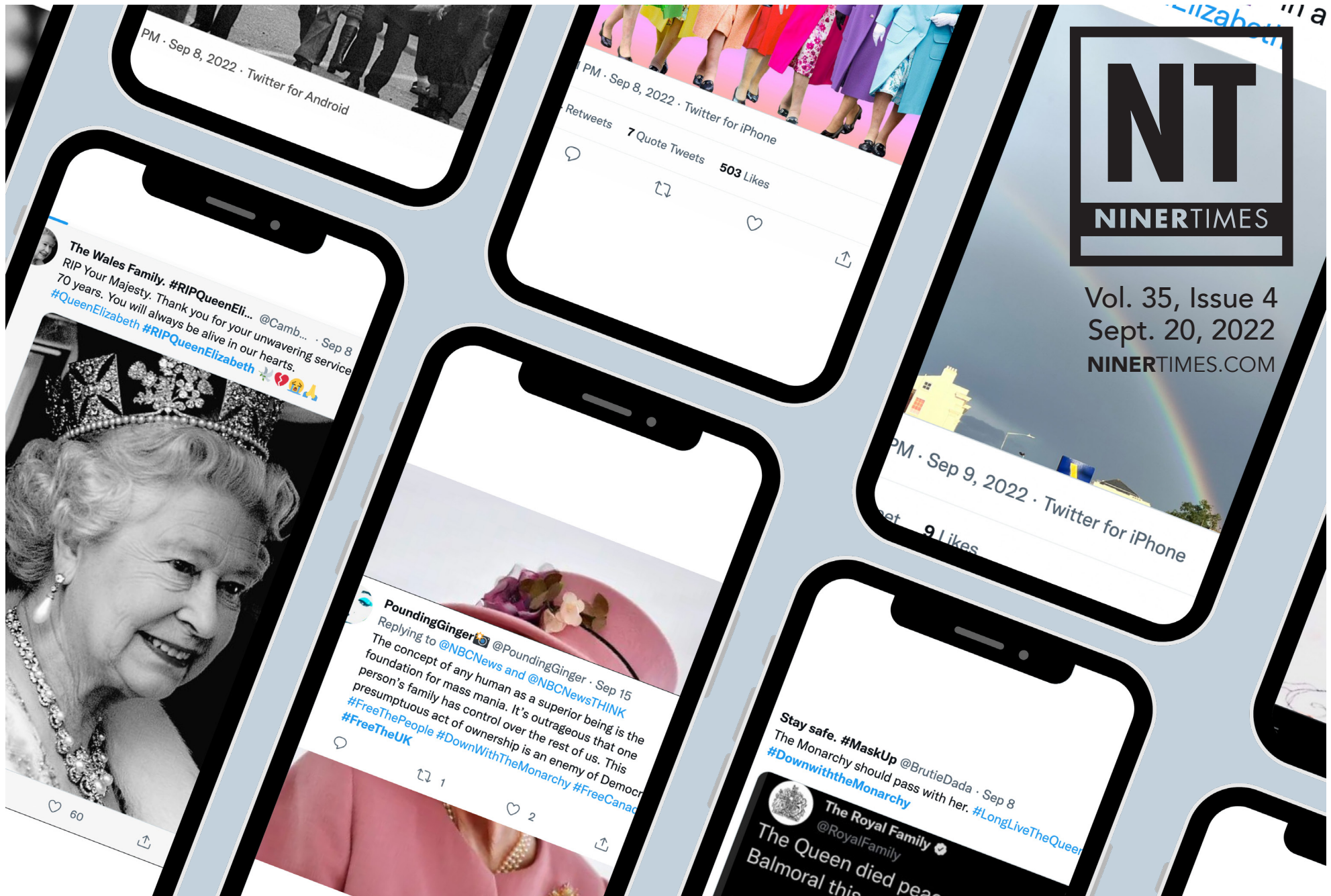




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THE TEA ABOUT CELEBRITY
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Tweets posted regarding Queen Elizabeth II following her passing.

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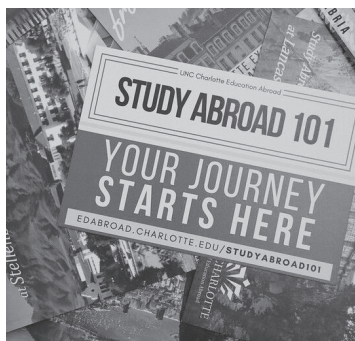
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Concept of the 49th Acre pavilion
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Queen Elizabeth II
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Guide to voting for SGA elections

by Kathleen Cochran
Asst. News Editor

Student Government Association (SGA) will hold its fall 2022 elections from Sept. 21 at 8 a.m. to Sept. 22 at 5 p.m.

The SGA election is for the freshman class president and SGA senators. The voting will be held all online at vote.charlotte.edu. Students will need a Ninernet login to sign in and vote.

Emily Hoyle is running unopposed for freshman class president.

“My vision for this position is to be social and involved with the students and the campus to achieve goals that ultimately promote a close-knit community within the campus. As freshman class president, I would do everything I can to improve mental health resources along with sexual assault awareness for all students on campus, so nobody fights alone,” Hoyle said via sga.charlotte.edu/emily-hoyle.

Ten candidates are running for underclassmen at-large senator: Abdoulaye Ndiaye, Abigail Kingston, Carl Rothrock, Dawson Jarman, DJ

Green, Heber Gamez, Jake Schattin, Lery Rmah, Meklit Dawit and Mike Bolden.

“As underclassmen at-large senator, I want to be known as a leader who listens to criticism from his fellow students as a way to make me a better leader,” Bolden said via sga.charlotte.edu/mike-bolden. “Treat each student’s concerns as a priority. Make each student feel wanted, appreciated, respected, and represented with honesty and perseverance. Stand up for my fellow students and give them the tools to speak. Help them understand that their voice needs to be the loudest voice, and if they need my help, then that’s what I’ll be there for.”

Nine candidates are running for upperclassmen at-large senator: Amir Bush, Cade Stewart, Clay Freeze, James Citrin, Joe Wholey, Joseph Morris, Kennedy Rodriguez, Ronni Lilly and Thomas Duke.

“Thriving communities need the input of their citizens,” Lilly said via sga.charlotte.edu/ronni-lilly-0. “I am a good candidate for this position

because I have a passion for being involved in the community and making it a better place by exploring issues and developing ways to solve them. As a senator, I would serve as an engaging advocate and liaison. More emphasis would be on collaborating with students in other programs/colleges, as well as other decision-makers in positions of authority.”

Matrim Habib Istafanos and Carlos Hilger are running for the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences senator.

“I wish to represent my fellow students and bring their interests to the forefront of decision-making on campus,” Hilger said via sga.charlotte.edu/carlos-hilger. “I hope to help amplify the voice of marginalized students and represent their interests.”

Jenna Bess is running unopposed for William States Lee College of Engineering senator.

“In this position, I hope to broker communication between engineering students and the Student Government,”

Bess said via sga.charlotte.edu/jenna-bess. “While I plan to represent all students in the William States Lee College of Engineering, I hope my standing as a freshman will allow me to help new students specifically, as they are still navigating their way around campus life and may face issues that upperclassmen don’t see.”

Dominic Kruz is running unopposed for Belk College of Business senator.

“My vision for this position is not only to be an advocate for the students of the Belk College of business but also a contact point for incoming freshman and transfer students,” Kruz said via sga.charlotte.edu/dominic-kurz. “If I get this position, I hope to help my fellow students in any way possible.”

The candidates were announced on Sept. 7 and have been campaigning. To read more about each candidate and their platform, please see their website: sga.charlotte.edu/elections/fall-elections-candidates.

Niner Transit experiences staff shortages

by Monique Delagey
Managing Editor

Niner Transit has had an increase in staff shortages on campus. This issue has led to the discontinuation of the Gold Line service.

As a result, the only bus routes



Green Route bus on campus
Photo by Isabella Lain

available now for students to take are the Green and Silver, with an additional service of the Purple route for students in expanded housing.

“During the spring of 2022, our transit partners, Academy, had trouble keeping up staffing levels,” Katie Turner, marketing director for auxiliary services, said. “Staff were assigned to the Silver and Green routes first since those routes cover nearly all of campus, including stops in close proximity to Gold Line stops.”

When the Gold Route was no longer available, UNC Charlotte’s bus tracking app, Passio Go!, notified students of this change to the bus lines.

“Instead of [spreading] staff too thin and continuing to have less reliable Gold

Line service, the decision was made to discontinue that service temporarily,” Turner said. “[This will allow] staffing resources to maintain frequent and reliable service on the Silver, Green and Purple routes,” Turner said.

In data for ‘Ridership by Route’ trends in the years before COVID-19, bus ridership for the Gold Route each year decreased. These data trends resulted in stopping Gold Route buses, but it still meant a difference for students and staff.

UNC Charlotte’s Parking and Transportation Services (PaTS) staff have made sacrifices to keep the routes running.

“Some office staff who are not routine drivers have gone into the field to drive shuttles to fill staffing gaps. PaTS staff

have been extremely dedicated to doing all they can to make sure operations continue as normally as possible so students can have a great on-campus experience again,” Turner said.

If enough staff is hired, Niner Transit hours and routes will likely be restored to their original state.

PaTS Assistant Director for Transportation Michael Christenbury said, “We are beginning to see more candidates for our posted positions, and I’m hopeful we’ll see continued improvement in this area.”

This semester’s changes in bus routes have caused current students to change their original routes from the previous year.

UNC Charlotte's response to monkeypox

by Emma Payton
Contributor

UNC Charlotte has implemented prevention methods to help battle the monkeypox virus outbreak in the United States.

There have been no confirmed monkeypox cases on the UNC Charlotte campus. However, in Mecklenburg County, there are 174 monkeypox cases confirmed as of Sept. 15, 2022, making it the most infected county in North Carolina.

Although concerns are growing around the country about the new virus, UNC Charlotte and the city are creating mandates and ample opportunities to get vaccinated and learn about prevention methods for the monkeypox virus.

Dr. Daniel Janies, professor of bioinformatics and genomics and the co-director of CIPHER (The Center for Computational Intelligence to Predict Public Health Risks), believes that the Charlotte campus is not at risk of a campus outbreak.

"If you avoid high-risk behaviors, the risk of contracting monkeypox is very low," Janies said. "There is evidence that monkeypox can be transmitted [by] respiratory droplets. However, new cases of monkeypox are coming down from a mid-August peak. That indicates that people are lowering their risk due to intimate contact, and there is no

widespread respiratory transmission."

The monkeypox virus, closely related to the virus that causes smallpox, can spread through physical contact, according to the CDC.

Smallpox is a virus that has been dormant due to vaccinations since the 1970s, with fevers and pustules being the most common symptoms.

The monkeypox symptoms typically last from two to four weeks and can be spread by direct, close and intimate contact or from mother to baby in the womb through the placenta.

According to the CDC, flu-like symptoms usually begin before a rash develops one to four days later. Although in some cases, the rash can develop first.

Contracting the monkeypox virus is possible if direct contact is made with objects or surfaces that those infected with the virus may have touched, along with close contact with those infected.

New prevention methods for the virus have also aided in decreasing case numbers. For example, the CDC has made prevention methods known to slow the spread of monkeypox, such as safer sex and making informed choices.

The CDC stated that vaccination is an important tool in preventing the spread and approved two vaccines to protect

against monkeypox. JYNNEOS, the primary vaccine, was created to protect against both monkeypox and smallpox viruses, according to the CDC. The ACAM2000 vaccine is a CDC-approved alternative vaccine.

On the Niner Nation Cares website, UNC Charlotte released a monkeypox FAQs section containing information that students and faculty may need to know about the virus.

[The monkeypox virus is] very rare," Janies said. "There have been only 400 cases in North Carolina and 22,000 in the U.S. in the current outbreak."

UNC Charlotte is currently not offering the monkeypox vaccine on campus due to a limited supply. However, the University has requested to be a vaccination site.

There are many opportunities and places to get the monkeypox vaccines, including the Pride festival near N. Tryon Street that occurred on Aug. 20-21.

"As soon as I walked in, there were areas on both sides with people asking if I wanted the vaccine," Colby Erwin, a fourth-year student and Pride festival attendee, said.

The federal partners working with the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services and Mecklenburg

County Public Health were working at the Pride festival to distribute vaccines. Erwin said that the vaccine distributors were understanding and peaceful if people refused to get the vaccine. Erwin said they ended their response with "Happy Pride!"

"Anyone, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity, who has been in close, personal contact with someone who has monkeypox is at risk," according to the CDC.

At the beginning of the fall 2022 semester, Chancellor Sharon L. Gaber sent an email to all students welcoming them to the semester on Aug. 17, with a statement at the bottom about Charlotte's involvement with the prevention of monkeypox.

"The University is working closely with public health officials to monitor the monkeypox virus. However, it is important to remember monkeypox is a rare disease that is not easily spread and is rarely fatal."

If an individual is diagnosed with monkeypox, the University suggests returning home and isolating. If isolation is not possible, find a place to isolate and not attend class or work. The CDC has also provided guidelines for complete isolation and cleaning instructions to prevent spreading.

The 49th Acre opening in summer 2023

by Daniella Amaya
Contributor

The 49th Acre, Charlotte's new tailgating lot, is set to be completed by summer 2023 after being delayed by four months due to permits.

Chancellor Sharon Gaber announced the beginning of the construction of the new tailgating lot in February 2022. The new tailgating location was supposed to open before the start of the fall 2022 football season, but it has since been pushed back.

"There was a four-month delay due to city and state permits," said Rich Steele, the associate vice chancellor for facilities management. "We are also waiting on

the Army Core of Engineers to give a wetland review in order for us to start installing utilities."

The review is set to be completed on Nov. 1. The opening will be in summer 2023, ready for the next football season.

"As a first-year Niner, I was hoping for the new lot to be open for the start of the football season," graduate student Isabella Taylor said.

The new lot will accommodate 2,500 students, and an entertainment pavilion will be added to the location. The Division of Student Affairs manages this new campus space.

"We want to enhance the student experience," Steele said.

The pavilion will be used for wconcerts and banquets before and after the games. The lot's location will be at the right corner of the football stadium to allow attendees more accessible access to the football stadium.

An anonymous \$10 million donation was given to improve the student's overall athletic experience. The new tailgating lot is set on a three-acre outdoor space to help with the expected increase in attendance at the games. All the money from the donation will be

used towards the 49th Acre construction.

The University accepted many submissions for the name of the tailgating space through a naming contest. The submissions were narrowed down and voted on. Finally, UNC Charlotte decided on "The 49th Acre." Graduate student Ethan Hayes thought of this name.

Until the new location is complete, football game attendees can choose between four different lots to tailgate, including Navy Lot 26, Red Lot 25, Blue Lot 7 and West Deck rooftop.

The tea about celebrity worship and the Queen's passing

by Jessica Danesi
Opinion Editor

When it comes to famous figures, many people are devoted to social media. Sometimes they can be a bit obsessed with a favorite musician, actor or TV series. This can be harmful because no one should be viewed as perfect, especially not politicians that control how societies are governed. People should not be seen as better than others purely because of their wealth or status. The recent passing of Queen Elizabeth II on Sept. 8, 2022, exemplifies celebrity worship culture and the dangers that it brings.

While her death was met with plenty of mocking jokes online, others expressed their mourning, speaking as if they knew her personally. Some even jumped to her defense when they saw others criticizing her.

Through social media, fan culture has become more intense and personal. Social media enables people to post anytime for the world to see. This has benefits such as raising awareness about current events, spreading creativity and communicating with friends. However, there are also downsides to its accessibility. Social media users sometimes see people with large followings like celebrities, influencers and politicians as mythical people who live in a separate world.

We don't see everything about famous people's lives. Regardless, some fans form parasocial relationships where they feel that they're viewing the full picture. This obsession with famous figures we see online is a part of celebrity worship culture. More specifically, parasocial relationships are one-sided connections where the 'ordinary' person feels like they genuinely know an online personality because they can see them online. However, social media is often only a

surface-level view of someone's life.

Despite the imbalanced nature of parasocial relationships, fans become attached to the figures they idolize. We often see celebrities as perfect and better than ordinary people. They live glamorous lives defined by wealth, status and popularity, but popular figures make mistakes like everyone else. Social media makes it easy to track what people have said and done. Even when celebrities are exposed for doing controversial or harmful acts, fans still jump to their defense. They're often blinded because they believe that they know the person and don't want to be disappointed by them.



In the case of Queen Elizabeth II, the nature of fans' parasocial connections is a bit different. The British royal family is a hot topic for those inside and outside of the United Kingdom. Many people

view royalty as if it comes from fairy tales and nothing more. People discuss the outfits the family wears, their relationship drama and how cute their babies are. There have been TV shows and movies that sensationalize their lives. What often becomes overlooked are their political decisions.

The British royal family members are politicians, not mere celebrities. They possess a long history of colonialism, imperialism and genocide, to name a few. For many, the British monarchy is a symbol of colonization. While it's true that over 20 countries gained independence during Queen Elizabeth II's reign, some feel that there still have not been enough reparations made to former colonies.

Regions such as the Middle East display minimal public mourning for the former queen. Many people continue to hold Britain accountable for colonial actions that formed a lot of the region's borders and led to many of its modern conflicts. For example, Gaza called on King Charles III to 'correct' British mandate decisions that oppressed Palestinians, according to a Sept. 11, 2022 report from PBS.

It's crucial to remember that the royal family members are real people who make mistakes that have devastating consequences because of their power. No human should be revered and believed to be perfect – especially not politicians who hold people's lives in their hands.

Moreover, celebrity worship culture can have real-life consequences. People who idolize celebrities typically see them as better than those in the middle and working classes. This can be because of financial success, power and a large online presence. The lives of famous people are heavily discussed in social media and mass media.



Furthermore, it's also a popular topic of discussion in real life since celebrities and popular culture are a common ground where most people know at least something about a topic. At its core, these conversations are harmless. It only becomes a problem when people take it to the extreme – insisting that famous individuals can do no wrong or that they are superior due to their wealth and class. Socioeconomic status should not be the sole signifier of success.

Queen Elizabeth II's passing demonstrates how celebrity worship culture can negatively impact us. Famous figures shouldn't be seen as flawless due to their popularity, and no one should be superior to others simply because of their status. As we navigate our lives, we must use critical thinking while evaluating which politicians to support and which celebrities to admire.

Twenty One Pilots ‘The Icy Tour’

Photos by Jade Suszek

Twenty One Pilots is currently on a United States tour titled ‘The Icy Tour’ named after their newest studio album title “Scaled and Icy”. The tour stopped at the

Spectrum Center in Charlotte on Sept. 4, 2022. The band performed 23 songs from their entire discography and played an additional two during the encore.



Twenty One Pilots visit Charlotte

by Jade Suszek
Asst. Photo Editor

Twenty One Pilots started ‘The Icy Tour’ on Aug. 18, 2022, and they played Charlotte, N.C., on Sept. 4, 2022.

I was able to see them when they performed at Spectrum Center in downtown Charlotte.

Every concert I have had the chance to see has been a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, but that night left me in awe.

As my first time seeing a concert at Spectrum Center, it was a great experience. I do wish I had done more research on the venue as I didn’t realize the enormity of the location. Spectrum Center is the home for NBA’s Charlotte Hornets during basketball season.

Once I finally got settled into my seat, it was about 30 minutes before the opening act was Peter McPoland. McPoland is an alternative indie artist who started releasing songs in 2018.

I had recently found McPoland on Spotify, but he sounded better in the studio recording than in his live performance. However, he put on an energetic and entertaining performance.

Twenty One Pilots has a storyline throughout their music about the fictional city of Dema. They played into it as they entered the stage, integrating a premade video into reality. Each song had an integration of the audience, video and pyrotechnics.

The video showed band members, Tyler Joseph and Josh Dun, wearing black ski masks in a desolate snowy location. They walked through a door, much like the Monsters Inc. closet doors, onto the stage at Spectrum Center.

If I weren’t a Twenty One Pilots fan, I would have thought I was at a cult meeting.

The concert was divided into different portions. The first section of the concert was what you would imagine a traditional concert to be.

In the next section, Joseph entered the audience to play the piano on a small stage in the middle of the pit. Performing in the audience rather than relying on

giant screens to view the artists created an engaging experience.

They created a medley of their published music from 2009 up to now, as

a way to thank the fans who have been there since the beginning of their musical career.

Another aspect of audience participation was during “Mulberry Street,” where Tyler asked different areas of the arena to turn on their phone flashlight with different words correlating to the song, creating a wave of flashlights during the performance. This was definitely my favorite part of the concert.

He used this portion of the performance to talk to the audience about how he envisioned audience participation. He also mentioned how he dreamt a hornet had stung him the night before the concert.

In the next part of the performance, Joseph then jumped onto a mattress held by fans in the pit, and the mattress surfed back onto the main stage. He was reliant on audience members to successfully make it back to the stage. I felt it showed how much trust he had in their fans.

There was also a campfire section, where all the band members, including Joseph, sat around a fire for a few songs. The campfire gave an intimate feel to the concert.

As the band began playing their final songs, Tyler came back into the audience and sang “Ride” within sections of the arena. He actually sang less than 5 feet away from me during the song.

I almost cried out of happiness for being able to experience him singing so close to me.

The concert ended with “Trees,” which is known for being a slower song in their discography, but they truly went out with a bang with lots of confetti, fire and smoke.

It was a night to remember, and if you get the chance to see them on any of their numerous stops in the future, do not hesitate to buy tickets.



Twenty One Pilots concert in Charlotte
Photo by Jade Suszek

This or that: College gameday edition

by Annie Turk
Contributor

It is the prime time for college football, and along with that comes cookouts, tailgates and game day parties. This fall, 49er fans finally have the opportunity to go to athletic events without any COVID-19 restrictions, and now we get to make up for the lost time. With encouragement from the University and the new official student section, CLT Gold Mine, many students are showing up to support our fellow student-athletes. So how do you get ready to show your Niner Pride at the games.

1. Reusable cup or disposable cup?

Shouting “Go Niners” at the top of your lungs is sure to work up a thirst. Are you the kind of person who comes with their own reusable gameday cup, or do you grab whatever disposable cup, such as a Red Solo Cup, you can find at the tailgate?

2. Clear bag or phone case wallet?

Although we may get into the events free as students, the food, drinks and merch will surely cost you extra. Do

you like carrying your cards and other little things in a cute bag or fanny pack (clear or small enough so you can safely get into the games), or opt for the easy-to-carry phone case wallet?

3. Cheering fanatic or sports spectator?

Many students love the atmosphere of the games – the loud cheering, the smell of popcorn and being surrounded by people in the student section who love the school as much as they do. Do you like to be a part of that action, or do you enjoy focusing on the game itself and hanging out in a more relaxed spot?

4. Official merch or team colors?

Picking out the right gameday outfit is essential. Do you wear the official UNC Charlotte merch, or just go for the signature green, gold and white school colors? You really can’t go wrong either way (unless, of course, you are rooting for the other team).

5. Classic or DIY accessories?

College students are the most creative when it comes to gameday accessorizing. From beaded necklaces to construction helmets painted green, UNC Charlotte fans know how to show their support. Do you like the classic accessories or coming up with unique gameday gear?

Charlotte fans are the best fans! No matter how you choose to support the 49ers on gameday, we all have one thing in common – Niner Pride running through our veins. If you haven’t had the opportunity to go to any UNC Charlotte sporting event yet, now is your chance. Our school is filled with incredibly talented athletes, and the games are sure to be a blast!

DEAR NINER TIMES, What are some tips for applying to a study abroad program?

by Sylvia Srinivass
Staff Writer

Studying abroad is the highlight of many students’ college experiences. However, the glamor of life abroad isn’t possible without preparation at home. If you are interested in studying abroad, here are four tips to make this process as smooth as possible.

1. Start early

It is advised that you start the pre-departure process at least nine months before your program’s start date. By starting the process ahead of time, you give yourself more time to gather and prepare the necessary materials, seek advice and ask questions.

2. Figure out your program criteria

There are many factors to consider when choosing a study abroad program, such as location and cost. Certain programs hosted by affiliate providers are more expensive than others, such as exchange programs. Prepare a realistic budget for this experience and choose a program accordingly. UNC Charlotte’s Office of Education Abroad (OEA) has a program finder that lets you filter programs by dates, location and major. Once you have found a program that meets your criteria, the application process can begin.

3. Know why you chose your program

There is no right or wrong reason to study abroad, but you should be able to explain why you chose a certain program. Do you want to go to a certain place to connect with your cultural heritage, because of a prestigious university or because it relates to your field of study? Be prepared to explain why this specific program best fits your academic, professional and personal goals.

4. Stay organized

You will be communicating with many different parties during this process, such as your academic advisor and an OEA advisor. Additionally, the host university may require documents and transcripts as a part of your application. There are many moving parts, so keeping a list of meetings and action items will help keep you organized.

Studying abroad is a transformative experience that you will remember forever. The preparation process may feel long and tedious, but the end goal will be well worth it.



Students in the crowd of the football game against William & Mary on Sept. 2, 2022
Photo by Chris Crews

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Why Disney remakes have been lackluster

THE LIVE ACTION DISNEY REMAKES HAVE LARGELY BEEN LESS THAN MEDIOCRE - HERE'S WHY

by Jack Hale
Staff Writer

Animated Disney movie posters and their latest live-action remakes
All images courtesy of IMDB

Since 2015, Disney has been consistently pumping out mediocre live-action remakes and adaptations of their classic animated films, such as “The Lion King” and “Pete’s Dragon.” and Disney announced early in the 2010s that they would make live-action remakes of almost all of their classic films. While Disney made live-action remakes before, such as “Alice in Wonderland” and “101 Dalmatians,” the reactions were fairly negative, as fans felt Disney lacked creativity and was money hungry. Fourteen films later and these criticisms remain true.

I have not seen every single remake, so the ones I haven’t seen could totally change my mind and excite me for future adaptations, but I doubt that. I am going to try my hardest not to bash these films. My goal is to explain why the majority of these films receive backlash and why so many people do not enjoy them.

The biggest issue I have with these films is that they are barely original. The only purpose that a remake should have is to change something from the original source. It could be as simple as

changing the time and setting, like “The Magnificent Seven,” a remake of the incredible Akira Kurosawa film, “The Seven Samurai.” Instead of using samurai in feudal Japan, the characters were cowboys and robbers in the American West. You could even go deeper and change the aspects of the story like “The Departed” did with “Infernal Affairs.” Providing social aspects and strengthened character development, Scorsese stayed true to the original story while also giving us something unique that we wouldn’t get from watching the original film.

Very few of these remakes have done that, “The Jungle Book” and “Mulan” being the only two that come to mind. The problem with “Mulan” is that the character changes completely derail the story and any relatability to the character. Every other remake followed almost the same story beats as the original. Any attempt to change or add to the story feels hollow and insincere. Whether it’s adding to Geppetto’s backstory in “Pinocchio” or depth to Belle and her father in “Beauty and the Beast,” none of

them add anything to the film except a bloated runtime with atrocious pacing across the board.

A distinct feature missing from these films is the animation, obviously because they are live-action and rely on CGI for all of the fantastical elements. A key aspect of classic Disney films is the fantastical element that can be visualized best through animation. When you take the animation away and replace it with humans and inconsistent CGI, it takes a lot of enjoyment out of the story. This is most notable in “The Lion King,” which heavily employs anthropomorphism so that we can better relate to them. While The 2019 release’s CGI is excellent, it takes out all of the emotion from the film. This is also notable in “Lady and the Tramp,” “Pinocchio” and “Beauty and the Beast.”

To take another look at some positives, “The Jungle Book” balances great CGI and new elements that add to the story while staying faithful to the source material. I also appreciate different adaptations and spin-offs, such as the “Maleficent” films and “Cruella.” While

they aren’t well-received films, they focus on various aspects of the story they are based on, and I have to give them credit for that. Many of the films are also very vibrant and colorful, specifically “Aladdin” and parts of “Mulan.” It still doesn’t make up for the lack of emotion, blandness and wooden acting, but it is something.

So if the studio never planned on differentiating these remakes from their originals, what was the point? Just a quick and easy paycheck. Instead of making an effort for original films to become classics in the future, Disney instead relied on our nostalgia for childhood favorites to get people to pay to watch the same movie again, but worse. It is nothing short of a cash grab and shows that Disney is running out of ideas and have no plans on stopping soon. “The Little Mermaid,” “Peter Pan & Wendy,” “Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs” and many more are all getting live-action adaptations soon. I will give these films a chance, but I am keeping my expectations low and hoping that these issues will be resolved.



Niner in the minors

WITH THE MINOR LEAGUE BASEBALL CAMPAIGN COMING TO A CLOSE WE LOOK AT HOW THESE FORMER 49ERS FARED

by Sam Perry
Staff Writer

Charlotte baseball had seven former players participate in the 2022 Minor League Baseball (MiLB) season. At the beginning of the 2022 season, the 49ers had three players in MiLB, but after this year's draft, the number grew to seven.

With the campaign coming to a close, we look at the Niners in the minors.

MiLB Vets

Josh Maciejewski: New York Yankees

Maciejewski split his season between Yankees Double-A affiliate the Somerset Patriots and Triple-A affiliate the Scranton Wilkes-Barre RailRiders before going down with an injury in early July.

The New York Yankees drafted Maciejewski in the 10th round of the 2018 MLB draft. He won a MiLB.com Organizational All-Star award for the Yankees in 2019.

This season, he made 14 of his 15 pitching appearances with Somerset, posting a 2.88 ERA while holding a 4-1 win-loss record over 34.1 IP and striking out 48 opposing batters.

Maciejewski is looking to heal and rehabilitate his injury to come back stronger next season.

Aaron McKeithan: St. Louis Cardinals

McKeithan spent time with Cardinals Single-A affiliate Palm Beach Cardinals and High-A affiliate Peoria Chiefs, playing 84 games.

McKeithan was drafted in the 16th round of the 2021 MLB draft by the St. Louis Cardinals.

During his 84 games played in the 2022 season, he batted .275, scoring 29 runs. McKeithan recorded five home runs, 13 doubles, 30 RBIs and walked 34 times at the plate.

Bryce McGowan: Colorado Rockies

McGowan was selected in the 18th round of the 2021 MLB draft by the Colorado

Rockies.

McGowan spent all season with Rockies Single-A affiliate the Fresno Grizzlies before being assigned to High-A affiliate Spokane Indians right before the season ended.

In 30 appearances for the Grizzlies, McGowan threw 32.2 innings striking out 39 batters while going 2-0 but posted a 7.44 ERA.

Rookies

Nate Furman: Cleveland Guardians

Last season, Furman led the 49ers in batting average (.371) and runs scored (67). He was the first Charlotte player selected going in the fourth round to the Cleveland Guardians.

After signing with the Guardians, Furman hasn't been assigned to any teams.

David McCabe: Atlanta Braves

McCabe battled through injuries with Charlotte, playing in only 42 games but still had a tremendous impact posting a .513 OBP, hitting 16 home runs while knocking in 52 RBI.

The Atlanta Braves selected McCabe in the fourth round. He played 28 games with the Braves organization, including two games with the Arizona Complex League (ACL) Braves and 26 games with Single-A affiliate Augusta GreenJackets.

In his time in Single-A this season, McCabe batted .260 with one home run. He recorded 23 RBIs, walked 15 times and posted a .347 OBP.

McCabe closed out his season against a nearby minor league team, the Kannapolis Cannonballers, where he spoke about the adjustment to professional baseball after a long collegiate season.

"I took some time off after the season ended, then headed to mini-camp after the draft. The organization did a good job of building us up and getting us back into game shape. It hasn't been too much of a

transition," said McCabe.

McCabe said he accomplished his dream of hearing his name in the draft.

"It was great. I was with my parents and my girlfriend," said McCabe.

"I was on the phone with my agent right as Nate Furman was getting picked. I was super excited for him, then I went a couple picks later, and it was just awesome being able to go through that," said McCabe.

After Charlotte became a second home for McCabe, he's found himself playing in familiar places with the Carolina League.

"It feels very similar to how Charlotte was. Playing in a place like Kannapolis and knowing a bunch of people will be supporting me, such as coaches and teammates, has been awesome," said McCabe.

Spencer Giesting: Arizona Diamondback

Giesting was selected in the 11th round by the Arizona Diamondbacks. This year, he appeared in nine games for the ACL Diamondbacks and the Visalia Rawhide.

Last season, Giesting led the 49ers in innings pitched with 75. In the MiLB, Giesting threw 15.1 innings, posting a 7.04 ERA while striking out 19 batters and posting a 1.57 WHIP.

Quinton Martinez: Los Angeles Angels

After the 2022 MLB draft, Martinez signed a free agent contract with the Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim, looking to work up to the show.

The left-handed pitcher spent a half-season with the ACL Angels, throwing in three games, posting a 3.60 ERA while striking out four batters in five innings pitched.



David McCabe is currently playing for the Augusta Green Jackets
Photo courtesy of Diamond Niner Report

The future is now

HOW THIRD STRING QUARTERBACK XAVIER WILLIAMS IS MAKING A NAME FOR HIMSELF

by Mathis Gaglione
Staff Writer

Xavier Williams may not have been on everyone’s radar to play this season, but the redshirt freshman quarterback has been one of the few bright spots for the 49ers this year.

The unexpected injuries of the team’s top two quarterbacks, Chris Reynolds and James Foster, thrust Williams into the spotlight against William & Mary and power five opponent Maryland. But the Colquitt County product has shined in its limited action.

Williams has gone 31/58 for 392 yards with two touchdowns through the air. He has run for 77 yards and two touchdowns on the ground with zero turnovers in his first two games. Despite the production, Williams isn’t satisfied.

“I feel like I played decent. Obviously, there are some things I can clean up; I’m not playing well enough in a winning aspect,” said Williams.

Even though Williams started the season as the third quarterback, he goes about his preparation as if he were the starter. That mindset helped the young quarterback stay focused when he got the news that he was getting the nod against Maryland.

“I try not to make moments bigger than they are. It was my first college career start, it was cool, but I went about it as just another game,” said Williams.

The quarterback has only started eight games in his entire career, dating back to his high school days, which makes his first real college action even more impressive. As Williams gets more opportunities to showcase his talent, his experience will only continue to grow, but that improvement is made when no one is watching.

“I think it’s about the preparation and how I come out here every day and the things I do off the field every day,” said Williams.

On top of the work you put in yourself, having experienced teammates who can take you under their wing and show you how to do things is invaluable. For Williams, learning from 6-year quarterback Chris Reynolds and redshirt junior James Foster has helped make the transition from high school to college easier.

“They’re both really helpful and influential to me. When I’ve gotten into the games, they both keep me calm, they help me see things, so they’re definitely big influences and have helped me a lot,” said Williams.

It’s unclear how many more reps Williams will get this season, as Chris Reynolds and James Foster seem to be making a lot of progress on their injuries.

“I feel better than I did a week ago,

James [Foster] and Chris [Reynolds] have made tremendous improvements, and they’re progressing very well, so we’ll see what happens,” said Head Coach Will Healy.

Playing time may be sparse for Williams the rest of the season as Reynolds and Foster return. However, he will remain hungry to continue improving, whether on or off the field.

“I’m just focused on being the best I can every day. I can go on for days with things I can get better at, but I’m focused on getting better at one thing each and every day, and that’ll help me become a

better overall player,” said Williams.

Even if Williams’ number is not called the rest of this season, it’s clear his time is coming, sooner rather than later. Williams is the future of the program, and he may be the one leading the 49ers into the American Athletic Conference in 2023.

Williams and the 49ers will be back in action on Saturday, Sept. 24, as they travel to Columbia, S.C., to take on the South Carolina Gamecocks. Kickoff is set for 7:30 p.m., and the game will be broadcasted on ESPNU.



Charlotte’s Xavier Williams (8) scrambles in a game against Maryland
Photo by Chris Crews

SCOREBOARD

MEN’S SOCCER	WOMEN’S SOCCER	FOOTBALL	VOLLEYBALL
Sept. 13: Charlotte 5, Winthrop 0	Sept. 11: Charlotte 3, Gardner-Webb 3	Sept. 17: Charlotte 42, Georgia State 41	Sept. 15: Davidson 3, Charlotte 1
Sept. 17: Charlotte 3, UAB 0	Sept. 15: North Texas 4, Charlotte 0		Sept. 17: Wake Forest 3, Charlotte 0
	Sept. 18: UTSA 2, Charlotte 0		
	Sept. 8: Charlotte 2, Coastal Carolina 1		

Weatherington's journey to 200 wins

CHARLOTTE VOLLEYBALL HEAD COACH KAREN WEATHERINGTON HITS CAREER WIN NUMBER 200 FOLLOWING 3-2 WIN OVER VIRGINIA

by Jesse Morris
Staff Writer

With a career ranging from Duke to Clemson, it was with Charlotte that Head Coach Karen Weatherington reached a new milestone: 200 career wins, 97 for the 49ers.

The road to get here was long, stretching back to her childhood; coaching fever beset her from the start.

A childhood interest

Far from the net, Weatherington's coaching career germinated in her time with her father. Since her father was a football and baseball coach, Weatherington made an early connection with the profession.

"I used to run around with my dad when I was seven or eight," she said. "At that point, I started understanding stats and would follow certain players of his."

It was from their shared love for football that those interests became something more.

"I was a huge Dallas Cowboys fan, and [while watching the coach] I was like, 'that's a cool job.' So when [my dad] made the connection that that was what he does, it always stayed in my mind that that would be a really cool way to affect people and help people grow," she said.

In her youth, Weatherington discovered one of her passions, volleyball. She started playing in sixth grade, and since then, the sport has meant much more.

"It's an opportunity provider for people worldwide, but mainly for women," Weatherington said. "I see it as a great opportunity to experience the world [and] provide an education for my players and myself."

Before Charlotte

Weatherington's first experience came when she bore the colors of her alma mater, New Mexico State, as an assistant coach from 1994 to 1997. From there, she coached at Duke, Iowa State, Clemson and Butler University, all the while getting a glimpse into the complexities of coaching.

Joining the 49ers

Even then, Weatherington had her eye on the green and white.

"I had been here in the '90s when I was at Duke as an assistant," she said. "We'd play here in the summer or spring, and I'd walk



Charlotte Head Coach Karen Weatherington in the huddle
Photo courtesy of Charlotte Athletics

"I learned a great deal from the women that I worked with – all female head coaches during that span of time – and I learned the chops it takes to be a woman in sports... we were all born with this competitive nature in us, so they showed me the other side of it: how to be a professional and to look at this as a profession and a career," Weatherington said. "I had all these examples of women who always challenged themselves to pursue greatness."

Like Charlotte itself, Weatherington's early career was formidable. Her first program, at Kennesaw State University, had won 11 games from 2006 to 2008. By the end of her stint from 2009 to 2012, the Owls had a 60-56 record and three conference appearances.

At Hampton University until 2014, she saw the Pirates through two consecutive tournament titles and a 21-11 season.

into [Halton Arena]... even then, before some of these buildings were open, it was an amazingly beautiful campus."

As the years progressed, the luster of the 49er gold remained on the horizon as she looked around for postings.

"I'd applied for this job – I want to say three times – because I knew that this [was], at the time, a diamond in the rough," she added.

In 2015, after four seasons without a winning team, Charlotte Hall of Fame member

and then-athletic director Judy Rose turned to Weatherington. It was a crucial moment in Weatherington's career.

"She gave me an opportunity from a pretty much unknown place," Weatherington said. "One of the toughest [career] moments was the retirement of Judy Rose [in 2018]. She showed me, when I came here, what it was like to reach beyond your bounds. When I found out she was taking that step into retirement... I cried [for] a couple of hours."

The big 200

Eight seasons have passed under Weatherington's leadership, four in a row with winning teams. Despite a tough start in 2015 and 2016, Weatherington ended the six-year drought at last with a 19-12 winning season in 2017.

Together, Weatherington and her team made history with their victory over Virginia on Sept. 10th. She had reached 200 wins.

"I sat down on the bench, and I teared up... when you're coaching, and in this heated battle [against a great team], you don't think about it, and I had forgotten," Weatherington said. "When the players grabbed the game ball and came up to me, I thought, 'Wow – I'm really glad that I'm able to earn this at Charlotte.'"



Charlotte Head Coach Karen Weatherington in the huddle
Photo courtesy of Charlotte Athletics