

THE CHARGER BULLETIN

The spooky news source for the University of New Haven

Volume 103, Issue 7 | October 26, 2021 | West Haven, Connecticut

University student creates true-crime podcast

BY ELISA D'EGIDIO
Student Life Editor

From mystery novels to crime documentaries taking over all streaming services, it is no surprise how fast true-crime podcasts have been gaining popularity. Crime-loving fanatics turning into online sleuths have become the new trend as these in-real-life Nancy Drew's and the Hardy Boys' combine their passion and internet skills to gain more knowledge about famous crimes.

Anna Dinino is no different. As someone who loves listening to podcasts during her long commute to and from school, she quickly was intrigued in making this her own "passion project."

Dinino, a sports management sophomore, began her very own true-crime podcast called "Crime Bistro Podcast" earlier this semester.

Dinino writes, records and produces her podcast by herself in her house from her personal laptop. She releases new episodes every Thursday to her website. Viewers can also stream her podcasts from Spotify, Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts and YouTube.

She caught an "inspiration bug," as she called it, after binge-watching videos of Kendall Rae on YouTube. She

admires how well of a storyteller Rae is and often reflects on her work.

"This is something I really like to do," said Dinino, "so I hope that the interests that I have in it and the amount of time spent preparing each episode does show through and people can at least appreciate that."

With the help of Google, Dinino shares that there are a lot of resources available to those who are interested in learning how to pick up on this task for themselves. Beginning from scratch, she knew nothing about recording and producing. With research, she purchased the required equipment and editing software and is teaching herself as she goes.

"My first couple podcasts were pretty nerve wracking to record and I definitely see a vast improvement, I think I learn with each episode and get a little better," Dinino said.

She mentions in her third episode, "Episode 3: The Princess Diana Conspiracy" sharing it was a lot of fun during the research process, as she was able to read many theories, conspiracies and conflicting material. As time has passed, she said that she has had the opportunity to finetune her researching skills, organizing timelines and collecting data.

"A lot of the things I have



Anna Dinino, sophomore sports management major and creator of "Crime Bistro Podcast," Oct. 21, 2021, West Haven. Photo courtesy of Charger Bulletin/Lismarie Pabon.



Graphic courtesy of Elisa D'Egidio.

come across is there is a lot of amateur internet sleuths, I guess you could call them, that put out their own articles or stuff on their own websites and a lot of it tends to be different than what is in police reports and other stuff that I am currently looking into. So, you kind of have to [wean] your way through what is the correct information and what isn't."

Dinino is not shying away from stepping outside of the box. She said that she is trying to implement some material taught to her in her psychology course at the University of New Haven into her podcasts. By taking notes and researching more of the psycho-

logical aspect of serial killers, she hopes to be able to implement this into future podcasts. In addition, she hopes to one day release a podcast highlighting popular conspiracy theories.

Her podcasts have been gaining popularity as she was recently interviewed by The Glastonbury Citizen, which is a newspaper from her hometown. She mainly uses the podcasts on Instagram to promote upcoming podcasts and releases.

In regard to passing on advice to other aspiring podcasters, she said, "I would also say being really patient with yourself is important, it was really easy for

me to get frustrated trying to figure out how to set up a website and edit properly since it was all completely new, but time and lots of [Googling] will definitely get you there."

For her upcoming weekly release, on Oct. 28, she will be covering the Yuba County Five disappearance from 1978. She is also releasing a bonus episode on Halloween discussing the Amityville House.



ENTER IF YOU DARE

“Hocus Pocus 2”: What we know so far

BY ANDREA ALVERCA
Staff Writer

After 28 years, the Sanderson sisters are finally coming back. Directed by Kenny Ortega and starring Bette Midler, Sarah Jessica Parker and Kathy Najimy, “Hocus Pocus” is considered a cult classic during the Halloween season and is finally getting its well-deserved sequel. Rumored to be in development for years until 2019, “Hocus Pocus 2” was properly confirmed when Midler announced the return of the Sanderson sisters on Instagram.

The original movie tells the story of the Sanderson sisters—Winifred (Midler), Sarah (Parker) and Mary (Najimy)—who are executed in the 1600s for witchcraft. Winifred manages to cast a spell that will resurrect the sisters during a full moon on Halloween, when a virgin lights the Black Candle flame. Fast forward to 1993, when teenager Max (Omri Katz) unintentionally resurrects them to impress his crush Allison (Vanessa Shaw).

“Hocus Pocus 2” will revolve around three sisters who accidentally bring the Sandersons back to modern-day Salem, Mass. This leads to a mission to stop the child-hungry witches from wreaking havoc.

Adam Shankman (“Hairspray,” “17 Again”) was originally anticipated to direct the sequel, but left the project to direct “Disenchanted,” the sequel to the 2007 Disney film “Enchanted.” Instead, director Anne Fletcher (“27 Dresses,” “The Proposal”) has taken over for “Hocus Pocus 2.”

On Oct. 15, four new additions to the “Hocus Pocus 2” cast were announced. “Zoe Valentine’s” Lilia Buckingham, Whitney Peak from “Gossip Girl” and “Cruel Summer’s” Froy Gutierrez. Up-and-coming actress Taylor Henderson was also announced to join the highly anticipated sequel. Henderson is set to play one of three new lead characters who will star in the film.

“Hocus Pocus 2” is currently in production and has changed filming locations from Salem to Rhode Island. It’s possible that the film will include several scenes set prior to canon which presents the possibility of learning more about the Sanderson sisters’ backstory. Sticking to the history of witches, while Rhode Island never held a single trial during the witch hunts, it did have a death penalty for witchcraft. Given how close Rhode Island and Massachusetts are to each other, it would make sense why filming is taking place in Rhode Island.

“WandaVision” spinoff coming soon

BY ANDREA ALVERCA
Staff Writer

On Oct. 7, Marvel revealed their plans to give Kathryn Hahn’s “WandaVision” character a spin-off series that will premiere exclusively on Disney+. Head writer Jac Schaeffer is the spin-off’s writer and executive producer. This marks Schaeffer’s first project with Marvel since he signed a deal with Marvel and 20th Television. While the miniseries had less than 10 episodes, it was nominated for 23 Emmys.

“WandaVision” aired earlier this year from Jan. 15 to March 5, having a two-episode premiere and a new episode every Friday. The miniseries follows Wanda Maximoff and Vision in a fourth-wall-breaking sitcom loop. Wanda’s ability to transform and control the fictional town of Westview attracted plenty of attention and brought several new characters to the MCU, one of which included Agnes, played by Hahn. Hahn’s portrayal of the dark-humored woman quickly became a fan-favorite out of the “WandaVision” cast.

It was ultimately revealed that



The login screen to Disney+ on a TV. Photo courtesy of Unsplash/ Marques Kasprak.

Agnes was really Agatha Harkness, a powerful sorceress who plotted to harness Wanda’s Chaos Magic for her own plans. With that reveal came another shocking one, with Agatha possessing the Darkhold. The Darkhold is a book of ancient and powerful dark magic where Agatha learned about Wanda fulfilling the Scarlet Witch prophecy and using Chaos Magic, leaving the door open for more of Agatha Harkness in the MCU’s future.

The news of the spinoff may also help answer viewers’ burning questions, starting with a chance to explain how Agatha managed to find Wanda. Other viewers questioned whether Agatha broke herself free of Wan-

da’s spell, or from the Darkhold itself. “WandaVision” introduced the Darkhold by showing it in Agatha’s basement, but how and when she acquired the book wasn’t explained.

There is plenty left to tell of Agatha’s story, as fans claim that Marvel will do a fantastic job on executing the Salem witch’s tale. However, it might be a while until we get a first look, considering the amount of streaming shows making their way to the Disney+ platform. This includes “Hawkeye,” which premieres Nov. 24, the show’s confirmed spinoff “Echo,” and confirmed second seasons for “Loki” and “What If...?”

“Scream” series returns with upcoming film

BY ANDREA ALVERCA
Staff Writer

In December 1996, Ghostface was introduced as a serial killer that attacked high school student Sydney Prescott, and her group of friends in the film “Scream.” Twenty-six years later, this mind-bending horror franchise is being renewed with fresh directors, according to the new trailer that dropped recently. The beginning of the trailer shows Tara Carpenter, played by “You” actress Jenna Ortega, being attacked by the new Ghostface in her home, and was presumably killed. Fans of the movie will notice the homage paid to Drew Barrymore’s Casey Becker in the first “Scream.”

Horror icon Wes Craven directed all four of the original “Scream” films. Sadly, the legendary creator of “A Nightmare on Elm Street” passed away in 2015. However, it’s been announced that the new film in the franchise is being handed over to Matt Bettinelli-Olpin and Tyler Gillett, co-directors of 2019’s “Ready or Not.” Which was not only brutal, but inventive—calling for a perfect choice in directors for the new slasher film.

While the “Scream” movies lost popularity after the fourth installment, the series continued

with an anthology TV series produced by MTV. It took place in the fictional town of Lakewood, following a group of friends targeted by a masked serial killer. Unlike the movies, the killer didn’t wear the infamous Ghostface mask, but one of Brandom James, the town’s own terrifying murderer who has seemingly returned after 20 years.

The “Scream” series follows Sydney Prescott, Dewey Riley and Gale Weathers as they endure several encounters with new Ghostface killers. In the upcoming “Scream” (2022), Ghostface is back again and has a new rule to their madness, in which the people getting attacked have ties to the original killers. Neve Campbell, Courtney Cox and David Arquette reprise their respective roles as the “Final Trio,” as they have survived the horrors that each installment awaited them. Marley Shelton also reprises her role as Deputy Judy Hicks from “Scream 4.”

The “Scream” (2022) trailer successfully hypes the movie’s thrills without giving away much about this installment’s story. However, the trailer might be deliberately misleading, as the franchise has a tendency to have numerous plot twists, including fake deaths. It’s heavily hinted that Dewey might die, and it doesn’t help that the trailer



Ghostface from “Scream.” Photo courtesy of Pixabay

includes a scene of a distressed Gale and Sydney possibly holding her back from what could be Dewey’s body.

Throughout the trailer, we’re introduced to several new characters, including Hick’s son,

played by Dylan Minnette from “13 Reasons Why” and Tara’s sister Sam, played by “In the Heights” actress Melissa Barrera. The trailer ends with what seems like a final showdown between Sydney and Ghostface at Stu

Mathers’ house. Stu Mathers, played by Matthew Lillard, was one of the two original Ghostface killers in the first “Scream.”

The film is set to premiere on Jan. 14, 2022.

Halloween-ready reads to add to your collection

BY EMILY
MCDONOUGH
Contributing Writer

With fall in full swing, it's the perfect time to sit down and get cozy with a good book. And since Halloween is right around the corner, there's plenty of spooky books to enjoy. Check out these five creepy reads.

“Coraline” by Neil Gaiman

“Coraline” is a dark fantasy children's novel published in 2002. When Coraline and her family move into a new house, she discovers an odd door. After Coraline walks through it, she finds another house like hers, along with another mother and father who have buttons for eyes. Other Mother and Other Father want Coraline to stay and be their daughter in that world. To leave that world, Coraline will have to fight to save herself and return to her ordinary life.

“The Graveyard Book” by Neil Gaiman

Nobody Owens is normal—well, kind of. He's normal as he can be, considering he lives in a

graveyard and is being raised by ghosts. There are many dangers in the graveyard, including a gateway to a desert leading to an abandoned city of ghouls and the terrible, mysterious being called a Sleur. If Nobody leaves the graveyard, he will come face to face with the man who killed his family.

“It” by Stephen King

In this classic Stephen King novel, seven friends return to their haunted hometown of Derry, Maine to confront a nightmare from their teenage years called “It,” a killer clown that preys on children. Now, children are being murdered again and their memories of that terrifying summer return when they go home to fight It again.

“The Haunting of Hill House” by Shirley Jackson

In this unnerving terror, four people arrive at Hill House looking for evidence of a haunting. At first, their stay just seems a bit creepy, but there's more than meets the eye. Hill House is preparing to take one of its visitors as its own to become more powerful.

“Mary, Will I Die” by Shawn



“Coraline” by Neil Gaiman sits on top of a bed spread.
Photo courtesy of Creative Commons/ciaokatelln.

Sarles

“Mary, Will I Die” is told from the perspective of four friends: Elena, Steph, Grace, and Calvin. Elena comes across the legend of Bloody Mary and urges the

friends to play. Five years later, the four are no longer speaking and Elena has since avoided the mirror. One morning, Elena passes the mirror and sees not just herself, but a scary figure looking

back at her, so, she breaks the mirror. However, when the pieces are put back together, the figure is gone. When Elena gets to school that day, a new girl named Mary arrives.

The #CollegePlague is viral on social media and on campus

BY KELLY ADKINS
Student Life Editor

A novel pandemic, a hurricane evacuation, the great flood and now the #CollegePlague; our university students have had quite the fall semester. The ironically-named “plague” is not only an unidentified viral infection, but a viral topic on social media platforms such as TikTok and Instagram.

The term is not new—in fact, it has also been called the “freshman plague” in pre-coronavirus times; the College of William and Mary's online news even wrote an article on it back in 2017. The article outlined the truths and myths of the “freshman plague” and offered stress as a potential immune system stressor. This made-up term was used to explain how first-year students tend to experience various illnesses as they introduce their immune systems to the bubble that is a college campus.

This year, students at the University of New Haven are experiencing a myriad of symptoms with random diagnoses and treatments. When students were anonymously polled via Instagram on what sorts of symptoms they experienced, answers ranged from the inability to think clearly to fevers, chills, swollen lymph nodes, fatigue, coughing and other cold-like symptoms. In the same poll, students indicated diagnoses such as tonsillitis, strep throat, upper-respiratory infection, mononucleosis and the common cold.

Giliana Santaniello, sophomore international business and finance major, said that while her illness—a



Graphic courtesy of Kelly Adkins.

consistent dry cough—has not overtly negatively impacted her semester, it is still an inconvenience.

“I don't really want to go to class because I don't want to be hacking in front of people,” she said.

Santaniello also said that it is weird that so many students are getting sick in non-COVID ways, and that even her boyfriend in Springfield, Mass. and her sister at the University of Maine have told her their areas are experiencing the same thing.

The surge of this mysterious “plague” circulating around the uni-

versity is nothing more than normalized viruses—like the common cold or influenza—spreading as a result of less frequent mask-wearing.

In June, the Boston Globe ran a story on this phenomenon, including infectious disease doctors' predictions that exactly this would occur.

In a “Weekly Roundup” email sent by the Office of Marketing and Communications, there was a section explaining what process students should follow when experiencing non-COVID-19-related symptoms.

According to the email, “If you are

feeling ill, you should submit any unexpected or out-of-the-ordinary symptoms not related to a known condition such as allergies.”

Senior criminal justice major, Jillian Lapiana, said “I feel nervous/weird to report symptoms in CoVerified, because I am worried that I would be sent straight to quarantine or isolation even if I do not have COVID.”

When a symptom is submitted on the CoVerified app, the student's status will change from “cleared” to “restricted.” But students were

reminded in the email that this is not meant to be a punitive measure. Rather, it is “to serve as a way to best protect the health of our community.”

After reporting symptoms in the CoVerified app, students will be assessed by a member of Health Services, and the next steps will be made according to that diagnosis. It is suggested that students call the Health Services Center at 203-932-7079 immediately after reporting any symptoms.

Paranormal activity in our own backyard: The scariest RSO

BY KELLY ADKINS
Student Life Editor

Ghosts, spirits and investigations—oh my! While spooky season is just a season for some, for the Paranormal Investigation Research Organization (PIRO), it is year-round. Often mistaken for a “you do not talk about fight club” mentality, Sierra Soletsky, forensic science senior and PIRO president, gave a glimpse into the inner workings of the club.

PIRO is an organization that has accumulated many conspiracies surrounding it, undoubtedly because of curiosity and the club’s confidentiality.

Rumors that haunt the research organization’s reputation include anything from the state of Connecticut asking PIRO to stop conducting experiments, to confirming the ghosts within Maxcy hall’s basement—which was the New Haven Temporary Home for children for 46 years before being acquired by the university.

Soletsky said that none of those rumors hold true.

PIRO, being a research organization, operates in two different components for its members: the educational side and the investigation side.

In the past, PIRO would travel off-campus and visit sites claimed to be haunted. Once there, the group’s investigators—which undergo a PIRO-specific training course before being approved for fieldwork—run various experiments and collect data and research on the scene.



A room that PIRO investigated for paranormal activity.
Photo courtesy of PIRO.

They have traveled to places including Gettysburg, PA; Bobby Mackey’s club, KY; Shanley Hotel, NY; and the Sterling Opera House.

“We want to make sure they are actually in it for the research and the seriousness,” said Soletsky on why investigators have to complete training first.

“We have the equipment you would see in Ghost Adventures, and stuff like that,” said Soletsky. “The K-2 meters, the mel meters, the spirit boxes, and we use this equipment to basically investigate and research.”

The equipment reads electromagnetic frequencies that any electronics give off. This is used to record baseline readings, so they know what the normal and abnormal levels are. By using the recording device, they know when there could potentially be

a ghost.

“All of these tools have scientific applications to them, we are just applying them to the paranormal,” she said.

Although the investigations are confidential, it is not a matter of wanting to keep secrets in the organization.

“One of the reasons we are confidential, the places we go we sign privacy contracts with so we can’t necessarily go around showing everyone all of this stuff,” said Soletsky. “Otherwise we would want to share all of these things.”

In fact, PIRO is always looking to engage with the campus community. Soletsky said that just last month, two of the resident assistants in Bethel hall contacted the organization, and asked them to run a program with the residents on the second floor, as

some were afraid it was haunted.

Typically investigations run for a few hours at night, and the team—which is filled with students identifying as scientists, spirituals and even skeptics—tries to catch something on the equipment.

“We are very scientific about everything since we are researching the paranormal, so we try to debunk anything,” Soletsky said, “so we are not always automatically assuming that it is a ghost [when we see feedback].”

Uniquely in Gettysburg, there is a large program that runs tours of the facilities and provides more expensive equipment, so they were not under a privacy contract. Soletsky was able to freely tell a story from the site.

She said that while this trip did not have many scares, she shared a story where the club is said to have communicated with spirits. The location they were at was previously a pig farm, so the members asked the spirits if they remembered the pigs, and the reading came back with one word: “pork.”

Soletsky said that they hope to travel again in the near future and are training investigators for the following semester. She mentioned staying within the northeast to stay safe with COVID-19 risks, naming places such as the Lizzie Borden house in Massachusetts.

Nowadays, PIRO holds weekly meetings where Soletsky researches a topic that the members vote on, and the executive board presents it in order to educate

and hold discussions. Some previous topics include conspiracy theories, serial killers, mummification and local hauntings. Before each presentation, the club plays a Kahoot about the topic to gauge previous knowledge.

Guests are also invited to speak at club meetings. In 2019, the son-in-law of Ed and Lorraine Warren—the paranormal investigators based out of Connecticut and the duo that the “Conjuring” movie franchise follows true cases of—visited campus. This year, professional paranormal investigator, Brian J. Cano, visited on Oct. 22.

PIRO also holds events for the larger campus community, including their Paranormal Awareness Week which is typically held a week before Halloween. This includes a divination fair, where students can have their tarot cards read, a pumpkin painting night, a showing of the movie “Scream” and a costume bash held on Oct. 31.

As for PIRO’s opinion on the paranormal activity within the campus community, Soletsky personally believes buildings on campus, including Maxcy, are haunted given their history and the tendency for students to “go looking” for activity, with things such as ouija boards.

“They definitely are haunted, and I just caution that the other students on campus just be respectful. That is our big thing, we just want to respect anything that may be there just because we are not there to infuriate spirits, we just want to talk to them.”

3 true-crime documentaries to watch this spooky season

BY ELISA D’EGIDIO
Student Life Editor

As the leaves change and the weather becomes colder, everyone enjoys cuddling up to watch movies during a time that is commonly known as “spooky season.” This year, instead of watching the typical Halloween movies promoted on your television, such as those listed from Freeform’s “31 Nights of Halloween,” I suggest something a bit spookier.

The thrill of watching true-crime docuseries shares the same suspense, gore and fear as a typical horror film except the scariest aspect is—it’s not fiction. What is scarier than a real man being wrongfully framed by the FBI for a terrorist act he did not commit or the tale of a man dismembering, hiding and executing multiple of his close friends and getting away with it for decades? “Halloween” and “The Exorcist”

are horrifying, but so is the real world.

“Manhunt: Deadly Games”

This series dives into the complex manhunt for the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Park bomber, Eric Robert Rudolph. At the Olympic Park bombing, one was killed and more than 100 people were injured. Richard Jewell, a security guard at the event, was hero-turned-terrorist by the media after the FBI reported he was a suspect of the crime. The series follows a sequence of connected bombings from Olympic Park to a 1997 abortion clinic and then a gay nightclub all while highlighting the abuse endured by Jewell from the public. Despite being cleared by the FBI, Jewell’s life was never the same. Rudolph, one of the FBI’s Top Ten Fugitives at the time, evaded the police for up to five years until ultimately being found and arrested in the woods in 2003.

You can watch “Manhunt: Deadly Games” on Netflix.

“The Jinx: The Life and Deaths of Robert Durst”

Robert Durst, real-estate millionaire, has been a suspect in a sequence of mysterious crimes for decades. The 2015 docuseries describes the three offenses he is accused of, including the disappearance of his first wife Kathie McCormack in 1982, the death of his friend Susan Berman in 2000 and the death of his neighbor Morris Black in 2000. The highly popularized six-episode series, ended with the finale gaining around one million views as Durst is seen confessing to the crime. Mumbling quietly to himself in a restroom, Durst is caught in the microphone saying, “What the hell did I do? Killed them all, of course.” Durst was finally convicted and sentenced to life in prison for the death of Berman this month.

Rotten Tomatoes gave the engrossing series a 95% rating. You can watch the series on HBO Max.

“The Staircase”

Michael Peterson, American author, was convicted of murdering his wife, Kathleen Peterson, in 2003. This 13-episode series explores his claim that she drunkenly fell down the stairs however medical examinations showed that not only were her fingerprints not on any of the glasses, but her blood alcohol content was low and that she had

been battered to death. Large amounts of blood were also found at the top of the stairs. The series uncovers lies, including his true sexuality and his connection to the death of Elizabeth Ratliff from 1985. In 2017, he entered an Alford Plea and maintained his innocence.

“The Staircase” is streaming on Netflix.



Graphic courtesy of Elisa D’Egidio.

Take these fall trips near the University of New Haven

BY KAYLA MUTCHLER
Editor-in-Chief

It's fall in New England and, if you've been here for a while, you know that it offers some beautiful and entertaining sights. With Halloween less than a week away, it's the perfect time to cram in some fall trips before the season ends. As college students, we're always looking for something to do, so here are some fall adventures around West Haven.

Jones Family Farms

Located in Shelton, Jones Family Farms is less than a half an hour away from the university. At this farm, you can enjoy a pumpkin patch, corn maze, winery, baked goods and more. The pumpkins are laid out in a field where you can view and buy some of the various shapes, sizes and colors available. Before you leave, make sure to try your luck to escape the corn maze.

Jones Family Farms is open Thursday through Sunday.

Fright Haven Haunted House

This Stratford haunted house

hosts over 20,000 square feet to explore, with three haunted attractions, each more terrifying than the next. This year, you can enjoy the new "Witching Hour" attraction. The story goes that the Duncan family has gone missing, and it seems that the cause is black magic. Enter if you dare and experience the same terror the Duncan family did.

There are also the "Psycho Ward 13" and "The Wasteland" attractions to trek through.

You can visit the haunted house on Friday, Saturday or Sunday.

Lyman Orchards

It is the perfect time to go apple and pumpkin picking, so head out to Lyman Orchards in Middlefield. You can purchase various size containers and head out to the rows of apple trees to pick some fresh fruit. If you want pumpkins, they offer orange, white and green.

Lyman Orchards also hosts the Apple Barrel Farm Market, where you can purchase fresh groceries, take wagon rides on a horse-drawn carriage, walk



A view from Sleeping Giant State Park, April 27, 2018, Hamden.
Photo courtesy of Flickr/GPA Photo Archive

through a corn maze and visit an ice cream shop.

Visitors can visit Lyman Orchards any day during the week.

Sleeping Giant State Park

If you want to see some of the best fall views the area has to

offer, check out Sleeping Giant State Park in Hamden. The park is named for its hills, where if you view it from certain angles, it looks as if a literal giant who fell asleep is in the mountain.

The peak of the mountain reach-

es 739 feet, so it is sure to offer a gorgeous view.

There are also various trails to hike along, a lookout tower and places to picnic and camp.

Mid-semester check-in: How do students feel?

BY SAIGE BATZA
Contributing Writer

We are officially midway through the fall semester; with the Homecoming events and midterms in the rearview, many of these events have forced students to reflect.

Many freshmen and transfer students who have had to adapt to the environment at the University of New Haven claim that it has been a stressful process. Returning students at the university claim the same, and that they need a change of pace in their everyday schedules.

In a recent Instagram poll to the university community 93% of students voted in support of implementing mental health break days.

Mikayla Brown, a health sciences sophomore said that midterms and class exams have been stressful lately. "Having fall break was a nice reward to the stressful week."

She said there should be more relaxing, mental health days on campus. "I think it's important that we can take a break to relax and enjoy time with family and friends."

Chelsey Abedrabbo, a psychology freshman, agreed with Brown, saying, "I am making



Outside of Maxcy Hall, West Haven.
Photo courtesy of Charger Bulletin/Jenelle Johnson

sure I do my best to study and keep up with my work," and that some days off from classes would be "nice to provide time to students as a way for them to destress."

Many students feel overwhelmed, whether that is because of the assignments in classes or other obligations outside of the classroom. There are many factors that contribute to the stress students feel throughout their time at school.

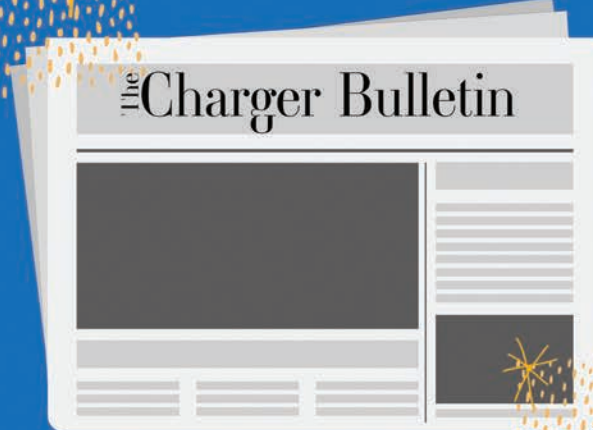
Eliana Vazquez, a junior communication student is feeling good coming back to school from the extended break. "It allowed me to have a mental break from all the work going on with school." Vazquez says that the workload instructors give is

sometimes a lot to handle, "especially when they have multiple projects due around the same time."

Although universities are not implementing scheduled mental health days for their students, it would be beneficial to have more relaxing days on campus. Though these days don't currently exist, there are campus resources to utilize. Students can reach out to Counseling and Psychological Services, which provides support for mental health issues that students may face throughout their time at the university. Health Services is another great resource available to students who are in need of support during this time.

POSITIONS OPEN TO
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Graphic courtesy of Kayla Mutchler.

The ultimate spooky, scary playlist for this Halloween

BY SHAYLA
HERNANDEZ
Contributing Writer

If you're anything like me, you've been in the spooky spirit since Sept. 1, anticipating all the Halloween festivities yet to begin. There's nothing quite like a seasonal playlist to bring in a perfect end to the month of October. Halloween is practically tomorrow, people! So don't forget to get into the spirit. Happy listening!

"Thriller" by Michael Jackson
"Thriller" by the "King of Pop" is one of the most iconic and distinctive Halloween anthems ever recorded. It's become a cult classic and its infectious rhythm is enough to get anyone hyped for the Halloween season.

"Calling All The Monsters" by China Anne McClain

This is my favorite song to play as soon as Oct. 1 approaches. Regardless of its intended adolescent Disney Channel audience, I will forever sing every word whenever it comes on.

"Somebody's Watching Me" by Rockwell

This track was released back in January of 1984. I'm personally



Graphic courtesy of Kayla Mutchler.

such a fan of the nostalgia that comes along with the production from that decade. The chorus is contagious and gets me in the mood to head to Spirit Halloween!

"Halloweentown Theme" by Retrospectre

"Halloweentown" is one of my favorite films to watch this time of year and the theme song makes me want to jump into a pile of leaves and carve a jack-o-

lantern.

"Goosebumps Theme" by Retrospectre

What's one more throwback? "Goosebumps" has a special place in my heart specifically because it would scare the crap out of me as a kid. This is arguably my favorite theme song to a TV series (aside from "Law & Order," of course).

"Poor Unfortunate Souls" by

The Jonas Brothers

This particular cover lives in the back of many minds, especially if you grew up watching Disney. It's not available on Spotify or Apple Music, but I personally listen to it on YouTube.

"Superstition" by Stevie Wonder

Stevie Wonder is a notable veteran in the music business, and this tune is one of the most well-known on his musical roster. "Superstition" unfolds a bunch of superstitions in a funky delivery.

"Come Little Children" by Erutan

Erutan really delivered a beautifully creepy performance of this song. I love the film "Hocus Pocus," and this particular artist really does Sarah Jessica Parker justice!

"I Put A Spell on You" by Bette Midler, Sarah Jessica Parker and Kathy Najimy

So, I know you're noticing a theme here, but I promise this is not a "Hocus Pocus"-themed playlist. Bette Midler's performance was stellar as much as it was sinister in this classic golden oldie.

"Remains of the Day" By Dan-

ny Elfman

If you've ever seen Tim Burton's "Corpse Bride," then you know this bone-chilling (no pun intended) anthem. As a composer, Elfman conveyed the ghoulish story of the main character in a captivating melodic way. This is hands-down a perfect addition to add to your October playlist!

"Friends on the Other Side" by Keith David

Number 11 on my playlist comes from the Disney film "The Princess and the Frog." The instrumentals and overall swing is impressive. If this tune sounds familiar, that's because it was a trending sound on TikTok for a time or two.

"Monster Mash" by Bobby "Boris" Pickett

Is it really October if you haven't heard this come up on the radio at least once? Whether you hear this at a kids Halloween party or hear it come on at the supermarket, there's no escaping the Monster Mash!

"This Is Halloween" by The Citizens of Halloween

The last but not least choice of mine is also by Elfman. When this comes on, forget it! You'll catch me decorating my entire dorm in orange and black.

No tricks, just treats: A guide to Halloween safety

BY NICOLE BIBEAU
Contributing Writer

Halloween is right around the corner, and while this is a time to wear costumes and eat pounds of candy, it is also a time to practice safety. College students are known to celebrate "Halloweek-end," and since this year's holiday lands on a Sunday, the weekend is sure to be filled with buzzing nightlife.

But do not fret—celebrating Halloween amid COVID-19 is still possible. Given that the virus tends to travel fastest in large gatherings, it is suggested to celebrate in small groups. When going out, have a face mask (and not just a Halloween mask) handy.

This Halloweekend, make sure to party smart. At many night clubs and bars in West Haven and New Haven, they require proof of vaccination or negative testing upon entry. Don't leave the house without some sort of proof. You should also carry hand sanitizer, limit the houses you visit and enter and stay home if you feel sick.

As always, never leave your beverage unattended because someone could take advantage of it. Know your alcohol consumption limit and do not drink and drive. Surround yourself

with trusted friends and peers to ensure you'll be in a safe environment. Also, you should always carry emergency cash and a phone.

With fall in full swing, it gets dark out earlier. Typically, most trick-or-treaters and party-going adults go out during the evening and nighttime. So, if you're guiding a child or going out with friends, be sure to utilize the buddy system at all times.

Halloween is also a prime time for mischief. From pranks, such as toilet paper thrown at houses and eggs thrown at cars, to people dressing up in frightening costumes, be cautious. Sometimes, pranks are taken too far.

Make sure to keep your head up and be aware of your surroundings at all times. Always stay close to the people you went out with. Also, wearing bright colors or reflective tape on costumes as extra protection will help drivers and other pedestrians be aware of your presence.

You should not appropriate cultures for costumes or party themes. The Myatt Center for Diversity and Inclusion recently sent out an in-depth email regarding this.

Have fun and have a safe Halloween.



Graphic courtesy of Elisa D'Egidio.

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Printed by Valley Publishing Co.
Derby, CT

Since 1938, The Charger Bulletin has been the official student news source of the University of New Haven.

Recipient of 1st Place - ASPA Annual Contest/Review for Scholastic Yearbooks, Magazines and Newspapers, 2020.

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How seasonal depression can affect you

BY STEPHEN GANGI
Contributing Writer

Imagine the emotions and feelings that follow a summer day as you lay on the beach with a good book. Most people call this happiness. This experience relates to how each season is known to affect one's emotions—positive or negative—and is referred to as Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD).

SAD could take place at any time of the year, and it affects everyone differently. Symptoms of SAD include low energy, sleeping problems, difficulty concentrating and feelings of hopelessness, guilt and worthlessness. Less common symptoms include insomnia, weight loss, anxiety, agitation and a poor appetite. According to the Mayo Clinic, most cases occur in late fall and early winter, receding once the sun comes out and the

weather becomes warmer.

In order to better understand SAD, six participants offered their opinions on the topic. Each of the participants agreed that SAD is most related to the winter season. Two participants have been previously diagnosed with SAD, one following the common occurrence and the other the opposite, allowing insight from both sides. At the beginning of each interview, the participants were asked their favorite and least favorite seasons. 67% of people said that fall was their favorite and when it came to their least favorite seasons, 50% agreed winter was their least favorite season.

Abby Aiello, a sophomore majoring in psychology who has been diagnosed with SAD, said, "The cold is too much. The snow and the ice are a bother and just add a hassle to each day."

"The only word I can think of to describe this season is glum,"

said Aiello. "Everything is kinda gross and wet and you are stuck inside all the time, and it's boring since you are limited to indoor places if you aren't a fan of skiing or doing winter sports."

Another determining factor for some participants was the clothing worn during colder seasons. Skylynn Taylor, a sophomore majoring in forensic science, said that she prefers the summer season because it allows her to go out in what she is confident wearing, and enjoy the warmth on her skin.

Amber Singh, a sophomore majoring in computer science, said that summer was her least favorite season because of the societal push to look physically fit, and, due to the weather, having to wear less clothing than she would prefer. Because of this, fall and winter were more enjoyable for her. She said that during these seasons, she could cover up and focus on comfort



Trees outside of the Beckerman Rec Center, West Haven.
Photo courtesy of Charger Bulletin/Jenelle Johnson

rather than the amount of skin she was showing.

Seasonal Affective Disorder can often be overlooked by people who aren't aware of the symptoms. Make sure to listen to your body if you begin to feel slightly off in upcoming seasons. Reach out to a medical professional or counselor to share your concerns, so proper treatment can begin.

Students may access Counseling and Psychological Services, located in Charger Plaza at 203-932-7333.

From costume to party, have yourself a harmless Halloween

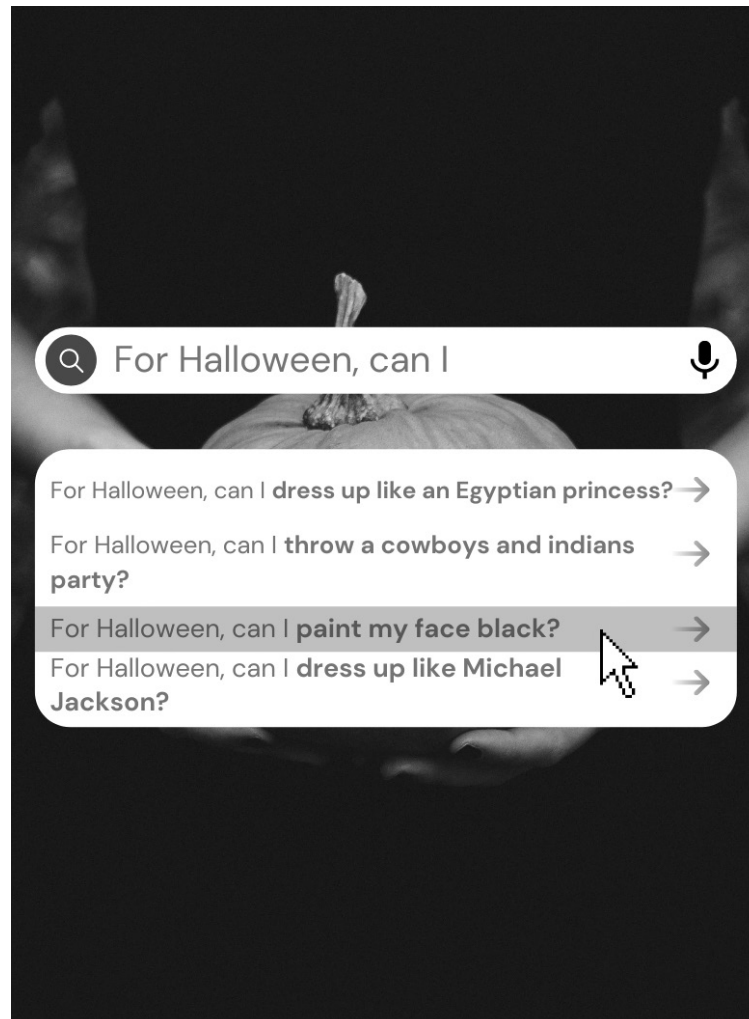
BY ISABELLE HAJEK
Opinions Editor

Halloween is a time many look forward to. Unfortunately, it comes with a foreboding undertone for many communities. While some prepare for a fun night out with friends and plan cute, Instagram-worthy photo ops, others hold their breath waiting for their identity to be degraded, reinforcing harmful stereotypes through crude and disdainful costumes and themed parties

The harm behind cultural appropriation on Halloween goes deeper than the celebration itself. Minority groups have a long history of having their culture and appearance exploited for white entertainment. From minstrel shows propagating Black stereotypes by white actors in ash-darkened faces to the fashion industry stealing deeply cultural designs to degrade into a source of income; minority groups in the U.S. have had to witness their culture be ostracized from American culture except for when it is lucrative.

Generations have been subject to this pattern of oppression. Halloween is one more burden these communities have to bear in a long history of harm.

Examples of costumes that appropriate cultures include "King of Egypt," "El Hombre Calavera," Native American regalia, Geisha and "Hey Amigo," among others. The non-exhaustive list of offensive costumes doesn't end with cultural stereotypes; others include prisoners, mental institution patients, transphobic motifs,



Graphic courtesy of Isabelle Hajek.

homeless people and deceased individuals. Using the stories and experiences of disenfranchised and disadvantaged populations is inherently offensive because it degrades individuals from these groups. Each costume takes a stereotype of a culture and exaggerates it, either for comedy, or sexualization.

This sexualization is increasingly problematic, especially when analyzing sexual violence perpetrated against particular communities. Minority groups,

mentally ill individuals and prisoners are demographics at high risk of experiencing sexual violence and exploitation. To relegate these identities as "exotic" or with the "crazy in the head, freak in the bed" mentality, is to enforce these narratives into collective social consciousness.

But being conscious of how your costume, themes or decorations affect others doesn't need to hinder your Halloween experience.

Here are some simple guide-

lines for putting together a harmless and fun Halloween costume:

Don't wear costumes that aren't from a culture you grew up in and have experienced. And that doesn't mean you took an ancestry test and found out you're .5% of a race; it means that is the culture you grew up in.

If you are dressing up as a character who is a different race or ethnicity, don't try to emulate their physical traits, such as their hair, skin tone and facial features. Instead, focus on the unique traits of the clothes they wear or props they have, and be conscious of the characters' own identity, as long as they are not culturally rooted.

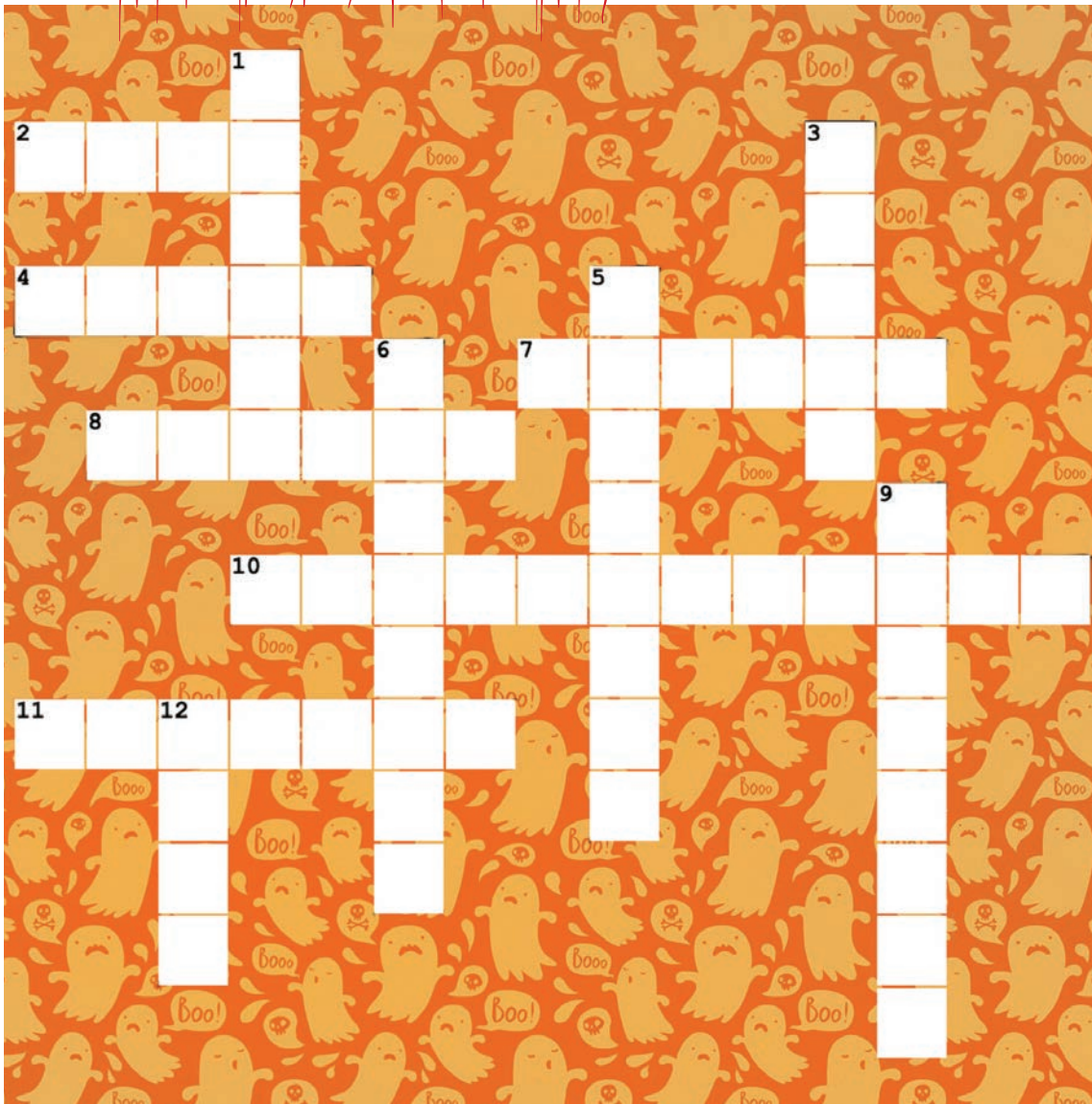
Use your resources. A simple Google search of "is ___ an offensive costume/party theme" should give you the information you need. If Google isn't your go-to or you can't find the answer, reach out to campus resources such as the Myatt Center for Diversity and Inclusion at (203) 932-7427.

When in doubt, don't do it. If there is a possibility of harming someone, the best option is to choose another costume or party theme.

Halloween isn't the time to show how much you appreciate a culture, there are year round opportunities to do so, like celebrating heritage months. Halloween is the night for repping your fandom and candy-induced comas. If it is too hard for you to come up with a costume or party theme that is not harmful, then don't participate in the night and foul it for everyone around you and just admit you don't care about other people.

CROSSWORD

Fill in this Halloween-themed crossword!



Across

- 2. Paranormal organization on campus.
- 4. Michael's surname.
- 7. Meaning "evil or morally wrong."
- 8. Movie with the character "Ghost-face."
- 10. The unofficial name college students call the weekend of Halloween.
- 11. Loves blood and hates garlic.

Down

- 1. A typically scary genre.
- 3. What skeletons are made out of.
- 5. An iconic song from "The Rocky Horror Picture Show."
- 6. Witches make brew in this.
- 9. A creature that howls at the moon.
- 12. Used as a covering for COVID-19 and Halloween.

WORD SEARCH

Find these words in our fall-themed word search!

Leaves, Autumn, Harvest, Pumpkins, Apples, Sweater, Jacket, Cider, Gourd, Acorn, Rake, September

