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editor’s letter
Spring-break shenanigans

As I write this, I find myself on the brink of what used to be known as “spring break” but has been renamed “reading week” by post-secondary institutions across Canada. It brings to mind Principal Skinner wishing the students “a frank and productive holiday” on the last day of school. I suppose this renaming was done in an optimistic attempt to instill in us a sense of duty-bound, rigorous allegiance to our various studies, but if you’re anything like me, any sense of stalwart stewardship over my GPA that I’m trying to propagate goes right out the window as soon as that glorious week starts, and I hear the call of the void.

Call it by whatever name you like, I’m going to spend the week going out for brunches I can scant afford, taking midday naps, and staying up late binge-watching the most gruesome murder shows I can find.

Spring break (reading week, whatever) began not all that long ago, relatively speaking. It was conceived in 1936 when a swim team coach from New York’s esteemed Colgate University (named after the toothpaste guy) decided to take his team to a fancy-pants new pool in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. By the next year, more universities had decided to join them at this fancy pool, partying ensued, and a bacchanalian legend was born.

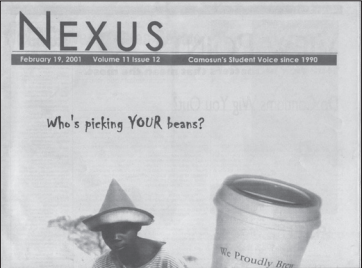
In 1960 there was a blockbuster movie called *Where the Boys Are*, all about how cool and popular the people who went to Fort Lauderdale for spring break were, and after that it went truly bonkers. So much so that in 1985 the city enacted laws to keep a lid on the wild and crazy antics of a bunch of drunken and hormonal teens and 20-somethings. Fort Lauderdale is still a party hotspot, but the handwringing and tut-tutting of the city fathers cast a pall over the wild freedom of years gone by, and other cities decided to take up the mantle (and profit).

Many places offer all-inclusive resorts with spring-break packages in an attempt to corral the revellers to one spot, controlling the mayhem. I can imagine myself possibly enjoying that when I was a teenager, but now it seems like Hell on earth. I would rather set myself on fire. I would much rather go an entire week forgetting that I ever knew any other people and was forced to take part in this grotesque vaudeville show of human debasement we call a society, so forget is what I shall do.

You will find me dressed in something flowy, pointing out plot holes to my dog while we speculate on who is the killer, baking cakes at 2 am, and wandering around in my garden in the dead of night, possibly smoking something out of a meerscham pipe.

Nik Ovstaas, student editor
nik@nexusnewspaper.com

flashback
25 Years Ago in Nexus



JASMINE WAGSTAFF
STUDENT EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

Unfriendly beans: In the February 19, 2001 issue of *Nexus*, writer Aaron Karapinka wrote about the negative effects coffee can have and the massive industry behind it built on exploitative labour practices. Fair trade coffee is a good alternative, but that gets expensive fast and few people are willing to pay more for something that’s cheap and readily available. An initiative was started to get campuses across Canada to use fair trade coffee, but no such luck. What’s a broke, tired college student supposed to do? I guess I’ll just have to stick to my Red Bull and Monster Energy drinks.

BIG garden, big opportunities: The format of traditional schooling made up of lectures and tests doesn’t work well for everyone. Sometimes you long to escape the classroom and dive into nature instead. Camosun’s Interurban campus was previously home to

the Garden of Eden, which is not to be confused for the adult store downtown. It was a small garden tended to by individuals in the Basic Instruction in Gardening Skills (BIGS) program, which provided a unique approach to adult special education. The students learned a lot of hands-on skills that helped them find employment later on, primarily in greenhouses, landscaping, or with the Capital Regional District.

Digital piracy: Long before Spotify and even YouTube, people had no inexpensive ways to get music onto their phones, so some decided to illegally download MP3 files to their devices rather than buy albums or CDs. Napster was a site people turned to for pirated music, and it was in danger of being shut down; people were furious. *Nexus* writer Jonathan Kimak wrote “We hear about this new CD, pay \$20 to get two good songs and ten low quality songs that are usually skipped over, and then feel ripped off.” Kimak continued to argue that with piracy, people get only the high-quality songs they want, which is a net positive for everyone (musicians would likely disagree). I’m just grateful that music is available and affordable now, because I’m never buying a whole CD for one song again.

open space
The predatory math of campus parking

MIKA TURQUIE
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Sprinting through campus from the depths of the Lansdowne parking lot to get to my class in the Young Building has become my new morning routine. During winter break, my preferred parking lot was fenced off, making the rest of the lot more crowded than usual and leaving me no choice but to park at the far end when I am running late for class.

If you’re unaware, Camosun

of Interurban. However, I was quickly reminded that driving is not just a choice I get to make every morning; it is a necessity. There are no bus stops near my house that would get me to campus in a reasonable amount of time. I used to think of driving to school as a privilege, but it’s what I must do if I want to be in my seat on time, and it comes with a cost.

At Camosun, Robbins charges \$3.50 for four hours of parking

Robbins charges \$3.50 for four hours of parking and \$7.00 for the full day, with no options in between and no refunds. This is predatory, as many labs and back-to-back lectures run 4.5 to 5 hours, forcing students to pay for a “full day” just to spend an extra 30 to 60 minutes on campus.

is building on-campus student housing in this fenced-off area. The six-storey building, with approximately 420 beds and a cost of \$154.7 million (\$151.7 million from government funding, and \$3 million from Camosun), is expected to be completed in the fall of 2027. Government officials say the priority is to provide affordable on-campus housing for students, while also helping alleviate the rental market in Victoria.

Building on existing parking lots is an urban-planning strategy called infill development, which reduces costs because the land is already cleared. What is unclear is why the college chose this specific lot rather than the rear parking lot, which was always empty before winter break. Did site selection prioritize construction logistics over student accessibility?

This isn’t the first time I’ve found myself running from the parking lot to class. While I attended the Interurban campus, I was always late to class because most parking lots fill up quickly. The worst part is that even if I tried to take the bus to campus, the morning bus was always full by the time it reached my stop.

At Lansdowne, I initially saw parking availability as a benefit, a “luxury” compared to the gridlock

and \$7.00 for the full day, with no options in between and no refunds. This is predatory, as many labs and back-to-back lectures run 4.5 to 5 hours, forcing students to pay for a “full day” just to spend an extra 30 to 60 minutes on campus. And if you go overtime, you can expect a \$30 parking ticket tucked in your windshield wipers. There isn’t much relief for long-term commitment: a four-week pass costs \$140, offering a discount over the daily rate of \$7... if you were to park every single day in that month. If you come to campus five days a week, there’s no discount on that four-week pass.

A full-time student (over four hours a day, five days a week for 14 weeks) is expected to pay \$490 dollars in parking fees per semester. For many, this \$490 parking charge is equivalent to the tuition of an entire three-credit course, effectively forcing students to pay for a class they aren’t allowed to attend just to park for the ones they are. The fees make up part of the \$30 million annual revenue that Robbins proudly touts on their website.

If Camosun is truly committed to student affordability through new housing, it must start by addressing predatory parking practices that penalize the very students they claim to support.

Something on your mind? If you’re a Camosun student, get in touch with us with your *Open Space* idea! Email editor@nexusnewspaper.com. Include your student number. Thanks!



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OVERHEARD AT NEXUS: "Maybe they'll just remove my whole head!"

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event

Student Society celebrates Black History Month with zine-making workshop



Camosun College Student Society pride director Acacia Tooth.

@KZPHOTO

DANI BIRGE
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

As Campus Life Days approach, the air is buzzing with the usual student activity. But for the Camosun College Student Society (CCSS) pride director, this year’s Black

History Month is about more than just keeping up with assignments, it’s about getting their hands dirty in the archives of the past to build a more inclusive future.

The centrepiece of this effort is

a zine-making workshop, a grass-roots medium that feels uniquely suited to the complex, intersectional history being celebrated. For event organizer Acacia Tooth, the goal is simple but profound: to ensure that the narrative of Black history recognizes the queer voices that have often been sidelined in mainstream education.

“My goal is to offer people a way to learn history... in a kind of queer way,” says Tooth. “Being a pride director, I find it’s really important that Black history also recognizes all of the queer people that put their lives on the line for liberation.”

The workshop—being held from 10 am to 2 pm on Wednesday, February 18 in the Fisher Building foyer at Lansdowne—isn’t just about creativity. Participants will dive into magazines and publications, specifically those from Black publishing houses, to find pieces that resonate with them. By cutting, pasting, and layering these images and texts, students will explore the deep connections between the Stonewall Riots, drag liberation, and the broader Black Lives Matter movement. The focus shifts away

from a sanitized, one-dimensional view of history toward an understanding of how these movements correlate.

“People might think it’s just about uplifting Black voices,” says Tooth, “but it’s also the history of why it’s a whole month. What happened beforehand to make it a month?”

The workshop acknowledges that true learning isn’t always comfortable. To understand Black resistance and emancipation, one must also confront the realities of slavery and systemic struggle.

“Learning and growth is not linear,” says Tooth. “It’s going to be hard conversations, but also making light of the fact that education is power. If one person learns something new and they take that away with them, then that is a success for me.”

The resulting zines—small, handmade booklets—serve as portable vessels of knowledge. While some participants might keep them for personal reflection, others are encouraged to leave what Tooth refers to as their “kick-ass” creations in campus lounges, such as

the library or Women’s Centre, to keep the conversation circulating. For Tooth, the work is also deeply personal as they are rooted in a family tree that stretches back to Nigeria. Although they never met their grandfather, his journey as an immigrant and the large, supportive family he built in Canada serve as the foundation for this work. This sense of lineage and celebrating those who created the opportunities for Black and queer students to occupy academic spaces today is the heartbeat of the event. It’s a call for BIPOC community members to find one another, to, as Tooth says, “walk in a good way,” and to exist in harmony.

“For me, [Black History Month] means recognizing my own family and our roots and where we come from,” they share. “It’s incredible to find that power through struggling. A lot of people will pass before they even know the big impact they have on our modern-day society. It’s just really important to keep those stories going, keep the conversation going and really celebrate those people who created those opportunities for us to have rights.”

NEWS BRIEFS

College issues budget update

Camosun College recently made public its revenue and expenditures for the nine fiscal months ending December 31, 2025. The college reported a deficit of \$4.6 million; the budgeted deficit is \$3.1 million. In a statement, the college said it is “not unusual” to report a deficit at this point in the year. Domestic enrolment for fall 2025 was up approximately three percent compared to fall of the previous year, while international enrolment was approximately

1,150 students, below the target of 1,200 and less than the 1,836 international students enrolled in fall 2024. The college is predicting a deficit of \$2.2 million at the end of the fiscal year, which is March 31. It says that with a further decrease in international student numbers will come further financial strain.

Teacher Recognition Awards seek nominations

The fifth annual Camosun Teacher Recognition Awards are now taking nominations

from students. The awards recognize faculty who go above and beyond in promoting student success and use flexible and engaging approaches to teaching. Nominations close on Sunday, March 1; to nominate a teacher go to [camosun.libwizard.com/f/cc_2026_teacher_recognition_nomination](https://libwizard.com/f/cc_2026_teacher_recognition_nomination). The recognition event takes place on Tuesday, April 28.

Post-secondary review deadline extended

The deadline for the independent review of the province’s post-

secondary sector has been extended. The review, which the Camosun College Student Society represented island students in, had an original deadline of March 15; it has been extended by two weeks.

Camosun named as a top employer

Camosun College has been named as one of BC’s top employers in 2026. This marks two years in a row the college has been recognized in the annual competition, held by employment-periodical

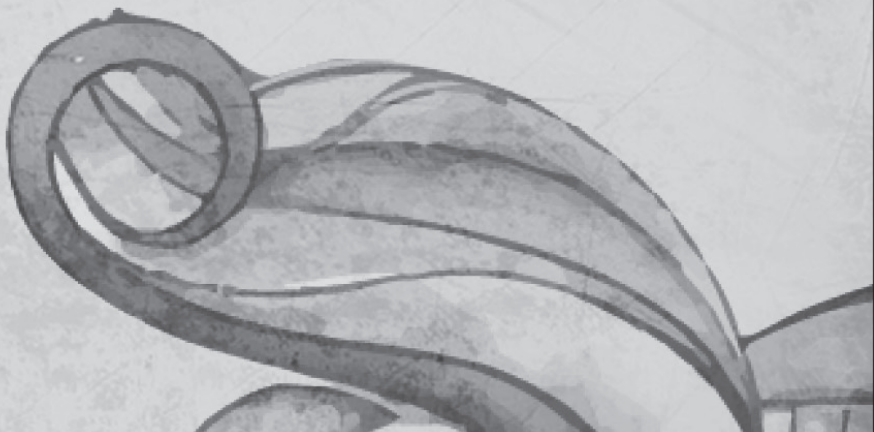
publisher Mediacorp Canada. The recognition comes from the college’s “commitment to creating a supportive and enriching work environment,” according to a college press release. Camosun has approximately 1,400 employees.

–GREG PRATT,
MANAGING EDITOR

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NEXUS
camosun's student voice since 1990

FYI Langford learners: you can now find copies of *Nexus* at the John Horgan campus!



alumni

Camosun grad starts new record label to support artists

“I’ve been kicking around the idea for ways to promote music that I find not gross as a musician.”

NAOMI KAVKA
UNDERSTORY RECORDS

NIK OVSTAAS
STUDENT EDITOR

It’s always nice to hear success stories from those who walked the halls of Camosun before you, a bit like the universe chucking you gently under the chin and letting you know that there is hope. Naomi Kavka, who graduated from the music diploma program at the Victoria Conservatory of Music through Camosun way back in 2011 (and also wrote for *Nexus*), is just such a story with the launch of her new record label, Understory Records.

Kavka, who makes her home in Smithers, BC, had noticed a seriously lacking network of support for artists in the northern reaches of this province we all call home. British Columbia has its fair share of artistic communities, and Smithers may just be poised to add its name to the roster.

“Smithers is another artistic hub,” says Kavka, “similar to Dawson [City, Yukon], Nelson, and Wells, where it’s very small and

super supportive and full of, just brimming with, artists, but there’s so many different barriers to entry, including funding, and it’s just having the right contacts to try and promote and distribute music.”

Getting your music out there without going through organizations like Spotify and YouTube, who are notorious for their poor payment of artists, is a challenge for up and comers.

“There’s a bit of a tipping point happening culturally, where I know personally and from people that I’ve talked to, we’re all pretty jaded with the streaming services as artists,” says Kavka. “We don’t really get anything from it, but it occupies so much real estate in our minds, of like, how many plays I’m getting, how do I get on playlists?”

While listenership can be tough for artists, the inner workings of the industry itself also poses challenges.

“There’s so much gatekeeping involved in that,” she says. “It’s



PHOTO PROVIDED

Camosun grad Naomi Kavka (left) and journalist Pam Haasen have started Understory Records.

just turned into this huge machine that I want to extricate myself from. I’ve done several releases on vinyl and find that people are really enthusiastic about buying them. The main barrier is it’s expensive to get it done. There’s lost of steps involved. And for a lot of first-time artists that are trying to release these things that’s a bit of a hurdle to sort of get over.”

Kavka, having navigated these issues herself, saw an opportunity, which is where Understory’s story begins.

“So my thoughts were, I’m going to team up with another really ambitious arts person I know,

Pam Haasen, who’s a journalist in Smithers, and work together to find creative ways to help artists get physical merch, and distribute,” says Kavka.

Understory’s first release, *Understory Records Volume One*, is a compilation of Northern BC and Yukon artists that comes out on February 28 (see understoryrecords.com for more info on the release and label).

“I mean, I’ve been kicking around the idea for ways to promote music that I find not gross as a musician,” says Kavka. “You do so much work [as an artist] and you are very aware of the business side

of music, which I was not especially adept at, but I have learned a lot about how to survive as an entrepreneur. So I want to be able to help [new artists] at least get their foot in the door. Like, ‘I have a record in my hand, I can go out into the world with this now.’”

Kavka says that people should think about the way they consume music the same way they think about how they consume something like local groceries.

“Of course, it’s just an offer to sort of shop local,” she says, “and you know that what you’re going to be [spending] is going back to the artist and back into the community.”

events

Camosun College Student Society brings bingo and trivia to campus



PHOTO PROVIDED

The student society is hosting bingo and trivia nights at both campuses.

JASMINE WAGSTAFF
STUDENT EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

The Camosun College Student Society (CCSS) is bringing game nights, consisting of bingo and trivia, to both Interurban and Lansdowne campuses. These events were started by CCSS pride director Acacia Tooth, who wanted to bring some more fun to students.

“I personally love going to bingo and trivia at Vicious Poodle and

Friends of Dorothy,” says Tooth. “I just find it’s always fun and it’s a great way to connect with people, so it’s kind of nice to be able to bring that on campus and have students that might not find each other from just walking around campus or being in different classes and getting everyone together. It’s been really lovely.”

With the first month of games done, the CCSS is increasing their

marketing to encourage more students to come by. This can be a little tricky, says Tooth, as the bingo and trivia occur in the evenings after most students have left campus.

“The turnout for bingo was pretty good. Obviously at Interurban, even though it is the busiest campus, a lot of classes are held during the day and nobody really makes it back, so it was a little slower, but it’s also the first of the events. Marketing was a little bit behind, but we feel more prepared for next month than we did this month. I’m hoping it’ll pick up,” says Tooth. “[As for trivia], there were a couple of students there, and honestly it was kind of fun having the smaller group because then everyone just went head to head with the knowledge that they had, so it got really competitive and was a lot of fun.”

Having these game nights available at the Interurban and Lansdowne campuses is a great way for students to let go of some stress and unwind. Plus, having them on campus and not at a bar makes them a lot more accessible for everyone, says Tooth.

“It is really nice. I myself have been sober for four years so having the opportunities to go to sober events with like-minded individuals who are also in school is just a really great way to ease into the college

“Sometimes it’s nice to just take a break from learning. We spend the entire time we’re on campus filling our head with knowledge, and sometimes it’s nice to just let loose and be comfortable in a new space.”

ACACIA TOOTH
CAMOSUN COLLEGE STUDENT SOCIETY

experience,” says Tooth. “Or even for people who have been here for years, just to have something low-key to go to.”

Tooth doesn’t have to run these game nights on their own—other members of the CCSS are contributing their time to help with the bingo and trivia nights. These events have also given the CCSS a fun way to connect with more students one on one, says Tooth.

“Some of the other [CCSS] directors do come and help with set up and all that stuff. Usually they stay for the event as well, which is also nice cause we get to meet more students that way and make those face-to-face connections,” says Tooth. “Usually when we are just running CCSS events it’s very hit and miss who comes by, so that’s been really nice.”

Tooth is very excited that these game nights are now up and run-

ning and hopes that more students will come check them out, adding that it’s a fun and free way for students to connect with one another regardless of what classes they may or may not have together. Bingo and trivia nights will occur on a monthly basis, swapping games every month.

“Sometimes it’s nice to just take a break from learning. We spend the entire time we’re on campus filling our head with knowledge, and sometimes it’s nice to just let loose and be comfortable in a new space,” says Tooth. “Just being able to relax and spend time on connections.”

The next trivia night is Black History Month themed and will take place from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm on Monday, February 23 in Wilna Thomas 234 at the Lansdowne campus.

See camosunstudent.org for more information on the CCSS.

event

Tsukino-Con brings anime magic back to UVic



@THE_ANYAPANDA VIA INSTAGRAM

Tsukino-Con runs from February 20 to 22 at the University of Victoria.

JASMINE WAGSTAFF
STUDENT EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

Tsukino-Con is back at UVic this year, and anime fans are no doubt hyped to attend another convention full of fun panels and unique art and merchandise from vendors, and to gather with like-minded people who share their passion.

Olivia Csiki is a UVic student and an avid cosplayer who began volunteering at Tsukino-Con—which is always hosted at UVic

during reading break weekend—in 2017; she’s now the deputy of the event’s finance department. She began watching anime and reading manga as a kid, and her passion has only grown over the years. She also frequently cosplays and has loved making friends in the community.

“The convention is a great way for local cosplayers to get into the cosplay community and it’s a huge networking thing now,” says Csiki. “A lot of cosplayers at Tsukino-Con

are really great at explaining their cosplays too, lots of passion. I’ve never had a bad experience interacting with anyone at Tsukino-Con doing cosplay.”

Csiki says that the convention has changed a lot since the pandemic, since Tsukino-Con didn’t run between 2020 and 2023.

“The con is still a little bit recovering from COVID, but it’s at a point where the numbers are similar to how they were a little bit before COVID, like before our bigger numbers, so it’s building up,” she says. “It’s recovering.”

The organizers of Tsukino-Con have been trying to run smaller events as well, such as the one-day Tsukino Matsuri that took place in August 2025.

“We are trying to implement more community events, so we’re trying to hold things for the con so people who attend the con can interact more with things they might not have originally,” says Csiki. “[Trying to] put more events in place for stuff like that.”

Smaller anime conventions like Tsukino-Con don’t get as much attention as larger ones like Anime Revolution or Fan Expo, but Csiki argues that there’s just as much fun to be had at a local convention.

“It’s a very different experience to come to a convention that’s smaller,” says Csiki. “You get a lot more time to interact with people and

“A lot of cosplayers at Tsukino-Con are really great at explaining their cosplays too, lots of passion. I’ve never had a bad experience interacting with anyone at Tsukino-Con doing cosplay.”

OLIVIA CSIKI
TSUKINO-CON

voice actors that come. You get a feel for the people that are actually in your community who like the same things you do, which is one of the things that I’ve really liked about Tsukino-Con. A lot of the people that I meet at Tsukino-Con I can meet outside of the con as well, because a lot of the people are very local, so it’s a great way to make friends and learn about what’s in your community as well.”

Tsukino-Con—which offers student discounts for single-day or full-weekend passes—includes different events to attend and things to explore in between panels.

“A lot of local artists come to sell their work, which is a huge incentive [for guests to attend]. There’s going to be the cosplay contest and the swimsuit contest. There’s usually some gaming stuff that goes on. We are planning to have a small array of guests coming. Some voice actors,

and some tubers as well hopefully,” says Csiki. “Learning about the anime community, coming in and having fun, meeting new people—those are some of the reasons that I recommend people come to a small con in general.”

Csiki says that she and the rest of the organizers have put a lot of hard work into making sure everyone has a great time at the convention this year.

“I’m very excited for this year’s con and I really hope a lot of people also enjoy [the] con this year as well,” says Csiki.

Tsukino-Con
Friday, February 20
to Sunday, February 22
UVic
tsukinocon.com

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Tea & Talent

THIS INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S DAY

DATE: MARCH 5TH
TIME: 2:30-4PM
VENUE: SHERRI BELL HALL,
WILNA THOMAS

SIGN UP HERE

BC Black History Awareness Society focuses on Black history and beyond

Story by Ashley Hagel, student editorial assistant

This February, for the 32nd year, BC Black History Awareness Society (BCBHAS) is hosting a number of events around Victoria for Black History Month (BHM), honouring the province's deep-rooted Black history, culture, and communities.

"We're a non-profit organization that began in 1994, so for over 30 years we've been celebrating Black achievements—past, present, and future," says BCBHAS executive director Jamila Douhaibi. "We create more awareness around BC's rich black history, but we also celebrate contemporary artists, youth, and storytellers."

This year, the program aims to "honour black brilliance" by amplifying voices across all generations. With music, art, and history all on display, these events serve to highlight the resilience and creativity of Victoria's Black community.

"I think it really ties back to who we are as an organization and what we do, and I think that really shows in the events that we have."

The program kicked off on February 1 with the BHM launch at Open Space Gallery. The event featured live music, art, presentations, and catering, all from the Black community. Then, on February 7, the Royal BC Museum hosted History & Heritage Day, including nine unique exhibits, various speakers, and no admission fee.

"We have History & Heritage Day, where people can come and talk to direct descendants of early Black pioneers, they can find out even more about the resources we have available, and talk to other people in the community," says Douhaibi.

Coming up on February 22, BCBHAS will be leading a guided tour through Ross Bay Cemetery, offering a real-life walk through Black history.

"That's an annual favourite because there's about 50 Black pioneers and their descendants buried at Ross Bay Cemetery," says Douhaibi. "That tour is a great opportunity to learn about Black history and Black individuals."

With the work being put in by BCBHAS, this tour is constantly evolving. Their presence at Ross Bay Cemetery extends far beyond one guided tour a year, as they fix up old headstones and graves year-round.

"We've done some restoration work at Ross Bay Cemetery, so we're always restoring different graves," says Douhaibi. "There's a new memorial grave that we put up just this past year, so whether you've been here before [or not], you'll always learn something new."

The last event of the month will be held on February 27 at Pacific Opera Victoria, featuring live music, a book signing, and a keynote speaker.

"Our final event will be the keynote speaker event, so that's, again, celebrating contemporary Black people. We'll have a local Black author who's the keynote speaker, her name is Junie Désil. And then there will be a host, there will be music by Caleb Hart, and probably some art there as well."



A display at the History & Heritage Day on Saturday.



JOSHUA TELFER

The Black History Month 2026 launch event at Open Space Gallery on Sunday, February 1.

Douhaibi says that the importance of Black history is to be learned at all times, no matter who you are.

"There's something for everyone," says Douhaibi. "We are free or by donation, and we really want people to just come and be encouraged to continue learning about Black history after February that it's important to learn about—well, it's Canadian history."

Apart from the events being held throughout the city, BCBHAS focuses on about the province's Black history.

"We also do presentations throughout the month," says Douhaibi. "I'm even presenting for SFU and Surrey Libraries—so at other places and share about history."

Education, of course, comes in all different forms. In addition to its biotic relationship with several organizations in the community.

"Something that's also important to us is the partnerships we have," says Douhaibi. "A newer one is with the Maritime Museum, so in part of our *Black Roots*, and it talks about the story of the Black community and what they did once they settled here."

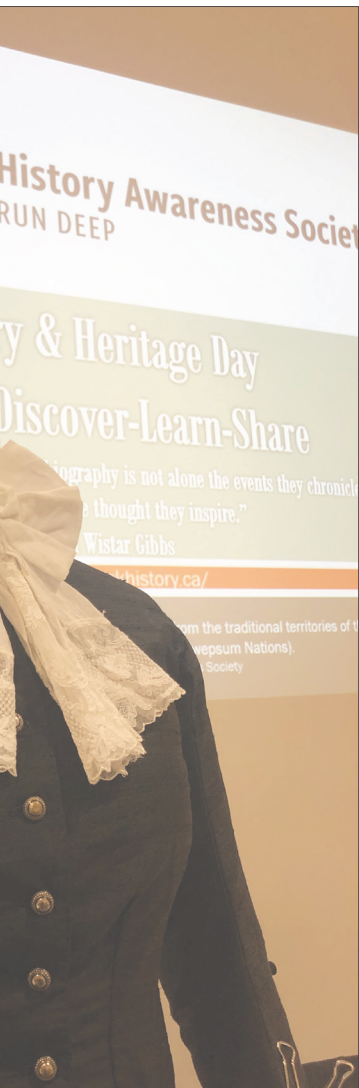
1858: Black Routes, *Black Roots* runs until the end of April. It focuses on individuals migrating to Vancouver Island in the wake of the 1858 events BCBHAS runs all throughout the year.

"We really encourage people to come out during February and throughout the year," says Douhaibi. "We do so many other projects."

One project they've been working on is a new community centre on Douglas Street and Johnson Street. The centre is set to open in 2026 for the community.

"It's going to be an accessible space, it's all on the ground floor. We have a ramp to the stage. We just want to have youth drop-ins, people really excited for that to happen."

BC Black History Society February in February



BCBHAS

, February 7 at the Royal BC Museum.

“All of the events are everyone welcome, a lot of them are free or by donation, and we really want people to just come out and celebrate Black history, and learn to be inspired or be encouraged to continue learning about Black history after February. Because, of course, it’s all year long and not just February that it’s important to learn about—well, it’s Canadian history, really—so it’s important to learn all year long.”

JAMILA DOUHAIBI
MUSICIAN



JOSHUA TELFER

The Black History Month 2026 launch event at Open Space Gallery on Sunday, February 1.

should not be confined to a single month. There’s so much

aiibi. “All of the events are everyone welcome, a lot of them out and celebrate Black history, and learn to be inspired or February. Because, of course, it’s all year long and not just an history, really—so it’s important to learn all year long.” BCBHAS is also committed to educating students across BC

Douhaibi, “so I’ll be going to local schools and universi- outside of these bigger public events, we also go to schools

tion to presenting at schools, BCBHAS also fosters a sym- ity, making outreach more accessible.

s and relationships we have in the community,” says Dou- tnership with them, we’re putting on *1858: Black Routes*, nity leaving San Francisco, how they travelled, and then

il, showcasing the lasting significance of nearly 800 Black Dred Scott decision. This is just one example of the many

ry, but then there’s also so many other things happening projects and events.”

ty centre in downtown Victoria, located on the corner of this spring, offering a number of resources and activities

floor,” says Douhaibi. “There will be a stage, there will be gramming, and events all throughout the year, and we’re

BCBHAS’ website features a number of different resources, many of which are specifically curated for students and educators. It also includes a learning centre with information regarding BC’s Black pioneers, a timeline of BC’s Black history, and so much more.

“We’ve created resources specifically for educators and students,” says Douhaibi. “We have an archive guide, so if stu- dents are interested in learning more about Black history and seeing those archived documents and photos, they can access the guide on our website.”

Black History Month, as well as Black history as a whole, is not currently a part of BC’s K-12 curriculum. For this reason, it’s important to BCBHAS that information and learning tools be as accessible as possible.

“We really want to have Black History Month and Black history talked about more in schools,” says Douhaibi, “and so that’s another big thing that we can work on because we want students that end up in university and college to already have known a lot of this information, and for it not to be something new to them.”

However, that often isn’t the case. Despite the positive reception from students and educators, Douhaibi says they’ve had to take a more “bottom-up” approach, as BCBHAS continues to work with the Ministry of Education and the BC Teachers Federation to make meaningful changes happen in the classroom.

“In the conversations we’ve had with the Ministry of Education, they’re now using one of our resources, which is a time- line booklet we created for educators... So we’re definitely making good advancements, but we really want it to be in the BC curriculum.”

BCBHAS continues to make an effort to spread awareness for BC’s rich Black history across the province, as well as cultivating community right here in Victoria.

“We always look forward to Black History Month,” says Douhaibi, “and being able to emphasize Black culture and Black heritage for the wider society, and we really hope that extends beyond February.”

music

Spark to Flame showcases Victoria Conservatory of Music students

JASMINE WAGSTAFF
STUDENT EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

Spark to Flame is a student concert held by the Victoria Conservatory of Music (VCM), a satellite campus of Camosun College. The annual concert is a tradition of the VCM as it works to highlight the talents of its students and engage the public, who may not have otherwise attended this type of event.

Seven students were chosen for this year’s performance, all young soloists with different musical specialties. The concert is also a fundraiser for the VCM, a non-profit organization whose mission is to train the next generation of musicians and keep the art alive.

VCM Music Performance diploma student Marlo Karakas is a vocalist performing this year. Karakas is in their second year of the two-year program, which Camosun offers in partnership with the VCM, and has been thoroughly enjoying their journey in studying music.

“I’ve never been one for academics, and when I was graduating [high school] I was excelling in music so I figured I may as well take a year or two at the Conservatory and see if I like it and I want to pursue it. And I love it; I’m just having so much fun. It’s just really cool to be able to do something I genuinely love and enjoy everyday,” says Karakas. “It’s a really cool program



PHOTO PROVIDED

Victoria Conservatory of Music student Marlo Karakas.

through the Conservatory and I get college credit from the Conservatory through the college, but I get to be at this cool downtown campus at the Conservatory, which is really awesome.”

Karakas has selected two pieces by Henry Purcell, a Baroque-era composer, for the concert. The student loves translating complex human emotions into something more digestible and understandable through singing.

“It’s so fun to take something so incredibly tragic, I don’t know why because it’s so macabre. One of my favourite things about music is that

you can take these insanely hard to express emotions, these super raw, deep, animalistic feelings, and express them in a way that makes sense to you,” says Karakas. “I can take these other [works] and then interpret them in a way that is really emotional and deep. It really helps me work through some things, and that’s what I really love about singing.”

Karakas is the only vocalist in the concert; all the others play instruments, such as flute and violin. They’ve been preparing for weeks leading to the concert, including special rehearsals with a

full orchestra and guidance from the Conservatory staff.

“I’m very excited to see everyone else perform because as a vocalist I don’t really have much familiarity with the more instrumental stuff. I’ve been hearing a bit of it, and it’s so cool because we have some really young performers who are insanely talented, and getting to listen to their work is something I’m really excited about,” says Karakas.

Spark to Flame gives an opportunity for the next generation of musicians to showcase their talents in front of a large audience.

“It’s going to be so cool to see different community members, because these are future professional

musicians,” says Karakas. “These are young students and it’s going to be really cool to see, and to help fundraise for the Conservatory. It’ll be super fun to experience something kinda different because I know a lot of people aren’t familiar with classical music and there’s a huge variety [of performances], and I think it’ll be pretty cool.”

Spark to Flame
7:30 pm Saturday, February 21
\$20, Alix Goolden
Performance Hall
vcm.bc.ca

music

Pacific Baroque Festival 2026 to focus on Spanish connections

“There is a core of people who have been exposed to [baroque music] in the right way, who fall in love with it—and once you’ve fallen in love with it, people keep coming back to it.”

LUCAS HARRIS
MUSICIAN

LANE CHEVRIER
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Back for its 22nd season, the Pacific Baroque Festival focuses this time around on Spanish influences. This collaboration between The Victoria Conservatory of Music and Christ Church Cathedral invites audiences to explore the rich and diverse sound world of baroque Spain, where the popular influences of Italian and French musical culture blend with Iberian traditions to create a distinct musical heritage.

Baroque specialist Lucas Harris, who will be playing several instruments at the festival, says that Spanish music is unique.

“Spanish music—just like Spanish art, Spanish cuisine—it really has a flavour of its own,” says Harris. “It’s just great to hear music in the Spanish language from that time, you know, in terms of vocal music, but also the instru-

mental music has a slightly different structure.”

Harris points out that for about 800 years, Spain was under Muslim rule, and that this influence comes across in the art and the music.

“When you go into a Spanish cathedral, you see these certain kind of geometric patterns in the artwork and so forth that make you think of Arabic or Islamic art,” he says. “And I think you find that in the music too. There’s a certain kind of seriousness to it, a certain kind of symmetry or balance to it. It just kind of seems to have a flavour of its own. It comes out in small details.”

While classical music isn’t as popular now as it was a few centuries ago, Harris believes that there’s still a dedicated following that continues to live on and find new members.

“If you look at it from the point of view of society as a whole, cer-

tainly there are lots of people who don’t necessarily have playlists of baroque or renaissance or medieval music,” he says. “But there is a core of people who have been exposed to it in the right way, who fall in love with it—and once you’ve fallen in love with it, people keep coming back to it.”

The difference between music from the classical era and modern music is that modern music tends to be about specific recorded performances from individual artists, whereas in the classical era, recording technology didn’t exist, so the music had to be written in a way that was timeless and could be performed by anyone.

“There was a little bit more emphasis on the composer—the way the music comes to us, it’s always the composer’s name comes first rather than the performer,” Harris says. “I kind of doubt that in 400 years people are going to be listening to our music. It’s, a lot of it, about the [artist’s] personality, and do you think certain Prince songs—how would they really be the same if it weren’t Prince singing them?”

Harris thinks that the festival is worth attending because of the richness of the music on offer, and that while this style of music is a little bit different than a lot of well-known classical, it has a distinct beauty.

“You’re going to hear an incredibly diverse collection of music that



PHOTO PROVIDED

Baroque specialist Lucas Harris will be performing at the Pacific Baroque Festival.

spans the gamut from gentle and ethereal and floating to rhythmically driven and injected with dance-music energy,” says Harris. “You’re going to end up being educated too about a whole area of baroque music that’s not as well known as your Vivaldi and Bach and Handel. And the music is really of good quality and deserves to be heard. Anybody that knows the festival is

going to trust that they’re going to hear something that’s really worth coming to.”

The Pacific Baroque Festival
Wednesday, February 25
to Sunday, March 1
Various times, venues,
and prices
pacbaroque.com

music

Showtune Piano Bar Cabaret coming to Hermann’s Jazz Club



CHRISTIAN TISDALE

A Canadian College of Performing Arts student performing at a previous event.

LANE CHEVRIER
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

For those who appreciate live music with a classic feel, Hermann’s Jazz Club will be featuring Showtune Piano Bar Cabaret later this month. This will be performed by the Diploma Year II and Certificate students from the Canadian College

of Performing Arts (CCPA), and presented by the Canadian Heritage Arts Society. However, there will be more on offer than just the jazz the club name brings to mind.

“It’s sort of more show tunes than strictly jazz. There’ll be a real mix of music from Golden Age to all Broadway, classic, and con-

temporary,” says CCPA managing director Erin Gavaghan, who adds that students have the opportunity to provide suggestions on what pieces are performed. “It’s quite a collaborative element. And it’s quite good fun for them to be able to experiment and choose something that might not have come up in one of their shows or classes, but actually that they want to develop as part of their own personal repertoire.”

The event is a part of the curriculum for graduating students at CCPA to help them become more familiar with working and performing in a live venue, says Gavaghan.

“We work in an incredibly demanding industry and we want to equip our diploma students with a wide variety of skills to take into live performance after they graduate,” she says. “We want to give them the opportunity to perform in a few different venues, and in particular to have the experience of working in a professional venue, which Hermann’s is—a really nice, unique setting.”

Gavaghan says that while CCPA students sometimes work and play

in larger venues like the McPherson Playhouse, performing at local music venues gives a more intimate feel, and this resonates with audience members.

“We take them into a venue that has a different feel to a traditional theatre and give them the experience of being able to perform and connect to an audience in that setting,” says Gavaghan. “In previous years we’ve had smaller local venues, and they keep being so popular that we can’t quite put the tickets on sale. So we decided to take the leap and go for Hermann’s this year so that we could actually reach more audience members.”

Live performance provides a more energetic feel, says Gavaghan, which allows students to have a sort of dialogue with a live audience while they’re performing, which creates a give-and-take experience.

“I’m a big proponent of live music and performance whenever possible, because I think it is a really unique thing that enables us to connect emotionally to the work in a much more profound way,” says Gavaghan. “There’s a feeling of being in the room, and the collective

experience that you share when you’re in an audience, that is never quite captured the same way in a recording. That’s why you can come and see things more than once.”

The Showtune Piano Bar Cabaret will be performing on two evenings (February 12 and 19), and each performance will be unique, with different students and a different lineup. Gavaghan thinks that fans of live music will be delighted by the events, and says that sometimes a simple live show in an inviting venue is the perfect thing for a winter night.

“It’s a really charming and delightful way to spend a dark February evening,” she says. “It’s an evening in which everyone seems to always leave with a smile on their face. And I feel like an evening that leaves you uplifted is something that should be treasured, particularly in the darkest of winter.”

The Showtune Piano Bar Cabaret
7 pm Thursday, February 19
\$30, Hermann’s Jazz Club
ccpacanada.com

review

I Love You, You’re Perfect, Now Change cynical, outdated



KATHY MACOVICHUK

A scene from *And Now the Parents*, one of the short vignettes that makes up *I Love You, You’re Perfect, Now Change*.

ASHLEY HAGEL
STUDENT EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

I Love You, You’re Perfect, Now Change offers a remarkably cynical outlook on romance while simultaneously failing to say anything meaningful about it. The musical, which made its off-Broadway debut nearly 30 years ago, wrapped up its run at Langham Court Theatre on February 8. While audiences

seemed pleased, I couldn’t help but marvel at just how terribly this production, which is made up of short vignettes, has aged.

The opening number, “Prologue / Cantata for a First Date,” garnered in me an early sense of hope. The musical introduces a pseudo-creation story centred entirely around the dating game, drawing attention

to the ritualistic nature of our romantic escapades. It was effective and comedic, and I found myself instantly looking forward to the remainder of the show. However, by the time two actors had entered the stage dressed like stereotypical nerds, complaining about being unattractive, that feeling began to dissolve.

The music was enjoyable and the vocal performances were mostly consistent. But, as this musical shows us, you cannot have your cake and eat it too. The lyrical content left something to be desired at almost every turn.

Honestly, were it not for the standout performances from Evan Roberts and Kait Regier, I’m not so sure this show would have been half as enjoyable as it was.

Roberts’ natural charisma breathed so much life into this production, and it was clear just how comfortable and confident he was up on that stage.

The show’s overall writing struck me as dated and stale, providing a theatre-going experience which felt strangely akin to being cornered by your newly divorced aunt at a holiday party. Although, in fairness, I can’t imagine it was too terribly easy to adapt a show about modern love when it was written three decades ago.

Despite this, there were moments of strength, including some strangely effective prop comedy, beautiful set design, and the occasional heartfelt scene.

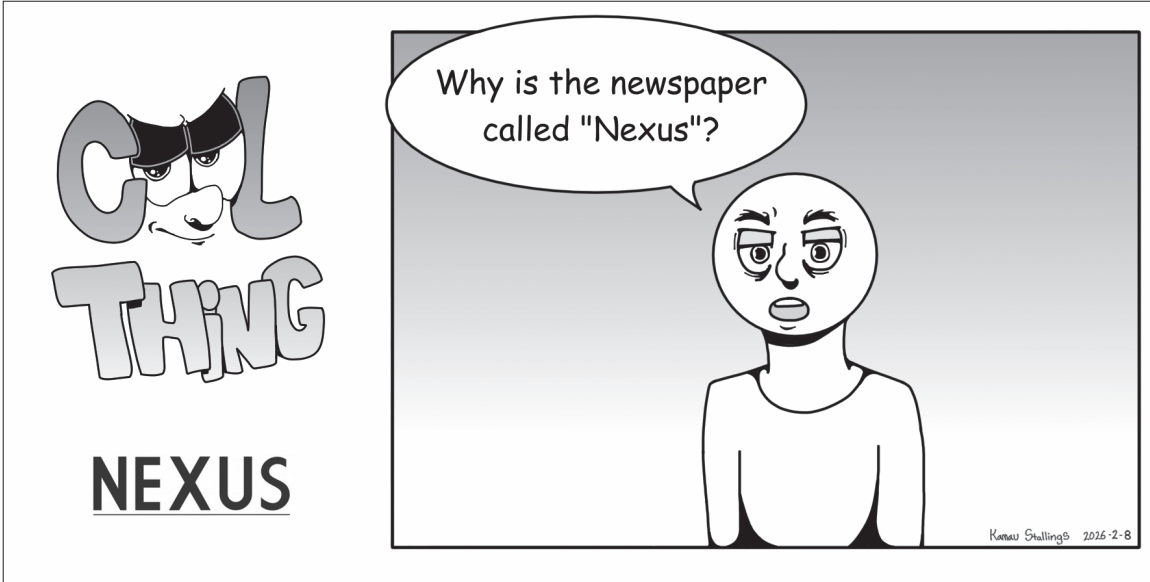
A good example of this is near the end of the show, during the song

“I Can Live With That,” where two elderly individuals flirt with each other at a funeral. Throughout the scene, these characters explore the complicated nature of getting involved with someone else after the love of your life has died. It was heartbreaking and heartwarming all at once. I strongly believe this was the best part of the show, as it managed to accomplish everything that the rest of the production couldn’t: presenting the nuances of romantic love in a human light, with compassion and humour.

There is one lyric in that song that stuck with me: “One day, we’ll die/Today, we’ll live.” And this sentiment, I feel, should have been the crux of this production—give as much love as you can to the people around you, because one day, you won’t get the chance to.

Unfortunately, that is not what this musical chose to do. Every other song—every other scene—felt jaded, bitter, and awkward to watch. I’d consider this the perfect show for anyone who’s had their heart broken and sadistically wants to relive the experience with an outdated soundtrack. Although, if you’re unhappily married, you’ll likely enjoy this all the same.

Cool Thing - Kamau Stallings



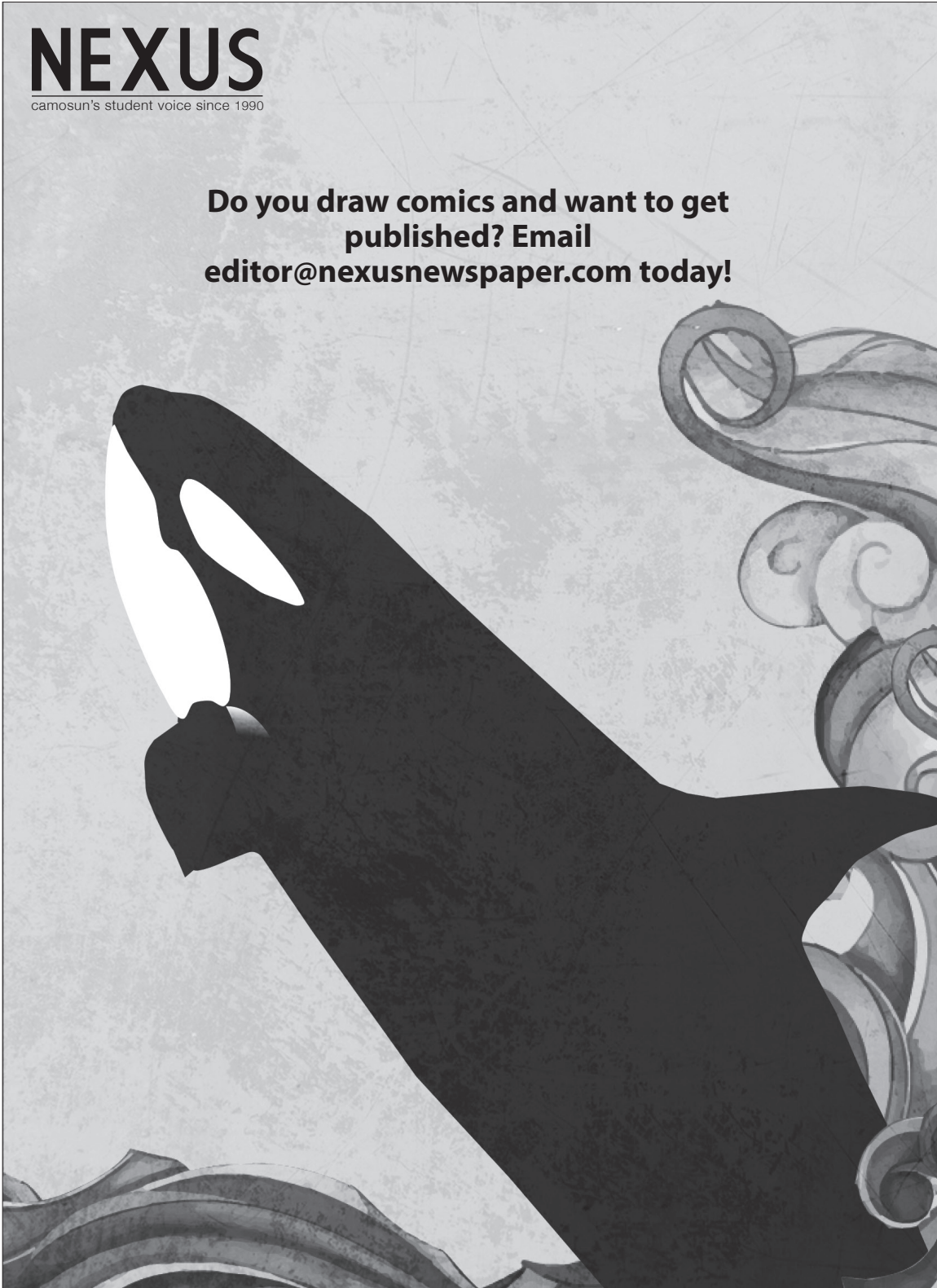
mr. andy - Sofie Mott



Evie the Alien - Jazmyn Hodges



Telescopic Penguins - Michael Erwin




Wild World of Wendland - Huxley Wendland



Camosun students!

Look for our next print issue on stands Wednesday, March 4!



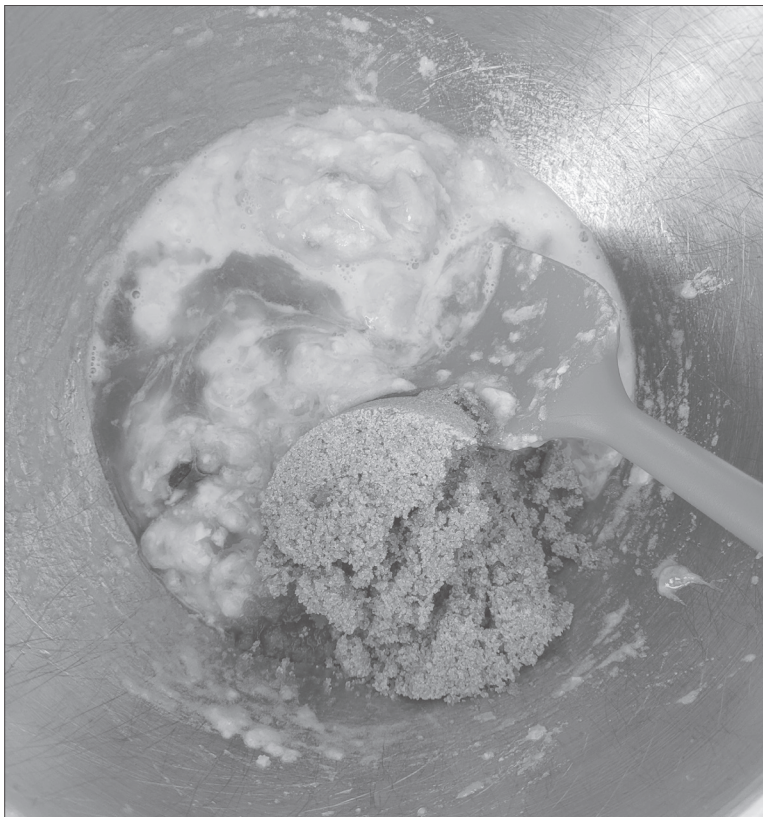
Trill's Recipes

by Trillium McNabb

Banana bread

Banana bread is very straightforward but also customizable with what fillings you can add. I personally recommend nuts or chocolate chips—if you're feeling fancy, use both.

- Ingredients:
- 3-4 ripe bananas
 - 1/4 cup melted butter
 - 1 cup sugar
 - 1 beaten egg
 - 1 tbs vanilla extract
 - 1 tsp baking soda
 - 1 1/2 cups flour
 - Pinch of salt
 - Cooking oil spray
 - Optional: 1 1/2 cups chocolate chips or chopped nuts
- Don't throw away your browning bananas—save them in the freezer to have a tasty treat for later.
- I made this recipe with my mom as a kid all the time. Even though bananas are not my favourite fruit, I couldn't resist this delicious snack. Banana bread is very straightforward but also customizable with what fillings you



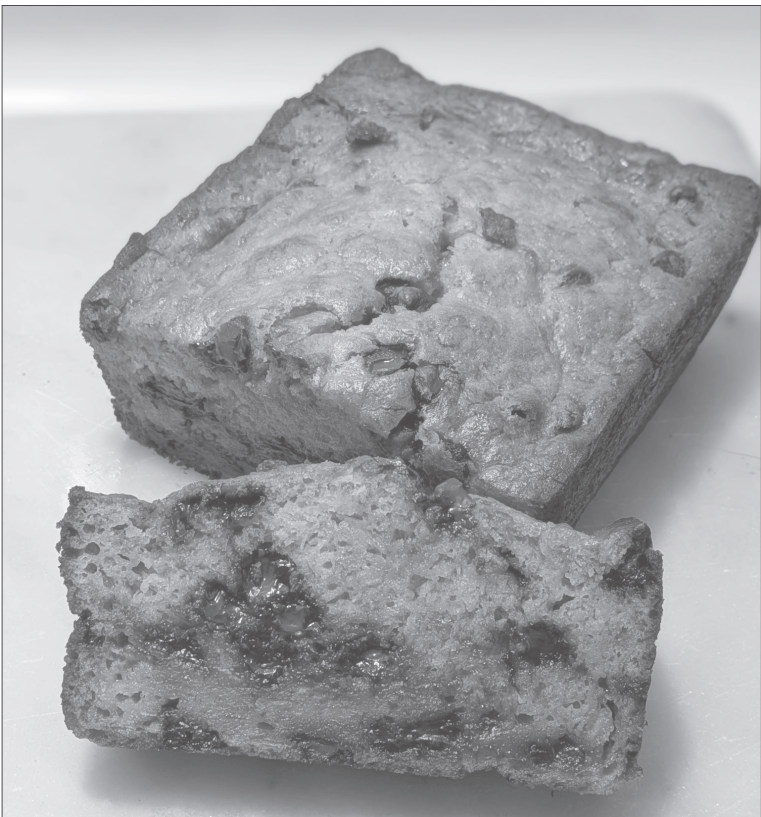
can add. I personally recommend nuts or chocolate chips—if you're feeling fancy, use both.

Pre heat your oven to 350 F. In a large bowl mash up your ripe bananas, then mix in with the butter, vanilla, and beaten egg. Then add in the baking soda and salt, and mix thoroughly. Add the flour in parts, mixing between each addition. Put in the chocolate chips and give the batter one final mix. The batter should look loose, but not runny.

Grease a loaf pan with a small

nob of butter or with oil spray. Pour the batter into the loaf pan; it should fill about two-thirds of the pan. Bake for one hour, checking with a toothpick or wooden chopstick to see if it comes out clean; when it does, take the pan out of the oven to let it cool for a while. Take the loaf out of the pan and let cool the rest of the way on a rack. Once cooled, it's ready to enjoy.

If you are using frozen bananas let them thaw completely in a ceramic or glass bowl. Do not use a



PHOTOS BY TRILLIUM MCNABB/NEXUS

Banana bread is an easy, and delicious, way to use those old, browning bananas.

stainless steel bowl, as they hold on to the cold, making the bananas thaw slower. When the bananas are thawed, don't peel them—cut the stem off with scissors. Then squeeze the fruit out like a yogurt tube. This process is the most unpleasant part of making banana bread; I recommend using gloves. Or you can use yellow bananas, but they don't have as much flavour power compared to the brown ones.

This recipe takes a long time to bake. The batter has a high moisture content, so to prevent burned sides with a liquid middle, it's cooked at a lower temperature. This type of bread is closer to cake texture than it is to normal bread. It can be cut into when it's still warm, and it won't affect the texture of the whole loaf. I like to put a small amount of butter on my slice and heat it up in the microwave.

Message from your student board

There's something powerful—almost electric—about students showing up together. In that moment, it wasn't about one campus or one issue. It was about collective frustration turning into collective action.



“Our education is under attack—what do we do? STAND UP, FIGHT BACK!”

“What do we want? MORE FUNDING! When do we want it? RIGHT NOW!”

Weeks have passed since those chants echoed through the Vancouver Public Library plaza, but the feeling hasn't faded. If anything, it still sends chills down my spine.

Hundreds of student leaders, representing more than 15 post-secondary institutions across British Columbia, gathered in solidarity to send a clear message to the provincial government: reinvest in post-secondary education. Students are stretched thin, institutions are underfunded, and silence is no longer an option.

There's something powerful—almost electric—about students showing up together. In that moment, it wasn't about one campus or one issue. It was about collective frustration turning into collective action. We were loud, visible, and impossible to ignore. Media attention followed, passersby stopped to listen, and for a few hours, student concerns took up space in the public conversation where they belong.

That same weekend, our CCSS team also attended the BC Federation of Students' annual general meeting. It was a chance to pause and reflect on a year of advocacy; what we pushed for, what we learned, and what still needs to change. Just as importantly, it was where we set our priorities for the year ahead, recommitting our-

selves to fighting for accessible, affordable, and properly funded education.

The AGM was also a moment of continuity and trust. The

federation re-elected chairperson Debi Herrera-Lira from Douglas College and secretary-treasurer Cole Reinboldt from Vancouver Island University, affirming confidence in their leadership to carry this work forward.

For the CCSS, this weekend carried extra weight. We put forward one candidate for director-at-large: me! I'm incredibly grateful to have been elected to this role and to step into the next chapter of my advocacy journey.

This position means my responsibility now extends beyond the 9,000 students at Camosun College to the more than 170,000 students represented by the Federation. I take that on as both a privilege and a responsibility. A privilege to have a platform where my voice, and our collective student voice, can be heard, and a responsibility to ensure student interests are always front and centre in the decisions we push for.

This also matters for you. With another seat at the Federation's executive table, Camosun students gain stronger representation in provincial advocacy spaces. More voices. More perspective. More power.

Because when students stand together, we don't just chant—we shape the future of education.

In solidarity,
Terence Baluyut
CCSS external executive

eyed on campus

Iftar event returns to campus



PHOTO PROVIDED

The Camosun Muslim Students Alliance and the Camosun College Student Society will be holding an Iftar event at 5:30 pm on Friday, February 27 in the Wilna Thomas Building. Pictured above is the student Iftar from last year, which was also held at the Lansdowne campus.

contest

Find the hidden *Nexus* and win



GREG PRATT/NEXUS

We've hidden this copy of our last issue somewhere at the Lansdowne campus. Bring it in to our office to claim a prize from contest sponsor Arsenal Pulp Press, who have donated an assortment of books for you to choose from. *Nexus* HQ is located at Richmond House 201 at Lansdowne.

word search

R	U	J	B	B	U	T	S	M	Z	Y	I	Q	C	R
K	S	H	Y	C	Y	P	R	L	X	J	H	X	T	K
Z	G	K	V	O	L	S	L	I	O	Z	K	S	O	N
K	D	F	T	N	E	W	C	V	V	V	Z	B	O	O
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A	J	P	T	I	N	N	J	W	F	U	B	T	O	L
X	O	J	F	U	T	P	S	H	S	Z	O	U	B	X

The Camosun College Student Society is bringing bingo and trivia to campus. See the story on page 4; find the words in the story to the right above.

Competitive Learning
Lovely Connections
Connect

Bingo Knowledge
Campus Trivia
Fun