



# The awards issue

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# NEXUS

camosun's student voice since 1990

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## editor's letter

# Send students your money

How is everyone doing amidst the housing crisis? If your answer is anything like mine and my schoolmates, it's probably something along the lines of: "Not great; can you lend me \$5?" With rent prices soaring and tuition costs mounting, it can sometimes feel as though the world is out to get us (and by the world, I mean Victoria, BC).

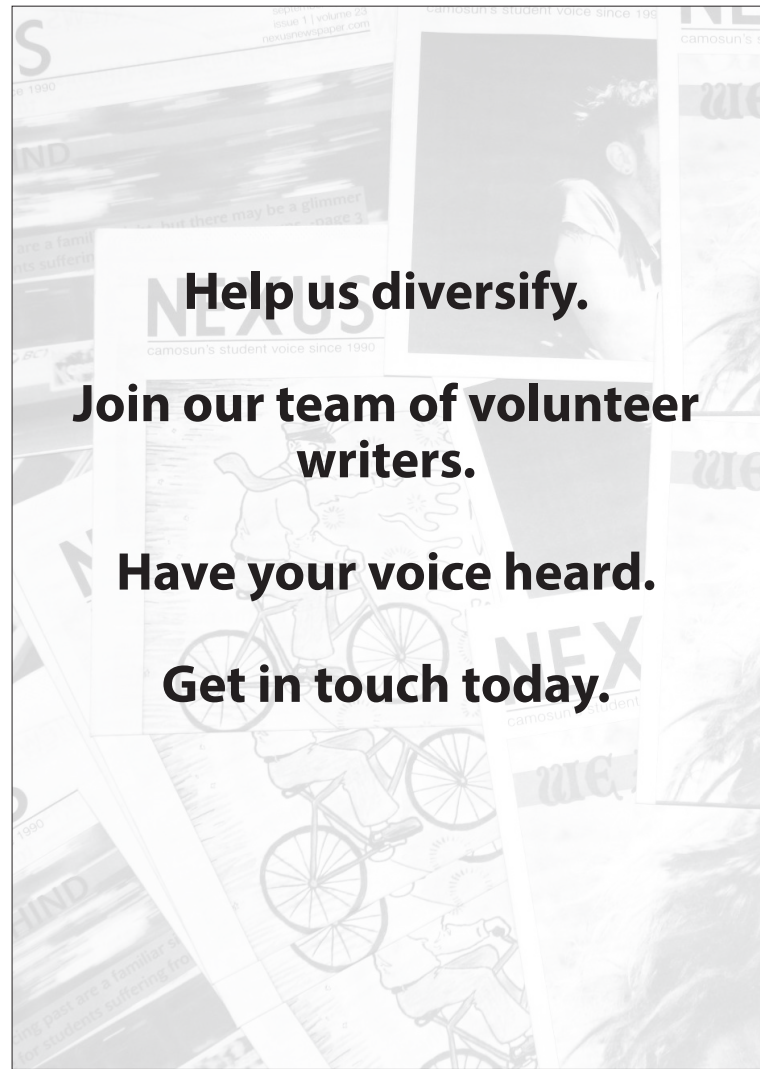
While I'm tempted, I'm not going to write about eating the rich (although I'm getting tired of ramen). And I don't want to delve into my personal woes, because I know that there are people out there who are struggling more than me, but it feels as though students are being failed. It's stressful enough as it is juggling education, jobs, and relationships; we shouldn't have to fight tooth and nail to pay for our tuition and half-decent housing. While this doesn't apply to everyone, many students are living paycheque to paycheque, except those fortunate enough to be living with their parents or receiving financial help.

It all makes me mad, and I feel sad for all of us trying to get an education while filled to the brim with financial stress.

The stress from financial instability isn't good to hold in our bodies, and it's doubly concerning when we can't afford nutrient-rich meals (the rich keep looking tastier and tastier). Many of these factors combined can contribute to poor mental health, fatigue, and burnout. I keep thinking about a line that actor Jessica Walters delivers in *Arrested Development*: "I mean, it's one banana, Michael. What could it cost? \$10?" This was meant to highlight how out of touch a rich family matriarch was, but I find myself repeating this line in my head every time I look at bananas in the grocery store. I'm afraid that a \$10-banana is encroaching, but I shouldn't spend my time being afraid of bananas; I should spend it on worrying about the multiple crises we are currently facing here in Canada.

While I'm aware that there are opportunities for grants, awards, and bursaries (and I've loved every penny), it doesn't diminish the fact that a portion of students are barely making ends meet. We deserve more support. The current inflation is deflating our potential.

Jordyn Haukaas, student editor  
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## open space

# Keeping cats indoors not a solution

EMILY WELCH  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

When I first heard about the movement to keep domestic cats indoors because of their impact on the bird population, I thought it might be a joke. But it's not.

For as long as I can remember, there have been cats in my family. Various cats have lived their lives with us, and their constant presence has been cherished; they comfort us, make us laugh, and keep us company in both good and sorrowful times. We even have a rule in our family: if someone has a cat on their lap they are to be left undisturbed, and they are absolved of house-

and it's troubling to see them be a factor in the bird decline. Still, there are other dangers to consider. Birds are killed by flying into airplane engines, but people are not asked to stop vacationing. Birds are killed by flying into windows, yet the skyscrapers continue to rise. Deaths because of communication towers, aerial wires, electrocution, wind turbines, pesticides, oil spills, lead poisoning, pollution, hunting, habitat loss, cars: all these are caused by human beings, yet the immediate answer is to remove cats from their natural habitat and turn a blind eye to these other things.

I find it hard to believe that en-

## Cats and birds have always lived together, and cats have always been predators.

hold-chore duties while their lap is occupied.

Approximately half of the world's bird species are declining, and there are estimated to be billions of birds throughout the world killed by domestic cats every year. Yes, the movement to keep domestic cats indoors could slow down the process. In Waldorf, Germany, the movement is underway; residents must lock their cats up, and if a domestic cat is caught outdoors, the owner will face a very hefty fine and a possible removal of the pet in question. If this was made a law everywhere, we may be able to help the declining bird population rise.

But this is a cop-out. Yes, cats are predatory and they love to hunt, especially in the summer months. It would be great if they could be trained to go after the truly bothersome species, such as rats and mice,

forcing a law to keep cats indoors will have much of an impact on the actual problem. Cats and birds have always lived together, and cats have always been predators. Suddenly they are being blamed for the decrease in bird population, as other bird-killing luxuries are continuing to expand at alarming rates, all while people bury their heads in the sand.

Cats need a certain quality of life, which often includes outside air, trees to climb, ground to explore, and, yes, hunting. Keeping them indoors is not natural and will only result in a great deal of depressed cats, while birds continue to die because of human beings refusing to act on the huge environmental impact our luxuries have.

We need to look at the bigger picture and leave our lovely cats to roam in peace.

Something on your mind? If you're a Camosun student, get in touch with us with your *Open Space* idea! Email [editor@nexusnewspaper.com](mailto:editor@nexusnewspaper.com). Include your student number. Thanks!

## letters

### Library critique should be placed elsewhere

I wanted to provide some feedback on the *Open Space* column regarding the need to commit to Indigenization ("Open Space: Camosun staff and faculty need to commit to Indigenization," June 7, 2023), in particular the comments regarding the college's library cataloging system. The library is part of a group advocating for and working for Indigenizing subject headings and has been working for years with the universities on this topic. They also have a guide on the library website discussing the use of these terms, why they are outdated, and what the library is doing.

It's awful that these terms are still being used but two minutes of research shows that the library seems to be pretty committed to Indigenization and that the larger issue is the Library of Congress standard that the college must adhere to.

VANESSA WEIR  
VIA EMAIL

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COVER PHOTOS: Evan Fraser: Camosun College; others provided

OVERHEARD AT NEXUS: "There's a limit to my fuckery."



awards

# Camosun co-op students honoured with awards



PHOTOS PROVIDED

Camosun College students Jacqueline Sperber (left) and Molly Mifsud recently took home co-op student awards from the Association for Co-operative Education and Work-Integrated Learning BC/Yukon.

JORDYN HAUKAAS  
STUDENT EDITOR

Molly Mifsud and Jacqueline Sperber have a few things in common: they are both Camosun alumni, they both self-developed co-op positions based on their interests, and they both walked away from their co-ops with awards from the Association for Co-operative Education and Work-Integrated Learning BC/Yukon (ACE-WIL). Mifsud received the 2022 ACE-WIL Student of the Year/Co-op College Award and Sperber received the 2022 ACE-WIL Student of the Year/WIL College Award. Both Mifsud and Sperber also won 2022 Yvonne Thompson Awards.

Mifsud began her co-op at healthcare company Tall Tree Integrated Health Centre, where they created a hybrid position for her that involved working administratively, promoting the company internal-

ly, and shadowing psychologists when permitted. She enjoyed having a blended position within the company because it allowed her to broaden her knowledge.

"I went in like a sponge and I don't think I could have absorbed more in my time there," says Mifsud. "They were very, very growth-oriented. Even the indirect project stuff, like talking with the psychologists, I feel like I learned so much about what I want for myself, and what I don't want for myself, and it really helps me get on a path for my career. It was really, really, really valuable."

Former *Nexus* staff writer Sperber took a similar route and found a co-op that directly aligned with her interests. She combined her love for marketing with her love for mountain biking and wound up working for Fox Factory in Vancouver. She ended up staying with the company

as a marketing email specialist after her co-op was finished.

"I think that is very important for everyone who wants to step out of their box and reach their higher goal," says Sperber. "So, for me personally, yeah, I'm really into marketing, I'm into biking. So, I'm working for a bike company and that absolutely makes a difference, I would say."

For burnt-out and undercelebrated students, winning an award (or two) can be a helpful reminder that they're on the right path.

"We don't always get celebrated, we work endless hours, we pull all-nighters finishing assignments," says Mifsud. "And it's great when it works out, but it doesn't always. And outside of your report at the end of the semester, we don't really get much validation. So, it felt really, really nice to celebrate it on a larger level. Especially for something like

co-op, which I don't even get credit for. So, it was nice to celebrate outside of my internal self. I [felt] pride, I would say, yeah, just joy. It was nice. It definitely helped bring me ahead and keep me reminded of why I'm doing this in the first place, so that was really nice as well."

The validation was also felt by Sperber. Her first language is German, so on top of having to do her schooling in her second language, she also had to learn about the Canadian market in her field of choice. She believes that determination was paramount to her success.

"I think I'm good at what I'm doing," she says. "I'm very passionate about my work and about marketing in the first place, and then accelerating in school was also a thing which I really wanted. I wanted to prove to myself that I can accelerate in school in a second language. And I think if you have a

dream, and you're willing to pursue it with all you have, and you focus on what you're really good at, then you can reach your goal."

Mifsud is currently continuing her studies at the University of Victoria as well as continuing to work for Tall Tree as a behavioural science coach. She believes it's important for students to put themselves out there and find a co-op or career that aligns with their passions.

"Find something within the community that resonates with you," she says, "and, yeah, overshoot; you never know, right? And if you're willing to work hard a company will likely take you on regardless; you just have to show that you're capable of growth."

See "Camosun alumni get awarded" in *News Briefs* (below) for information on more Camosun alumni who have recently won awards.

## NEWS BRIEFS

### Camosun alumni get awarded

Monika Bhardwaj has been selected as the 2023 recipient of the Lieutenant Governor's Medal for Inclusion, Democracy, and Reconciliation. While she was at Camosun, Bhardwaj was elected as the international director and women's director for the Camosun College Student Society (CCSS). During this time, Bhardwaj focused her involvement in areas of inclusivity and diversity. Shae-Lynn Mellors has won the college's annual Promising Alumni Award. She graduated from the Community, Family and Child Studies diploma and then went on to the University of Victoria to complete her degree. Currently, Mellors is working at her private practice supporting children who are facing behavioural challenges. Neil Klompas is the recipient of the 2023 Distinguished Alumni Award. Klompas has experience in the fields of healthcare, finance, and biotechnology; after working in the Armed Forces

and as a paramedic with the BC Ambulance Service, he attended Camosun and graduated from the Applied Chemistry and Biochemistry diploma program in 1999. Klompas currently works as president and chief operating officer of Zymeworks, a start-up that develops antibody-based therapeutics for the treatment of cancer.

### Make up the sitdown

Camosun Colleges Fine Furniture graduates are showcasing their handy work in this year's annual furniture exhibition, *Hot Hot Seat*. This will be the exhibit's 35th year, set to take place at the Arts Centre at Cedar Hill Recreation Centre until Sunday, July 23. Students will be featuring hand-made chairs made from western maple, as well as other projects that were completed throughout the year.

### \$3,500 grant available to Camosun students

On May 2, the BC government announced a \$480-million

investment aimed at creating jobs and training British Columbians for high-opportunity fields. A portion of the StrongerBC: Future Ready Action Plan will be made available to students as a \$3,500 grant for certain short-term skills programs offered by public post-secondary institutions. Camosun College's Professional Studies & Industry Training has the largest number of qualified programs for this grant available in the province. For a full list of eligible programs at Camosun visit [prosit.camosun.ca/strongerbc](http://prosit.camosun.ca/strongerbc).

### Province announces funding for upgrade supports

The provincial government recently announced \$3.8 million in grants for Adult Basic Education and English Learning Pathways programs at post-secondary institutions. The goal of the funding is to upgrade support for students. Twelve institutions have been allocated a portion of this funding,

including Camosun College, which is set to receive \$240,625.

### Settlement reached for support staff at college

Members of the Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 2081 recently ratified their collective agreement with Camosun College. CUPE 2081 includes roughly 700 support staff at Camosun College who are covered by the collective agreement.

### Donations being collected for *The Witness Blanket*

Camosun College is partnering with Kwakwaka'wakw and Coast Salish artist Carey Newman, who is gathering donations from cultures affected by residential schools for *The Witness Blanket*. Newman is looking for donations in the form of recorded sounds that reflect those cultures, such as music, traditional instruments, paddling or carving, and the sounds of nature. The recordings will accompany *The Witness Blanket*, a virtual art exhibit that

contains hundreds of different objects reclaimed from residential schools, inspired by the look of a woven blanket. Newman believes that having sounds to accompany *The Witness Blanket* will enhance the exhibit and further showcase the culture of those affected by residential schools. For more information, go to [witnessblanket.ca](http://witnessblanket.ca).

### 2023 grads get their hats off

Over 2,000 students graduated from Camosun this year; approximately 1,000 graduates crossed the stage during four convocation ceremonies held at Interurban's PISE gym on June 14 and June 15. The theme for the 2023 convocation ceremonies was ÍYĆANEUEL OL, the SENĆOŦEN word for "doing good work together."

-JORDYN HAUKAAS,  
STUDENT EDITOR

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awards

## Plumbing and Pipe Trades student wins gold in national competition



CAMOSUN COLLEGE

Camosun Plumbing and Pipe Trades student Evan Fraser recently took home top honours at a Skills Canada competition.

JORDYN HAUKAAS  
STUDENT EDITOR

Evan Fraser has been learning sprinkler fitting at Camosun College, and it recently paid off with a gold medal.

Fraser—a Plumbing and Pipe Trades apprentice—says that sprinkler fitting is very interesting because he works diligently and carefully to install safety systems he hopes will never have to turn on. And he was able to showcase his abilities this year at the Skills Canada National Competition in Winnipeg on May 25 and 26, where he took home the first-place prize in sprinkler fitting.

One of the first things Fraser (who previously competed in provincials on April 19, where he also took home gold) noticed upon walking into the pipe trades shop at Camosun's Interurban campus was a ceiling decorated by banners. This sparked his curiosity, and he knew almost immediately it was something he wanted to be a part of.

"The way I actually found out about this competition is in the pipe trades shop at Camosun; there's all these banners hung up from past winners and when you go and win these things, they put a banner up for you in the shop," says Fraser. "When I did my very first day in the

shop, when I first walked in there and saw it, I was like, 'Huh, what are those?' and I sort of asked around about it a little bit. I thought to myself, 'That'd be pretty cool to get my name up on one of those things.'"

Fraser is no stranger to competition; he genuinely enjoys being in front of people and showing them what he's capable of doing.

"I mean, competition is something I've always enjoyed," he says, "and getting to do something like this has been a lot of fun, a lot of pressure, but, I've done a few different careers in my life so it was kind of nice to get off the job site and go to something where it's just, what

"When I did my very first day in the shop, when I first walked in there and saw [the banners from previous competitions], I was like, 'Huh, what are those?' and I sort of asked around about it a little bit. I thought to myself, 'That'd be pretty cool to get my name up on one of those things.'"

EVAN FRASER  
CAMOSUN COLLEGE STUDENT

do you know and how well can you do it?"

While some students may experience nerves when competing, that isn't the case for Fraser. He says that a lot of pipe trades involve math, and knowing the craft in a way that doesn't let nerves interfere.

"Basically, what I do, and what most pipe trades are, is just practical math," he says. "It's just taking math and making it a physical reality. So, when it comes to nerves, as long as your math is good, as long as you're confident in your ability to produce something, there's no reason to be nervous."

Fraser enjoyed being around like-minded individuals at the competition, and he says that it was a supportive atmosphere.

"The best part about the competition is just meeting the other people from all around the country, not just at the provincial level, but also at the national level," he says. "Meeting, you know, all these people from literally across Can-

ada, all their instructors, all their teachers, and training directors and all that. Getting to make those connections and learn little tips and tricks from everybody as you're in the middle of a competition in a high-stress environment where just everyone's supportive, but also watching you the whole time."

During his time at Camosun, Fraser has met a lot of teachers and journeypersons who have inspired him. He says that Camosun is one of the best places to learn trades. He hopes to one day follow in his teacher's footsteps and become a teacher himself (ideally, at Camosun).

"You gain this sort of comfort of knowing that the people that are teaching you are really, really passionate about what they do, and seriously good at it," Fraser says. "There's some of the smartest people I've ever met in this industry working at that school. And they're really good at what they do and they're very good at spreading that on to their students."

## NEXUS

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review

## Bacon Beer and Bourbon fest successful despite cramped quarters



PHOTOS BY LANE CHEVRIER/NEXUS

The Bacon Beer and Bourbon Festival took place in Langford in late June; despite the less-than-ideal conditions of the venue itself, the fest offered up some tasty drinks and food.

LANE CHEVRIER  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

On Saturday, June 24, the City of Langford teamed up with Hertel Meats and Stanley Park Brewery to present the Bacon Beer and Bourbon Festival, which also included several different whiskey and food vendors. The event was held at Langford's Starlight Stadium, or rather, it was held outside of the stadium. Because of the amount of people there, it felt so cramped that it was difficult to move; together with the hot evening sun radiating off the concrete, it was absolutely stifling. I wish the event was in the grassy football field sitting empty a dozen feet away from the broiling sardine can of the festival, but perhaps the intention was to make the guests feel like roasted bacon, pickled in alcohol.

There was a heavy security presence at the event, requiring all bags to be checked, and certain bags like backpacks were prohibited entirely, along with any water bottles, showing that comfort and hydration was clearly not a priority for the event organizers. I've been to scores of alcohol festivals and I've never been to one as strict, but, eventually, with only a slight loss of dignity, we gained entry to the venue.

Upon entering, we were presented with a bacon kebab from Hertel Meats, which consisted of thick tasty chunks of what seemed to be a smoked maple bacon, and, together with a complimentary can of beer from Stanley Park, it was a refreshing start to the festival. The Waypoint Hazy Pale Ale (5.2%) is light and refreshing with a gentle bite, which, for the more casual beer drinker, lacks the moderate hops that are often associated with pale ales.

WhistlePig Farm & Distillery showed off their PiggyBack 100-proof Bourbon Whiskey, which for a 50% spirit was surprisingly sweet, without the harsh burn you usually get from strong alcohols. Caramel, maple, and vanilla flavours make this a delightful sipping bourbon that won't make you wince.

Old-timers and newcomers alike could rejoice to find the classic strong, sweet liqueur Southern Comfort (35%) in attendance, offering up their Bourbon & Peach Arnold Palmer Iced Tea Cooler. This takes the tried-and-true Southern Comfort flavour and adds a bit of lemon and black tea, which is a very simple combination that works quite well. It's a concoction delicious and unassuming enough that it should be approached with caution if you plan on doing anything that requires brain cells later on in the evening.

Bin 4 Burger Lounge was in attendance, and presented me with the Not So Boaring slider, which combined wild boar and pork, bourbon bacon jam, Philips Citrus Lager, gouda cheese sauce, crispy onions, and bacon aioli on a little brioche bun. Seeing a boar-based burger made me want to pig out a bit, and it gave the simple pork burger a bit of a gamier flavour and certainly hit the spot.

As an event sponsor, Stanley Park was the only brewery in attendance, and while I can't say I've found anything particularly unique or adventurous about their drinks, the phrase "hitting the spot" can usually be said about most of their beers, including the Park Sesh Lager (5%). Simple but clean, this was a must-have in the sweltering heat, and it's the sort of summer lager that can make you feel so refreshed that

you forget to drink water alongside it, assuming you have any on you.

Stillhead Distillery offered their B-Word Bourbon Style Canadian Whisky (40%), which, unlike the PiggyBack, is more akin to what one might expect from a strong alcohol, with an extreme burn in the throat that really makes you commit to the experience. With strong leather and

smoky flavours, together with the live country-western music at the event, this whisky made me feel just like a rooting', tooting' cowboy (at least for a minute or two away from objective scrutiny).

Finally, to finish off the evening, I tried Garrick's Head Pub's house-made Bacon Ice Cream with caramel bourbon sauce. While

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Finally, to finish off the evening, I tried Garrick's Head Pub's house-made Bacon Ice Cream with caramel bourbon sauce. While

I was expecting to find a mildly bacon-flavoured ice cream, I was surprised to discover that there are actually little bits of real bacon mixed into it, which is an unusually successful combination, although the cold bacon does leave a bit of a greasy film on the tongue. The sauce is very much a caramel, but the bourbon flavour is more of an "I'll take your word for it" addition, since I couldn't taste it at all, but regardless, it was a unique and delicious dessert.

Judging by the patron density, the Bacon Beer and Bourbon festival was a smashing success, with tasty treats, excellent spirits, and decent beer. If it returns next year I'd love to see it in the football field, which would undoubtedly make it a more comfortable experience.





# Student summer

## Summer activities t

Story by AJ Aike

Ph

**L**iving on a student budget doesn't mean that summer needs to be boring. There's more to do than just lay on a beach, go for a bike ride, or head out for a walk or hike without breaking the bank.

The mission I chose to accept for this story is going out for the day without spending more than \$40. I came close but could've done it cheaper.

To prepare for this task I did what I always do when looking for ideas: checked Pinterest. I found a lot of "summer bucket lists," which had some regular summer activities such as feeding ducks, camping, and making s'mores. Other activities aren't feasible in Victoria right now, like going to a waterpark, hosting a bonfire, or competing in Tough Mudder. A couple of the activities were more of a summer-long quest: buy a cookbook and make every recipe, grow a summer plant, and become conversational in a new language. So, while certain activities were not attainable for this challenge, I found a list of activities that I could do.

And right from the start, my day did not go as planned.

**E**veryone who said they were going to join me ended up bailing at the last minute. That didn't ruin my plans; I had ideas for groups and activities to do on my own, which gave me the freedom to change plans on a whim.

The first thing I did was checked out Filipino festival Mabuhay! at Centennial Square. I explored the various food vendors and the food looked delicious, but I wasn't hungry enough for a full meal, and at \$20 it was too expensive. I did find one vendor that had lechon, a pork dish, and turon. I was sold on turon when told it was a dessert; it cost me \$3 and looks like a spring roll but inside is a banana (I recommend trying this if given the opportunity). I then sat and ate my turon while watching a group of dancers perform.

Previously, during my brainstorming, I asked for suggestions on Facebook, and someone suggested Quazar's Arcade on Government Street. I had never been there, so I decided to check it out. Before buying tokens, I walked around to see if there were any games I wanted to play. I was hit with nostalgia: Q\*Bert, Donkey Kong, Tetris, and, my absolute favourite, The House of the Dead 2. I could have easily dropped my entire \$40 on The House of the Dead but restricted myself to \$5. It didn't take long to realize that, despite playing it for hours back when I worked for Cineplex Odeon in Calgary, I suck at playing it now.

Despite the visit to Quazar's being short, I still had fun. (There was a birthday party in the private room and for a moment I thought that might be a good idea for my upcoming birthday; then I realized I like alcohol more than video games.)

My next mission was to find a coffee shop I had never been to. I thought this would be a challenge due to the many coffee shops I've visited around town; I was wrong. The problem was I didn't actually want coffee when I came across Rise & Grind on Broad Street, so I decided to come back later.

One of the things I wanted to do was a photo scavenger hunt; I have a card-deck-style game for this that I bought years ago. I randomly pulled out a dozen cards but some weren't realistic: I wasn't going to find snow in the summer, I didn't want to take a photo of poo, and wasn't going to try for a picture of bees. I put those cards back in the deck and drew three more. I'm easily distracted, so this part of my adventure did not go as planned. If I had focused on taking photos and nothing else, I probably would've found more, but I could only remember two cards while walking around; I ended up with one photo.

My next stop was Bastion Square Market, which is a dangerous option for me. If money were no issue I could have spent a few hundred dollars. I found art, pottery, chainmail jewelry, candles, and clothing that I wanted to buy. So, I left there and made my way to the Inner Harbour.

The reason I went to the Inner Harbour was two-fold; I wanted to see the new HAVN floating sauna (obviously way out of our budget) and check out the price of the harbour taxi. \$14 for one stop was not worth it so I didn't bother; I was looking to head to Fisherman's Wharf, but not for that price. I've been on the harbour tours, and I do recommend them, but not on this budget.

There's something fun that I've always wanted to do in the Inner Harbour but have put off—get a caricature done. The artist had just started one of a mother and daughter and I didn't want to wait around. A basic black-and-white caricature is \$15, and I still had \$32, but I had to save some money for the end.

Another suggestion I was given was geocaching. A few of my friends are really into this but I'm a newbie. I downloaded the app, made an account, went through the tutorial, and

was completely lost. Despite my confusion, I opted to try a virtual geocache because I thought snapping a photo would be fun. The nearest one was the Legislature fountain; pretty easy, or so I thought.

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For the more coordinated and confident people (of which I am neither), there are many TikTok dances to learn and film. I attempted this once and failed miserably (don't bother looking for the video, as there isn't one; I never managed to learn the dance).

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When I got to the fountain it was surrounded by yellow tape. I burst into laughter at my luck. On to the next virtual geocache: a plaque of a poem by a former City of Victoria poet laureate on the corner of Government and Broughton. Another fail; I looked everywhere and could not find it.

Fox Trot was playing around the corner for free, so I gave up on geocaching and went to listen to them. They're mellow rock with a laid-back island sound; like Current Swell with a little more edge. I would go see them again.

At this point, I wanted coffee and headed back to Rise & Grind. I should've made note of their hours because they closed at 3 pm and it was 3:30 pm when I went back. I was getting tired and wanted to head to my final activity—beer tasting. And here's where I made my mistake.

**B**reweries generally have flights of four beers that range from \$5 to \$12 but instead, I decided to go to Swift. The flights at Swift are a good deal; it's six for \$12.95. They offer samples from different local breweries, so I thought this was a good idea, as I had \$32 left. However, while drinking beer on the beautiful patio I got hungry. Chips and guacamole are \$14; still under the \$40 with tax but not tip. My original plan was to go to either Vancouver Island Brewing (\$7.50 for a flight of four beers) or Phillips Brewery (\$9 for a flight of four beers). Phillips also has the option of whiskey and gin flights. Food is also cheaper at both breweries. Had I stuck with my original plan I would have stayed under the \$40.

**M**y day was mellow and a bit lonely. Had my friends shown up we still would have checked out Quazar's, but the plan was to hit a dollar store and then head over to Clover Point and Spiral Beach.

The purpose of hitting the dollar store was for lawn games: bocce ball, horseshoes, and lawn darts, all of which cost around \$3 each. There were also kites, gliders, bubbles, and water guns. One suggestion on most Pinterest summer bucket lists was water-balloon fights; I want to do that this summer. Somewhere deep in my camping gear is a small bocce ball set. I find it's more fun to play bocce ball on the beach than grass because the bumpy sand gives more of a challenge. I recommend spending the \$3 to test it out; small backpack-sized sets run from \$17 to \$26. It's one of my favourite summer games.

Laying on the beach wasn't allowed in this adventure, but painting rocks and building rock towers was fair game. I'm not sure which is more fun, hunting for the best rocks for a tower or the quest to get the tower higher (the best tower I've ever built was about 2 feet tall). Painting rocks can be a lot of fun in a group and the bonus is having something decorative to take home. While it's nice to lay on the beach and relax, activities can build more memories at the beach.

For crafty people, beaches can offer objects to create wind chimes or garden decorations. A day at the beach can become a scavenger hunt for seashells, small pieces of driftwood,

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A larger group activity that can be a bit more of an investment is to have a DIY backyard carnival. The more people that pitch in, the cheaper it will be.

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# Summer spendin' to enjoy on a budget

by Greg Pratt/Nexus

Photo by Greg Pratt/Nexus

cool rocks, or other small items. My neighbour finds beautiful rocks at Spiral Beach; he refinishes tabletops with them.

While lying on the beach or sitting around a campfire with friends, there are still ways to make it more memorable. Find some funny videos and see who in the group can stifle their laughter. Lip-reading challenges can be hilarious—pick any topic and each person says something related to that topic while everyone else tries to figure out what they're saying. There's also the good old alphabet challenge as a reliable—and free—good time.

**L**et's not forget music: turn your streaming music library into a Magic 8 Ball by asking it a question and putting the library on shuffle—the title of the first song is the answer to the question.

Every summer also needs the ultimate playlist. Search through whatever app you use and find the songs that will make this summer stand out. Take it a step further and make playlists for summer relaxation and summer activities.

Music lovers might enjoy hunting for “new to them” artists. Check the bargain bins of music stores for cheap albums then head home to listen to it. Listening to the album isn't an outdoor activity but nice to do after a day out with friends. My son and I grab cheap vinyl every now and then and chill at home. Streaming music is convenient but it's a whole different experience listening to vinyl.

A game that my son and I have dubbed “music war” can be played anywhere music can be streamed, which is pretty much everywhere. We take turns playing a song that we think is better than the last song played. Sometimes we try to stay within the same genres as each other or if one person plays a solo female/male artist the other person will do the same. Other times it's all over the place and we're purposely trying to confuse each other. We've never had a clear winner; I simply end the game after a couple of hours.

**T**he cheap and free ideas don't end there. For the more coordinated and confident people (of which I am neither), there are many TikTok dances to learn and film. I attempted this once and failed miserably (don't bother looking for the video, as there isn't one; I never managed to learn the dance). I even got lost in the step-by-step videos; I'm that bad. It was still fun to try; my kid and I had a good laugh.

I like to people watch. I'm a bit silly and tend to make stories up for people. It's fun to make up stories about who they are, where they're going, and why they're moving the way they are (slow, quick, looking around, staring off into space). If the people are having a conversation, I'll create a fake conversation for them; it's more fun with a friend who joins in.

For a night out, the HarbourCats are a good option when they're home. Adult prices range from \$15 to \$35, and Tuesdays have \$10 seats. Save-On Foods sells ticket vouchers for \$11, valid for a general admission ticket. If baseball isn't your thing, or you don't want to watch a full game, it's free admission during the seventh-inning stretch (standing room only). On July 14 and 29, there are fireworks, which, in my opinion, are the best in Victoria. The music and choreography of the fireworks are on a different level than Symphony Splash or Canada Day. I highly recommend checking it out this summer, especially since admission is free.

Some activities cost a bit more than \$40. Kayaking and stand-up paddleboarding rentals start around \$40 plus tax for two hours. There are rentals by the hour at Thetis Lake, the Gorge Waterway, Gonzales Beach, and Willows Beach. A few companies rent by the day, week, and even month. This is on my summer bucket list; I've done it in Kelowna but not in Victoria.

**F**resh, off-the-boat crab is a treat every seafood lover needs to try. There are two ways to get fresh crab: buy it or catch it. Sidney Pier is a good place to catch crab, and the type of trap that works best there runs around \$25, a worthwhile investment for people who like fishing. A single-day fishing licence can be purchased for \$5.66 for residents or \$7.53 for non-residents; the daily catch limit is four crabs.

My friends and I use fish heads as bait, which adds about another \$10 to \$15 when we run four traps. Like all fishing, there is no guarantee of catching a crab, but it's still fun to hang out at the dock. The last time I went crabbing we spent half a day at Sidney Pier, ran four traps, and caught eight crabs; only two of us had licences so that was our limit.

After spending a day outside having crab at home is a tasty treat. Whether caught or purchased it's important to learn how to properly prepare crab, an island experience on its own.

If you don't like crab but do enjoy other types of seafood, Fisherman's Wharf has more options to check out at the fish market. While there, check out the float houses, artisan

shop, candy store, or grab some ice cream. Up the hill from the wharf along Erie Street is Fisherman's Wharf Park, where one of the City of Victoria pop-up music stages can be found.

With Victoria having the most restaurants per capita than any other city in Canada, a summer-long activity could include trying some of the local establishments. A cheap version would be to try ice cream places but other themes with higher budgets could be pubs, patios, or types of food. There are so many options, it's possible to pick streets, with the best food found on Yates Street or Government Street. Me? I'd go for food trucks and ice cream.

**A** larger group activity that can be a bit more of an investment is to have a DIY backyard carnival. The more people that pitch in, the cheaper it will be. Many of the supplies can be purchased at a dollar store or found at a thrift store to keep costs down.

Balloon darts require a board, tape, balloons, and some darts. Hardware stores often have end cuts of wood for a discount which would work for the board. If you're lucky, you might find darts at a thrift store or have a friend with some; tape and balloons are dollar-store items.

A fishing pond can be made from a small wading pool or similar container, pole, string, magnets, hot glue, and foam fish (or whatever shapes are available). Magnets, string, foam shapes, and a glue gun with glue sticks can all be purchased at the dollar store and a broom handle can be used for a pole. The cost of the “fishing hole” really depends on what is used. Any container that's around 6 inches deep would work.

Ring toss is easy to set up, although not necessarily cheap. It's about \$9 plus tax and deposit for a six-pack of glass Coke bottles. If you're lucky you might be able to find some at a thrift store. Rings to toss can be purchased from a dollar store.

A similar, and probably cheaper, option is a ping-pong toss. This uses jars and three ping-pong balls. Jars can be purchased at the dollar store, and, possibly, so can ping pong balls. Canadian Tire sells a set of six ping pong balls starting at \$5, so there wouldn't be a huge savings at the dollar store. Small mason jars will work as well and run between \$13 to \$18 for a dozen, probably more useful than jars from the dollar store.

The tin knock down could be the cheapest game, especially before recycling day. It needs six cans and three balls. Large tomato cans work best; turn them upside down for easier stacking.

Another relatively cheap option is guessing the number of jellybeans in a jar. Find any size of glass container and fill it with jellybeans, making sure to count them, and put the lid on.

Don't forget carnival snacks—every carnival needs to have popcorn, cotton candy, ice cream, or popsicles. Try giving a little kick to some homemade popsicles by adding alcohol. There are various recipes online; this too is on my bucket list and will most likely become a new birthday tradition.

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I was getting tired and wanted to head to my final activity—beer tasting. And here's where I made my mistake.

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If you know, or can track down, a carpentry student, someone skilled with power tools, and someone with artistic talent, invite them to join forces and create a funny photo stand. Take some wood, cut

a hole large enough to stick a head through, stand it straight up, then paint a picture of a fun character such as a clown, pirate, or even the Camosun Chargers' mascot, Rampage. People can take photos with their phones as carnival souvenirs.

The carnival is two days of fun because it's one day hunting for everything needed and setting it up and another day to enjoy the fun. After the first carnival, a second carnival will be cheaper or can have additional games.

**M**y summer bucket list has more activities; I had to stop looking at Pinterest because my list kept growing. However, while being a student on a budget is hard, with some creativity and planning it's possible to have a variety of fun adventures alone or with friends for less than \$40.



art

## Art Gallery of Greater Victoria exhibit examines interpretations of streets

*“The Street is an exhibition that focuses on artists’ representation of the street and urban themes throughout art history.”*

STEVEN MCNEIL  
ART GALLERY OF GREATER VICTORIA

NICOLAS IHMELS  
STAFF WRITER

One of the great things about art is how it can take something as simple as a person walking down a street and turning it into something beautiful. According to Art Gallery of Greater Victoria (AGGV) curator Steven McNeil, that’s exactly what the exhibit *The Street* does with its subject matter.

*“The Street is an exhibition that focuses on artists’ representation of the street and urban themes throughout art history,”* says McNeil. “It includes photographs, paintings, prints, and videos, and it has a great focus on contemporary Canadian photography but it also includes some historical works, and it really lets viewers think about the way artists have engaged with urban street in their work. It’s really one of the prime subjects for artists throughout time.”

McNeil says that the exhibition—curated by Grant Arnold

at the the Vancouver Art Gallery with additional works from AGGV selected by McNeil—tackles themes of conflict and artistic observation.

“There are three main themes in this exhibition; the first one is poetry and the street,” he says. “And in that section, which is the largest section, it really shows how artists interact with the beauty of observations on the street. There is a section on conflict and the street, with some more difficult works to look at, but works that are very thought-provoking that look to the relationship artists have in interpreting major conflicts in the world within their works of art. And then... it’s order and the street, and in that section it really looks to the way artists look at the way cities are organized and how that plays out in works of art.”

*The Street* offers many different viewpoints, says McNeil.

“It’s very easy to stand in front of a work in this exhibition and imagine the artist’s actual viewpoint



COURTESY OF VANCOUVER ART GALLERY

One of Roman Vishniac’s pictures captures a street in Warsaw in 1939; the picture is shown as part of *The Street* exhibit.

in taking in the scene around them, and I think it has a wonderful connection and resonance for people who enjoy taking photographs themselves, and thinking about how they’d shoot the angle and the subject matter they want to photograph,” he says. “So, there’s a wonderful connection to viewers with this exhibition.”

McNeil says that the main thing he would like people to get out of *The Street* is the many different ways a street can be interpreted.

“I’d like people to take away that

the street can be thought about in many different ways,” he says. “And that the street has always been a subject throughout art history. And to think about how the urban environment and people’s interactions with the street have really shaped their own thought processes, their own experiences of everyday life.”

McNeil loves how art shapes our viewpoint of the world.

“I love how art can connect us with what’s happening in the world and make us think about our place in the world,” he says. “Whether it

be how you see yourself fitting into your own community or what’s happening in the news. I think that art is such a great way of making people think about the world they exist in, and how they fit into it.”

*The Street*

Until Sunday, September 3  
Art Gallery of Greater Victoria  
aggv.ca

stage

## *Absinthe, Bourbon, Vodka, and Sake* explores themes of running away



PHOTO PROVIDED

*Absinthe, Bourbon, Vodka, and Sake* director Zelda Dean.

ABBY BIDWELL  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Victoria-based director Zelda Dean was drawn to *Absinthe, Bourbon, Vodka, and Sake* because the play takes unexpected turns. Dean has worked with award-winning playwright Caroline Russell-King for 40 years and says she has watched her develop into her career.

“So, I’m intrigued by many of her scripts, but this script in particular is... very compelling,” says Dean. “It’s very powerful, and what I like about it is that there are major twists in the play, so things are not as they appear.”

Dean has read many scripts over her career, but this one really stood out for her because it brought about

many different emotions and kept her on her toes.

“You know, theatre can sometimes be magical, and it’s hard to find the scripts that come across that way... It brings a sense of reality, there’s great connection as we go through the journey with the characters,” she says. “It challenged my perception, it kept me guessing. The play made me laugh when I first read it, it made me cry, it surprised me, and it actually made me examine myself. So, for a play to do that, I mean... I think it’s my 151st play that I’ve directed.”

The theme of “wherever you run to you bring yourself” drew Dean to the play.

“Well, one of the questions that the play brought to mind for me,” she says, “is, ‘Have you ever felt like running away?’ I mean, what if you could have a redo of your life, or a moment in your life, or in a relationship? What if you could script your own story, your own life story?”

Even though Dean always has a roadmap of how a show will end up, there are new discoveries during the rehearsal process.

“I always have an idea in my head of the frame that the play will end up in, on opening night,” she says. “But I’m always surprised by what we discover as we take the script apart, because when I’m

*“The play made me laugh when I first read it, it made me cry, it surprised me, and it actually made me examine myself.”*

ZELDA DEAN  
*ABSINTHE, BOURBON, VODKA, AND SAKE*

working with actors, all I’m trying to do is help them find the truth in their characters, so that we stay true to the characters, true to the script.”

Dean has previously worked with actors Christine Upright and Ryan Kniel and knows what they can bring to the final production.

“I work in a collaborative fashion with my actors, but when the dust settles, the director decides what shape the show will be,” she says. “And I obviously have a good sense myself of what the shape of the show is, and how I hope it will end, and having worked with both of these actors I know their capabilities, and I know how much they’re going to bring to it.”

Dean believes that audiences may experience moments of surprise during the play, and she’s looking forward to their reactions throughout the production.

“This particular story happens

to be intriguing, and that’s really why I took it,” she says. “It’s just intriguing. And I can hardly wait to see the reaction from the audience.”

Dean hopes that the overarching themes of the play will resonate with its viewers and lead them to an understanding about the urge to run away.

“I mean, I’m in my 80s, and, I admit it, that I’ve thought about it, yeah, that there are times we just want to run away,” she says. “So, I think that what people will take away from this is that there are different ways to run away.”

*Absinthe, Bourbon, Vodka, and Sake*

Various times and dates,  
Wednesday, July 19  
to Sunday, August 6  
\$25, Congregation Emanu-El  
Synagogue Black Box Theatre  
bemaproductions.com



stage

## *The Last Five Years* gets non-linear with relationships

“You can be in a moment, and you can be thinking about the future, and be sort of caught up in the past in the very same moment, so the way time and memory actually work is a lot more complicated.”

JULIE MCISAAC  
THE LAST FIVE YEARS

EMILY WELCH  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Blue Bridge Repertory Theatre is continuing its stream of gutsy productions with the musical *The Last Five Years*. Written by Jason Robert Brown, *The Last Five Years* premiered in Chicago in 2001 and has since grown in popularity, showing around the world.

“What’s special about it is the story documents five years in the journey of a relationship,” says Julie McIsaac, director of Blue Bridge’s production of *The Last Five Years*. “The characters’ names are Cathy and Jamie, and you get this way of meeting, falling in love, and then the struggles that ensue.”

McIsaac says that what makes *The Last Five Years* interesting is



PHOTO PROVIDED

The *Last Five Years* director Julie McIsaac is working with Blue Bridge Repertory Theatre for the first time.

that the story runs on two different timelines.

“Kathy’s story is told from the end of the relationship back to the beginning,” says McIsaac. “Her story starts with, like, the heartbreak of the breakup, and then goes backward in time all the way back to their first meeting. Whereas Jamie’s does the opposite—his timeline starts with their first date, and then moves forward. So, you get this really cool intersection of the two timelines.”

We often think timelines have to be linear, says McIsaac, but human experience is much more complex.

“You can be in a moment, and you can be thinking about the future, and be sort of caught up in the past in the very same moment, so the way time and memory actually work is a lot more complicated,” she says. “I love that this piece shows us these two timelines.”

McIsaac is excited about this production, particularly the unique twist that the cast is hoping to achieve.

“The way it’s originally conceived is that the only time the two characters meet up is in the middle of their story, but we’re doing something a little different, where they

are both on stage throughout the entire piece,” she says. “It’s very exciting; it’s new.”

McIsaac says that she feels the musical is really well crafted.

“The composer himself is an incredible pianist, so the piano parts are really cool, but we also have a violin and a cello helping us to tell the stories. We will also have the band on stage with us, at the Roxy,” says McIsaac. “It’s been really fun working with live musicians, as well as the two singers. It’s very exciting.”

McIsaac also appreciates the actors she’s working with and what

their experiences will bring to the production.

“Cheyanne Scott is going to be playing the role of Cathy,” says McIsaac. “I worked with Cheyanne before in *Children of God*, which is a new Canadian musical about the residential-school experience. I’ve always admired her work, and I’m looking forward to working with her on this different capacity. Seth Zosky is playing the role of Jamie; he is someone Victoria audiences don’t know, as he is based out of Toronto. Seth is Jewish, as is the character of Jamie; we felt it was important to bring in an actor who has that lived experience, who understands that culture, because it is sort of imbedded in the character.”

The plot takes place after hours at a wedding, says McIsaac.

“There will hopefully be this element of romance and whimsy when you walk into the Roxy.”

This is McIsaac’s first time working with Blue Bridge after seeing many of their shows and hearing a lot about them over the years.

“I have such a love of musical storytelling,” says McIsaac, “and I’m thrilled it’s working out.”

### *The Last Five Years*

Various times,  
Tuesday, August 1  
to Sunday, August 13  
Various prices,  
Blue Bridge Theatre  
[bluebridgetheatre.ca](http://bluebridgetheatre.ca)

review

## *Secret Saloon* energetic and lovely musical improv comedy



PHOTO PROVIDED

Improv musical comedy *Secret Saloon* was a success during a June performance at Theatre SKAM’s Satellite Studio.

KIM FEHR  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Going in to *Secret Saloon* on Saturday, June 16 at Theatre SKAM’s Satellite Studio on Fort Street, I wasn’t really sure what to expect. It was the first live comedy show, let alone musical improv comedy, I’d been to.

The set was absolutely adorable. The lighting and furniture pieces were both visually appealing and versatile; the actors cleverly opted to turn different lamps on and off to signal setting changes rather than moving the set pieces around. Neither of the two actors—Islay McKechnie and Ciarán Volke—

changed costumes despite playing several characters each, so having obvious lighting changes for different scenes was helpful.

The show began with the actors having a casual conversation onstage with an audience member. Although this conversation became the foundation of the show—several

Despite the slow start, once the show got going, each scene flowed smoothly and the pacing was great.

bits became major plot points in later scenes—it was a little slow.

Despite the slow start, once the show got going, each scene flowed smoothly and the pacing was great. The actors did a great job at keeping all their characters distinct enough to keep track of easily. The physical comedy was great, too; just enough energy to be lively, but not so much that it felt slapstick.

Although the show had a noticeable formula for building scenes and easing into musical numbers, the actors didn’t always stick to it, for example, ending a song abruptly with “—anyway, you were saying...” and leaving scenes unresolved, which kept the show from feeling too formulaic.

I appreciate that the jokes didn’t get very dark. Almost in spite of the content warning that started the show off, the jokes were much

tamer than I was expecting, which was a pleasant surprise. Despite (or perhaps because of) avoiding darker jokes, the actors had no trouble getting laughs.

The musical aspect was cool as well. They used a variety of instruments, including a saxophone and track looping. It was impressive how well they were able to improvise lyrics while staying in character. There was one song where the actor struggled to find a line, but they took it in stride and kept going strong.

Although the main show was well paced, the ending did seem a little abrupt. A couple of scenes near the conclusion didn’t really resolve, so it felt like there were loose ends left untied.

Overall, this was a lovely performance, which I’m glad to have seen before they take it to the Saskatoon Fringe Festival this August.

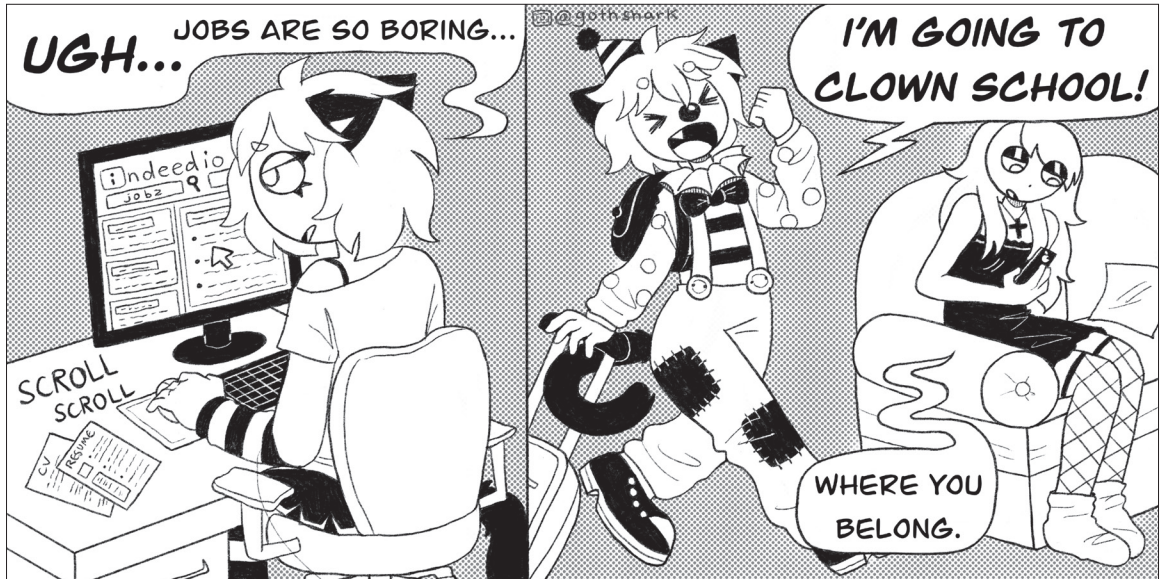


David Wilder: Private Eye - Ben Walmsley-Byrne



In an attempt to ground himself, detective David Wilder returns to his humble beginnings.

Ruby Rioux and the Bats from Saturn - Ray Nufer



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2. "The Guardsman plays on the agony and ecstasy of love," June 7, 2023
3. "Tastes of Victoria: Brickyard dominates pizza," June 7, 2023
4. "Open Space: Terms 'fem-presenting' and 'masc-presenting' need to go," May 3, 2023
5. "AJ Aiken and the art from Young: My journey into Visual Arts," May 3, 2023

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GREG PRATT/NEXUS

We've hidden this copy of our last issue somewhere on the Lansdowne campus. Find it and bring it in to our office for a prize!

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Get hunting!





## Walking the Balance Beam

by Emily Welch

## The balance of love

What do some people say is worth living for but also worth dying for? What causes such a wild spectrum of emotions that can't possibly all be contained in one sentence? What is the theme of countless works of art?

Love. Love is the answer. It fuels our lives. Its existence can make or break us. We can have productive behaviour if the waters of love are calm. We can be completely exhilarated and feel capable of conquering any obstacles when newly in love. We can also be completely lethargic and unproductive if things in the love department are going badly.

With so many factors at stake, how do we balance life and love? After all, there are so many different ways and types of love. Love doesn't always mean romance. We feel love with our families, whether they're biological or chosen. We feel love toward our pets, which I believe fall into the category of family. There's

love that people feel toward good friends, toward colleagues and coworkers, to people who have passed away, and even to those we may have never met, such as an artist or musician.

A commonly used phrase is "love thy neighbour." This is something I try to practice, but it's not always easy. I give money when I can to people who need it, and I had to accept a long time ago that money I give may not be going toward food or shelter. I've accepted that with ease because I'm still helping to make someone's path through life a little easier.

However, loving thy neighbour also implies loving those who have wronged us, because it's the right thing to do. That's harder for me. I consider myself a very forgiving person, and I have no issue with accepting apologies and continuing to move ahead, but loving the real shit disturbers in my life is difficult.

I don't always understand the concept of letting go. This is where having to balance comes in for me—I've had to try to practice loving people regardless of their actions. This is useful for my own progression and sanity, but it's always hard.

Balancing romantic love with academic life is something most students have had to navigate, and it's always a conundrum because we have to try and make time for studies, ourselves, and this amazing human being we absolutely must have in our lives.

If it doesn't work out, then we can be in serious trouble because a broken heart will destroy a person for a while. It can make a deep gash in a person's neat and tidy academic path.

Balance must mean examining all sides, and making sure to love ourselves with the most consideration. After all, it's a shame to not try. Love is a many splendoured thing.



## Tastes of Victoria

by Pablo M. Romero

## Spinnakers a Victoria treasure

After the beautiful summer solstice, the moment to look for the ideal place to enjoy the summer has arrived. Burgers, cold beer, and the refreshing breeze of the ocean sounds like the perfect combination, right? There are a lot of places where you can get all that, but let me tell you about a stunning location with everything mentioned above and more.

Spinnakers Brew Pub, located at 308 Catherine Street, was founded in 1984, making it the first brewpub in Canada. They were pioneers in the beer-crafting business in the west coast region. The infrastructure perfectly combines modern architecture with the essence of an authentic pub, and it's close to breathtaking coastal scenery.

My experience at Spinnakers was more than excellent. I decided

to go for one of their specialties, the salmon burger. An exquisite grilled salmon accompanied by apple chutney, grainy mustard aioli, red onion, and leaf lettuce, in the middle of two slices of artisanal home-baked ciabatta. I ordered it with a light, refreshing cream ale and some handmade truffles for dessert. The burger was stunningly tasty, accompanied by a generous portion of hand-cut Kennebec fries; the cream ale was the perfect match for the grilled salmon, and the truffles were dangerously addictive. I have to give a distinction to Spinnakers for keeping the food price ratio coherent and favourable, offering generous portions at a fair rate.

In addition, it's worth mentioning how impressed this establishment left me when I realized that many of the items are produced

in-house. From the bread to the chocolates, vinegar and spirits (obviously), everything is made at their own outstanding bakery and brewery using local produce. It is a brewhouse pub made by and for Victoria.

The wide and inclusive variety of options on the menu, the friendly servers and staff, the vast number of beers, the provisions with a fine selection of chocolate, the ocean view from the coastal location, and the comfy guesthouses are more than enough reasons to make a visit to Spinnakers.

At least for the summer, it's the perfect place to create unforgettable memories.

I left with a good feeling and a solid will to spend some dog days in this remarkable Victoria establishment.



## Kiryn's Wellness Corner

by Kiryn Quinn

## Grand declarations of wellness

Most of us have made a grand declaration to eat better, exercise more, go to hot yoga flow or Krav Maga every day, or begin journaling. We set a start date, like New Year's Day or next Monday, because beginning mid-week just seems irrational, am I right? We want to change something, so we decide to go big or go home, and then a week—maybe a month—later, we're sitting stuffing our faces with chips and making excuses for why we haven't kept up with our near-impossible declarations of massive change.

Well, I don't know the first thing about Krav Maga and I'm terrible at journaling, so, this column is going to focus on what I do know: yoga and nutrition. I have over eight years of yoga teaching experience and a diploma in holistic nutrition.

My yoga experience is mostly around the physical practice of yoga, known as asana, and is traditionally practiced in order to prepare the body (think hips, knees, and back) to sit quietly in meditation. Patanjali refers to this more specifically as meditative absorption; it's the seventh of the eight limbs of yoga.

Despite my background in both yoga and nutrition, I'm only human, ebbing and flowing through discipline and lack thereof as time ticks on.

I'm a little older now and wish that someone—anyone—had taught me that it's okay to fall down, and that when I do, I can be gentle as I get up, brush the chip crumbs from my lips, grab my yoga mat, and decide to try a different, possibly gentler, class for a change.

I'd like to join you on a journey of exploring how to incorporate health and wellness into your life while learning how to allow yourself to also indulge in hedonistic pleasures and not judge yourself too harshly. I love food and I love yoga, so please, allow me to share two simple things with you to try this month.

1. Pay attention to what foods you crave and when: if you want to journal, be my guest. But simply spend a moment to notice when and why you crave food or drink that you probably know isn't great for your overall health.

2. Pay attention to your breath. Again, if you want to journal about it, rock on. But simply begin to pay attention to when your breath (prana) is shallow, laboured, and restricted, or when it's easy and deep. Until next time, Keep it real.



## Nic's Flicks

by Nicolas Ihmels

## Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 3 ends franchise on good note

*Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 3* (2023)  
3/4

Lets face it: the Marvel Cinematic Universe has had a rough patch with its phase-four movie slate lately. While it had a few high points with *Spider-Man: No Way Home* and *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever*, it also had a concerning number of stinkers as well. Two examples of this are Taika Waititi's *Thor: Love and Thunder* (just a silly mess that put way too much emphasis on humour) and *Peyton*

horrible things that have happened to Rocket.

Let's talk about the soundtrack: this is easily one of my favourites of all time. Each song has its own place that it serves in the movie. A great example of this is Radiohead's "Creep", which played at the beginning of the film. This song beautifully ties into Rocket's character because being a genetically engineered raccoon does make him feel like a little bit of a creep sometimes. The song also ties into the film's theme of chosen family really

The usage of Radiohead's "Creep" beautifully ties into Rocket's character because being a genetically engineered raccoon does make him feel like a little bit of a creep sometimes.

*Reed's Ant-Man and the Wasp: Quantumania* (a sour end to what was once a vibrantly funny trilogy).

I'm pleased to say that James Gunn's *Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 3*, while not a perfect movie, is one of the finer films that the MCU has put out in recent years.

One of the main things I liked about this movie—which brings the *Guardians* franchise to a close—is James Gunn's direction. Each frame is engaging and well directed, and the action is clear and well paced. Gunn also proves that he's a whiz at getting the best performances from his cast, which is what a really good director does.

I really liked the acting performances; everyone in the cast succeeds at injecting life into their characters. The stand-out to me was Bradley Cooper as Rocket. Even though it's a voice-over role, Cooper does a brilliant job in showing Rocket's humour and emotion. This movie really puts this character through the ringer and Cooper does a brilliant job in conveying all of the

well because all of the Guardians are creeps in their own way, and their creepiness is what makes them Guardians of the Galaxy as well as family to each other.

The one big thing I didn't like about this movie was the villain. A lot of people complained about Ronan the Accuser being a weak villain, but Chukwudi Iwuji's High Evolutionary is by far the MCU's worst villain. The character comes off as a screaming, sociopathic, high-school bully.

I also hate a villain who thinks that, for example, walking into a room of high-ranking officers and shooting insults at them will get them to do what he wants. That's his entire character. There's no detailed plan or any hint of what he wants; he's just a big loudmouth bully that needs to be taken down, and a franchise that has delivered powerful villains like Erik Killmonger should do better.

Despite this, *Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 3* is another bright moment in the MCU treasure trove.

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