

camosun's student voice since 1990

student issues

BC government eliminates interest on provincial student loans

KATE WOOD
STAFF WRITER

“This is a very big win for us, students especially... eliminating interest rates on our loans is very huge.”

FILLETTE UMULISA
CAMOSUN COLLEGE STUDENT SOCIETY

The government of British Columbia announced in its 2019 budget presentation on Tuesday, February 19 that it is eliminating interest on provincial student loans, effective immediately. For a student with \$28,000 in combined provincial and federal student loans, the decision is estimated to save \$2,300 over a 10-year repayment period. This decision will not take away interest already accumulated on existing student loans, but there will be no further interest added.

British Columbia Federation of Students (BCFS) chairperson Aran Armutlu says this is something the BCFS has been campaigning for for a number of years, and the organization is pleased to know that it is being heard by government.

“We hear the feedback from decision makers,” says Armutlu. “The feedback we hear is definitely that the work that we do works, and they listen. So it is really great to see that the work that we do is heard and that folks are taking that into account.”

The decision to eliminate interest on provincial student loans will increase access to education for students with limited resources, according to Armutlu.

“Interest charge on student loans is a penalty for low- and middle-income families who have to borrow in order to access education, so this really is a welcome relief, and we look forward to next

steps in future initiatives to make post-secondary more affordable,” says Armutlu.

Camosun College Student Society (CCSS) external executive Fillette Umulisa says the CCSS considers the decision to eliminate interest on provincial loans to be a victory for those who have been working toward this goal.

“This is a very big win for us, students especially,” says Umulisa. “I know we have a number of asks that we bring forward every year, like asking for grants and not loans, but eliminating interest rates on our loans is very huge.”

Umulisa says that this decision will help people to make the decision of whether or not to go back to school, and will ease their stress when they finish school and start to pursue their careers.

“This is going to encourage a lot of people that were scared to take out loans,” says Umulisa. “People that were restricted, people that did not want to pursue their career because it’s expensive, it’s going to give them a chance to actually go for what they want, go for what they

like, and not have a stressful future or stressful post-graduation life.”

The decision to eliminate interest on provincial student loans has encouraged the CCSS to continue to pursue its goals as an advocate for students, according to Umulisa.

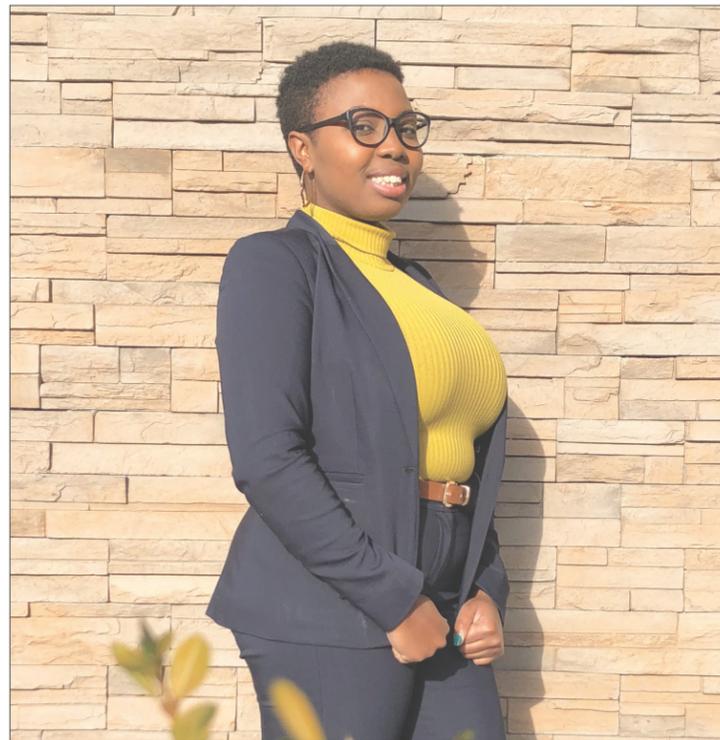
“Even if it takes us forever we know that we’re going to be heard at some point,” says Umulisa. “So this is kind of an encouragement for us as well, being advocates for students, being one of the students that went to the legislative assembly that talked to MLAs and talked to ministers and made budget presentations to see this happen. I feel like it’s a good thing; it makes us feel happy and proud of what we do as a student union.”

BC minister of finance Carole James says that she expects this decision to help students to continue on their paths after completing their post-secondary education, and, in turn, encourage them to become contributing members of society.

“The students I talk to talk about the burden of coming out with a student loan, and then each month having to pay off the interest,” says James, “so not getting to the principal of the loan but feeling like they’re always under water. The loan continues to grow because the interest continues to grow, so just to be able to provide students with that relief, that when they come out they’ll be able to start paying off the principal of their loan. They’ll start seeing the loan amount go down each month with payments, instead of simply paying off the interest, and I think that will make a huge difference. I think that will provide them with the opportunity to get on with their work life, or whatever the next stage is after they finish school, and we’ll all benefit because they’ll be contributing in their communities.”

2018 Camosun Exercise and Wellness graduate Paul Madden says this decision will help his wife to pay off her student debt while their family tries to balance the other economic factors of their life.

“She’s always checking the value of her student loans to see what the interest is,” says Madden. “It’s always building up. So, like with any loan you’re paying off, you put a payment on it, some of that goes to just interest, so it’s going slower. So if there was a bit of a decrease she would be able to pay that



GULTASH SINGH WARAICH

Camosun College Student Society external executive Fillette Umulisa.

off sooner. It’s difficult for us having a mortgage and a two-year-old, so there’s other factors, economically, to consider.”

James says she is happy to be able to share the government’s decision to eliminate interest on BC student loans; the decision was made as a part of the government’s focus on increasing opportunity in BC.

“We want to make sure that there are opportunities for people in British Columbia to be able to raise their families, to be able to build a good life in our province,” says James. “And we know part of the challenge that people face in that is a lack of affordability, and so [this announcement will help government] be able to meet the goal of both helping students, helping them with their affordability, and making sure that we are encouraging them to get a good education.”

Second-year Nursing student Natasha Lennam knows how stressful it is to finish school and search for a job that pays enough to cover loan payments.

“This is my second time getting student loans,” says Lennam. “The first time, it just added to the stress of trying to find a job after graduating, because the loan payments you get six months, previously, before you had to start paying interest rates. The interest rates were pretty high, so you had basically six months to find enough work to start making those payments. So I think it will be a huge stress reliever.”

First-year Camosun College Preparatory student Shakira Sephton says that after this announcement she is grateful to be a BC resident.

“My actual degree is in Alberta, but I will be taking out BC student loans,” says Sephton. “So it will

still be good for me because I’m still a BC resident, which is really nice, actually.”

While the Ontario government has reduced the threshold of accessibility to funding for low-income students from \$175,000 to \$140,000 and converted portions of provincial grants into loans, BC is moving in a different direction. James says that it is important to invest in people in order to build a strong economy.

“I think they’re making a huge mistake,” says James about decisions made by the Ontario government. “I think education is one of your best investments in opportunity. You know a well-educated citizenry will build a strong economy, will build a strong province, will create healthy communities. Education really is key to opportunity to strong economy, so I think they are moving in the wrong direction. It won’t just hurt students; from my perspective it will hurt the entire province.”

Other initiatives that the BCFS is working on include increasing funding to post-secondary institutions, says Armutlu.

“A couple other things definitely help in terms of student affordability, things like grants,” says Armutlu. “It’s something that we definitely advocate for, the creation of an up-front needs-based grant system, similar to one that was eliminated back in 2004 here in BC, that would really help increase access to the classroom, as well as funding to our institutions. Increase proper funding to our institutions, so that it can be coupled with the progressive freezing and reduction of tuition fees, because, as we all know, you can’t reduce tuition fees without increasing funding to our institutions.”

eyed on campus



PHOTO PROVIDED

Camosun’s guerrilla artist returned once again with more art in late February; see our interview with the artist at nexusnewspaper.com.

NEXUS

camosun's student voice since 1990

Next publication: March 20, 2019
Deadline: 9 am Monday March 11, 2019

Address: 3100 Foul Bay Rd., Victoria, BC, V8P 5J2
Location: Lansdowne Richmond House 201
Phone: 250-370-3591
Email: editor@nexusnewspaper.com
Website: nexusnewspaper.com
Publisher: Nexus Publishing Society

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NEXUS IS A MEMBER OF CANADIAN UNIVERSITY PRESS

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Nexus prints letters to the editor. Nexus reserves the right to refuse publication of letters. Letters must include full name and student number if a Camosun student (not printed). Nexus accepts all letters by email to editor@nexusnewspaper.com. We reserve the right to edit all letters.

OVERHEARD AT NEXUS: "We're in the business of rat harnesses. R-A-T."

SPEAK UP

What are your thoughts on how Camosun handles snow days?

BY ADAM MARSH



ALYSSA NORMAN

"I think, overall, they handle them pretty well, mostly judging by what's happening with transit. But it's hard for them to predict what the day's going to look like."



ANDREW YORK

"Cancelling on the Friday [February 8] was a little strange because there wasn't much snow... Monday [February 11] was a bit of a debacle; a lot of people got here and then it got cancelled [and] we had to make our way back."



AASTHA BHUTANI

"It's bad. Every student is struggling, and then there are no facilities to handle snow days, so I think they should have more so that the students don't suffer in these situations."



BALIA GLOVER

"Monday, not great. Tuesday, well. Wednesday it seemed like they were compensating for Monday, because [Wednesday] seemed like it would have been okay."



ERIC BORTHISTLE

"[Monday] was the interesting day... It was obvious that it was going to snow and everyone was kind of confused, like, 'Why are they opening it if they're just going to close it once everyone's here?'"



KORY PRESCOTT

"I don't have too many issues; my car is pretty good in the snow."

open space

Nicole Arbour needs to learn the difference between satire and stupidity

JESSICA HO
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

You might recognize Nicole Arbour's name from the viral 2015 YouTube video "Dear Fat People," or one of her countless other filmed rants, such as "Dear Black People," "Dear Feminists," "Dear Sluts," "Dear Refugees," or myriad other distasteful videos created by the Canadian comic and YouTube star.

Just when we thought that she couldn't go any further, the former cheerleader and self-proclaimed "motivational creative powerhouse" has got the public fuming again with her parody of "This Is America."

If you're not familiar with the original, "This Is America" was released in May 2018 by Black rapper Childish Gambino. Gambino's lyrics are jam-packed with symbolism and, coupled with the song's critically acclaimed music video, have earned Gambino 13 awards, including a Grammy Award for Song of the Year.

Arbour's classless adaptation, "This Is America: Women's Edit," is disjointed at best. In the opening scene of the parody, Arbour puts on lipstick in place of Gambino lighting a cigarette. Arbour replaces the scene of a man with a bag over his head being shot with a breast-feeding woman being taken out of the room. Incoherency is peppered throughout the song with muddled lyrics such as "This is America/got rape in my area," "I wear Fendi/I'm so sexy," and "I gotta give up my dreams/... rather be the Taliban."

Apparently, Arbour thought it was a great idea to translate the immensely layered song and music video to an incoherent parody that profits off of Gambino's concept and art. Instead of a thoughtful portrait of issues such as gun violence, police brutality, mass shootings, and America's deep-rooted discrimination toward Black people, Arbour's video equates these pressing tragedies to the "challenges" which face white, cisgender, able-bodied, thin, and, ultimately, extremely privileged women living in America. Some have pointed out that

while the execution of the video may be easily misconstrued, Arbour's objective is to bring attention to the sexist issues facing American women. While this goal may seem innocent in nature, it's clear from the moment you press play that Arbour's version of the video and song is nothing more than an attempt to profit the hell off of Gambino's success and appropriate the issues that the original song explores.

This video is hardly an attempt at fighting for equality: instead of dancing with children, as in Gambino's video, Arbour dances with thin, promiscuously dressed women who also mainly just happen to be white. What kind of female empowerment is this supposed to be representing?

Arbour's response to the backlash from the video is unsurprisingly similar to her reaction when she was called out for claiming that "they [fat people] smell like sausages" during the "Dear Fat People" controversy four years ago. She claimed that it's "funny" to her that some people couldn't understand that the video was clearly satire, something that only "smart/spiritual/conscious people" will get.

It's interesting how satire is a literary device taught to us all in grade school, yet college-graduate Arbour can't seem to figure out the difference between being satirical and being just plain short-sighted.

Arbour has apologized for "This Is America: Women's Edit" and claimed that she understood why some people were upset, but said that her intent was always to "honour the spirit" of Gambino's original. This public apology, however, came after she posted the since-deleted responses to comments in which she complained about "[B] lack women tears everywhere" and that she is "sick of people mad at slavery."

One thing is for certain: this is not Nicole Arbour's first controversy, and until she can learn the difference between satire and stupidity, it will not be her last.

Something on your mind? If you're a Camosun student, send *Open Space* submissions (up to 500 words) to editor@nexusnewspaper.com. Include your student number. Thanks!

event

Cultural Showcase Event casts spotlight on international students



ALLAN SHOOK/CAMOSUN COLLEGE A/V SERVICES

Camosun student Nathan Salvador performs at last year's Cultural Showcase Event.

KATY WEICKER
STAFF WRITER

Camosun students from around the globe are coming together again in this year's Cultural Showcase Event, a longstanding tradition at the college to help celebrate different cultures through a creative lens.

Second year Business student Luis Aguilera is an international student from Mexico; Aguilera will be co-hosting the event for the second year after getting involved with Peer Connections, an on-campus

program designed to help support international students.

"It's a group that, as soon as I arrived to Camosun—like, my first day—the people doing the orientation talked about it," says Aguilera.

The idea of volunteering was intriguing to Aguilera, who quickly joined the group. When the opportunity to host the event came up last year, Aguilera thought he'd give it a shot.

"People tell me that I'm really talkative, outgoing, social," says

Aguilera. "So, I just said, 'Why not? I'll give it a try and see how it goes.' And that's how I got involved, pretty much."

Joining Aguilera is co-host Emily Zhao, a second-year international student from China. Zhao was involved in the Peer Connections Cultural Runway fashion show in 2018, and is thrilled to be hosting the Cultural Showcase Event for the first time.

"I'm so excited because it's my first time to be a host," says Zhao.

"I think that that warm environment and atmosphere before the performance [at last year's event] really gave me some courage."

NATHAN SALVADOR
CAMOSUN COLLEGE STUDENT

"And, actually, when I was in high school in China, I really wanted to be a host, but there's no opportunity provided for me. So, this time, I'm really excited about it."

Aguilera says that he's excited to see the different people who are going to perform this year, despite auditions being derailed by February's snowfall. One of these performers will be second-year domestic University Transfer student Nathan Salvador, who will share his Filipino heritage at the event for the second time after getting involved with February's snowfall. One of these performers will be second-year domestic University Transfer student Nathan Salvador, who will share his Filipino heritage at the event for the second time after getting involved with February's snowfall. One of these performers will be second-year domestic University Transfer student Nathan Salvador, who will share his Filipino heritage at the event for the second time after getting involved with February's snowfall.

Salvador hopes other domestic students will join the cause with the help of events like this. Aguilera echoes Salvador's sentiment about the important message behind this event. "By doing this event, we recognize March 21, the International Day of Elimination of Racial Discrimination," says Aguilera. "That's also a big part of the event, how we started."

Salvador says that atmosphere is one the things that encouraged him to come back this year.

"To be honest, I was really, really nervous. I get really, really nervous really easily," says Salvador. "But I

think that that warm environment and atmosphere before the performance really gave me some courage."

Salvador says another big part of his decision to participate is how the event sheds light on cultural discrimination, an issue he personally tries to focus on after developing several friendships with international students.

"Before I didn't really have any idea what the international community was going through, being a domestic student who grew up here, even if my culture is Filipino," says Salvador. "Talking with these people really kind of opened my eyes to see how much hardship they go through when they're moving out of their comfort zone."

Salvador hopes other domestic students will join the cause with the help of events like this. Aguilera echoes Salvador's sentiment about the important message behind this event.

"By doing this event, we recognize March 21, the International Day of Elimination of Racial Discrimination," says Aguilera. "That's also a big part of the event, how we started."

Cultural Showcase Event
7 pm Friday, March 15
Free, Young 216
camosun.ca

NEWS BRIEFS

Chargers players, coach get PACWEST nods

Camosun Chargers players and one coach recently got recognition from the Pacific Western Athletic Association (PACWEST). Women's volleyball coach Brent Hall has been named PACWEST's women's coach of the year, and Chargers women's volleyball player Mika Yamada won the women's rookie of the year award. Vitor Pereira and Eduardo Bida were voted to the men's first all-star volleyball team, while Mychaela Roelants was voted to the women's second all-star volleyball team. Carter Karpenko was voted to the men's all-rookie volleyball team and Hannah May snagged a spot on the women's

all-rookie volleyball team. Over on the basketball courts, Tessa Lannon-Paakspuu was named defensive player of the year and voted onto the women's first all-star team; Dallas Hancox was voted onto the men's first all-star team. Women's player Maddie Manns was voted onto the all-rookie basketball team.

Camosun business students offer tax-return help

Camosun College Business students are volunteering to help other students complete their tax returns. The students are trained by the Canada Revenue Agency. The sessions will take place in room 276 of the Centre for Business and Access at the Interurban campus

on March 11, 13, and 15. Space is limited; students can go to camosun.ca/cpa2b to register.

Board of governors approves new college policy

On February 4, the Camosun College board of governors approved a new Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion policy that aims to make the college a welcoming place for staff, faculty, and students. Students can go to the policies section of the Camosun website to see it in full.

Overdose prevention training available at Camosun

On Wednesday, March 6 from 5 pm until 6 pm, Camosun students

can go to room 124 in the Liz Ashton Campus Centre at Interurban to learn how to administer Naloxone, a drug used to stop the effects of opioids, usually when an overdose occurs. The session was held at Lansdowne on Tuesday, February 26.

Ryerson Students' Union impeaches president

On Monday, February 11, the Ryerson Students' Union board voted to remove president Ram Ganesh while it awaits the results of a forensic audit detailing nearly \$700,000 in spending. Some of the largest purchases included \$1,375.21 at an army surplus and sporting goods store, \$2,507.18 at a

Cineplex Rec Room, and \$2,280.89 at Toronto nightclub EFS. The board also suspended the union's vice-president of operations Savreen Gosal. Maklane deWever was elected as Ganesh's replacement. Ryerson University is located in Toronto.

-ADAM MARSH

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student athlete

Camosun Charger Doug Waterman graduating from court to stage



PHOTO PROVIDED

Camosun student and Chargers athlete Doug Waterman laying down some rhymes for a receptive crowd.

KATE WOOD
STAFF WRITER

The city of Victoria has yet to see the best of local hip-hop artist Doug Waterman. Waterman is about to graduate from Camosun College; once he is freed of his responsibilities to his education, and of his duties as team captain on the Camosun Chargers men's volleyball team, Waterman will

be able to invest more time in his passion for hip hop and production.

His experiences with music throughout his life—playing the snare drum in Cadets, taking piano lessons, and performing in his middle-school jazz band—have built a foundation upon which Waterman has developed a passion for producing hip hop.

"I pretty much always start with

making a beat," says Waterman of his creative process, "which usually starts with some sort of melody, or keys. I'm definitely a huge fan of piano, that kind of nice melody sound. I'm a big fan of Drake and his producer 40; I'm a huge fan of that kind of sound, so I pretty much always start with keys or some sort of melody, and then I'll add in some drums. I always pull in my drums

"I've been really lucky coming in at the right time, starting my first year, and going through these four years, having incredible teammates to help me with this achievement that's been donned upon me."

DOUG WATERMAN
CAMOSUN COLLEGE STUDENT

specifically; I'll never pull in a drum kit. I always pull in each sound separately based on what I want on top of it, and then I'll start kind of layering depending on what I hear."

Waterman recently travelled to LA to perform as a part of a showcase for up-and-coming musicians. He found it motivating to perform in a new city and receive positive feedback from an unfamiliar audience.

"It was definitely a really cool experience, just being from completely out of town," says Waterman. "I definitely was really ready for my set when I went there, and I got a good response from other performers that were there, and just the crowd in general, which was super nice. I have yet to put out my best music, obviously, so being able to perform at a good level with the music I have out now, and get a good response from a totally unbiased crowd, was really nice to see. [It was] promising. It's just like a bit of a confidence boost, you know?"

Waterman's coach for the past four years has been Charles Parkinson. Parkinson says that when he recruited Waterman, he wouldn't

have guessed that he was a budding musician. Even though he may not be a big hip hop fan, Parkinson is impressed by Waterman's music.

"I must admit I do find a lot of his stuff is infectious," says Parkinson. "The beats are good, and I like his lyrics; I think they're actually pretty good. Hip hop in general isn't really my thing, but of course I make exceptions, and I go on the website and I listen to his music and think, 'Wow, that's Doug!' Yeah, so it's pretty cool."

Getting ready to move on to the next chapter in his life, Waterman is grateful for the time he has had at Camosun and in particular with his Chargers teammates and his coach.

"Charles has been with me for four years. We've won [provincials] four times, won nationals once, so it's been pretty interesting. I've been really lucky coming in at the right time, starting my first year, and going through these four years, having incredible teammates to help me with this achievement that's been donned upon me. I think when I look back it will be a good chapter of my life, probably the best one."

know your profs

Geography Instructor Trisha Jarrett on the importance of prioritizing student mental health

KATY WEICKER
STAFF WRITER

Know Your Profs is an ongoing series of profiles on the instructors at Camosun College. Every issue we ask a different instructor at Camosun the same 10 questions in an attempt to get to know them a little better.

Do you have an instructor who you want to see interviewed in the paper? Maybe you want to know more about one of your teachers, but you're too busy, or shy, to ask? Email editor@nexusnewspaper.com and we'll get on it.

This issue we talked to geography instructor Trisha Jarrett about breakfast for dinner, volcanoes, and her frustration over lack of staples.

1. *What do you teach and how long have you been at Camosun?*

I've been at the college since 2002, and I primarily teach Geography. My favourite courses to teach are natural hazards, biogeography, statistics in geography, and research methods. I also work in the Environmental Technology program and have recently taken on the role of chair of the department.

2. *What do you personally get out of teaching?*

I get to share my love for geography with students. We break



ADAM MARSH/NEXUS

Camosun College Geography instructor Trisha Jarrett.

down topics and learn geography is a way of thinking that is relevant and widely transferrable. I love that I get to spend time teaching, discussing, applying and (still!) learning about

geography—to be able to share that with students is a privilege.

3. *What's one thing you wish your students knew about you?*

I think many students might not know how hard it was for me to adjust to post-secondary education. It was financially tough, and I didn't have a lot of local support when I first moved to attend school. I was from a very small town, and it was a big challenge.

4. *What's one thing you wish they didn't know about you?*

I am a horrible speller and often make mistakes.

5. *What's the best thing that's ever happened to you as a teacher here?*

It's great when former students get in touch with me to let me know that they are still studying geography, or that they came across something that we talked about in class, or to send along a photo of a really cool volcano they saw in their travels. I love that the connections made in the classroom can sometimes continue on beyond a student's time at Camosun.

6. *What's the worst thing that's ever happened to you as a teacher here?*

Being laid off from my first position at Camosun in the co-op department. I worked with some exceptional educators and support staff, and it was a very difficult time.

7. *What do you see in the future of post-secondary education?*

Post-secondary education is expensive, particularly in Victoria, when the price of housing is factored in. I am very concerned about the loads that many students carry between juggling school, work, family, and other commitments, while at the same time having to fund their education. I think we will need to see a continued effort to prioritize mental-health strategies for students. Camosun has a great one—camosun.ca/about/mental-health—and also we need to continue to support instructors in finding ways to identify and support students who are in need of support.

8. *What do you do to relax on the weekends?*

I have three young boys, so there is not a lot of relaxing. The closest thing would be to run them in the woods—preferably on a mountain somewhere.

9. *What is your favourite meal?*

I am a big fan of breakfast for dinner. Or, breakfast for breakfast works, too.

10. *What's your biggest pet peeve?*

Students who hand in multi-page labs without staples.

movies

Event focuses on short films by and for women



PHOTO PROVIDED

Flip the Record is one of the films screening at LUNAFEST, which will be at The Vic Theatre on Saturday, March 9.

KATRINA BROOKE
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Just in time to honour International Women's Day, LUNAFEST is an evening of short films by, about, and for women. Featuring films by both emerging and award-winning directors, the 2019 lineup focuses on intersectionality, highlighting important stories about women that may not otherwise receive attention.

"We try to find topics that speak to the social climate," says LUNAFEST assistant program manager Anja Hakoshima.

Currently in its 18th year, LUNAFEST is the first all-women

travelling film festival, now screening in approximately 150 cities across the United States and Canada. The fest's origins lead back to Clif Bar & Co. co-owner Kit Crawford; the Luna Bar is a nutrition bar for women created by Clif Bar. Crawford is an artist and a strong advocate for women in the arts. If someone wants to bring LUNAFEST to their city, the only request is a \$350 donation to Chicken & Egg Pictures, a non-profit organization that supports women filmmakers. Hakoshima explains that they do their best to ensure the donation request is never a barrier

to entry, and says that they have waived it in the past.

"The hosts themselves take the net proceeds from the event and give it to their organization," says Hakoshima. "In this case, it's the Zonta Club of Victoria. In general, it's women's causes, but we don't eliminate other causes, as well."

The 90-minute event showcases eight films, each exploring the human condition and female experience through the lens of immigration, LGBTQ identities, disability, race, and more. Hakoshima explains that the event itself is apolitical, although there are films

that challenge the status quo and highlight social-justice issues faced by women today.

"We get some pretty powerful films," says Hakoshima.

Hakoshima says that the organization now receives over 1,000 submissions of short films from all over the world every year. The artists who are selected to fill the main lineup receive an award of \$2,500 and are often invited to attend the events.

"They have a chance to really talk to their audience and promote their film," says Hakoshima. "They get a lot of visibility that they probably wouldn't if they had just made

"We try to find topics that speak to the social climate."

ANJA HAKOSHIMA
LUNAFEST

this one short film but no one was watching it. This way, a lot of people get to see it."

As for what the future of the fest holds, Hakoshima says she hopes more and more filmmakers submit their films.

"The more the merrier," she says. "We get more films and of better quality and then more hosts will learn about us too, and so they can utilize this wonderful tool."

LUNAFEST

7 pm Saturday, March 9

\$18, The Vic Theatre

lunafest.org

music

Crashing Into Things find creativity in the face of adversity



COLIN SMITH

Crashing Into Things bassist/vocalist Mike Isacson (second from left) knows how to make the best out of bad times.

ADAM MARSH
STUDENT EDITOR

For Crashing Into Things bassist/vocalist Mike Isacson, the most fruitful creative times are often the darkest. In 2011, his wife left him and he was at a dead end, and

he went to a show at what's now Capital Ballroom. After the set, someone hollered his name. It was fellow-band-member-to-be Adrian Southward. One thing led to another, and Isacson eventually went to Pender Island, where Southward

is from, to record some vocals that turned into the material on the local band's self-titled debut album.

One of those songs, "(She Said) I'm Gonna Kill You," details a night Isacson won't soon forget.

"That was just kind of going

back to when I was around 20 or so, and had a girlfriend for a little while in Fernwood there," says Isacson. "Yeah, I got my dick pierced in front of a bunch of folks on Halloween evening."

Isacson has been a fan of animation his whole life, so when he started writing a song about that fateful night, he thought it might also make a good music video. Although they used a Vancouver-based animator to make the video for "(She Said) I'm Gonna Kill You," Isacson enjoys editing and making videos as well as making music.

"For the first album, we had two videos done, and I had other people make them; ever since then I've really gotten into making videos myself," he says, adding that the videos have become a big part of his creative process.

Isacson calls Crashing Into Things' current sound "working class art rock."

"When people hear us and try to come up with a comparison, the single band I hear most often is Talking Heads," he says. "That was a reference point for us, but we're heavier than Talking Heads. Some of our stuff gets quite heavy."

Guitarist Kalev Mihkel Kaup has had "really, really serious heart issues for years," says Isacson, and ended up getting a transplant in November of 2018. Isacson says

that impacted the band's latest work.

"The new album [*Smaller than Death*] is very much about mortality," says Isacson.

Aside from Kaup's heart transplant, Isacson had some health issues of his own.

"I didn't know what the fuck was going on," he says. "I don't think it's a super gloomy album, but it's definitely heavier."

Isacson had a 13-year hiatus from music when he was married but always figured he would get back into playing. And out of a dark period, creativity came.

"My ex-wife, the day that she told me she was leaving, I was completely devastated," he says.

But from the trauma came Isacson's most creative period.

"Even some of the stuff we're still working on, it was actually written initially six or seven years ago," he says. "It just hasn't been worked out. It's true—you go through those traumatic experiences and it can be, creatively, very fruitful."

Crashing Into Things

8 pm Friday, March 8

\$10, Wheelies Motorcycles

(2620 Rock Bay Avenue)

wheeliesmotorcycles.ca

Leading the charge on gameday and in the classroom

The players and coaches of the Camosun Chargers look back at 25 years of college athletics

By Fred Cameron, features writer
Photos courtesy of Camosun Chargers Athletics



The Camosun Chargers men's volleyball team during the recent PACWEST championships.

Recently, the men and women of the Camosun Chargers volleyball and basketball teams experienced the sort of pressure only rivalled by the most daunting of all midterms as they stepped onto a gymnasium floor and got ready to play in provincial championship games. And none of the teams even had home court advantage.

It's all part of being on a college sports team. The Chargers teams—men's and women's volleyball, men's and women's basketball, and golf—are made up of student athletes: Camosun students like you and me who fill their free time with intense training to get to provincial and national championships; who juggle an athletic career with their schoolwork; who earn themselves a second education while at the college.

It's not always easy. For every victory there is a practice where things aren't going right, where player and coach are clashing; there are devastating losses on important game nights. But it's all part of being on a college sports team, which in many ways isn't that different from being on a pro sports team.

This season marks 25 years of Camosun Chargers athletics. The Chargers have persevered and hit the quarter-century mark, with that same laser focus and determination that the players use when the chips are down, the practice is behind them, and it's go time.

Most current students are too young to remember the Chargers' first seasons, but Camosun College Recreation and Athletics coordinator Graham Matthews has been working with the Chargers since their inaugural season. Matthews says it was fun but a bit of a struggle getting the programs off the ground in the first place.

"We started our first year in the Carey Road gym," says Matthews, referring to one of Camosun's former campuses. "It was quite old, but at least we had a facility to start with. We had to bring in seating, so we bought some portable chairs from the Commonwealth Games. Every game we had to set up the seating and then take it down and put it in storage."

That only lasted a year, because the college consolidated into two campuses, says Matthews.

"We had to reach out into the community to find the gym space for our four programs," Matthews says. "Lucky for us, the Victoria school board came forward and helped us out. We managed to arrange gym time at Spectrum Community School, but we had to move around to a number of different schools. Every time, we had to pack all of our event stuff into a college van and set it up at whichever school we were playing at. We would have Friday and Saturday afternoon games, and then we would pack it all up and take it back to the college to store it. We did that for about 14, 15 years, until eventually we got the facility we are in now, PISE [The Pacific Institute for Sport Excellence]."

It's been an interesting adventure getting to this point, says Matthews. He says the Chargers have been highly successful over the years, but they couldn't have done it without a ton of community support.

"We have gone to the PACWEST [Pacific Western Athletic Association] championships numerous times," Matthews says. "If you come out to

PISE, be sure to come and see our wall, because we have the banners up on the wall permanently. We are almost covering one whole wall now with PACWEST and CCAA [Canadian Collegiate Athletic Association] achievements. I guess big ones for us would be winning national championships in golf and men's volleyball."

Among the highlights for Matthews is a golf tournament that the Chargers hosted and won.

"We hosted the inaugural Canadian Collegiate Athletic Association golf championships in 2000," says Matthews. "We split the event between Arbutus Ridge and Olympic View. It was a three-day tournament and we had 14 teams. It has since gone on to evolve into a national championship."

Since the addition of the PISE facility, Camosun gets the opportunity to host the PACWEST championships.

"In the past 10 years, we've hosted three championships," Matthews says. "Just recently, we have had the opportunity to put in a successful bid on the women's national volleyball championship. Our women's team went all the way to the gold medal game and picked up a silver in front of a packed house."

The Chargers recently finished the regular season in front of a crowded house for their 25-year anniversary celebrations.

"It was really rewarding to see," says Matthews. "We won three of the four games. All of our teams [men's and women's basketball and volleyball] are preparing to go to the PACWEST championships."

(The PACWEST volleyball championships happened after interviews for this story had been completed; the men's volleyball team took home silver, and the women's volleyball team finished fourth in the PACWEST standings. The women's basketball team and the men's basketball team both took home bronze.)

Charles Parkinson has been coaching the Chargers men's volleyball team for so long he can't remember when he started, but he thinks it's been 11 or 12 seasons. Parkinson is also an instructor in Camosun's Centre for Sport and Exercise Education and the Sport Management program leader. Parkinson developed his love for volleyball through a 30-year playing career; having peaked as a member of Canada's national volleyball team, Parkinson says he always wanted to give back to the sport, so he went out and got his advanced coaching diploma.

"I've been coaching now for about 35 years," says Parkinson. "I got my level 4 under the old system, and I did a master's degree in high performance coaching and technical leadership because I wanted to be able to provide these athletes with both technical and tactical skills, and I wanted to provide the mental support and physical training they require. I wanted to be able to give the insight that I had gained, having played the sport for 30 years. I can actually impact kids more than just as volleyball players, but in terms of life in general."

After all these years, Parkinson says he is still excited to go to work in the morning.

"I can have the worst day in the world, and I go into the gym with the

guys, and I just kind of bathe in their testosterone and their energy and positive attitudes," Parkinson says. "I find it refreshing and renewing."

The Chargers men's volleyball team has been very successful over the years, Parkinson says.

"We won the championship six out of the last 10 years, and we have won the last four, and we're trying to make it five in a row," says Parkinson. "That's something that's never been done before, and I think that's something that's worth getting behind."

Chargers men's volleyball team captain Doug Waterman is pursuing a degree in the Sport Management program. He says the team has suffered some tough losses, but they're steadily getting better.

"I think we're really starting to find our team play, which has been nice," he says. "It's definitely something you need going into playoffs. We haven't had an astonishing win record or anything this year, but it's all a process. We're coming to the end, so hopefully we peak at the right time, and we can pull out a victory when the time comes."

Cait Haggarty is behind the bench of the women's basketball team as coach. Haggarty says she found her love for the game through her playing career, which found her playing at UBC for five years, and playing pro in Germany for a year. Haggarty took an indirect route to Camosun, including a stint where she went through firefighter training. "Things were up in the air and then this opportunity came to my plate," says Haggarty. "I thought it would be a good time to give it a go. I think the island has incredible potential. There have been some great basketball players who have come out of Victoria, and there are a lot of up-and-comers on the island."

Fourth year Sport and Fitness Leadership student Tessa Lannon-Paakspuu is one of those up-and-comers on the Chargers women's basketball squad. After playing on her high school's basketball team in Penticton, Lannon-Paakspuu tried out for some teams and decided to come out to Vancouver Island and play for the Chargers.

"I just love the island, and the school itself drew me in," says Lannon-Paakspuu. "I didn't know exactly what program I wanted to get into. Originally, I was just going to come here for a year and do the University Transfer program. Then I found the program I'm in now. It's health and wellness and exercise, and that drew me in, so I've been here ever since."

The life of a student athlete involves a lot of juggling, says Lannon-Paakspuu.

"Trying to balance practice, school, and our course load, and then eating and sleeping well... It's a struggle, but you have to manage," says Lannon-Paakspuu. "You figure out when to do homework, and what nights you can get a good night's sleep. Because I'm in such an athletic program, all of my instructors are really good about it. They're really understanding when it comes to missing classes for sports."

Lannon-Paakspuu is registered in five courses this semester; she says that she's busy, but so is every other student.

"It's different pressures. A lot of full-time students work and have other things to juggle. I just have to learn to juggle things myself. It's not impossible," she says. "The average student might have a little bit more free time, but they fill that with something else. I choose to fill my time with basketball."

Haggarty says that student athletes have to stay on top of things if they want to succeed, both on the court and in the classroom.

"I think regular students have their challenges as well; sport is just another dynamic that's thrown into the mix," she says. "We practice four days a week and play two days a week, so time is definitely limited. I think there is a lot to be gained from it, as well. It's a really neat experience to be a student athlete."

Everyone I interviewed agrees that student athletes are given a unique opportunity to combine the team experience with a formal education. The impact of the Chargers at the institutional level is significant, Parkinson says, adding that at the individual level, student athletes are learning that there are no shortcuts to mastering a craft.

"Being good in anything that you do, whether it's academics or athletics, requires commitment and hard work," says Parkinson. "They learn about those things through their training. They learn about working together as part of a team to try to achieve something that's greater than any individual."

An unexpected lesson Waterman learned as a Charger is how to manage different people and different personalities.

"You kind of learn how to deal with a wide range of different people, and how they perceive things, how they work, and how they take in information—or don't take in information, for that matter," says Waterman. "It's been a great personal learning experience."

Being part of a team, players really have to interact with people in different ways and learn to break barriers, says Waterman.

"Sometimes in practice you have to get in a guy's face a little, and it's nothing personal, but we want to get the best out of each other," says Waterman. "Charles, our coach, will get into us because he's trying to exploit the best out of us and he knows what we're capable of. It's good to be able to

have that kind of relationship where we call each other out, but know that it's nothing personal. That is definitely a good life skill."

Student athletes also learn a lot of life lessons that translate into the marketplace, Parkinson says.

"There are very few companies that want to hire people who can't operate as part of a team," says Parkinson. "I think athletes have a distinct advantage because in order to be successful you have to work together. You have to figure out how to overcome the opposition and put your strategy and tactics into practice."

Student support is very important to the success of the Chargers, and Matthews says that the teams get that support.

"We get a good turnout from students and within the college community," says Matthews. "We have a natural rivalry with Vancouver Island University in Nanaimo. Whenever we play each other we have a packed house. The rivalry is always strong and the gym is electric."

Haggarty hopes it's a fun experience for the fans.

"We try to play an up-tempo game with a lot of running and back-and-forth," says Haggarty. "It creates an exciting atmosphere, and that makes people want to come back and watch. The games are usually close. The girls do a good job of connecting with peers and getting some friends out, so it's a pretty fun environment when we get a good crowd. We just try to keep the game high-tempo and exciting."

Being a part of the Chargers community is something that stays with you for the rest of your life, says Parkinson.

"People come out to cheer for us, and it provides an incredible motivation, a burst of energy, and a little adrenaline for the athletes, which allows them to do things that they didn't think they were capable of," Parkinson says. "It's a pretty awesome phenomenon when you see that happen, and you're a part of that experience. That's kind of why I do it, and why I will continue to do it."

Lannon-Paakspuu says she gets pretty nervous when she sees a big crowd.

"I'm quite the nervous Nelly when it comes to game days, but once the game starts that goes away, and I can really feed off the energy of the crowd," says Lannon-Paakspuu. "For the big home games like the season opener, if you hit a shot the crowd goes wild, and it's such a great feeling."

Waterman says he's pretty good at staying focused on what he has to do on the court.

"Sometimes you want to get the crowd involved and use them to your advantage, but when it comes down to gametime, we need to stay focused on doing our job," he says. "But, yeah, hometown advantage is huge, and having friends and family coming out to the games every weekend is definitely a plus."

More fans than ever before are able to watch Chargers games, says Matthews.

"Through the years, technology has really helped us to meet our fan base," Matthews says. "We stream all of our games now. We have international coverage online, which is great because of the number of international students playing for our teams, as well as graduates who are living out of the country, and it allows parents to watch the games."

Because of the nature of the competition, the Chargers golf team tends to fly under the radar—the team didn't play one home event this year. It's tough for students to get out to see them play, says head coach Doug Hastie, who adds that the team has a very good history.

"Camosun has won some national championships," says Hastie. "They've had individual champions. They've won the PACWEST numerous times."

And Hastie, who started as coach last year, says the team is continuing to succeed.

"We play a schedule, pretty well right from when school starts, so early September," says Hastie. "We have five events, including the PACWEST championship, and the top two teams in the conference qualify for the national championship, which was in the second week of October. This year we weren't expected to make nationals, but we did. We finished second in the PACWEST, and we finished eighth at nationals."

College golf is quite unique because of the team format of competition, says Hastie.

"Five guys play and the top four scores count," says Hastie. "They do name an individual championship, but the main thing is the placement of the team. College golf is one of the only team golf competitions. It's great."

Hastie, a well-decorated professional, brings decades of experience to the Chargers program, having been assistant coach of the UBC Thunderbird golf teams.

"I've been around golf, whether it's teaching or playing, for a long time," he says. "There are some very good golfers playing in the PACWEST, says Hastie. "Most of the guys are playing in their provincial amateur championships. There are some guys in the PACWEST conference that I would say are at the national level. They have to shoot low 70s in competition to make

the team. These are not casual golfers. The level of play is just below the NAIA [National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics], which is where we played when I coached with UBC. Our team actually won some of the NCAA [National Collegiate Athletic Association] tournaments. We are just below that, and not far behind."

The golf team spends a lot of time together, and teammates develop a close bond, says Hastie.

"When you go into a tournament, you drive on Friday, you play a practice round, you're staying together in a hotel, and then the tournament is Saturday and Sunday," says Hastie. "The guys are together for three straight days for five weeks in a row, and then the sixth week they are together for a week for the national championships. They get along really well, and push each other to get better."

Maybe Parkinson can't quite remember when he started with the Chargers, but he says he's going to be around a little longer, and he's looking forward to next year.

"We have another really good recruiting class," he says. "We should have another great team... Right now we're just gearing up for our own championships this year. It's one step at a time. We're focused on finishing this year. I remain excited about the school, and the sport, and about the athletes. It allows me to live my dream, as well. It'd be great to talk about another championship next year, but one season at a time."

Over on the golf course, Hastie says he doesn't expect a lot of change between now and next season.

"We don't do a lot of recruitment because we have a lot of students who want to come to the college to play golf," says Hastie. "We have a pretty young team, though. We only have two guys moving on, so we have six returning. We have a tryout process set up for when we get back to school."

Waterman wants to finish this year before making any decisions on his future. He says he's really not too sure what he'll do as far as volleyball goes.

"If I worked as a coach I'd want to be in it full time," says Waterman. "If I can find the time to make that commitment that's something I might look into, but I also have other plans. I want to start working and making some money and doing my own thing in the music world. I make music, and I produce my own stuff. I sing and rap." (See our full story on Waterman's music on page 4.)

Lannon-Paakspuu has one season left with the Chargers, and says she will likely need a break once she graduates and makes her next step.

"It's funny, but I don't think I'll end up using my degree," says Lannon-Paakspuu. "I actually plan on being a police officer. Hopefully Saanich or Victoria police, but I'll see once I graduate where I can apply. My program kind of led me into it. One of our coaches, Niki [Sundher], is a police officer with Saanich, I believe, and she loves her job, and that really made me keen."

As far as the future of the Chargers goes, Matthews says there is definitely potential to expand, and mentions bringing in a new sport entirely.

"The original plan was to have men's and women's soccer, but because of how things evolved, and a lack of facilities and funding to get them going, they were always kept on the backburner," says Matthews. "It would be good [to have them] because soccer is quite strong in this community. We're always fielding interest from students wanting to play soccer for the college. I think we'll be able to field fairly strong teams. There is a good pool of coaches that we could bring in. It would give us a nice balance to our athletic program."

The Chargers golfers hope to continue to have success, but there is definitely room to expand the program, says Hastie, pointing to a rather obvious missing link in the golf program.

"We would love to have a women's team," says Hastie. "We have had one in the past. We would like to get the program going again if we can get enough interest. I would love to take on the coaching duties if I could."

One of the greatest rewards of working with the Chargers is seeing how successful some of their former student athletes and coaches have become, says Matthews.

"Many have gone on to professional careers, whether in the medical field, policing, or teaching," says Matthews. "Some have continued on to get their master's degree. Sometimes we see ex-athletes come back with their families to show their kids where they came from."

The experience is much bigger than the sport, Parkinson says. "There are friendships that last forever," says Parkinson. "You can couple those life experiences with an education. We all know that volleyball is a moment in time, but education lasts forever."

Waterman says that his Chargers experience has completely changed his life.

"The last five years, playing as a Charger, has been the best chapter of my life, for sure," says Waterman. "I remember my first year very clearly, just watching my captains, and the older players, and now it's my turn. Being able to grow as a player and become a leader... I'm the guy who'll be going out the door soon. It has been quite an experience, and it's definitely something I'll be happy to look back on in the future."

music

Dry Sockets fest brings the noise with two days of experimental sounds



MICHAEL NINE

Vancouver's Sam McKinlay performs noise as The Rita.

BO ESSERY

CONTRIBUTING WRITER

"With Death Squad it was pointing a loaded gun at the audience and... taking the audience hostage."

That's Michael Nine, who performs noise under the name MK9 and previously as Death Squad, talking about some of his more memorable performances. MK9 is one of 18 artists from across North

America performing at Dry Socket, a music festival featuring a litany of noise acts. Although the genre is unconventional, its fans acquire an immense sense of satisfaction from it.

"There's sort of an intensity," says Dry Socket founder Ron Brogden. "As soon as you get away from worrying much about songwriting in the pop-music sense, the further away from that, the closer

you get to the visceral side of sound. With something like The Rita, just the impact that has is the closest, for me anyway, that you're ever going to get to the first time you saw a punk rock band. Obviously now, punk rock's been around a long time, but the first time you see something that you've never seen before, that totally speaks to you and has an impact; noise is able to maintain that to a certain extent."

Dry Socket will host many accomplished musicians; however, headliner The Rita stands out with his extremely experimental and creative process for conjuring harsh noise. Sam McKinlay, the solo artist behind The Rita, has been into creating harsh noise for years, from using dirt bikes in art galleries to making noise with ballerinas.

"From, like, the mid-'90s on, I kind of just made it my own," says McKinlay. "I just got more and more into the analogue effects and the custom fuzz pedals. Lately, I work with ballet dancers a lot. So I'll have them rigged up to a microphone; then, as they move, it translates into that exact same sound—like, rigged up to their thighs and the arches of their feet and the floor that they're on, and as they move, it virtually, eventually, just creates that same sound I achieved in the art gallery with the dirt bike. So again, it's just translating various obsessions and interests into a sound I absolutely love. And then in a live environment, it's a really crushing, high-volume experience."

"If I'm walking downtown, and they've got the piledriver going and something whirring in the back, you'll see me standing there smiling."

RON BROGDEN

DRY SOCKETS

Although to an outsider noise seems to be about being the most extreme, it's like any art. At its core, it's a labour of love, a medium for expression and the shared, arduous experience of being a human being.

"When I first started doing it, I was listening to some stuff, and really enjoyed the sounds and just wanted to kind of make my own sounds," says Nine. "I've always been searching for specific frequencies, so when I was first doing stuff in '90 and '91, I never thought of releasing anything, never thought of performing. It sounds cliché, [but it was] like personal therapy. Like the frequencies, if I could manipulate whatever I was using to make sounds that would affect my brain and alleviate stress or depression or anything, that's what the whole beginning of it was."

The genre of noise is broad and doesn't discriminate against new ideas and experimental interpretations, making it an incredibly versatile and ever-expanding model for music. However, even with its incredibly experimental nature, it still has feeling.

"I think if someone's doing

something that's honest, and from their heart and their soul, giving everything that they have," says Nine, "I think that's what makes some of the best stuff."

All of which begs the question: can workers on a construction site accidentally make a great noise record?

"There's some famous—well, infamous—early Japanese noise acts like Hatanarash; [one of] their gig[s] involved using a backhoe to tear down the gallery they were in," says Brogden. "So definitely I expect—I can't say this 100 percent for sure—people have gone and recorded construction sites to be able to use those sounds. You know, I'd listen to it. And I do—if I'm walking downtown, and they've got the piledriver going and something whirring in the back, you'll see me standing there smiling."

Dry Sockets

7 pm Friday, March 8 and
Saturday, March 9
\$20, Intrepid Theatre
industrial.org

EVENTS

The Nexus guide to Victoria's open-mic scene

JOHNNY FREM

CONTRIBUTING WRITER

I arrive at 4 pm for the Hootenanny at Logan's Pub (Sundays, 4 to 8 pm). It's packed with young people. The host arrives for a mic check and gets rolling at 4:45 with her warm-up of six tunes followed by three more for each band member. So the band hogs the first two hours, then opens it up to the remaining eight people placed at the bottom of their sign-up list. I'm not impressed, plus I can't make out any lyrics of the performers, who seem to be a sideshow for each other and their friends at tables near the stage, while people in the main room and the adjoining room carry on as though nothing is happening. The performers are good, but I find the audience rude. Open mics can be an unpredictable uphill battle. Outside a heavy snow falls.

I bus over to the Kitchen Party Jam at Christie's Carriage House Pub (Sundays, 7 to 10 pm). From the lobby I hear a guitar and one high voice. I don't hear the room of attentive people around the corner. The host sees my pack: "What's in there?" "Trumpet." "Wanna play?" "Prob'ly not. I'm out of practice. No chops, but can I tell a story?" "Sure." Two of the crowd here don't have grey hair. Like Logan's, there's also an adjoining room here, but it's no distraction from a cute country duo, then a folk singer and a '70s

rock band who just rolled in from playing the open mic at The Loft Pub. My turn. I tell a story about busking in the London Underground, which goes over well, even though I blow the punchline. I'll do better next time. Open mic is about ironing out kinks. Or else I'll do what my hero, Leonard Cohen, did at open mics: only perform what is perfectly ready, then split, leaving them wanting more.

Next I hear an Indigo Girls song, "Closer to Fine." A guy on piano covers Elton John's "Rocket Man." Exquisite. Okay, maybe it's more than just acoustics. What was happening back at the Hootenanny? Perhaps rookies dealing with stage fright prefer not to be noticed and veterans are more comfortable. It's all relative. Forty years ago, if I stepped into a room of geezers playing schmaltzy tunes from the 1930s, I'd do a 180 and head for a bar like Logan's, where I'd hear people my age struggling to cover these songs I hear today at the Kitchen Party Jam.

On Tuesday, I check out the Unplugged Open Mic at Gorge-ous Coffee (Tuesdays, 6:30 to 9:30pm). The place is a cafe with 10 tables and 25 seats, all taken, and simple rules: "No microphone, acoustic. Each performer gets three songs." That seems to be the standard stage time allotted at open mics. Nicole goes to UVic and plays original tunes. She's quiet, shy, and struggles to



JOHNNY FREM

A scene from the open mic night at Christie's Carriage House Pub.

find the chords, but offers up a voice that rings clear, true, timid, fragile, and vulnerable. She almost cries. She sings too quiet, so on the second song a friend backs her up with harmonies.

Musicians need a place to play before an audience. These are not people pretending to be rock stars, professionals who've chosen to make a career of music. They're truck drivers, students, a couple of professors on a break from the Kingston snow, people with day jobs who've sometimes been playing music all their lives. Sometimes it's their first time on stage. Open mics are for people who want to share their passion—music—with

someone other than a neighbour on the other side of a wall. Don't expect sounds from iTunes. This will be raw and human with glitches. "Original, magical, beautiful," as the host at Gorge-ous Coffee says.

Two days later I'm at the Open Mic at the Spiral Cafe (Thursdays, 6 to 9 pm). It's a full house of 30 seats and a few people standing. "Only two songs here, and only one if it's long. 15 have signed up already, so the list is full and we might have to go late." Apparently, this open mic is one of the oldest in town. Even though it's way over in Vic West, it's worth the trip (the number 14 bus goes direct from Camosun to the Spiral Café).

"Hi. I'm Max. I'm seven years old. This is my Dad. He's 44. I like to do songs about interesting characters. This one is called 'Old Joe Clark.'" Max plays fiddle; his dad plays banjo. And they're great. Max doesn't miss a beat. Dad doesn't either.

People come here to show off. All the acts are polished. Several pianists, drummers, and guitarists play back-up at all the open mics. If you want to do that, you better be good. Get some songs together. Plan some banter. Connect with the audience. If you want to make open mics your scene, play a good hour a day at home. If you're versatile, you can sit in with anyone. Get unwired.

stage

The Belfry Theatre's Spark Festival celebrates 10 years with the personal and the political



GRAHAM ISADOR

Donna-Michelle St. Bernard will perform *Sound of the Beast* at SPARK.

CHRISTINE CLARK

CONTRIBUTING WRITER

The Belfry Theatre is putting on the 10th annual SPARK Festival this month with productions by notable Canadian playwrights, directors, comedians, musicians, and performers.

Comedian and writer Mike Delamont will perform his one-man production of *Mama's Boy* at the fest; the play is his story of growing up with and saying goodbye to an alcoholic parent. Delamont's mother was a lifelong alcoholic who died in 2012 without ever achieving sobriety.

"She was a binge drinker, so she'd be totally fine for months and months and months and then all of

a sudden just kind of disappear off the face of the earth, you know, and be gone for a week," says Delamont, adding that "she was an excellent mom, she was wonderful, and she provided for me and she introduced me to theatre."

But her alcoholism grew more severe as the years passed; Delamont remembers a Jekyll-and-Hyde kind of transformation between binges.

"Being the child of an alcoholic, you do feel very alone in that," he says. "You don't feel that anybody else is going through that experience, and as you become an adult, you're like, 'Oh, a lot of people had that same experience.'"

Delamont workshopped



New Music Revue



Ladytron

Scenery
(IK7)
4/5

This is the first album in seven years for British synthpop quartet Ladytron, and its 13 tracks give me all kinds of good feelings.

The band's connection to their music is out of this world and it makes for an amazing artistic experience. They're masters of their genre, and it shows.

"Deadzone" has a luxurious, bombastic quality that controls the room. "You've Changed" just demands to be felt, and I can't stop feeling it.

Emotional, deep, and fun, the modern technological sounds here make me want to dance. This visceral feeling, built by the track progression, intensifies to a deadly crescendo and then tapers into an intoxicating, haunting finale.

Somehow nostalgic and space-age at once, this album takes me to distant galaxies.

Ladytron has managed to compose a brand-new album that makes me feel like I've loved these songs my entire life.

-TRULY HUNTER



Emily King

Scenery
(ATO Records)
3/5

Scenery is Emily King's fourth album; while her 2007 debut earned her a Grammy nomination as an R&B and soul artist, *Scenery* has more of an indie vibe.

This romantic album starts off strong, smooth, and sultry—my head was bobbing along to the unique and catchy drum beats of the first few love songs.

Soon after, the tone of the album changed from relaxing and groovy to a little too slow and sombre to make for easy listening; at the halfway point the songs begin to run into one another and sound too morose to keep my interest. Toward the end, some tracks had the occasional hint of a tired '80s love ballad.

King has a beautiful and individual voice that is well suited to the livelier songs on *Scenery*, but she doesn't shine nearly as much when the energy of the album dwindles. If you're looking for some dreamy vocals and relaxing music to play at home, I would recommend checking out the first half of this album and skipping the rest.

-KELLEN ROGERS



Golden Daze

Simpatico
(Autumn Tone Records)
4.5/5

LA-based indie rock duo Golden Daze's second album, *Simpatico*, delivers powerful imagery through minimal means.

The band's two members, Jacob Loeb and Ben Schwab, tell a story through the album's dreamy, lo-fi folk songs. A sense of nostalgia and longing for what were once simple and familiar days is evoked. There is harmony in the vocals and in the use of both electric and acoustic guitars, the tools chosen to convey this story.

In the first half of the final chorus of the title track, which closes off the album, the lyrics are, "When everyone has gone/and it's empty at the end." The music fades out to silence, although the song is not over. A tune faintly returns, emphasizing the second part of the last verse, "I'll still be around/my friend."

Here's hoping Golden Daze stick around, too.

-ZACHARY GREENWOOD



Adam Baldwin

No Rest for the Wicked
(Sonic Records)
4.5/5

Adam Baldwin's second solo EP, *No Rest for the Wicked*, is a catchy and energetic rock release that takes the listener on a journey through Baldwin's fight with drug addiction.

Each song beautifully captures emotion, from the guilt-ridden "Shattered" to the hopeful "Dark Beside the Dawn," all while maintaining the lively overall tone of the EP.

While the music continues to capture the audience's attention, the lyrics capture the true battle with addiction. Baldwin—who is from Dartmouth, Nova Scotia and has been performing for over 15 years solo and in Matt Mays' band—gives his addiction a persona, which is especially heard through the lyrics and the music in "Salvation."

Baldwin chooses to end his story with the title track, where he recognizes that the battle is never truly over.

-JULIA THEIM



Radiant Baby

Restless
(Lisbon Lux Records)
3.5/5

Restless is the first full-length by Felix Mongeon, an electro-pop artist from Montreal who goes by the stage name Radiant Baby. The artist maintains a flow throughout the album in most of his songs, creating something unique and easily recognizable.

Restless is a mix of relaxing vibes and pulsating beats, which brings to mind some '70s nostalgia. It's something easy to listen to while studying or reading, since the lyrics are not distracting. I could see Radiant Baby playing on the side stage of a music fest, where they could play in the background but still entertain the public.

Again, this album is not something I would stop and listen to with my full attention, but is still a project I would recommend. The beats are pretty groovy and keep you in a wavy mood with no perception of the random dance moves you might throw out during your study session.

-RICARDO RAMOS

Mama's Boy here in Victoria and has performed it in Winnipeg, Edmonton, and Orlando, Florida. It's an emotional show; the degree to which the work resonates with his audience was unexpected, says Delamont.

"It's fascinating to talk to people after the show," he says. "Either they had alcoholic parents, or they are an alcoholic parent, or they lost a parent that they were very close to. It's interesting because I never wrote it to be a universally accepted show; I just wanted to write my own story."

The show is built from a series of anecdotes and songs about Delamont's childhood with his mother and his dad, all presented in chapters that swing unexpectedly between wildly comedic and heart-wrenching.

"It's a very heavy script told in a very conversational, easy dialogue from the mind of a comedian," says Delamont, "so even in the darkest points there is a lot of funny in it, which is what I really enjoy the most about it."

Sound of the Beast, written and performed by Donna-Michelle St. Bernard, veers away from the private tragedy of addiction and into the very public and political realms of resistance.

"I think that there's a heightened sensitivity caused by Black Lives Matter and Me Too," says St. Bernard. "I think part of the moment that we're in is learning not to

take authority at face value. I think it's a critical thinking moment."

Written over 2015 and 2016 at the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity's spoken-word program, *Sound of the Beast* is told through hip hop, spoken word, and theatre, an approach St. Bernard describes as "trying to bring my fullest self to this story." St. Bernard is one-quarter of the way through *54ology*, a project for which she is writing a performance story for and about each of Africa's 54 countries. *Sound of the Beast*, in part, tells the story of Tunisian rapper Weld El 15, who spent two years in prison for his song "Boulicia Kleb" (which roughly translates to "Cops Are Dogs"). St. Bernard, who lives and works in Toronto, says that her story also looks at other ways racism can manifest on a daily basis.

"Part of the story I'm telling involves the casual scrutiny of carding, like being stopped and asked who you are all the time in your own neighbourhood," she says.

St. Bernard says that she's also had encounters with the police.

"Yeah, I'm sort of the person that some people might say was asking for it," she says. "Like, I'm certainly not trying to stay out of their way."

She acknowledges that there's privilege in being able to both craft and perform her work for audiences across Canada. Sharing her story with communities outside of Toronto, she's felt a little apprehen-

sive but also pleased at the positive reception.

"I think it's part of our safety right, like when I say I'm afraid of these people and I don't ever want to be in a room with them where someone didn't know I'm in a room with them, like, I don't know what happens in the dark," she says. "I feel like the louder I can say it, the more I sort of feel that someone would notice if I disappeared."

St. Bernard says having to travel across the country telling an elaborate story, complete with lighting and sound design, just in order to be believed about the reality of police action against Canadians is frustrating.

"[People often have] a reflexive attitude, 'Oh, there's always something with these people, they're always mad about something,' or, 'They just hate cops; it's just a thing they do.' There's a weird tension," she says, "of wanting your rights, wanting access to all the services that a civilized city offers, but knowing that you're in some ways not really part of that and not really considered entitled to those things."

SPARK Festival

Various times, Friday, March 8
to Sunday, March 24
\$25.65 student tickets, Belfry
Theatre
sparkfestival.ca

what's going on by kate wood

UNTIL SATURDAY, MARCH 16

A tale of two times

Langham Court Theatre presents That Elusive Spark, written by Janet Munsil. It takes the true tale of a man surviving an iron rod through the brain in 1848 and adds in the story of a descendant of the man's doctor. A comedy of two stories in different centuries woven together, the play examines how far our technology has advanced while we struggle to understand the human mind. Student tickets are \$17; showtimes and tickets are available at langhamtheatre.ca.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 6

A night out at the barre

Ballet Victoria presents Carmina Burana, sung by the 140-voice choir of the Victoria Choral Society and played by the Victoria Symphony with Maestro Brian Wismath, at the Royal Theatre on March 6. Doors are at 7 pm; tickets start at \$30 and are available at balletvictoria.com.

SATURDAY, MARCH 9

Not your grandmother's silverware

The Invisible Orange & Vancouver Island Metal Festival are hosting BC Round One of the Wacken Metal Battle Canada at Logan's Pub. The contestants are Electric Druids, Liberata, Krypteia, and Forever Frost, with the winner heading to the huge Wacken Festival in Germany. Advance tickets are \$10, and doors are at 8 pm. For more information visit loganspub.com.

SATURDAY, MARCH 9

Happy birthday, CFUV!

Victoria's campus/community radio station CFUV 101.9 FM is celebrating

35 years of being on the airwaves with this night at The Copper Owl. Quarterback and DJ Robbie are performing. Tickets are \$10, and doors open at 9 pm; all cover charges collected will be donated to CFUV. For more information visit copperowl.ca.

SATURDAY, MARCH 9

You lucky dog

Single Mothers are at Lucky Bar with Dog Indiana on March 9. Single Mothers is a punk rock band from London, Ontario that reviewers say audiences will have to see to believe. Tickets are \$13.50, and doors open at 7 pm. Visit luckybar.ca for tickets and more details.

THURSDAY, MARCH 14

Hey, who turned out the lights?

White Buffalo is coming to Capital Ballroom with special guest Spencer Burton. Said to be inspired by musicians like Bob Dylan and Leonard Cohen, White Buffalo strip down their folk influences on their latest album Darkest Darks, Lightest Lights. The album explores a range of genres and themes examining the grim corners of American life. The show is at 8 pm and tickets are \$25; visit thecapitalballroom.com for more information.

THURSDAY, MARCH 14 TO SATURDAY, MARCH 23

Dark and funny

7 Stories is running at UVic's Phoenix Theatre until March 23; it's a satire play written by Canadian playwright Morris Panych. The story is about a man on the ledge of his apartment window intending to commit suicide, with other residents of his building coming into the story. Tickets are \$26, and student discounts are avail-



DAVID LOWES

That Elusive Spark is running at Langham Court Theatre until Saturday, March 16.

able for weekday and matinee shows for \$16. For showtimes and more information, visit finearts.uvic.ca.

SATURDAY, MARCH 16

Sound the alarms

Vancouver-based 11-piece band Five Alarm Funk are bringing their stylings of—you guessed it—funk to the Capital Ballroom. Expect to break a sweat. The show is at 8 pm; tickets are \$24.50 and are available at thecapitalballroom.com.

TUESDAY, MARCH 19

A hearty party

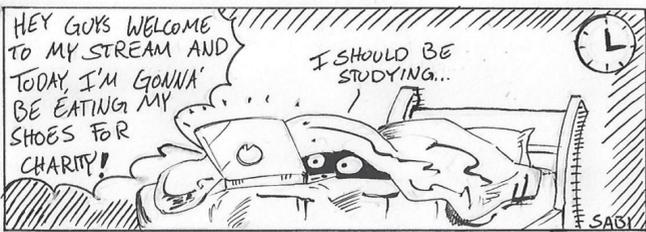
Australian rockers and world-renowned party band The Cat Empire

are hitting the Royal Theatre on March 19. Tickets start at \$43.50 and are available at rmts.bc.ca; the show starts at 8 pm.

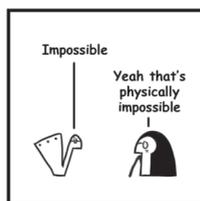
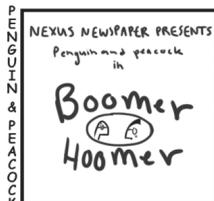
COMING SOON

April 12, Jim Gaffigan, Save-on-Foods Memorial Centre
April 17, Metric with July Talk, Save-on-Foods Memorial Centre
May 19, Chris D'Elia, Royal Theatre
June 24, Corey Hart, Save-on-Foods Memorial Centre
August 21, "Weird Al" Yankovic, Save-on-Foods Memorial Centre

C'est la Vie by Sebastien Brotherton

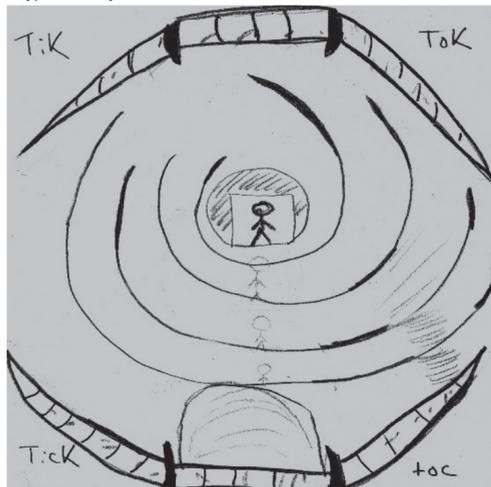


SADY



By Jayden Grieve

Kayfabulous by Nate Downe



T:K

T:K

STR8TS

STR8TS No. 220 Medium. A crossword puzzle grid with some numbers filled in. Includes a 'Previous solution - Tough' and a 'How to beat Str8ts' section.

SUDOKU

SUDOKU No. 220 Medium. A 9x9 grid with some numbers filled in. Includes a 'Previous solution - Easy' and a 'For many strategies, hints and tips, visit www.sudokuwiki.org' section.

SUDOKU No. 220 Medium. A 9x9 grid with some numbers filled in. Includes a 'Previous solution - Easy' and a 'For many strategies, hints and tips, visit www.sudokuwiki.org' section.



Let's Talk?

by Katy Weicker

Reflecting on a year of rants, raves, and fuckboys

A year ago I pitched the idea of Let's Talk?, a column about women's issues, to our managing editor, Greg Pratt. For some reason (which I'm sure he frequently regrets), he graciously allowed me the space to fight for equality.

What I had originally intended to be a hard-hitting column about the injustices women face on a daily basis has taken more than one detour—from my love of pumpkin spice lattes to ruminations on fuckboys back to rants about cookie-making, with a quick aside to discuss big-girl panties—but at the heart of it, I try (and, hopefully, at least sometimes, succeed) to shed light on the struggles (no matter how trivial they may seem) I face as a woman in 2019.

I wrote my first column on International Women's Day. I wrote about my frustration over the absurdity that we needed a day to celebrate women and how fucking amazing and strong we are. Because, if I'm being brutally honest, at the time I didn't really get it—I am surrounded by seemingly strong women who take zero shit.

I didn't feel like we needed a day to prove how awesome we are because we are freaking awesome 365 days a year.

The reality is that Women's Day isn't just about celebrating how awesome women are; it's about supporting those who are marginalized—the ones who have it way harder than me, the cis white female.

A year later, after fumbling through countless interviews with astonishing women from all walks of life, I am humbled enough to say that I am beginning to understand. We are celebrating because it's not just about being a badass. The reality is that Women's Day isn't just about celebrating how awesome women are; it's about supporting those who are marginalized—the ones who have it way harder than me, the cis white female.

Am I marginalized because I have a vagina? Sure. Am I more privileged than many? Absolutely. This realization is overwhelming, but that doesn't mean I get to put my head in the sand and shy away from it.

So, when I celebrate Women's Day, I'm not just celebrating the "Rah-Rah, I am woman, hear

me roar." I am celebrating every woman: the ones who aren't white, the ones who aren't cis, the ones who have been cat-called far worse than I, the ones who have been outcast, the ones who think they should be doing more despite doing more than enough, the ones who are badass, the ones who want to be, the ones who need a movement like Women's Day, and the ones who don't. I am celebrating all of us.

After 18 cycles of panicking over what I will say in my next column, I feel like I'm beginning to understand the simple root of all of this: being a woman is hard. For some more than others. But for the sake of this crazy sisterhood, we need to come together and support each other.

So, happy Women's Day, all my lovely ladies. We got this.



The Chopping Block Chronicles

by Justin Bennett

The dark side of the restaurant industry (part one)

There really wasn't much in the way of restaurants in my small town, so my first taste of the cooking world came from working at one of the local pubs. At the age of 13, I was working weekends scrubbing pots and pans and occasionally filling in on the line during busy brunch services. It was here that I was introduced to the debaucherous world that is the restaurant industry.

I remember thinking it was all so surreal—the people in the kitchen came from all walks of life and any semblance of civility or societal norms were thrown out the window; political correctness held no place here. Then, as if by magic, travelling through the door from the kitchen to the bar, the world became something entirely different. There were

beautiful women busily running food out to tables, and clean-cut, handsome men pouring drinks and making customers laugh. This quickly sold me. I loved this, and I wanted more.

It was then that I experienced my first staff party. Yes, imagine that: a 13-year-old boy barely through puberty and sitting down with the people he was enamoured with. "What do you want to drink?" the man behind the bar asked me. I had only ever heard of one drink that I thought I might enjoy; beer was out of the question at this point in my life. "I'll take a... screwdriver, please," I stuttered out, barely able to see over the counter. This was my first taste of the dark side of the restaurant industry.

A few years later, I was introduced to the book Kitchen Confidential by Anthony Bourdain, and it was as though I had found my bible. This was the kind of rock-star chef I wanted to become. Partying, drugs, and more sex than a person could handle—what else could an aspiring chef at the age of 18 ask for? Little did I know that this book should have been read as a warning, and not something to seek out.

That lesson wouldn't come for some time.

It seemed that the more I partied, the more I made my life revolve around work; the more I made my life revolve around work, the more money and power I got within it. It was a vicious cycle that I will delve into more in the next issue.



Health with Tess

by Tess Syrawik

Stretch it out

You know that hunchy, achy feeling right between your shoulder blades and up into your neck? Some people call it "texting neck" but I think it can be equally named "Instagram neck" or "Candy Crush neck."

Too much time slouching over our phones is bad for our posture, impacting our organs, body language, and causing upper back and neck pain.

Here are a few simple things you can do to alleviate your backache and to help you sit up a little taller. Roll your shoulders up toward your ears, then down on your back. Use your muscles to press the tops of your shoulders down and pull your shoulder blades toward one

another. This will open your chest up and improve your posture. I like repeating this a few times to loosen up those achy muscles and take a mini mental break from the task at hand. It's especially useful when you don't have a lot of time and space.

A good stretch is more thorough and is best done when you have more time. To stretch out your upper back, hang your body down as if to touch your toes but bend your knees enough to rest your body along your thighs. Stay there and breathe deeply a few times. If your back feels stiff and uncomfortable, increase the bend in your knees to give your body more support. You can also do this while sitting on a chair or on the floor. This can relieve

tight back muscles, especially the ones between your shoulder blades.

If you want to get your blood flowing the other way, lie down on the floor with your feet up a wall. Tuck your shoulder blades in and try to lengthen your neck—more space between your earlobes and the tops of your shoulders means more release in your neck. If you're uncomfortable keeping your legs straight, bend them. This is your body, so you should listen to it.

In short, take breaks to move around a bit and do what feels good for you. Your posture is important, and a few minutes to stretch your back here and there will help you feel better without getting in your way of juggling the school/life circus.



Communication Error

by Nate Downe

Grammaticalization of the writer

Sitting on the edge of your seat, poised at the end of the beginning of the starting line. Gears shifting without synchronicity. Flailing rubber particulates from rotating tires that move without the appearance of going anywhere. Characterless smoke clouds pervade left and right. The sky opens up just as the snowfall reverses its direction and ascends toward the horizon. Momentum has spitefully left you, and its overspending has set you back yet another lap. The sprint nowhere has completed its obligatory rhythm once more.

The words appear: "If you write anything on your computer..." This statement is paired with any number of titles, such as "Write the Future," and some even as bold as "Engineering a Better Future for Girls." Breathtaking. Obviously, all of which are in reach by a simple click of the advertisement in front of you, an advertisement for a glorified spellchecker. A spellchecker that, for some reason, needs access to a frighteningly large portion of your computer.

Redundant propositions, such as "if you write anything on your computer," can present serious issues to the writer. For example, these types of questions stretch themselves so thin that they can be taken as common sense, but in fact they all too often bypass reason altogether. Thus, if unexamined and taken as a no-brainer, escaping

them is near impossible, as if by virtue of these lines existing you are already interlaced within them—you are on your computer. Perhaps, it might have well just asked, "If you breathe, eat, and shit..."

Grammization, as it is posulated here, is the adjustment of the writer (and of their writing) for which the understanding and knowledge of the writer's language is not permissibly understood before it is cheaply and hastily quickened to its end, or to its conclusion.

In other words, if one must use training wheels on their bicycle when they learn to ride, eventually the crutch or assistance of the training wheels is no longer needed and the conclusion is that the rider has successfully understood their craft and the proper use of their tool within its context. However, the grammaticalization of the writer, facilitated by grammization from free software, has led to knowing how to ride a full-size bike, but with the difference of when stopping, the bike falls over (without autocorrect, you still don't know how to spell on paper).

Tautologies like these, like free grammar software, are seductive because they need no further explanation—you can write without writing! they soberly repeat themselves, as if they are common sense. There is no argument to be made against them; any attempt to make one is quickly reproached.



First Things First

by Tiegan Suddaby

Are summer classes worth it?

Classes? In summer? Should I? By instinct I would say "absolutely not," because I like not doing things. However, I also hate not doing anything productive and then feeling like an absolute fool for not doing anything. Instead, I'll make the decision easier for all of us.

What you need to consider is what you want to achieve in a summer class that you wouldn't get in the rest of the year. For the more ambitious types, think if there are any goals you plan to reach, and how another class would help with that. People who process scholarships like outstanding applicants. If you're dedicated to doing extra, optional work, that tends to impress.

You need to consider what a summer class might entail. True, the overall semester is shorter, but longer hours and intense workloads are why taking just one class—maybe two—is recommended. Either enrol in a class that you know you want

to devote time to or a class that would be too stressful to take on during a semester when you have other classes.

Think of it like this: if you know you're going to push aside a certain subject to be your last priority because it's frustrating, make it the only priority. If you know you're going to focus entirely on one subject because you love it, the concentrated hours and work should be worth it.

For the people who want to just get their required classes over with: go for it! Finishing the less-exciting material in a matter of weeks is a completely valid reason for summer classes. Without the weight of other classes crushing your intellectual shoulders, you'll be more prepared to take on another semester.

Summer classes entail harsher hours and an intense workload: is it a challenge that's worth overcoming? Is it a cop-out answer to say, "It's up to you"? Then so be it.

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INTEREST ON BC STUDENT LOANS

The BC Government's 2019 Budget announced that interest on the BC portion of all student loans is eliminated effective February 19, 2019.

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