MASC) and the University of Pennsylvania (16-3, 5-1 Ivy).

“The past weekend proved that we are one of the best teams in

the country,” assistant coach Tate Miller wrote to the News. “The squash that the men played was absolutely brilliant and all of them should be proud of the teamwork and passion that they displayed, and we will be going into the off-season with plenty of confidence for next season.”

The Bulldogs played the Cavaliers back in November to start Yale’s 2022-2023 regular season, beating UVA with the same score of 6-3.

On Saturday, the Bulldogs played in the semifinals against the undefeated No. 1 Harvard University team (16-0, 6-0 Ivy). The Blue and White fell to the Crim-

son 6-3. There were many close matches against the Crimson, with Brian Leonard '24 and Maxwell Orr '25 both losing their matches with a tight scoreline of 2-3.

On Sunday, the Bulldogs competed in the 3/4 playoffs against the University of Pennsylvania and played their last matches of the tournament. The men had a hard fight and rallied to beat the Quakers 5-4, which placed them third in the tournament.

“The team showed incredible grit and resilience on Sunday in the 3/4 playoff after losing to Harvard in a heartbreaking semi-

SEE CROSS COUNTRY PAGE 11



YALE ATHLETICS

This weekend, the Ivy League’s Big Three — Yale, Harvard and Princeton — faced off in Connecticut in the first meet of the year, with several notable team and individual finishes from the Bulldogs.

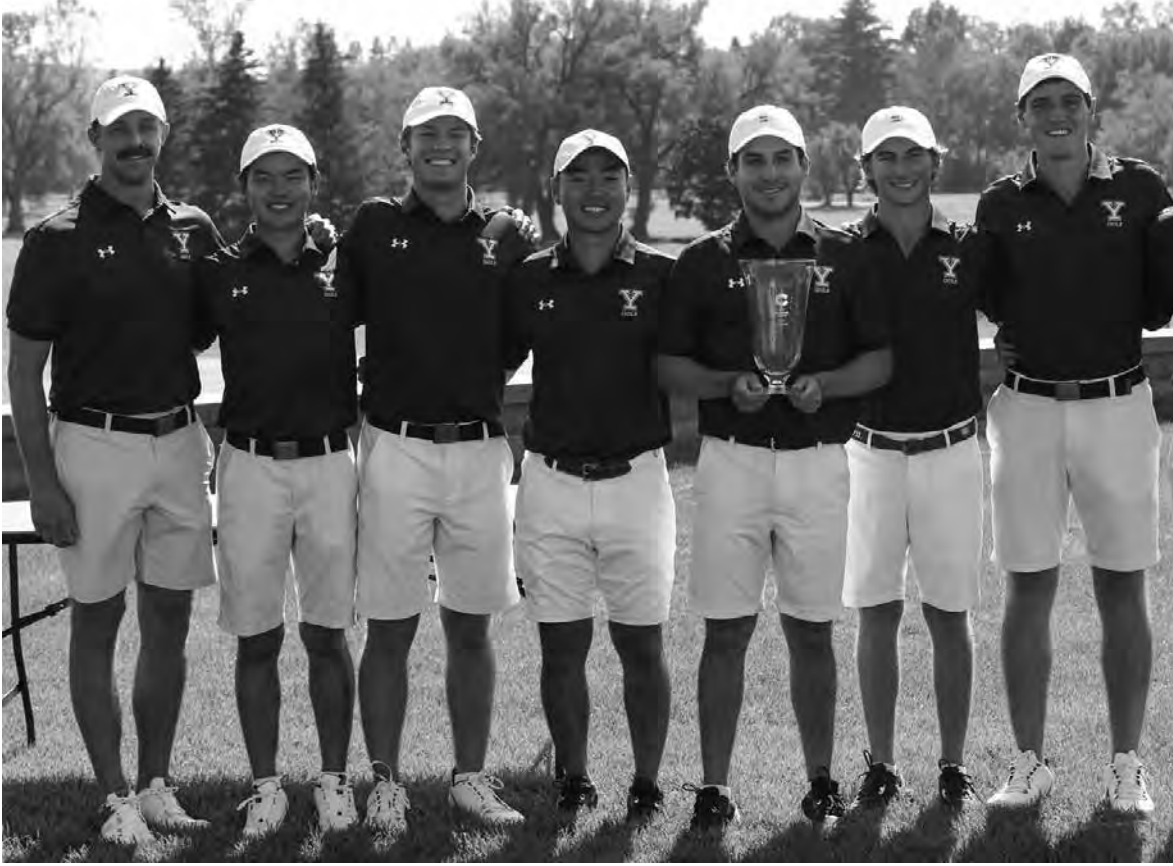
STAT OF THE WEEK

7

THE NUMBER OF TOP-TEN FINISHERS FOR THE BULLDOGS IN THE MEN’S 6K AT THE HYP CROSS COUNTRY MEET, INCLUDING FIRST-PLACE FINISHER OWEN KARAS '26

SPORTS

New golf coach starts season strong



YALE ATHLETICS

The Bulldogs will travel to Westchester, Illinois, to face off in the Highlight Invitational on Monday, Sept. 18.

M GOLF FROM PAGE 10

17 shots better than the second-place opponent. “Especially coming off the disappointment with the way that last year ended, there is no lack of motivation to get the year off to a great start,” Brantley wrote to the News. “From the first-years, to the returners, everyone has been working extremely hard to be the best we can.”

The Bulldogs’ competitive drive, along with the winning experience provided by Tyburski, the new head coach, is already paying dividends. When long-time Yale men’s golf coach Colin Sheehan ’97 stepped down at the end of the 2023 season, the Yale Athletic Department faced a tall task in replacing a coach who had brought so much success to

the program. However, Tyburski seems well up to the task. During his 14 years leading Colgate’s program, he became the winningest coach in program history, and he earned Patriot League Coach of the Year in 2022. Similar to Sheehan, Tyburski has a long track record of success. “The coaching transition from Colin to Keith has gone very well,” Lodge told the News. “We are very fortunate to have Keith as our new coach as he has made the transition fairly seamless and we are all excited for our future with him as our coach. What has brought us success through this coaching change has been Colin and Keith’s shared desire to win and their shared love for the game of golf.”

As the team shifts focus to their

upcoming competitions, Tyburski has emphasized the importance of knowing when to stay patient and when to be aggressive over the course of a weekend tournament. He has also stressed the need to manage expectations so early on in the season. However, the team’s win at Seven Oaks was extra special to him. “Seven Oaks was where I learned to play golf and has been the site of many memorable moments in my career,” said Tyburski. “Being able to start my tenure at Yale with a win at a place with such personal significance means everything to me.”

For their next competition, the Bulldogs will travel to Westchester, Illinois, to face off in the Highlight Invitational on Monday, Sept. 18.

Mens Soccer sees last minute goals

M SOCCER FROM PAGE 10

“The rain delay personally helped me get back on the field in the second half,” Lagos said. “I went down injured in the first half and the extra time allowed me to recover before the start of the second half.”

While the mid-game delay may have proved beneficial to the Bulldogs, the game was far from over. With the spotlight now on the team’s defense to secure the game, one of Yale’s supposed strong suits lived up to the challenge. Edwards proved crucial once again with an extraordinary save in the 70th minute. The Huskies managed to get on the scoreboard with less than two minutes to go in the game thanks to a header by Lucas Almeida. However, it proved to be too little too late, and Yale was victorious.

Thanks to a combined defensive and offensive effort, along with some standout players, Yale secured its second win against UConn since 2003. The 2-1 victory also marked the first of the 2023 season for the Bulldogs.

“It’s hard to describe how amazing it feels to celebrate in the corner with your teammates,” Lagos said. “I was relieved when the final whistle blew considering all the saves Chris had to make.”

After a drawn out and tiring game against UConn, the team had to quickly shift its focus to Monday’s game against Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas.

While traveling does provide some added difficulties, Coach Kylie Stannard said it was nothing out of the ordinary. “We are used to quick turn-arounds in college soccer, especially early in the season when we have the bulk of our non-conference games,” Stannard said. “Adding a flight to this turnaround is an extra challenge but all of the guys we have in the team have made trips like this in the past while at Yale or within their youth club environments.”

Stannard also said there are some advantages to being the away team on a weekday, as the team is able to rest more than normal and focus on physical, mental and tactical preparation. Stannard told the News that it can help them be even more focused at times.

Edwards also commented on the travel, adding that it is interesting to play teams from different regions in order to see varying styles of play and field surfaces. He also shared that the travel can be great for team chemistry. “You are with all of your teammates the entire time,” Edwards said. “Eating, playing games, walking around or just hanging.”

The game against SMU featured heartbreaking moments for Yale at both beginning and end. In the third minute of the game, Rogers took a freekick that hit the post, and the resulting rebound was put into the goal. Unfortunately, the goal was rescinded due to an offside call. From then on, it was a tight contest that saw Edwards’ saves keep the score locked at 0-0.

The closing minutes of the game brought tragedy for Yale, as an 86th-minute goal by SMU’s Fredrik Skilberg proved to be decisive. Despite a strong effort and a disallowed goal, Yale lost the game 1-0.

“We definitely feel we deserved more from the game with a very strong performance,” Stannard said. “Even if that was coming away with a clean sheet and a draw against such a strong opponent on the road ... We are strong defensively but we also need to make sure we learn even more what it takes to finish a game for the full 90 minutes and earn shutouts. If we do that, we can accomplish great things.”

The Bulldogs’ next two games will be back at home: first against the University of California, Irvine, on Saturday, Sept. 16, and then against Colgate on Tuesday, Sept. 19.

Contact **JOAQUÍN FERNÁNDEZ-DUQUE** at joaquin.fernandez-duque@yale.edu.

Eli extends win streak at home invitational

W VOLLEYBALL FROM PAGE 10

Isabella Mendoza ’26 landed 12 kills, just behind the season-high 14 kills of Betsy Goodenow ’27. Halle Sherlock ’26 came up with two digs in the fourth set to lead the team to victory.

The Bulldogs made quick work of Rhode Island, winning their first match on Saturday 3-0. The Rams found their swings halted by Gigi Barr’s ’25 six blocks. Meanwhile, the University of Rhode Island team’s defensive efforts did not faze Goodenow, who again led the team with 10 kills. This marked her third game with at least 10 kills, a fiery start for the first year.

In both matches against Sacred Heart and Rhode Island, the Yale volleyball team posted hitting averages above .300.

Mendoza said the key to hitting well is confidence and preparation; she also noted the importance of a short-term memory. “The team does a great job of resetting and taking it one point at a time,” she said. “Teams going on runs are a part of the game, but we focus on controlling what we can on our side of the net.”

The weekend ended with the feature match against the University of Connecticut as Yale looked to even their all-time record at 2-2. The match began with a tense win for UConn, 25-20. Mya Ayro led the Huskies with 16 kills. However, the Bulldogs rallied back shortly, taking the second game 25-23. In an all-Connecticut battle, emotions ran high and fans held their breath.

Finally, with the 13 kills from Barr, the Blue and White put an end to the Huskies, taking sets three and four 25-23 and 25-19, respectively. Diehl reached her 2,000th assist milestone to help keep Handsome Dan the supreme Connecticut dog.

The homestand was a chance to show the dominance of the Bulldogs’ roster, which does not end with just the players on the court. In all three games, Head Coach Erin Appleman substituted new players, each one contributing just as much to the game as the player before her.

The Rhode Island game saw first year Jaidynn Perkins-Martin ’27 get her first career rally. “Stepping into the jersey for the first time was a surreal experience, especially for the first home game,” Perkins-Martin

said. “Seeing the lights dim is a crazy experience and a dream come true to finally be able to put the jersey on.”

She said she has also seen herself improve through the mentorship of the other players, the coaching staff and the team’s captain, Maile Somera ’24.

Somera has been instrumental in the team’s success, posting 27 digs and nine assists this season alone. “Maile has done a great job leading the team and she does a great job keeping everyone motivated. She’s a great leader on and off the court,” Perkins-Martin said to the News. “Playing with such amazing players from all over the country has definitely helped me get better and grow as a player. Our amazing coaching staff has also helped with all the feedback they give at practices.”

The Bulldogs look to extend their four-game win streak in Chicago next weekend, facing the Northwestern Wildcats (5-3, 0-0 B10) and the Loyola-Chicago Ramblers (2-6, 0-0 A10).

Contact **MEREDITH HENDERSON** at meredith.henderson@yale.edu.



YALE ATHLETICS

The Bulldogs look to extend their four-game win streak in Chicago next weekend.

Yalies recover after semi-final loss

CROSS COUNTRY FROM PAGE 10

final,” Nikhil Ismail ’24 wrote to the News. “We were able to bounce back from that loss and take down a team that we hadn’t beaten in 7 years in what was a true team effort. Everyone from positions 1-14 contributed to our success this season on and off the court and I think this weekend proved that.”

Ismail was last on for the Bulldogs in a game-deciding match, with the Bulldogs and the Quakers tied 4-4. He battled to beat his opponent 3-2, turning the victory over to the Bulldogs. Merritt Wurts ’25 played an important role for the Bulldogs by also winning with a close match of 3-2.

This was an exciting win for the Blue and White, as the men broke their 10-match losing streak against the Quakers.

“We proved to ourselves that we belong up there with the best teams in the country,” team captain Eric Kim ’23 wrote to the News. “It’s been a privilege to captain this group of guys this year. They made my job easy and although we didn’t reach our goal of winning a national championship, I’d rather lose with this team than win with another.”

Kim is the only graduating senior seeded in the top nine.

Looking ahead, some of the Bulldogs will compete in the CSA Individual and Doubles Championships at the Arlen Specter US Squash Center in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, during the weekend of March 1.

Contact **PETER WILLIAMS** at peter.williams@yale.edu.



YALE ATHLETICS

The Bulldogs race next at the Codfish Bowl Invitational in Boston, Mass., on Saturday, Sept. 23.

WEEKEND

A P E A C E F U L P L A C E

// BY HAILEY TALBERT

Morning light filtered through the high arched window, warming the soft pillows and framing the floor. I brushed knees with the person sitting beside me, as more students filed into the small space. Though the room was full, it maintained a certain air of immensity, attributed to peaceful silence punctuated by the occasional murmur. I focused my attention on the details of Harkness Chapel: behind me, Copernicus holding his conception of the universe in his palm on a panel of the large, stained glass window. At my side, an intricately carved wooden panel depicting the planting of trees at Hillhouse. In the center of the room stood a Buddha poised at the top of an altar, surrounded by candles and flowers. Soon, illuminated only by shards of light cast by the stained glass window, we settled in silence together, breathing collectively, and the meditation began.

My first experience with meditation in the Buddhist Shrine room was during Bulldog Days, Yale's three day, two night program for admitted students. In a flurry of new faces, speaker events, and model lectures, Bulldog Days was an exhilarating and occasionally exhausting experience for myself and many others. In fact, the night before attending meditation, I had been awake until three in the morning, excitedly chatting with the first-year students who were hosting me. After hours of conversation about classes, clubs, and school culture, I passed out mid-conversation, slumped upright against the wall.

Thus, the next morning, I needed some time to recuperate before repeating another day of seemingly endless events. Attending the Buddhist Meditation being hosted that morning turned out to be a wonderful choice, as it allowed me to center myself for the day and find another welcoming community at Yale.

Meditation also allowed me to notice the beauty of the place I was fortunate to be experiencing. During other Bulldog Days events, there was no time to trace each carving in the wall with my gaze or identify the images etched in window panes. Meditation gave me the opportunity to take time to appreciate being a first-year at Yale and set intentions for navigating a new, exciting, and at times, intimidating place.

During the meditation, I focused intently on my breath, the sensations of my feet on the ground, and the scent of incense offerings wafting through the chapel. When the meditation ended, it felt rather strange to leave such a peaceful, welcoming space to the bustle of campus again: a reminder of Yale's host of calm spaces to retreat from the rapid pace of academics, activities, and social commitments.

The Buddhist Shrine Room, located in the Harkness Chapel in Branford College, is open during the semester from Sunday to Thursday from 4-10 PM for quiet meditation, reflection, and prayer. The Yale Buddhist Community also offers meditation and learning every Sunday and Wednesday from 7-8PM for undergraduate and graduate students as well as chanting offered on Mondays at 7PM.

Contact HAILEY TALBERT at hailey.talbert@yale.edu.

D I N I N G H A L L C O N C O C T I O N S

// BY SOLENNE JACKSON

I can often be seen lingering by the Berkeley salad station, sprinkling my plate with freshly ground pepper. To be real, my dinner plate looks like a culinary experience on most nights, so much so that I have had people approach me and ask, "How did you do that?"

The formidable Yale Dining plates (designed for football athletes, I'm sure) have no bounds. Once filled, they look about as colorful and coordinated as an ever-growing online shopping cart. One of the ways to appreciate the Yale dining hall is to see the variety of experience; to be grateful for the varied mouths and diets it can feed. Many students who have adopted vegetarianism (or have retired, following the anemia warning) form volcanic salads erupting in a grilled carrot turnip medley, oozing red pepper hummus lava and shards of pita chip. Others, though, are more simple: my friend Hannah's plate has merely token vegetables, and features instead a few slices of cheese pizza topped with a half-eaten cupcake.

It is in these moments that Hannah stares perplexed at my Michelin-star plate with a mixture of second-hand embarrassment and envy. I simply continue to drizzle Balsamic glaze.

I am Yale Dining's biggest fan. I wake up every morning to a life lesson from Annette, perfectly soft-boiled eggs, and a mezze bar that looks like a game of Tetris. What more could a girl want? Nothing, except, perhaps the all-natural peanut butter jar I carry around in my backpack every day. (No, seriously). So let me tell you how to make Yale's dining halls the best underrated dining experience in New Haven.

First, take advantage of the little things: sliced almonds or walnuts, the pickled pink onions and banana peppers, figs in the brussels sprouts salad, and obviously, fresh-ground black pepper. I dust a little table salt onto the rocky road brownies and - , brace yourself - , to the cantaloupe. I also, now this is basic, slice the apple (it's difficult but doable with the dining hall knives) before I dip it into peanut butter to avoid this look.

Second, politely ask the grill staff to add sautéed onions to your burger. Game changer.

Third, take advantage of your flexibility in the mornings. On occasion, I purchase fresh berries to top my overnight oats, acknowledging the risk they go moldy in our MicroFridge. (Orange gunk has pooled in the bottom drawer of said fridge, having escaped from a carrot and ginger juice that doesn't belong to anyone in my suite.)

Finally, plating. Don't underestimate the bowl -- it transports you to sweetgreen, I promise. I pair items carefully and take care to avoid the serving spoon drippings. We're lucky to have the ability to choose from multiple cuisines simultaneously -- particularly those in Morse and Stiles -- but that doesn't mean mussels need to sit on the saffron chickpea stew with tzatziki.

Honestly, a good dining hall experience comes down to having no shame in keeping a little paprika or Italian herbs seasoning shaker in one's backpack and leaning into the absurd amount of olive oil we consume.

And, remembering that Yale Dining is truly remarkable food for a college campus.

Contact SOLENNE JACKSON at solenne.jackson@yale.edu.

MY VERY OWN TAOS TALKING PICTURE FESTIVAL

// BY IDONE RHOADS

On the second floor of the Harwood Museum of Art in Taos, New Mexico, I first saw “Taos Drive-In Theater,” a watercolor print by Ken Price, one of a slew of contemporary artists who moved from Los Angeles to Taos in the 1970s. In the background is a familiar Taos desert evening — a sky teeming with dark blues and hazy pinks, mountains glowing red in the distance, a field of dry shrubs that look like tiny fires. There are no people in the image, only rows of nearly identical cartoon cars, all oriented towards a large movie screen on which a bare-shouldered woman poses seductively. The more I looked at the print, the more I felt certain that one of the shrub-shaped fires was going to send the whole drive-in up in flames. The image unnerved me, and I became set on having my own copy of the piece, but I couldn’t find any online for less than several hundred dollars.

Taos is a small town in northern New Mexico sandwiched by the Sangre de Cristo Mountains on one side and the Rio Grande on the other. Everything there is desert brush and cracked earth and oceans of ponderosa pine dotted with short adobe houses. If you drive 15 minutes out of town, you’ll likely lose cell signal. If you don’t look back, it’s easy to pretend that there was never a town at all.

Taos has long been known as an artists’ colony, attracting well-known names like Ansel Adams, D. H. Lawrence, and Georgia O’Keeffe. Artists still flock there today to tap into an energy, the Taos Hum as some call it, that is said to animate the Taos airwaves. I, however, was not in Taos this summer for the Hum. I was there to live and work for eight weeks, and I was alone.

The first time I went to the movies in Taos, it was a Friday night. I was going to see “The Little Mermaid” — not because it was a movie I had any particular desire to see, but rather because I desperately needed something to do, and it was probably the most interesting thing playing at the time. This decision came at the heels of almost two weeks of constant solitude during which my human contact started and ended with my work day.

As I pulled into the parking lot of Storyteller Cinema 7 at around 7 p.m., 20 minutes in advance of the film’s start time, I was surprised to find the parking lot full. I was even more shocked to discover a ticket line inside the theater and an even longer line to buy concessions. “The theater is bumping as god intended,” I texted a friend as I waited to buy Sour Patch Kids and a cherry Icee. Finally, 10 minutes after the film started, I slipped into one of the only remaining seats at the front of the theater. Despite finding myself sitting so close to the screen I could see the minutiae of every CGI scale on that talking fish, I was pleased — thrilled, even.

No matter what was playing, the theater was the place to be on a Friday night; it was always full. In a town where I had no friends, knew practically no one, I needn’t do more than sit in the dark for a few hours to feel like I was part of a community, connected to the people around me. This realization kicked off what I’ve come to call my summer of film kismet. I started going to the movies constantly.

I was walking out of the supermarket a few weeks later when I noticed a familiar name on the store’s bulletin board: The Coolidge Corner Theatre. During the roughly three weeks I spend at home in Boston every year, I go to the Coolidge almost every other day. 2,000 miles away, Science on Screen, a Coolidge program that pairs a science-related film with a talk from a STEM professional, was doing a showing of “Moulin Rouge” at the Taos Center for the Arts and was bringing in a local mixologist to talk about the science behind absinthe. I don’t particularly like “Moulin Rouge,” but this coincidence felt intimately personal to me. It was as if a lifeline of film reel had dropped down from the sky, transporting me from the mountain desert to the worn theater seats of home. Once again, I sat in the dark, this time feeling comforted by the melodramatics of Satine’s slow death.

Though it seems like many Taoseseños were going to the movies just for the love of the game, if you will, I was not. When Storyteller wasn’t showing “Asteroid City” or “Past Lives,” I made the hour and a half trek to the Violet Crown Cinema in the Santa Fe Railyard Park. This may seem excessive, but you have to understand that thinking about these movies, planning my journeys to see them, and allowing myself to be swept up in the ensuing Twitter discourse gave shape to my otherwise almost oppressively neutral day to day life.

Whenever the happy film accidents that tied my summer together began to lull, I created them for myself. I admitted to one of my friends that, “I think I’m getting a little bit too weird about all of this,” when I explained my genuine frustration at not being able to see “Barbie” and “Oppenheimer” on the same day because my parents were coming to visit on their release date. I sounded crazy, and I knew it.

Although my Barbenheimer plans were thwarted, my parents generously agreed to go see “Oppenheimer” with me. The theater was entirely sold out, and I watched an older couple get in a fight with a group of teenage boys in cowboy hats who had commandeered an entire row. There was a thrum of excitement, an anticipatory nervousness thanks to our proximity to the place where it really happened. Los Alamos was no mystical site out in the middle of nowhere; I drove by the Los Alamos exit every time I went to Santa Fe. I remember feeling unreasonably lucky to be somehow adjacent to such an interesting moment in contemporary film history.

On my last night in Taos, I emceed a concert in Kit Carson Park. The organizers handed me a long list of sponsors that I didn’t bother to read in advance. The flower shop, the electrician, the brunch spot, Los Alamos National Laboratories... My co-host joked that everyone should go see “Oppenheimer.”

Weeks after my visit to the Harwood, I was in Arroyo Seco, a village about 15 minutes outside of town. As I was about to drive home, I noticed a poster outside of a gallery advertising Price’s work. I ran inside to ask if they had any copies of “Taos Drive-In Theater” for sale. From the back of the store, they produced a poster for the 2001 Taos Talking Picture Festival, a local film festival that ended in 2003. Price originally made the watercolor for the festival poster, they explained. This was one of their last few copies.

In absence of real human drama to animate my life, I was certainly predisposed to notice and assign meaning to these film-related coincidences, and I’ve already admitted to contriving some of them myself. Still, when I was offered the poster, I took it as a confirmation that the film narrative tying my summer together was not entirely in my head. After all, what was I if not one of the unseen people in a row of anonymous cars, watching a movie and trying to see through wildfire smoke in the distance? I looked at the poster and felt that I was seeing a portrait of my summer.

Call it a coping mechanism for two months of solitude if you want; I’ll call it the same. I have always loved film, but I only realized this summer that it was something you can live on too.

Contact **IDONE RHOADS** at idone.rhoads@yale.edu.

the friends that stick (& the ones that don't)

// BY HANNAH KURCZESKI

“Hannah?”

I turn to face Phelps Gate and see Cat’s smiling face as she jogs through the archway. “Cat!” I screech, breaking into a full sprint towards her.

“Hannah!”

“Cat!”

Our shrieks echo off the first-year dorms as we collide in the middle of Old Campus, wrapping our arms around each other and squeezing so tight it is hard to breathe. “I can’t believe you’re actually here,” she says.

“I can’t believe you’re actually here.” When we pull away, there are tears in our eyes. It is a reunion straight out of a movie, one meant for childhood best friends that haven’t seen each other in years.

This was April 20th, 2022: the night before first-year move-in. Cat and I had only met once before, at Bulldog Days, but already I felt like I’d known her for my entire life. We’d met on social media the day we both got into Yale early action, and stayed in touch through senior year and the summer after. When we finally arrived on campus, our FaceTimes and text exchanges turned into girl’s nights and sleepovers on each other’s couches. Nothing changed, and everything changed — we kept growing closer.

I got lucky because I met so many of my best friends early on. One messaged me on YaleConnect simply because my bio said I liked Gilmore Girls. I had no idea she would become my lifeline, there for both Monday lunch debriefs and late night rants. The aspiring director from my early-action group chat became my favorite writing partner, fellow musical-watcher, and one of my

most trusted confidantes. And of course there were my suitemates, the three rays of sunshine that the Branford housing office randomly paired me with. We still live together today.

Like most people, the idea of this ever-elusive “friend group” was appealing before and after coming to Yale. I wanted to find my Ross and my Monica and my Rachel and my whatever-the-rest-of-their-names were (I’ve never actually seen Friends, but I’ve heard it’s a whole thing). So I tried, and in the first week I met a group of girls that seemed very nice. Some of them stuck around, but most didn’t. I quickly realized that you can’t force friends. Sometimes they stay surface-level, no matter how much you wish it would go deeper. It took me a while to realize that that was okay, and moreover that it was normal. It took me even longer to realize that you don’t need a “friend group” to have friends. Most of my closest friendships formed from a one-on-one connection — not because of any distinct “group,” but because we simply liked each other.

Just as I’d met some of my best friends early on, there were just as many that I didn’t meet until first year was well underway. I spent all of first year fall break bonding with a friend of a friend who is now one of my best friends, someone who has been there for me for post-rehearsal chicken nuggets and random adventures up Science Hill (a fascinating, faraway land for a non-STEM major). I put up my first show with the kid from my first-year seminar who always wore cool outfits, and the girl I met outside of my first audition is one of my favorite people to talk to about literally everything. I’m constantly inspired by the kindness of the guy I met at the theater department info session, and spent most of my first day

back on campus this semester catching up with him. Some of my closest friends today are even people that I met much later on, through second semester classes, the Dramat commencement musical, and the midnight line at the GHeav hoagie counter. The beautiful thing about Yale is that you never know who you could meet nor what value they might add to your life.

At the beginning of my first year, I unintentionally started a tradition of setting a personal goal for myself at the beginning of every semester. For my second semester of first year, that goal was to prioritize the people that made me the happiest. It’s cheesy, but ever since then, my time at Yale has been extra special. If you take one thing away from this article, I hope it’s this: life is too short to waste your time on anyone but the people who would answer the phone at two in the morning and give you handwritten notes just because they know you’re having a rough day. It doesn’t matter if they’re someone you’ve known from the first day of school or someone you met last week — if they bring joy and add value to your life, hold on to them. Tight.

There’s no one-size-fits-all formula to finding your people at Yale, or even in life at large. I just know that somehow, I got lucky. I lived on the right floor. I sat on the benches outside Vanderbilt Hall. I signed up for a lot of clubs that I never went to, and I tried to pursue the passions that made me apply to this school in the first place. In the pursuit of joy, I hit the lottery. Now, I’m trying to spend my winnings well.

Contact **HANNAH KURCZESKI** at hannah.kurczeski@yale.edu.

WKND Song Recommendation:

I Want the World to Stop by Bella and Sebastian.

ABOLISH MOSQUITOES

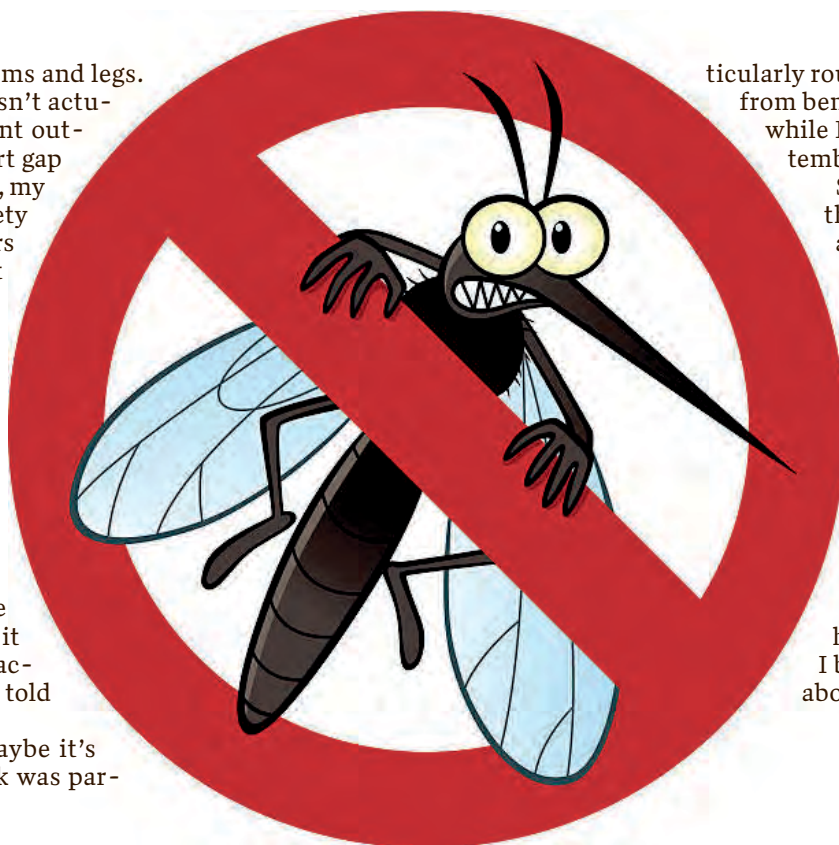
// BY ORAH MASSIHESRAELIAN

I have had enough. I have had enough of itchy arms and legs. Enough of a pimple shaped bump on my face that isn't actually a pimple but looks the same no less. I just went outside — fully clothed — and they still found the covert gap between my socks and the bottom of my pants. Now, my ankles are swollen and misery is my name. The entirety of my legs are covered in small pink and white scars from the times I fought back. I'm no ROTC kid, but oh boy do I have battle scars.

Today, I finally take my stand. I don't want to smell like insect repellent anymore. I don't want DEET soaking into my pores. And by the way — the "DEET-free" repellents? A scam! Fraudulent!

One time in middle school I bought the Victoria's Secret Bombshell perfume because I read on Pinterest that it's a scent that also repels mosquitoes. The Off! bottle with its bright orange nozzle was haunting my dreams. I wanted out — hell, I needed it — and I was convinced that Victoria held the secret to my emancipation. But then I bought the perfume and wore it maybe twice and I don't believe it did much anyway other than give me that sly satisfaction for pulling off a purchase from a store my mom told me I couldn't shop at until I was older.

In recent years, it's only gotten worse — or maybe it's something with the Yale Mosquitoes™. Last week was par-



ticularly rough. I had multiple occurrences of them creeping up from beneath my chair or bench to nibble away in secret. All while I was simply trying to enjoy an abnormally hot September day!

Sometimes they'll even be extra sneaky, relishing in the game of it. After I sat on a picnic blanket for half an hour unscathed one day, I returned home in victory and celebration, pumping my fist in the air like someone who just won a silver medal. And then it happened. I started itching. First, it was mindless, but five minutes later I noticed it all. I was covered in bites, all from a scheming little mosquito who followed me inside and waited to attack just to spite me. I was outsmarted — by a bug! The stench of defeat overpowered that of the bug spray.

Friends, readers, seekers of freedom: the time is nigh. Enough is enough — abolish mosquitoes! Pull your support! Relinquish fear and apprehension! Love is indeed — maybe — the most important thing in the world, but direct it elsewhere! If we stick together and put up a strong front, I believe that we'll stand a chance. Eliminate contact, abolish mosquitoes. Together, we can.

Contact **ORAH MASSIHESRAELIAN** at orah.massihesraelian@yale.edu.

Barbenheimer

// BY AENGUS COX & ARIEL KIRMAN

Unless you spent the summer in a nuclear bunker or on a remote getaway retreat, you no doubt saw fun-sized billboards on every street corner or commercials before every Youtube video for this summer's pair of blockbuster films. In one corner, sporting a flowery pink dress and a conspicuously artificial finish is the Greta Gerwig-directed, Mattel-backed "Barbie." In the opposite, much more ominously lit corner, sporting a stern, battle-hardened expression is Christopher Nolan's much anticipated "Oppenheimer," his first attempt at a biopic.

At first glance, these two movies could not be more different. One takes place in the fictional utopia of Barbie Land, while one details the making of the atomic bomb in the New Mexico desert and its effects on the bureaucracy of Washington D.C. One, directed by and starring two of the most well-respected women in Hollywood, promises to take on the patriarchy, while the other depicts the overwhelmingly white and male worlds of academia and the U.S. Military. They were marketed alongside each other precisely because of their many obvious differences; it was exciting and hilarious to see such opposite films crash up against each other. But you know all of this already; after all, it's Barbenheimer.

Against all odds, Gerwig's fantasy world feels more real, more prescient and more important than the cold and unfeeling one in which "Oppenheimer" takes place. A lesser director may have tried to rationalize the bizarre qualities of Barbie Land, but Gerwig acknowledges and revels in the ridiculous kitschiness of its cotton candy architecture. In fact, she uses the nature of Barbie Land — how divorced it is from the physics, let alone the political climate, of the real world — to the film's advantage. Barbie's home can serve as a laboratory for political change precisely because it is so removed from the historical realities that afflict ours. Even during the moments where "Barbie's" plot reaches truly head-scratching levels of absurdity or when its call for social change verges on half-hearted corporate newsletter territory, I am tempted to give it the benefit of the doubt because it feels so acutely aware of its own shortcomings.

"Oppenheimer," on the other hand, is completely oblivious to its lack of substance. Its blaring music and blisteringly fast editing cannot save the story from feeling like anything more than a summary of the Manhattan Project brought to life by a very expensive AI. Christopher Nolan has long been fascinated with the limits of both filmmaking and the human imagination. In two of his previous movies, "Inception" and "Interstellar," he weaves together many dizzying narratives, with the help of time manipulation and space travel to probe existential questions of reality, memory and

personal identity. In service of these movies' overwhelming technical display and apparent profundity, however, the fundamental characteristics of a good story — character development, convincing dialogue and a succinct plot (to name a few) — are entirely thrown out the window. It is no surprise, then, that faced with a genre defined by an emphasis on depicting the intricacies and emotions of characters, Nolan's biopic falls flat. Despite the frequency and proximity of Oppenheimer's face on screen (Cillian Murphy)'s face (who plays Oppenheimer) face on screen, we are rarely given a hint of what lies below his fedora and behind his weathered eyes. He watches blankly when the Trinity test sets the desert in front of him alight, just as he does when getting his security clearance dramatically revoked. In both pivotal sequences, Nolan's visuals and the accompanying audio career forward, unconcerned with the man they left entirely unilluminated in their wake. Ultimately, "Oppenheimer" hints at — but never fully explores — any of the topics that are integral to a biopic; Nolan seems too concerned with heavy-handed visual metaphors to dig below the surface of Oppenheimer's relationship to his wife and kids, his inner political conflict or even his thoughts on the bomb we spend hours watching him build.

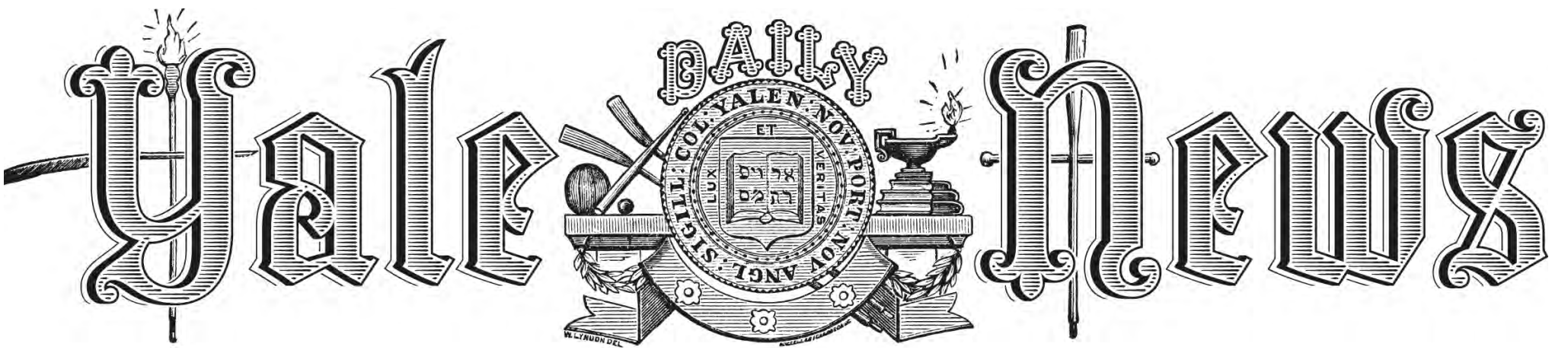
And so, self-aware or not, playful and saturated or stern and melodramatic, the two halves of Barbenheimer may be more similar than they first appear; both of them reflect the difficulties of reconciling the pursuit of massive commercial success with the creation of well-considered and substantive art. Both directors are heralded as boundary-pushing visionaries, but their convergence towards the mainstream — admittedly, Nolan has been there for a while now — has resulted in a sort of cinematic identity crisis as the excesses inherent in the Hollywood blockbuster — reflected in the combined budget of 250 million dollars — bleed over into both narratives. Although Gerwig does an admirable and creative job, the promise of a truly subversive "Barbie" movie seems doomed from its outset. Its pursuit of being just clever enough and just rebellious enough to rehabilitate the Barbie brand defeats the purpose of being clever and rebellious at all. Similarly, while the sheer scale of Nolan's "Oppenheimer" is enough to cash in at the box office, its reliance on eye-catching action sequences and non-sensical story structure feels more like "Avengers: Infinity War" fashioned as a period piece than an honest investigation of a person's life and work.

Contact **AENGUS COX** at aengus.cox@yale.edu and **ARIEL KIRMAN** at ariel.kirman@yale.edu.

Hey guys! About that piece on abolishing mosquitoes: you can just ignore it. It was all a silly joke because mosquitoes are obviously the most majestic little creatures to ever grace the face of the earth and we would never want to do wrong to harm such innocent beings. Mistakes happen, so please disregard the false call for help and be friends with mosquitoes, thanks <3

WKND Hot Take:

Humidity is not that bad.



New Haven votes: 2023 Democratic primary



Second row: Justin Elicker delivers a victory speech after being elected the Democratic mayoral nominee for the November general election, where he will face Republican Tom Goldenberg.

Third row, first on the left: Ward 1 candidate Kianna Flores '25, who ran uncontested, passes out lemonade and speaks about her key issues.

Third row, second: Alderman Frank Redente, Jr. gathers with community members in Ward 15.

Third row, third: At an election watch party, mayoral Democratic candidate Liam Brennan — who ultimately lost the primary — interacts with supporters.

Fourth row: Candidates campaign outside of the Ward 22 polling location.

Photos by **COLLYN ROBINSON, MAX STERNLICHT, NYDIA DEL CARMEN, MICHAEL PAZ, MIA CORTÉS CASTRO, YURII STASIUK AND LAURA OSPINA.**

JOIN THE *YDN*

INTERESTED in JOURNALISM?

JOIN THE Yale DAILY NEWS

UNIVERSITY
CITY
OPINION
SCITECH
ARTS
SPORTS

WKND
MAGAZINE
YTV
PRODUCTION
BUSINESS
PODCAST



YTV: Mayor Justin Elicker wins New Haven Democratic primary

New Haven Democratic mayoral candidates, Justin Elicker and Liam Brennan, hosted watch parties waiting in anticipation for election results determining the Democratic nominee for the November general election. With over 70 percent of the votes, Justin Elicker won the primary. Camerawork by Nydia del Carmen, Max Sternlicht. Production Manager: Olivia Cevasco. Edited by Linden Skalak.



YTV: Ward 1 voters speak with the News on primary election day

On New Haven primary election day, YTV editors Max Sternlicht and Nydia del Carmen and city staff reporter Yurii Stasiuk went to the Ward 1 polling location to discuss city politics and ask for voters' opinions on Democratic mayoral candidates. Camerawork by Nydia del Carmen, Max Sternlicht. Production Manager: Olivia Cevasco. Edited by Jonah Halperin.



FROM THE FRONT

"The garden of love is green without limit and yields many fruits other than sorrow or joy."

RUMI ISLAMIC POET

Incumbent Justin Elicker wins mayoral primary



Laura Ospina, Contributing Photographer

ELICKER FROM PAGE 1

his supporters enjoyed drinks and pizza while they celebrated the victory.

During his speech, Elicker thanked his wife, Natalie, his daughters and his parents. He also congratulated the winners of contested alder races around the city. Elicker mentioned various accomplishments of his administration over the last four years, including implementing and growing the Elm City's non-violent crisis response team, called COM-PASS, increasing affordable housing

units and the ordinance that allowed for the first tenants union in Connecticut. He also acknowledged that his campaign is not yet over.

"Let's be clear that tonight is not a victory, because guess what, we've got a campaign that goes through November and we have a candidate that is on the Republican ticket," said Elicker. "We need to keep the fire on to win, and we need your support to win. We need to knock on doors. We need to get the message out so that it is not 70 percent, but it is even more in November. Are you with me?"

When Brennan entered his after-party, he knew he had lost the election. The crowd of around 20 people met him with hugs and cheery words. He walked from person to person, smiling and thanking them for their support.

Brennan acknowledged that the result of the race was not what he was hoping for but said that his campaign raised important issues, helping city residents envision a "better future."

"Winning office was always just a means to an end ... to enact the change we want," Brennan told his supporters. "Our whole system of

government [in the United States] is creaky and old. We can give up and we can complain ... or we can choose to try to do something better. And that is what all of you did over these last few months."

Brennan will not be on the ballot in November, as he chose to not run as an independent candidate. He told the News that while he does not have any specific post-election plans, he will continue to be involved in the city, and also hopes to spend some more time with his wife and four kids.

Abdul Osmanu, field manager for Brennan's mayoral campaign and a town councilor in neighboring Hamden, told the News that while he has run many campaigns in his career, Brennan's was his favorite.

"Liam always has his eyes on the issues, and I am excited for all the great things he will continue to do," Osmanu said.

Ending on an amicable note, the candidates spoke over the phone after the election was called, during which they agreed to work together to help serve New Haven.

"I'm grateful that Liam threw his hat in the race and ran a spirited campaign," said Elicker at his party.

Brennan held his election day after-party at Rudy's Bar on Chapel Street.

Brennan also thanked Elicker and acknowledged his "fantastic campaign."

"His service to the city has been phenomenal," Brennan said, "[and I appreciate] his willingness to put himself out there."

Around the city, voters shared why they chose to vote for either Elicker or Brennan with the News.

In Ward 22, former middle school teacher Melodie Thigpen, said she voted for Brennan, hoping that a new administration would help keep the Yale students living near her home on Lake Place accountable for their noise and littering.

"It seems like Yale is protected. The students are very privileged and they act like it," Thigpen said.

Up north in Ward 10, Lisa Bergmann told the News that she voted for Elicker because of his collaboration with "a coalition of alders." Bergmann highlighted Elicker's support for a better job market and local hiring, reopening the Q-House and prioritizing safety as reasons for supporting Elicker.

The general election will be held on Nov. 9.

Contact **MIA CORTÉS CASTRO** at mia.cortescastro@yale.edu, contact **YURII STASIUK** at yurii.stasiuk@yale.edu.

Incumbent Jeanette Morrison wins re-election in Ward 22

MORRISON FROM PAGE 1

includes many of Yale's residential colleges — including Ezra Stiles, Morse, Timothy Dwight, Silliman, Pauli Murray and Benjamin Franklin colleges.

Morrison won with 186 votes compared to Geritano's 34. Five of the ward's ballots were left blank. Three poll workers inside the Ward 22 polling location at the Wexler-Grant School on Foote Street said there were eight absentee ballots outstanding.

Geritano, a Yale alumnus, got involved in Dixwell politics following his graduation when he joined the Dixwell Community Management Team. He congratulated Morrison after official results were posted, expressing gratitude for the chance to engage with voters and a desire to remain involved in local politics.

"I feel like I learned a lot from the process, and I'm just excited to move forward and stay as involved as I can in the city," Geritano said.

Morrison cited her years-long work on Dixwell Community House, also known as the Q House, as being one of her key accomplishments over her tenure. After its closure in 2003, Morrison collaborated with community leaders and residents to revamp the center for its reopening in 2021. Since then, the Q House has been a fixture of the Dixwell Community.

Phil Gorski, a Ward 22 resident and Yale professor, told the News he voted for Morrison and for incumbent Mayor Justin Elicker in today's primaries.

"I'm happy with the job that [Elicker]'s done through a difficult time ... COVID dealt a pretty tough hand," Gorski said of Elicker. He said that he voted for Morrison in the Ward 22 alder race for "similar reasons."

Morrison commended her large campaign team for their efforts to inform the public about her work, bring voters to the polls and make constituents' voices heard.



Laura Ospina, Contributing Photographer

According to Tenzin Jorden '25, Ward 22 co-chair for the New Haven Democratic Town Committee, community organizations Students United Now and New Haven Rising helped mobilize support for Morrison's campaign. Volunteers knocked on doors, drove voters to the polls and guided elderly voters to accessible voting locations.

Jorden also credited Morrison's victory to strong support from UNITE HERE unions, including Local 33, 34, 35 and 217. The politically powerful unions represent Yale's graduate workers, technical and clerical workers, custodial and dining workers and hotel workers in New Haven.

"I was outside for most of the day. A lot of people came specifically because they believed in Jeanette," Jorden said. "A lot of them know Jeanette on a first-name basis. She's done a lot of great work."

Jorden noted that a possible cause of low voter turnout could be attributed to confusion that arose from the latest redistrict-

ing cycle. Jorden said that several people who came by the polling location had been moved outside the ward because of redistricting.

Morrison was first elected to represent Dixwell in 2011.

Contact **KENISHA MAHAJAN** at kenisha.mahajan@yale.edu.

ELECTION DAY

"Autumn is a second spring when every leaf is a flower."

ALBERT CAMUS, FRENCH PHILOSOPHER

City officials and advocates reflect on two terms of Elicker's housing policy

BY MAGGIE GREYER, NATHASHA KHAZZAM & YURII STASIUK
STAFF REPORTERS

On Tuesday, New Haven Mayor Justin Elicker and Liam Brennan will face off in a Democratic primary defined largely by housing.

Elicker has spent much of the past four years managing the COVID-19 pandemic and a growing affordable housing crisis in the city. With ownership vacancy rates across the city around 1.4 percent and homelessness on the rise throughout the state, housing has become a central challenge for his administration.

"We're doing a little bit of everything, because there is no one solution to addressing this issue," Elicker told the News. "Housing challenges exist for someone that has very low to actually no income, but it also is impacting someone that [has] low to moderate income."

The News spoke to several city officials and activists on New Haven housing to evaluate the successes and failures of the Elicker administration's housing policy in four areas: pandemic rental assistance, affordable housing, tenant protections and homelessness.

These experts pointed to a mixed track record for the Mayor, pointing to the strengthening of the city's first tenant unions and an inclusionary zoning bill that had mixed success creating additional affordable housing. They also noted the failures of the Liveable City Initiative and the controversial bulldozing of two tent encampments that had been home to unhoused residents for several years.

Millions of dollars to pandemic rental relief

In his first mayoral term, Elicker rolled out new programs to address housing insecurities caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. His administration launched many of the programs with an influx of federal funding that was allotted to the state for pandemic relief purposes, according to Karen DuBois-Walton '89, executive director of the New Haven Housing Authority, who challenged Elicker in the 2021 Democratic mayoral primary.

According to DuBois-Walton, the Elicker administration used state resources to move people out of congregate shelters and into hotels for extended periods of time, helping to curb the number of COVID-19 cases within the city.

Most prominently, the city initially invested \$10 million of federal American Rescue Plan Act funds into an "I'm Home" initiative to fund rental assistance and affordable housing development.

In 2022, the city allocated an additional \$1 million to the program with the goal of increasing down payment assistance from \$10,000 to \$25,000 per person for those who earn below 300 percent of the federal poverty level for New Haven.

"We have programs for every income level to support people with the goal of ... having long term sustainable housing," Elicker said.

As of 2019, only 29 percent of city residents owned the home they lived in, compared to 66 percent of Connecticut residents. Elicker said that the city's expansion of the down payment program aimed to close this gap.

This past spring, Elicker's administration proposed spending another \$5 million of ARPA money to expand the program again, in order to jumpstart long delayed affordable housing developments in the city.

Another program, the Coronavirus Assistance and Security Tenant Landlord Emergency Program, distributed grants as high as \$8,000 to help tenants behind on rent and homeowners behind on mortgage payments.

DuBois-Walton explained that CASTLE "was an important step at a time when people's housing was very insecure."

However, the program has also been widely criticized for not utilizing enough of its allotted funding. According to the New Haven Independent, CASTLE expended roughly \$103,000 out of its \$800,000 budget between the



TIM TAI/SENIOR PHOTOGRAPHER

Ahead of Tuesday's Democratic primary, the News spoke with community members about Mayor Justin Elicker's response to rising homelessness and affordable housing crisis.

program's launch in September 2020 and May 2021.

Inclusionary zoning creates some — but perhaps not enough — affordable housing units

One of Elicker's main policies aimed at increasing affordable housing in the city was an Inclusionary Zoning Law, which went into effect Feb. 18, 2022. The law requires that new apartment buildings provide a certain number of units at rent prices below market rate to tenants earning no more than 50 percent of the area median income.

The law has since succeeded in approving the construction of 23 affordable housing units, with 17 more units still in the approval process, according to Lenny Speiller, the mayor's director of communications.

DuBois-Walton said she believes that apartments covered by the inclusionary zoning law represent only a small subset of the needed affordable units.

"The vast number of units that we need to develop are not going to come from inclusionary zoning," DuBois-Walton said. She suggested the solution might lie in city-wide initiatives that prioritize building affordable housing units in larger quantities.

DuBois-Walton also discussed city efforts to construct accessory dwelling units, which are smaller housing units added to existing homes or apartment buildings. In 2021, New Haven's Board of Alders passed an ADU ordinance in order to encourage new apartment development. However, no ADUs have since been built. According to a report by Elm City Communities, a group that includes the city's Housing Authority, this is likely due to the current city requirement that only owner-occupants of housing units can build ADUs.

Other city initiatives, such as the city's Affordable Housing Commission's creation of a Below-Market Rental registry, have helped to facilitate affordable housing research within the city, DuBois-Walton claimed.

Tenants find strength in unions but neglect in Livable City Initiative

One of the largest steps forward in establishing protections for tenants made under the Elicker administration has been the formal recognition of tenant unions. Last September, Elicker signed an ordinance defining tenant unions and establishing a process through which tenant unions can collectively complain to the city's Fair Rent Commission.

Since the ordinance was passed, three tenants unions have formed in New Haven: the first at 311 Blake St., and others at 1275 Quinipiac Ave and 1476 Chapel St. Last week, mega-landlord Ocean Management agreed to negotiate with members of Blake Street Tenants Union, marking the first time in Connecticut that a landlord has recognized and agreed to collectively bargain with a union.

"When I signed into law the first state of Connecticut tenants union ordinance, I didn't know quite how powerful it would be," Elicker said in a speech Wednesday, Aug. 30, at a march the Blake Street Tenants Union organized to protest alleged retaliation by Ocean.

Luke Melonakos-Harrison DIV '23, vice president of Connecticut Tenants Union, told the News he saw the tenants union ordinance as an important first step toward further protections for tenant organizing.

"Every time a tenants union has filed, the administration has been very celebratory and receptive. And we appreciate that," he said. "We're proud that New Haven is leading Connecticut when it comes to unions."

However, Melonakos-Harrison pointed to the Liveable City Initiative as a place where the Elicker administration has failed in properly protecting tenants. LCI is a city agency created to enforce living standards in rental units.

LCI has been plagued by delays and unresolved complaints, with tenants living in hazardous conditions, left waiting weeks and months without receiving support from the city.

"LCI must be reformed. It must be better staffed. It must be more transparent to tenants," Melonakos-Harrison said. "Tenants have to have better access to information about their own housing conditions and need to be given more tools to hold their landlords accountable and be protected from retaliation."

In April, Melonakos-Harrison, along with two other tenants living in Ocean Management-owned units, published an opinion piece in the New Haven Independent detailing what they see as the chronic underfunding of LCI.

In a conversation with the News, DuBois-Walton agreed that LCI lacks the staffing and resources to effectively ensure that landlords comply with city housing standards.

"To expect that [LCI is] going to be able to do the level of inspection and housing code work... with the number of units that are in this market, with the

staffing they have is very unrealistic," she said.

There are currently twelve full-time LCI inspectors, who are responsible for close to 36,000 rental units across the city.

Elicker argued that those twelve inspectors are supported by officials in other departments, such as lead inspectors from the Health Department and Fair Rent Commission staff who inspect units. However, Elicker added that he plans to allocate "additional inspectors and funding" to LCI in the budget for the upcoming fiscal year.

The mayor also hinted at future reforms for LCI in a conversation hosted by the Yale Law Democrats on Thursday night, saying the city is looking to "potentially restructure LCI," but that no plans have been finalized.

Officials evict tent cities; administration looks for shelter alternatives

Elicker faced fierce criticism from activists and community leaders for the forceful removal of two tent encampments within the past six months where unhoused people were living.

In March, Elicker ordered the New Haven Police Department to forcefully evict the West River tent city. In August, another long-standing encampment under a Lambertton Street bridge was bulldozed. Elicker told the News that the second eviction was initiated by the state's Department of Transportation, who owns the land.

Elicker argued that the city only intervenes when the living conditions in camps become dangerous — as he said he believes was the case with the West River camp. Back in March, city inspectors repeatedly found signs of burn pits, trash and construction of a permanent shower, all of which are not allowed on the public land. At the Lambertton Street camp, some tenants were located dangerously close to a railroad, Elicker said.

"We very actively, with outreach workers and with our non-profit partners, engaged with the people that were on site [in tent cities] ... to try to find alternatives," Elicker told the News.

Mark Colville, a local activist and member of the unhoused activist team U-ACT, strongly condemned the Mayor's administration for evicting unhoused people without providing adequate alternative housing. Colville runs the Rosette Street Project, where he hosts unhoused people living in tents in his backyard.

According to Colville, after the most recent eviction of the Lambert Street Bridge encampment, fifteen to twenty people who were evicted showed up to the Rosette Street Project seeking shelter.

"[Elicker] won't talk about the atrocity of evicting people and not having any legally-sanctioned place for a person to be who has been excluded from the housing economy," Colville told the News.

Another challenge the unhoused community in New Haven faces is a lack of shelter beds. In New Haven, there are five permanent shelters, providing a total of 227 beds and 37 family rooms. The city also operates seasonal shelters and warming centers providing 105 additional beds.

For some unhoused people, staying in a shelter is not an option, according to DuBois-Walton. She told the News that until recently, the city's shelter system followed a "one-size-fits-all" model, sorting unhoused people into temporary homes solely based on factors like gender or whether they have children.

In shelters, some married couples cannot stay together, unhoused people cannot keep their pets and the strict curfew prevents some people from working. DuBois-Walton explained that for others, living in shelters with strict regulations and without much privacy can be a re-traumatizing experience.

"People don't want to use the shelters; that's why they're camping out," DuBois-Walton said, explaining why some choose to stay on public land. "Or they can't behave according to the criminal justice model that a shelter is run by."

To address some of the factors that DuBois-Walton said cause people to avoid shelters, Elicker has proposed the city reallocate \$5 million of ARPA money to purchase the Days Inn hotel on Foxon Boulevard. The administration hopes to turn the building into a hotel-style emergency housing that would provide additional 56 rooms, or 112 beds, to shelter unhoused individuals and provide them with flexibility and privacy. The purchase still needs to be approved by the Board of Alders.

Homelessness in Connecticut rose for the second year in a row in 2023 — increasing by roughly 3 percent.

Contact **MAGGIE GREYER** at maggie.grether@yale.edu, **NATHASHA KHAZZAM** at natasha.khazzam@yale.edu and **YURII STASIUK** at yurii.stasiuk@yale.edu.