

2019 SGA ELECTION

RESULTS

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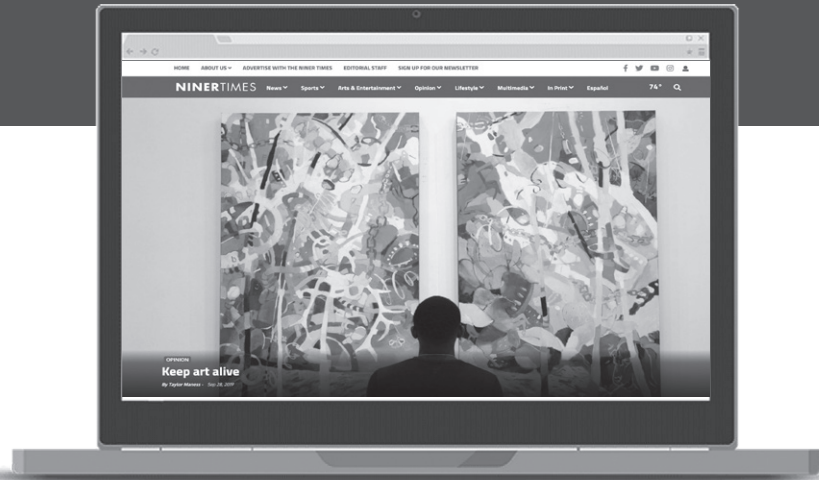


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VIDEO

- Special Look at the 44th International Festival

SPORTS

- Charlotte drops first conference game against the Owls
- 49ers open conference play against FAU
- Special Look at the 44th International Festival

Dear readers,

The Niner Times recently changed our website, so it is still under maintenance. You may still find what you're looking for, but don't fret if you do not. We are working hard to ensure it's back to normal as soon as possible.

Best,

Madison Dobrzenski, Editor-in-Chief



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EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

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editor@ninerimes.com

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CONTRIBUTING STAFF

Emily Kottak, Josephine Justin, Bradley Cole, Isaac Naylor,
David Cain, Julianna Peres

LAYOUT STAFF

Sam Palian, Drew Fitzgerald, Reuben Sanchez, Olivia Lawless, Aarushi Katoch

COVER DESIGN

Natasha Morehouse LAYOUT EDITOR

NEWSROOM:
STUDENT UNION 047
705.687.7150

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MEDIA MARKETING

MARKETING DIRECTOR

Caleb Adams
mktdirector@uncc.edu

CREATIVE DIRECTOR

James Bourke
production@uncc.edu

MARKETING STAFF

Joe Calhoun, Paityn Kapesser, Abram Shaw, Kayla Christian



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FALL 2019 STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION ELECTIONS



Fall 2019 freshman class president and senator election results announced

by Emily Kottak
Intern

The Student Government Association (SGA) elections took place Sept. 23-24 and the results are in.

The freshman class elected a president and at-large senators. Winning 52 percent of the votes, Richard “Dick” Beekman won the title of freshman class president. This year’s freshman at-large senators are Ikram “Tife” Olusesi (17 percent of votes), Trinh Dang (17 percent of votes), Destiny Coe (14 percent of votes) and Tatiyana Larson (12 percent of votes).

It may have been Dick Beekman’s persistent campaigning and original slogan that got him elected. His slogan “We Need Dick” was a hot topic of conversation among freshmen.

Beekman also created a Snapchat story for freshmen which included videos and pictures of him campaigning and interacting with other freshmen, getting them to recite the unique slogan. His slogan was inspired by a friend who used a similar tactic and was successful with it.

“My sister went to highschool with a guy by the name of Adam Schmidt who is now currently serving as the President of the Senate for NC State,” said Beekman. “My sister informed me that Adam had won every one of his elections with not just his great ideas, but also by using the campaign slogan ‘Get Schmidt Done.’”

Originally there were 18 candidates running for freshman class president, so Beekman needed something to set him apart from the others.

“My colleagues from the Marine Corps would affectionately call me Dick from time to time, and as such, I settled on the campaign slogan ‘We Need Dick,’” Beekman explained. “In regards to the campaign itself, I wanted to come up with unique and creative ways to reach voters. That’s why, in addition to traditional methods such as posters and flyers, I also decided to use Snapchat Geostories as a way to connect with voters using 21st-century ideas and innovation.”

The sophomore class elected at-large senators. The new senators are Gabi Hitchcock (22 percent of votes), Jessica Massenburg (22 percent of votes), Khadeeja Shive (13 percent of votes) and Ukamaka “Ukaa” Okonkwo (13 percent of votes).

This year’s junior at-large senators are Alexis Bethea (27 percent of votes), Rani Young (21 percent of votes), Jacob Baum (20 percent of votes), Jeremy Goldsby (17 percent of votes) and Enosh Ishman (14 percent of votes).

The senior at-large senators elected this year are Chloe Yarbrough (40 percent of votes) and Matthew Basel (32 percent of votes).

Several of the academic colleges here at UNC Charlotte have their own senators. The Belk College of Business senators are Naga Ganesh Mummidi (56 percent of votes) and Rahad Firdausi (26 percent of votes). The College of Arts and Architecture senator is Tia Wilso (100 percent of votes). The senators for the College of Computing and Informatics are Sonnisha “Bonnie” Raun (55 percent of votes) and Aditya Bhujle (45 percent of votes).

As for the College of Health and Human Services, Nylah Lemard (44 percent of votes) is this year’s senator. The University College senator is Mason Kirkpatrick (100 percent of votes) and the William States Lee College of Engineering senator is Priya Patel (100 percent of votes).

The Fraternity and Sorority Special Interest senator is Zachary Mazag (59 percent of votes) and the Interest Special Interest senator is Kayla Henry (100 percent of votes). Adjara Dembele is this year’s International Special Interest senator (100 percent of votes).

This year’s Multicultural Special Interest senator is Johana Ndjocu Nguba (100 percent of votes) and the Service/Volunteering Special Interest senator is Jennifer Brown (100 percent of votes).

In addition to senators for each grade, there are also at-large senators for the University in general. The elected at-large senators for this year include Alyssa Lopez (12 percent of votes), Charles “Vince” Graham (11 percent of votes), Katie Walsh (9 percent of votes), Amber Brumfield (9 percent of votes), Jon Mitchell (9 percent of votes), Matt Ramsay (9 percent of votes), Jamila Mckinnon (8 percent of votes), Raina Riddick (8 percent of votes), Ross Landgraf (7 percent of votes), Clayton “Clay” Britt (7 percent of votes) and Dhruv Sadhu (7 percent of votes).



Photo courtesy of UNC Charlotte



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44TH ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL

Over 16,000 attend UNC Charlotte's International Festival

by Josephine Justin
Intern

On Saturday, Sept. 21, 2019 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., over 50 countries were represented in the 44th annual International Festival held at UNC Charlotte. With over 16,000 people in attendance, the festival is also one of the largest attended events on campus by students, even more so than football games.

Inside the Barnhardt Student Activity Center, there were many country booths such as France, Guyana and Lebanon. Opera Carolina, a Celtic Folk Band, Hula Carolina, and Trabucos Latin Band performed at the inside stage. For the Festival for Music and Dance on the arena floor, the audience experienced a diverse set of dances from Bollywood to Kurdish dancing. The earth balloon and Parade of Nations is a highlight for many of the attendees every year.

Outside, a savory aroma filled the air and the sound of sizzling pans could be heard from multiple

booths cooking ethnic food. At the outside stage, there were African FolkTales told and a Caribbean drums performance. Many were involved at the International Game Zone where they could play archery or life-sized chess. Players from Charlotte Independence were also there to play soccer and sign autographs. Sponsors, such as the Super G Mart, were also present outside along with the Arts and Science Council who provided a grant for the festival this year.

From South Korea's kimchi to Armenia's baklava, there was an abundance of delicious ethnic food available for purchase. Booths were colorfully decorated with an array of food, art, costumes, jewelry and activities like getting henna tattoos. Each country shared their culture in unique ways as seen through Iran's santoor, a musical instrument, and the Hebrew alphabet puzzle at Israel's booth. Over the past couple of years, there

has been a new trend where more Charlotte community groups have booths, and this year, other universities such as UNC Pembroke even attended.

For Gregory Shaw, a 7th grade social studies teacher at Jay M. Robinson Middle School, this was his 25th year attending the festival. Shaw encourages his students to attend the event as part of an assignment and said, "The best part about it is seeing my students getting exposed to different cultures and learning what they cannot from a textbook."

Many students from UNC Charlotte, such as freshman Julianne Torio, were excited to share the culture and food of their birthplace with the attendees.

Representing Palestine, Noor Alashi was inspired by "seeing everybody wanting to learn more about her family's and ancestor's history."

After the on-campus shooting in April, there was increased security this year at every entrance into the festival around the Barnhardt Student Activity Center.

Dr. Joe Hoff, Director of Global Education and Engagement and Chair of the International Festival, sees the event as "a way to help the international community feel like they belong." For the coming years, Hoff hopes to see more UNC Charlotte Alumni getting involved to help put on the festival.

Reflecting on the importance of the International Festival, Hoff said, "It's a wonderful event that brings people from all different backgrounds together and celebrates the diversity of Charlotte."



Photo by Matt Sodano

A new direction

Newly hired Kyle Bailey takes the helm of men's tennis

by Bradley Cole
Intern

For Kyle Bailey, the plan was never to be a tennis coach. In his younger days, he saw himself becoming the next Jerry Maquire, but never at the helm of a Division 1 tennis program.

As the stars have aligned, Bailey has found himself in a successful coaching career that has now led him to the Queen City.

The Charlotte 49ers announced Bailey as the new men's head tennis coach in early September 2019 after he spent the last three years as an assistant tennis coach for The University of South Carolina.

"I felt like this is the right time for me," said Bailey. "I'm really excited to get things started here."

The journey for Bailey has been a long one and it started as a player at American University where he had a successful playing career with a team that made three NCAA tournament appearances during his tenure.

Those playing days weren't the reason Bailey chose the tennis coaching world, however. It was time spent away from the game that made him realize where he wanted to be.

Bailey suffered an injury late in his career and decided to stay an extra year at American to further his education. During that year off, Bailey decided to work with the Sports Information Department and even would do an internship with NBC Sports. He would work on media guides and help cover a variety of athletic events. It was a way to stay in the action and eventually pushed him into his current profession.

"I just felt so far away from [the] action," said Bailey. "I think that's why I chose coaching tennis because I just love to be a part of the action."

After his stint with American was finally over, he started to ponder his

decisions for a career. Bailey thought about everything from joining the military to going into journalism. But an assistant coaching job opened up at American and he took it.

From there, Bailey fell in love and jump-started his career. He went on to coaching high-level junior players at College Park. After getting married and quitting his job, coaching college tennis crossed his mind once again and he landed at Monmouth University.

"I moved my wife and daughter out to Saint Louis with family and figured out my next move," said Bailey. "I then moved back by myself and into a little beach house near Monmouth and did that job for four months."

There were rough days to start for Bailey and his new team but he would eventually lead the program to its first NCAA tournament appearance in his first and only season.

That caught the attention of some of his fellow college coaches and found his next job spontaneously. While on a phone call with the head South Carolina tennis coach looking to schedule a match for Mommunth, things took a turn.

"I was calling the head coach to get South Carolina on our schedule, and next thing you know, he's asking me to fly out and be his assistant," said Bailey.

Knowing how big of an opportunity he was given, Bailey and his family packed up and moved to Columbia.

From 2016-2019, he helped the Gamecocks improve their recruiting and helped lead the team to three straight NCAA appearances. He recruited and brought in 2019 NCAA D1 singles champion Paul Jubb.

It was an enjoyable experience for

Bailey, but there were more opportunities on the horizon, specifically just across the state line in North Carolina.

Bailey has known of Charlotte throughout his career, but the tennis program caught his attention a couple years ago when he came with South Carolina for a match against the 49ers last fall. He was impressed with what he saw.

"I remember rolling up in the team van and just telling the others guys how nice it was and equal to South Carolina in many ways," said Bailey. "I knew that if I could just get kids on campus and see what's going on, they could have the same feeling I had."

Once the Charlotte job was offered, Bailey knew this was another opportunity he could not pass up. After a meeting with the Charlotte athletic department, it was apparent the two sides had the same vision.

"In talking with the athletic department, I felt very similar to them," Bailey said. "They were talking about building something and not being mediocre; I knew that's what I wanted to do and build something special here."

Not only was Bailey on board with the program, but his family fell in love with the city as well.

"This place checked all the boxes on the list so to speak," Bailey said. "My wife and I both love it here in the Carolinas."

Bailey is no stranger to building programs and knows he's got some work ahead of him at Charlotte the next couple of years. The 49ers have an older group of players that will graduate soon and recruiting with be essential, which is something Bailey has been fairly good at.

Before any of that can happen, he wants to set a standard off the court



Photo courtesy of Charlotte 49ers Athletics

and instill a work ethic in his players that goes beyond the court.

"The first thing we are really trying to work on is getting the culture right and getting the guys to have a certain standard of excellence for everything we're doing," said Bailey. "If we can get the right environment, we can be pretty successful."

Bailey has already seen some improvement during their first fall tournament in Cary that was hosted by Duke. A pair of 49ers picked up wins and the team as a whole put together some hard-fought matches. The team will have another showing in October at the River City Open hosted by the University of Richmond and then again at the ITA Regionals back in Cary.

Those tournaments are just the beginning of what Bailey hopes is a program-changing tenure.

"When it comes to expectations, our goals are to win the conference and get this program on a national stage," said Bailey. "My goal has always been to be a part of a nationally recognized program, and I think we can do that here."



CROWN COMMONS: NOT A CROWN OF GOLD

The neverending dining hall discussion continues

by Isaac Naylor
Intern

What's for dinner? For students living in North Village, it could be Crown Commons. But beware, Crown has been on a recent disappointment streak. It's become commonplace for students visiting the dining hall to complain about the quality of the food or share campfire stories of their bad past experiences. For Crown, the food could use some work. Compared to its South Village counterpart, SoVi, it's safe to say that Crown is the red-headed stepchild of the family.

At its core, Crown has two problems: food variety and overcrowding. Instead of having Crown's scatter of unnamed food stations, SoVi has Bok Choy (the Mongolian food station) with that sweet and sour chicken, Flame (the barbeque station) with customizable hamburgers, and Homestyle with traditional home-cooked meals. But, when it comes to pizza, Crown has SoVi beat. Crown's angel-crafted pizza decimates SoVi's burnt monstrosities.

Another major red flag about Crown is its dessert bar. SoVi has what feels like an indoor Ben & Jerry's while Crown has its infamous ice cream freezer. Alone in the corner, this self-serve eyesore is not a nightmare for what it can do to your waistline but whether it's clean or not. The scoop spoon is left swimming in a gray pool of old ice cream. It's not the most appetizing thing to see before enjoying a midnight snack.

Touching on space: Crown doesn't have it. Right at the center of campus, Crown serves a tsunami of students around lunch and dinner time. At about midday, Crown turns into a sardine can and seating is scarce. The space between tables can become narrow and you can feel a tad claustrophobic.

Space aside and focusing more on atmosphere, SoVi has something that Crown doesn't: Rockbot. Essentially, Rockbot is a downloadable app that acts as a DJ where

people can up-vote and down-vote songs played at a restaurants, cafés, bars, gyms and other locations. I appreciate this seemingly small addition to SoVi that allows me to pick the songs that I want as opposed to hearing "Can You Feel It" for the third time at Crown. However, I feel that SoVi's atmosphere is just a placebo. Most people I've met on campus know that Crown and SoVi are basically the same with a few cosmetic differences. Because it's newer, SoVi is Crown with a facelift. The dynamic wallpaper, the modern-looking ceiling lights and classy table designs give SoVi a sort of je ne sais quoi.

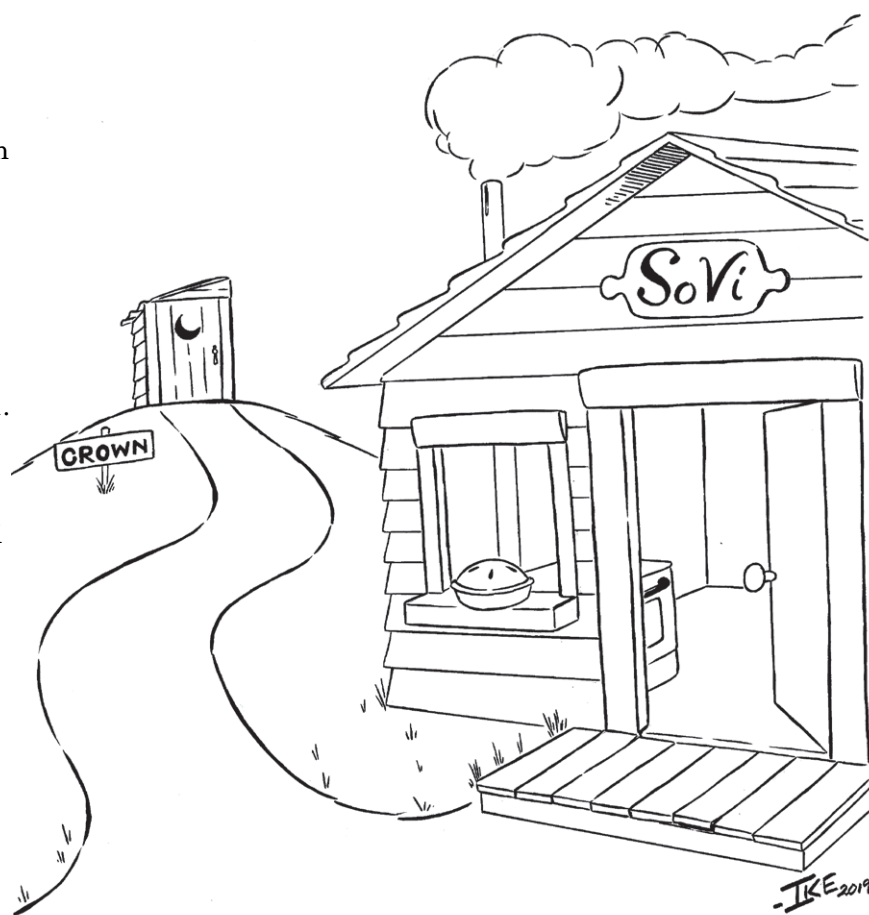
Though, not all of Crown is a dumpster fire. Just like SoVi, Crown has a salad bar, soup station and a place to get fresh fruit. SoVi does have more outdoor seating if that's your thing, but remember: Crown was built within the confines of the Student Union; space is limited.

Despite being cramped, Crown is open much longer than SoVi. Living in North Village, I find some nights during the week where SoVi is completely out of the picture. The trip to SoVi is like walking halfway across the state. Unless the bus is on time, it takes about half an hour. This might sound so-so until you realize that SoVi closes at 8:30 p.m. This means if you have a late class or lack the ability to teleport, you better head to Crown, which closes at 11:00 p.m.

However, no matter where you go, Crown or SoVi, the jani-

torial and cooking staff are almost always friendly and the tables are usually clean. So, be sure to be polite and always thank them for what they do.

In closing, the food at Crown is more than edible and the truth is that no matter how much they improve, somebody somewhere will find reason to nitpick. Crown could add more choices to its menu and perhaps rearrange its seating. As for quality, it's a college cafeteria. It's neither the best nor the worst. It's in this murky gray-area. In other words, it's better than late night Ramen noodles.



A CASE FOR ATKINS OF THE YESTERYEAR

How the architecture of Atkins Library is elitist

by David Cain
Intern

We all know J. Murrey Atkins Library; the beacon upon a hill. It has served the UNCC community as a landmark and place of learning for nearly 55 years now. Built in 1965 with the addition of Dalton Tower in 1971, Atkins is now one of the most iconic buildings on campus. Atkins was built in a mid-century modernist style. A style that sought to break from the elitism associated with Higher education at the time in favor of a new education for the masses. Atkins Library originally represented that hope, being the epicenter of education in the Charlotte Mecklenburg area. In recent years (and after many renovations), it seems that Atkins Library has lost sight of that original goal in favor of a building that is hardly functional. The changes to Atkins Library have not only been costly and made the building nonfunctional, but they have also besmirched the school's rich architectural history.

Built in 1965, Atkins Library has been a local landmark for not only the University, but the university city region for decades. That is why it is a complete tragedy that the building has lost so much of its marvel in recent years. The infamous 2005 renovation that covered the exterior of Atkins in brick and added new additions to the west side of the library was a complete stain on the



Photo by Chris Crews

University's rich modernist architecture. At a university that was originally designed by arguably one of the most famous North Carolina architects, A. G. Odell Jr, there is a rich architectural standard that has been ignored. One must ask: at a school that was created to educate the common working people of Charlotte, why do our buildings look like bastardized and faux elitist copies of the buildings of UNC Chapel Hill? Atkins Library is now just one of the many failed renovations on campus that is both visually and functionally flawed. Atkins Library is nothing but a place to wander, endlessly searching for a class, media space or group room.

As an institution designed to store information, Atkins Library is successful, hands

down, as the most valuable asset in perhaps the entire Charlotte-Mecklenburg area. As an institution designed as a place of student interaction, the building fails. The building floors are difficult to navigate and create a maze of intervening corridors, bookshelves and work nooks. The library is filled with hidden corridors and difficult to find study rooms forcing students to wander until they stumble upon their destination. Also known for its infamous inconsistencies in regards to air conditioning, many of the older portions of Atkins are consistently warmer than their newer counterparts. It must be stated that Atkins remains the

most important resource on campus. It's too bad students can't find those resources.

In short, the changes that have taken place in Atkins Library represent a greater change that has been taking place on campus for the last 20 years. In a school that was designed in a modernist style that would echo the modern education that the people of Charlotte were receiving, it seems criminal that the school has shifted its architectural vernacular to a style that rejects the fundamentals of UNCC's original mission statement. In a school that seeks to break its association with UNC Chapel Hill, perhaps it is also time to break from those architectural traditions.



GAMING ROUNDUP: OCTOBER 2019

Check out all that the month of October has coming in games

by Noah Howell
AE Editor

“Little Town Hero” - October 16 for Nintendo Switch

A new IP from Game Freak (known for their work on the small indie series you have probably never heard of called “Pokémon”), “Little Town Hero” puts you in the shoes of a defender of a small town from newly arrived monsters. Not straying too far from their previous work by making it turn-based combat, the game does still change things up with how you fight. Basically, you fight with ideas (not entirely sure how that works). The big attention-grabbing headline for this game, at least for me, is that Toby Fox is composing the music. Toby Fox is the creator of “Undertale” as well as all of the excellent music that is found within it. This alone is enough to more than pique my curiosity in the game. My biggest concern though is how that odd gameplay mechanic works in practice.

“The Outer Worlds” - October 25 for PS4, Xbox One and PC

The reveal for “The Outer Worlds” couldn’t have come at a better time last year when “Fallout 76” was critically dogpiled by seemingly everyone in the video game industry. Coming from the developer behind “Fallout: New Vegas,” Obsidian Entertainment is putting that expertise to work to make their very own RPG in a new sci-fi world. The game looks and seems to function much like “Fallout;” it is not an open-world game in the typical sense. It does seem to feature a significantly more diverse and branching dialogue path for all of the game’s quests, something which “Fallout 4” was criticized for dumbing down. I am curious to see how the game will do, especially since it is Obsidian’s first foray into doing it with their own IP rather than what they did with “Fallout: New Vegas.” I am optimistic. It is also worth pointing out that the game is even coming to the Switch at some point after launch as well.

“Concrete Genie” - October 8 for PS4

Because Sony is killing it in both hardware sales and software, this allows them some leeway to be a bit more experimental with their first-party software. Enter “Concrete Genie.” This charming looking game follows a young graffiti artist in a town of bullies. The gameplay seems like a third-person puzzle-platformer, though apparently it will shift as you progress further. Nevertheless, it is a notch down in terms of scale from Sony’s other first-party exclusives like “God of War” and “Uncharted,” but it looks to carry the same amount of heart. The magical element found within opens up the narrative in terms of what to expect and the fact that I haven’t fully grasped what this game even is excites me. It is also worth noting that there is a PSVR mode included for owners of Sony’s VR peripheral.



Image courtesy of CD Projekt Red

Luigi’s Mansion 3” - October 31 for Nintendo Switch

A game I have been waiting for since I played the first installment on my GameCube, “Luigi’s Mansion 3” finally arrives on the Switch this month. A game with Mario’s underdog brother as the lead, “Luigi’s Mansion” is all about exploring a haunting locale while sucking up ghosts. From all that I have seen, this game appears to continue on with the great gameplay of the original, all in a new and exciting environment. Also, it flatout looks like one of the best games Nintendo has ever put out in terms of visuals. We even get Gooigi to tag along with us, a weird jello-like version of Luigi which further stretches the puzzle-potential. While it makes sense to release this game on Halloween, I am bummed I won’t be able to get myself into the spirit of the holiday by playing this game in the leadup to the holiday, merely on the day itself.

“Call of Duty: Modern Warfare” - October 25 for PS4, Xbox One and PC

A soft reboot of what is probably one of the “Call of Duty” series’ most popular games, “Modern Warfare,” looks to freshen up the franchise after the mixed responses to “Black Ops 4.” This is as surefire of a bet as you can get, as long as things are handled properly in the games’ three modes in campaign, multiplayer and spec ops. From the campaign’s most recent trailer, the campaign looks about as Hollywood as it has ever been, which is saying a lot and isn’t really a knock on it. The cinematics looks stunning as does the narrative look promising, but the gameplay is what needs to be engaging enough to follow it through. Based on the beta, the multiplayer mode does look intriguing and like it will be pleasing to fans of the original. I will still remain cautious, especially considering the role of the iconic Cpt. Price has been recast (the new guy does look pretty good though).



Image courtesy of Nintendo

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“The Witcher 3: Wild Hunt - Complete Edition” - October 15 for Nintendo Switch

Heralded as one of the greatest games of the generation (or at least that’s what the friend who has been egging me on to play this game for the past three years has told me), CD Projekt Red’s “The Witcher 3: Wild Hunt” makes a surprising debut on Nintendo Switch this month. I say surprisingly because the game was designed for current-gen hardware like the PS4 and Xbox One, not the Switch (which is slightly more powerful than the Xbox 360 and PS3). From early preview footage, it definitely looks toned down in terms of graphical fidelity, but the fact that one of the most massive open-world games ever is running on Nintendo’s hybrid console with decent visuals and at mostly 30 frames-per-second seems to be nothing short of a miracle. The game is based on a very popular series of Polish novels which follow Geralt of Rivia, a slayer of monsters and other abhorrent foes. The game excels at providing a rich and detailed world filled with well-written and designed quests throughout. It is massive (which is part of why I have continued to fail to give this game the time it deserves). I want to give my full attention to the game when I do play, which is why the portability of the Switch may be my ticket to finally experiencing all that this game has to offer.



Image courtesy of Obsidian Entertainment

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Across

1 Gull relatives

6 Spots to fast-forward through

11 Cleopatra’s killer

14 Sharply inclined

15 Trip odometer function

16 Chinese steamed bun

17 *Realtor’s client

19 Category

20 Rural stopover

21 ___ d’Alene, Idaho

22 “Well, gosh!”

24 Social reformer Jacob

26 *Surface for slicing rye, say

28 Body ink

30 Eye part that may become detached

31 Golf’s Slammin’ Sammy

32 Karma

35 Vegas’ “one-armed bandit”

36 *Vehicle’s rear warning

lamp

39 Head or tooth pain

42 Pick out with care

43 Aficionados

47 “Ye Olde” retailer

49 Lose its fizz, as soda

50 *Feline metaphor for an empty threat

54 Pâté de ___ gras

55 Goodnight woman of song

56 “The ___ Wears Prada”: 2006 film

58 “___ you awake?”

59 Vied for office

60 Certain brain tissue, or what each half of the answers to the starred clues can be

63 Pre-marital (just barely) promise

64 Parisian love

65 Reagan attorney general Ed

66 After taxes

67 Easy victories

68 Medicare Rx section

Down

1 Tops with slogans

2 Ian Fleming or George Orwell, schoolwise

3 Get the old gang together

4 Old Nintendo game console: Abbr.

5 Job detail, briefly

6 More accurate

7 Change of ___: trial request

8 Stars, in Latin

9 Lousy grade

10 Flasher at a disco

11 1797-1801 first lady Adams

12 City near Naples

13 Prodded

18 Stereotypical boxcar hopper

23 1979 Donna Summer hit

25 Local govt. prison

27 Bit of wine sediment

29 “Ghost” psychic ___ Mae Brown

32 Winter malady

33 “___ My Children”

34 Shop ___ you drop

37 Rapper/actor whose name sounds like a summer drink

38 “Westworld” network

39 Pill for pain

40 Pantomimed act in a parlor game

41 “Sure wish that doesn’t happen”

44 Pool noodle, e.g.

45 “... who is the ___ one of all?": Evil Queen

46 Manned the helm

48 Like the Great Depression, timewise

49 Like the Reaper

51 Figure of speech

52 Hop out of bed

53 Activist Medgar

57 Tanning device

61 Medical ins. plan

62 Scone go-with

UPDATED EVERY DAY!

Money, Money, Money

Tips for college students trying to save money



by Emily Kottak
Intern



Photo by Oleg Zigalenko

Almost every college student can testify that, in college, money can be hard to come by. Tuition and other college expenses add up, leaving students with little spending money. Not to worry though, there are several tips to help out college students when it comes to money and spending it wisely.

Student discounts

One of the many great things about being a student is being eligible for student discounts. There are several ways to find these sales/discounts. In this age of technology, discounts are accessible at the click of a button on a cellphone. The app called “UNiDAYS” is one such button that includes categories such as fashion, food and drink, technology and health and fitness. After creating an account, one can select the category he or she is interested in and then find a specific brand or product within it. The app will also show if the retailer offers a student discount and what the amount off is. For example, under the fashion category, a student can select American Eagle as an option and then see the discounts. They can then select “Get Now” to redeem the discount.

Shopping on a budget

Many college students love to shop. While South Park Mall and Concord Mills are convenient locations for UNC Charlotte students, they often aren't the most cost conscious choices. A similarly convenient and less expensive shopping idea is to check out Uptown Cheapskate, only 1.8 miles from campus. Uptown Cheapskate is a consignment shop, the products are in good shape and there are many name-brand items. Last week I went to Uptown Cheapskate for the first time with friends and I purchased a North Face jacket, Tommy Hilfiger sweatshirt, Fabletics leggings, Forever 21 shorts and a shirt for only \$96. That's a steal.

What you can do for \$20 in Charlotte

Us UNC Charlotte students have the wonderful city of Charlotte at our fingertips. However, it can be difficult to find something to do in this big city that doesn't require spending a lot of money. Here are some ideas of what you and your friends can do with only \$20 in the city.

If you are looking for something more relaxing to do, The Stroll Wing Haven botanical gardens costs only \$10 for adults. It is a custom garden and bird sanctuary with fountains, benches and isolated alcoves which provides plenty of peace and quietness. A more active past time would be taking a hike at Crowder's Mountain State Park. There are no entrance fees so you can enjoy the beautiful park without worrying about money. There are five trails, each with different levels of difficulty that are family friendly and for avid hikers. Crowder's Mountain State Park website is packed with lots of information if you are interested in seeing other activities and events offered there.

For some fast-paced, high-energy fun, you may want to check out one of Charlotte's dance clubs. Most clubs do not allow people under the age of 21 to attend, but at the Prohibition club on Thursday nights, 18 year-olds are permitted. Students can responsibly enjoy Charlotte's nightlife with music and dancing for \$10-\$20, which is the typical entrance fee for clubs.

It is clear that there are many ways to save money while also participating in fun activities without breaking your bank account. From student discounts to choosing cost-conscious shopping locations, the options are endless.



Photo by Meredith Murray

Book Review: Convenience Store Woman by Sayaka Murata

by Julianna Peres
Intern

Sometimes reviewing book reviews can be just as telling as reviewing the book itself. In some book reviews, Ruth Ozeki wrote “quirky,” Viet Thanh Nguyen stated “comic,” and Hiromi Kawakami praised the story by saying, “This novel made me laugh.” Alright, what am I missing? The protagonist Keiko is a strange woman who currently works and has always worked at the local convenience store. She often refers to herself as a “foreign object” who does not function well within the general population.

Ever since childhood, her personality and behavior were strange. One day on the playground, she found a dead bird and proposed to her mother not that they bury it, but that they take it home to cook for dinner. She was never one for sympathy, compassion, guilt or pity. She once pulled down her teacher’s pants because she was annoyed with the woman’s crying and considered stabbing her nephew with a steak knife to stop his screaming. These are all symptoms of some form of apathetic psychosis, not comical quirks.

All Keiko ever cares about is convenience, which is the most common theme throughout the novel. In fact, when she meets her new coworker Shiraha, she instantly dislikes him except for his work ethic. However, when he realizes that she is as much of an outcast as he is, he suggests that they live together. Their relationship, one designed to keep society from prying into their lives as single people, is one of convenience.

The reasons that hold their union together begin to wear off after Shiraha moves into Keiko’s tiny apartment. He is petulant, demanding and lazy. All he ever wants to do is watch videos on his phone. Since he is well into debt, his sister-in-law pays him an unwelcome visit. She tells him to pay back his

dues or else she will take him to court. This prompts him to pester Keiko to find a “real” job to assist with his debt. She leaves the only place she has ever known, and certainly the only thing she has ever loved: the convenience store.

Shiraha, rather than becoming a “useful recluse” like his faux partner, rejects everything on the basis of outdated expectations. He refers to the role of women and the role of men as it was in the Stone Age. He claims that only women who can bear children and only men who are breadwinners will be accepted into the village; the rest will be run out of their homes. He is demanding and holds no office for Keiko. Of course, she has no voice in the relationship; no woman in the Stone Age would talk back to her man! These are the thoughts running through Shiraha’s head as he graciously tells Keiko what to do. True to his animal nature, Shiraha absently hopes that war will break out so that he may have something to do. He, like Keiko, flagrantly disregards others’ lives. Often, he disregards his own life. How can two people who are so indifferent about everything bother to do anything at all? Conclusion: they don’t, unless, of course, it involves the convenience store.

I won’t spoil the ending as it was one that simultaneously satisfied me and left me curious. What to think of Shiraha’s character, of his unwillingness to participate within the “Stone Age” society in any capacity, should be left to the reader. What, also, to think of Keiko’s final decision should be left to the reader. What I can say is this: if you cannot love anything or anyone but enjoy doing one thing above all else, wouldn’t you keep doing it?

Genre: Realistic Fiction

Rating: 4/5

