

# NEXUS

CAMOSUN'S STUDENT VOICE SINCE 1990

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# NEXUS

camosun's student voice since 1990

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OVERHEARD AT NEXUS: "I will always kiss your fish pants."

COVER ILLUSTRATION: Sebastien Sunstrum

## SPEAK UP

How do you feel about the Canadian Federation of Students expelling the Camosun College Student Society?

BY ADAM MARSH



**MICHAEL SANTAROSSA**

"It seems like there was no other option for them to leave. I guess they got what they wanted by leaving in at least some way. I hope that this is only a minor setback when it comes to rallying for a decrease in student debt and such."



**FAERY CHOQUETTE**

"It doesn't sound like a bad thing; it sounds like it was kind of what was trying to happen in the first place."



**STEFAN ZHEUNG**

"I think we should have a system to monitor these organizations... We don't know where the money is going."



**RACHEL SPENCER**

"I'm not too pleased, I have to say. Every [post-] secondary education student should get every opportunity available to them."



**MATT MOODYCLIFFE**

"It's kind of weird that they would just straight-up do that. As far as what can be done for it, what is there that can be done, really? I guess it's just the way it is, but that is unfortunate."



**LIEZEL PASCUAL**

"The only concern is not being able to hear the voice of students in Camosun itself. Being able to voice out concerns of the students is a really big thing."

## student editor's letter

### The value of empathy

It's a strange feeling to piece together a time in your life you can't remember all that well. And by "all that well," I mean there is, literally, a three-year period in my life that is a massive blur to me.

It's quite cliché, really—Keith Richards; Slash; a friend's dad, perhaps? We all know, to some extent, what alcoholism looks like. But there are things no one ever says about it. Things you don't see from your friend's dad, things you don't see in the movies. And they aren't pretty.

I may have forgotten some experiences, but I haven't forgotten any of the feelings that went along with those experiences or the look of absolute despair in the eyes of loved ones as they watched.

I've always been a writer, but the idea that alcohol seems to go with writing like peanut butter goes with jam is a fallacy; while it might have worked for Ernest Hemingway right up until he blew his brains out with a shotgun (which is a pretty good indication that it didn't actually work at all), it never allowed me to write or do anything in my life that well.

It was a strange experience to write the feature story this issue (see page 6). It felt like I was writing about someone else—a life that wasn't mine and never was. When I look in the mirror today, it's really hard imagining the face staring back at me doing the things I did, and treating people the way I did. But I did. And not forgetting but also not dwelling is the name of the game. My life has changed in both minute and colossal ways. I eat three meals a day. I brush my teeth twice a day. Hell, I'm even hanging out with my 13-year-old cousin a few days a week this summer. Why? Because I'm healthy. My aunt and uncle trust me with their kid.

But it wasn't that long ago that that wasn't the case; some nights it still feels like yesterday that I watched people pile on the bus and choose to stand up rather than sit beside me because I just had that smell, that look, of someone who was messed right up. So, after reading the feature this issue, do me one favour: if you see someone looking like that, ask yourself what you would want if you were them. Say hi. They might be annoying and tough to follow, but that's not the point. They probably won't bite, and odds are they're having a tough go of it.

Adam Marsh, student editor  
adam@nexusnewspaper.com

## 25 Years Ago in Nexus returns in September



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## open space

### It's time to look at death in a more positive light

**TRULY HUNTER**  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

If it wasn't for death, life would be insignificant. Without the pressure of impending death, what sense of immediacy would we have in our goals and dreams for the future? We would have forever to complete them; as creatures drawn to leisure, we wouldn't complete much at all.

If it wasn't for death, no life would be able to exist. Death makes room for new things to grow. A world where no one and nothing ever died would be a terrifying place.

Despite these facts, the finality and ultimate mystery of death still shakes us to our core; many of us yearn for everlasting youth and immortality. We try to deny our own mortality through anti-aging products, we keep death under a mysterious curtain when a loved one passes, and, ultimately, we live in fear of the day our own lives will end. Still, death is an unavoidable part of life.

Throughout human history, our species has had a deep, close relationship with death. This relationship once allowed us to confront and accept our own mortality as an integral part of our experience. Now, ironically, with the modern world in death-denial mode, we let the life we're clinging to slip through our fingers as we waste our lives being afraid of death.

Many of us spend time thinking about growing old and dying. I recently spoke to friends, read studies, and attempted to discover what frightens people most about death. Generally, people are not thinking about how wonderful it will be to get old or what they want for themselves after death. The idea of becoming "ugly" with age or leaving behind unfinished business are the

most common fears of old age and death I have encountered. These fears are so common and pervasive that many people use up the little time they have on Earth being afraid of them. They question their goals, asking if they're worth the risk, and waste their potential by stopping before they ever get started, scared stiff by the what-ifs until they've become dead on their feet.

Some say fear of death is normal. Survival instinct is a necessary part of life—it keeps us alive. That's true, but survival instinct isn't what I'm warning against. I'm not telling you to be reckless so you can show you're not afraid to die. Respect for death goes hand in hand with acceptance. You don't need to be reckless in order to die; death comes for us all in time. Instead, I warn against spending life protecting yourself from an inevitability only to lose out on the one thing you've been trying to protect.

The fear of our own mortality has taken days, if not weeks, from each of us. We didn't take the trips, learn the skills, do the things that made us feel alive. But what if, like our ancestors, we spent time with death and appreciated it as a part of our natural cycle?

If we demystify death, it will encourage us to live fuller lives. Time spent worrying about what might happen will be replaced with experiences that change a boring existence of mere survival into one with a deep fulfillment of dreams and growth of vitality.

Nothing can change the unavoidable certainty of death—don't waste your time.

Take the trip, go skydiving, learn to be get old or what they want for themselves after death. The idea of becoming "ugly" with age or leaving behind unfinished business are the

## letters

### The failure of opinion pieces

Really, *Nexus*? I'm shocked that this was allowed by your editors ("Open Space: The failure of feminism," June 13, 2018 issue). Why not help educate this poor woman before allowing her ignorant and misinformed opinion to irritate any other readers? I won't waste my time dissecting this (because this lame argument happens every minute on the internet) but please, Cindy, do some research into what feminism actually is before you start saying it has somehow failed. Your misunderstanding only holds everyone back because opinions like this allow for continued misinformation to spread. This just weakens everyone.

**TONY CLIFTON**  
VIA NEXUSNEWSPAPER.COM

## funding

# Camosun gets funding to assist students with disabilities

"At the end of the day, if you're creating more programs and you're increasing the accessibility of the college, there isn't really a way to go wrong with that."

**ELEANOR VANNAN**  
CAMOSUN COLLEGE STUDENT SOCIETY



KATY WEICKER/NEXUS

The provincial government recently announced that Camosun will get \$75,000 for programs for students with disabilities.

Yates says the \$75,000 won't cover the entire cost of the program, which will teach students how to look for a job, what skills need to be developed to work with employers, and how to dress for work.

"Some basic elements around job readiness is what we're going for," says Yates.

Yates wants to give students the knowledge and confidence so that they can go out, with support, and find work.

"How you work with your supervisor, how you get paid, all those kind of job-seeking 101s that, if you've had a couple of jobs, you will have learnt them," she says.

Yates says that various Camosun College departments will be working together on the program for now.

"We'll be working with a couple of programs and just a small number of students to begin with. We will be working very carefully with those students to assess how the program

works and what we could do better," says Yates.

Yates says that she would love for the program to expand if it works out, but for now the college will make sure career servicing and coaching is aligned with existing Camosun programs.

"I'd like to see a program that applied to students across the college that isn't necessarily discipline specific, but provides some good, high-level 'This is what you need to know to get a job,'" says Yates.

Camosun second-year Practical Nursing student Jeremy Hudson says a job skills training program seems like a good use of the grant money.

"I don't know much about how exactly the money's being spent," he says, "but it seems like an effective use of resources."

Rachel Chan, who is also a second-year Practical Nursing student, thinks it's great that Camosun is giving opportunities to people

who might not normally get them, although she has some concerns.

"I do feel like [people with] a mental disability kind of need a separate course to do things than people with a physical disability," she says. "Especially people with a learning disability; they might need extra resources; they might need extra instructions about how to do stuff like writing a resume than people who have physical disabilities that don't really need the extra layer of the instructions that people with a learning disability might."

Vannan says it would make sense to build on existing programs "and get a larger reach and benefit more people."

"At the end of the day, if you're creating more programs and you're increasing the accessibility of the college, there isn't really a way to go wrong with that," she says.

The program is still in its early planning stages and will be implemented sometime this year.

## NEWS BRIEFS

### Former Camosun instructor and bank robber dies

Stephen Reid, a writer and bank robber who taught creative writing at Camosun in the late '90s, died on Tuesday, June 12. He was 68. His wife, local poet Susan Musgrave, said in a statement that Reid passed away from a lung infection and congestive heart failure. Reid is survived by his wife, daughters, and granddaughters.

### Camosun students receive awards at grad ceremony

Camosun recently awarded students at this year's graduation ceremony, held in June. This year's Distinguished Alumni Award—

given to someone who graduated Camosun more than 10 years ago and has demonstrated excellence in their field ever since—went to Grace Salez, who has a diploma in Visual Arts. The Promising Alumni Award—recognizing graduates from the last 10 years—went to Don Kattler, who has a certificate in Mental Health and Addictions. The Governor General's Collegiate Bronze Academic Medal, which recognizes the top academic graduate from a program that is two years or longer, went to eight students: Arianne O'Hara, who has a diploma in Arts and Science Studies; Miesha Kowak, who has a diploma in Business Administration with a focus on accounting and finance; Robert Downs, who has a diploma in Civil Engineering Technology; Junmin Ahn and Luke Mitchell, who have

diplomas in Computer Systems Technology; Shaun McGuigan, who has a diploma in Electronics and Computer Engineering Technology with a focus on renewable energy; Tristan Tarnowski, who has a diploma in Mechanical Engineering Technology; and Solena Lewis, who has a diploma in Medical Radiography.

### Camosun partners with Nova Scotia college

Camosun has partnered with Nova Scotia Community College to work together in mutually beneficial areas, such as the marine sector. A memorandum of understanding was recently signed to solidify the decision. The two colleges will collaborate on workforce development,

such as the sharing of curriculum that supports the provincial and national marine and ocean interests.

### New tech talent showed off at Camosun

Camosun's Information and Computer Systems (ICS) students strutted their stuff at the ICS Capstone Symposium on June 18 at the Inn at Laurel Point. The projects included a smart controller, which is a temperature control system designed to keep an eye on fermentation temperatures, and the app Project SMILE, which was made with the intention of boosting reading skills in children with non-verbal autism.

### Canadian Federation of Students rejects motion to simplify decertification process

The Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) recently rejected a motion put forth at their National General Meeting (NGM) to simplify their process for allowing member locals to decertify. The NGM was held in Gatineau, Quebec from June 9 to 12; at the NGM, Camosun students, who had been members of the CFS since 1992, were expelled from the national organization as a result of ongoing conflicts between BC member locals and the CFS. Camosun students are currently not in a national student organization.

**-ADAM MARSH**  
GOT A NEWS TIP? EMAIL  
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college

## Camosun's Fine Furniture program celebrates 30 years with new exhibit



CAMOSUN COLLEGE A/V SERVICES

Camosun 2018 grad Calvin Sytsma's chair is on display in *Making It*.

**KATY WEICKER**  
STAFF WRITER

When Ken Guenter and Cam Russell retired from Camosun in June of 2017, it was the end of an era for the college's Fine Furniture program. Russell had spent 30 years crafting the program, with Guenter by his side for the final 17. A year (and an adjustment period) later, the two are collaborating again to

organize *Making It: A 30 Year Retrospective Celebration of Camosun College's Fine Furniture Program*, a celebration of the program that was such a huge part of their lives for so many years.

"Five days a week from eight in the morning until four in the afternoon," recalls Guenter of the 10-month program. "We got to know our students pretty well."

While Guenter admits it was a little odd at first having both himself and Russell step away from the program simultaneously, he found the transition from teaching to be natural.

"I left teaching and went back into my own studio," says Guenter. "About 15 minutes ago I was busy oiling some stools I've been making for the exhibition coming up. So I'm back in my own studio building again, as is Cam, as well. We both went back into our own studios, doing what we were doing many years ago."

This exhibition is the latest project Guenter and Russell have worked on after collaborating on a number of curatorial projects and exhibitions over the years, in addition to sharing the their teaching history. *Making It* showcases the work of graduates spanning from the beginning of the program to the latest grad class. "Chairs" is a theme that has been used consistently as a final project for Fine Furniture students over the years, so when Russell and Guenter decided to launch this exhibition, adopting this theme yet again seemed like a no-brainer. The two set out with the goal of trying to get someone from each graduating class to build some form of seating.

According to Guenter, they weren't quite able to achieve that goal, as a lot of the graduates of the program have gone on to do other things outside of woodworking; however, by doubling up on a

couple graduating classes, as well as contributing pieces themselves, Guenter and Russell have been able to secure almost 40 chairs. Current Fine Furniture instructors—including program graduate turned program leader Sandra Carr and tool room attendant Nathan Holder—have also contributed work to the exhibition.

With so many talented graduates out there, Guenter admits that creating the roster was one of the toughest things they had to do. "How do you decide? We couldn't invite everyone, that was almost 500 people," he says. "We didn't have room for almost 500, so we had to come up with some sort of criteria."

Since the program hands out a number of awards every year, including one for top student and one for top design, the logical choice was to extend an invitation to the recipients of those accolades.

"We were pretty much looking for people who had won one or the other of those awards during the year," Guenter explains. "They had proven themselves to be students who had excelled in the program."

One of those students is 2018 grad Calvin Sytsma, who was announced as the winner of the current graduating class' chair competition, giving him the opportunity to join the retrospective.

"I was very shocked about winning," says Sytsma. "And I was very excited that my chair would be going in the exhibition."

Sytsma says that his chair—named "Solid Flexibility"—is made of a solid piece of wood that is cut to flex when sat on, giving it ingenuity and a wow factor that landed him in the exhibition.

For Guenter, seeing all these pieces together is one of the things that he's most proud of when he reflects on his time at Camosun.

"When you go to an exhibition, and some of your graduates are at the exhibition, and the work they do is so amazing, and so much better than anything you've done, that's pretty exciting," Guenter says with a laugh.

Guenter says that having students become the masters happens all the time. "We have graduates that come out of the program who have excelled and who are amazing at what they do," he says.

And when those students become successes in the industry, Guenter is rewarded doubly.

"Cam and I always say one of our favourite things is when graduates get a hold of us because they need to hire people. That idea of graduates hiring graduates is something we've always been very proud of."

**Making It: A 30 Year Retrospective Celebration of Camosun College's Fine Furniture Program**  
Various times and days,  
Saturday, July 14 to Saturday,  
September 22  
Free, Legacy Downtown  
(630 Yates Street)  
uvac.uvic.ca

know your profs

## Camosun's Michael Stewart on prepping for class and enjoying good beer

**KATY WEICKER**  
STAFF WRITER

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

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

This issue we talked to English instructor Michael Stewart about his hopes for his students, his love of sourdough bread, and his bone to pick with Netflix.

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

I started teaching English literature and academic writing at Camosun in February of 2017. So I'm quite new!

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

So many things. It's wonderful to introduce curious people to new books (or new ways of looking at familiar books), and I love helping people find their inner writer (and reader). English class is also



KATY WEICKER/NEXUS

Camosun College English instructor Michael Stewart.

a great place to think, talk, and write about new and difficult ideas, which should be part of any college program. Plus, I just love meeting Camosun students, who are so lovely, diverse, and engaged.

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

That I want them to succeed. Most teachers I know want that. We're not here to punish or scold

students, but to help them become better writers, readers, and thinkers. And that's good for everyone.

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

Er, my Twitter handle.

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

I haven't been around long, but over the last two terms, I had the

privilege of teaching students in the Indigenous Studies program, both writing and indigenous literature. Not only did I get to talk about my favourite books and writers to a bunch of wonderful, engaged students, I learned so much from my class. It was a perfect (or nearly perfect) experience.

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

As term faculty, I'd have to say the stress that follows and precedes every term. Since I and many of my colleagues are on contract, we get laid off at the end of each term, and sometimes don't know if we'll get hired back until the very last minute—even then, we can be given a class we've never taught before and need to spend every waking moment preparing for it. That said, my more established colleagues are pretty much the best people on Earth and bend over backwards to make sure contract faculty are supported emotionally and professionally.

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

What a question! I think I'll focus on what I'd like to see. Students are carrying record levels of unsustainable debt and, particularly in places like Victoria and Vancouver with low vacancy rates

and runaway housing costs, live increasingly precarious and challenging lives. I want to see more funding for tuition and cost-of-living allowances so that everyone who wants an education can get it. Not only do prospective students deserve it, we owe it to them.

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

I have two small children, so there's not a whole lot of relaxing going on in my home, but when I can, I love to tend my vegetable garden, bake sourdough bread, and go for hikes on this beautiful island of ours. Also beer. Delicious beer.

**9. What is your favourite meal?**

Too many to count, but it's hard to beat a piece of freshly caught salmon, rockfish, or halibut, and some garden-fresh potatoes and vegetables. Some wine would be nice, too.

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

I am very peevis, so this is a bad question for me. This is how people find out how small and petty I really can be. I guess as a parent of young children, my pet peeve is how unbelievably terrible kids' TV shows are. They are horrible, by any standard. How hard is it to make a good kids' show, Netflix?

chargers

## New Camosun golf coach Doug Hastie focuses on pressure training

**ADAM MARSH**  
STUDENT EDITOR



PHOTO PROVIDED

New Camosun Chargers golf program head coach Doug Hastie.

Doug Hastie has replaced John Randle as head coach of the Camosun Chargers golf program. Hastie, who was the assistant coach of the University of British Columbia (UBC) Thunderbirds in the past, feels that the psychological ups and downs of the sport are a metaphor for life.

"Golf duplicates life as much as any sport," he says. "You're going to have your ups and downs; you got to work through them. The downs just make the ups feel that much better. You get frustrated when you play bad, but that just means when you play well, it really feels good and you don't take it for granted."

Hastie knows that with golf, there are only certain things you can control.

"You try to stay away from what we call outcome goals—score and placing and all that kind of stuff. You try to focus on process goals, which is, what can you control? You can control how you think, you can control your pre-shot routine, you can control making decisions on the golf course," he says.

As far as the uncontrollable—bad bounces and course conditions—Hastie knows it's better to focus on what's possible to change. "I want to focus on short game and playing tactics, and hopefully get the team to push each other, and concentrate for that short season that we've got," he says.

Practicing being under pressure is important while playing at a competitive level for the six-week season. Tiger Woods' father jingled

"Golf duplicates life as much as any sport. You're going to have your ups and downs; you got to work through them. The downs just make the ups feel that much better. You get frustrated when you play bad, but that just means when you play well, it really feels good and you don't take it for granted."

**DOUG HASTIE**  
CAMOSUN CHARGERS

coins in his pocket as his son was putting to get him used to distractions; while Hastie hasn't gone that far, the players have consequences if they start to lose focus on the aspects of the game that are within their control.

"You don't do anything out of term," says Hastie. "You just play golf. That's the toughest thing to do sometimes."

When they're on the driving range, if the golfers hit two balls in a row without going through their usual pre-shot routine and aren't focusing on a specific target, they hit the ground.

"Whether it's to do some push-ups or sit-ups, whatever it is," says Hastie. "The goal on the range—especially right before a tournament—is simulating the golf course as much as you can, and trying to mentally put yourself in that situation on the first hole or 18th hole, whatever it is, and then hit the shot."

The players aren't just casually hitting balls when they're on the

range; that doesn't do any good at all, says Hastie.

"You change clubs between every ball, you change targets between every ball; you really try to put yourself in a pressure situation," he says. "You play some kind of pressure game against your buddies to try to push each other."

Camosun recreation and athletics coordinator Graham Matthews says Hastie's experience with UBC and with the golf industry in general made him a really good fit for the position.

"We're really excited and happy to have him on board," says Matthews. "He understands what a student athlete is all about: academics, plus the training, plus the competition and bringing all those qualities together. He just has a really good fit, I think, with coaching. We're looking forward to seeing how things open up for next year."

Team tryouts are Labour Day weekend; anyone interested in trying out can email Hastie at dhastiepga@gmail.com.

recap

## Canada closes Pacific Rim Basketball Classic in flying fashion

Canada's RJ Barrett answered the nation's questions about how he would adapt to the challenges of coming up against senior players in the Pacific Rim Basketball Classic.

**ADAM MARSH**  
STUDENT EDITOR

Canada's RJ Barrett answered the nation's questions about how he would adapt to the challenges of coming up against senior players in the Pacific Rim Basketball Classic (PRBC). The six-foot-seven Mississauga, Ontario athlete earned Player of the Game on Sunday, June 24 at Save-on-Foods Memorial Centre, as he and the Canadian senior men's basketball team cruised to a 108-72 victory over China to finish up the PRBC.

Barrett—who is a favourite for the 2019 NBA draft—was a beast from behind the arc, finishing with 21 points at the final buzzer.

The crowd roared after a well-earned powerhouse dunk was slammed home in the second quarter, to which China responded with a swooshing three-pointer.

Chinese coach Feng Du and Canada's Anthony Bennett were both ejected from Friday's game in Vancouver; tempers were quick to spark again in Victoria after Canada took an 18-4 lead late in the first quarter, but no ejections were given.

Canada's Dwight Powell, who plays for the NBA's Dallas Mavericks, got better offensively as the game went on; he had a grand total of 18 points.

The Chinese found their court legs a bit early in the second, scoring



CANADA BASKETBALL

RJ Barrett during the Pacific Rim Basketball Classic in Victoria last month.

21 points in the frame, but Canada's fitness, quick movements, and calm ball handling prevailed as they led 49-25 at halftime. By the end of the third, Canada paved the way 75-47 in a quarter that was more

evenly matched than the others. China's Jing-Yu Li played very well in that quarter, as did Shi-Yan Gao and Qian Wu, who was awarded player of the game for China. Canada's Andrew Nembhard was a

force to be reckoned with, driving home 18 points total. China played catch-up all game; their occasional shows of strategic court movement and rhythm were too little too late against the Canadian team.

# Bottom of the barrel

One *Nexus* writer's account of the road from rehab to recovery

Story by Adam Marsh, student editor

Illustration by Sebastien Sunstrum, covers illustrator

There is no conflict in this world that compares to the hell of needing something you no longer want. I know this firsthand: while most of my friends went to post-secondary right after high school, I went to rehab.

Alcoholism is one of the slowest and most painful ways to die. Sometimes I stop dead in my tracks and catch myself staring at the beauty of recovery—cherry blossoms on the trees, waterlogged cigarette butts in a storm drain; it's all fucking beautiful—and think about the worst years of my addiction to booze and drugs, the years I learned to live with a constant bloating ache in my liver region as though someone was stabbing me with a machete from the inside out, then wringing my innards through a rusty workbench vice. I learned to survive without living, without existing. The confusion, the vertigo, the incessant full-body trembling, the insomnia—these are things no one tells you about abusing booze. You don't fall asleep; you pass out. The rest of the time you are dreadfully, awfully inebriated, confused and awake, sometimes for days—weeks—at a time.

## THE FIRST STEPS ON CAMPUS

The first time I set foot on Camosun's Lansdowne campus was a few months before I went to rehab. It was a hot summer day. The Fisher courtyard was vacant, as it often is in July and August. I was struck by the beauty of campus, drawn in by its elegant simplicity and small-town feel, and confused about where registration was. All I could think about was the sweat pouring from my body. I was worried someone was going to stop and ask me what was wrong. I was with my father; he went in to a building and told me to wait outside. As I slouched against Fisher in the relentless heat and tried to light a cigarette, the flame from my Zippo danced an SOS in shaking hands.

"You can't smoke here."

I looked up, sun burning swollen, heavy eyes.

A security guard's shadow was a relief from the hot sun. Part of the confusion is huge lapses in time. Anyone who has been hammered at a bar on a Friday knows this, but when you've been fucked for over a year straight, without a day sober, 10 minutes can easily be confused for a few

The first time I set foot on Camosun's Lansdowne campus was a few months before I went to rehab. It was a hot summer day. The Fisher courtyard was vacant, as it often is in summer. I was struck by the beauty of campus, drawn in by its elegant simplicity and small-town feel, and confused about where registration was.

Before I get further into this, make no mistake about it: there is nothing glorious about this. It's not a rock-star war story. It's the story of how close I came to being an average homeless person pushing a shopping cart down Pandora Avenue and begging for your change. More importantly, it's how I learned the value of my human shortcomings, how to harness my own flaws into something the world needs, not something everyone—myself included—resents.

## "YOU GOTTA STOP THIS SHIT, MAN."

As a kid, I remember questioning everything about the world, thinking too much, and being chronically unhappy with who I was. Our culture taught me what it taught everyone else: to look outside to fix what lies within.

Everyone else seemed to get tired after a few drinks. For me, those first few lit a crackling fire through poisoned blood and made me feel I was someone else entirely, someone who—if the night stopped there—I wanted to be. But it never did stop there.

I don't remember signing up for Camosun. I remember reading an acceptance letter, but I have no memory of signing up. I think a teacher from high school helped with that. I wrote my provincial English exam hung over and high on MDMA and marijuana (somehow, I still passed that exam); I spent most of my senior year in the bathroom puking or drinking, not matriculating. I smoked dope at the reservoir on Mt. Tolmie, and would zip downtown on the bus during lunch hours to score. One day, after a dealer refused to hand over a skimpy pathetic excuse for a gram and pointed a knife at my bloated gut, I came up with some safer ways of getting my shit.

It's exhausting to have to go meet the dealers, go through all the bullshit, and pray you don't get ripped off, robbed, or beaten up. It's a dangerous way to live, but I only ever feared for my immediate safety once or twice. It's a peculiar kind of sneaky, cunning hell that I don't wish on anyone. More as a defence mechanism than anything, I convinced myself that I was pals with these people who wanted my money. One guy, Brandon, was different.

Brandon was a good guy, but he introduced me to hard drugs. He was also the one who urged me to stop. He slept with socks on his hands and had scars everywhere from picking his flesh when he was high.

"You gotta stop this shit, man," he told me, as I handed him a twenty in exchange for two yellow pills that would keep me up for the next two days.

He said he was going to rehab in two days, that I would need to find another guy. He told me he didn't want to give me a number; he told me that he didn't want me to end up like him.

He was one of the good ones.

I crushed that pill up and snorted it when I got home. I still remember the burn of it in my nostrils and the incredible euphoric feeling that followed—as though one could have an orgasm just from looking at a fresh paint on a fire hydrant. That was the last time I did hard drugs. Just booze and pot from that point on. How harmful could that be?

## THIS IS WHAT IT FEELS LIKE TO DIE

Alcohol is more harmful to the body than heroin, according to some studies. Within about a year, I was dining and dashing on a regular basis from various bars after work because I couldn't afford my massive tab. I stole money from family members for beer and vodka.

I tried to quit booze for the first time in November of 2012. It lasted three months. I smoked about 20 bucks worth of pot a day in that so-called "sober" time. Withdrawal from alcohol can be fatal if it is done carelessly. In that sense, it can be far worse to come off of than opiates.

My friend's uncle had been sober for 10 years. He walked me through what to expect. "You're going to shake, laugh, cry, piss, and puke," he said. "Sometimes all at the same time."

For the next eight days, I did. Coming off a 24-pack of 10-percent beer and a micky of vodka a night is fucking terrifying. Even with valium—which is standard for alcohol detox—horrible delirium and delusions, and hallucinations of ants crawling up and down my body, petrified me. More than once, I thought I was having a seizure. *This is what it feels like to die*, I remember thinking.

But it was the first sign of life to come. My face hurt from laughing and smiling so much, as I cried and trembled; delirium tremens is an absolute clusterfuck of emotions.

Worms crawled on the walls of my room. I grew paranoid very quickly that a friend was recording my every move and planning to hurt me. It was utterly insane.

My central nervous system was waking up again. It wasn't as though I woke up slowly on a lazy Sunday with breakfast in bed. It was awoken from a deep slumber with shattering glass and screams.

## THE FUNERAL TRAIN

I was left with a gaping hole drugs used to fill. When I relapsed the following February, it was after the death of a teacher from school, Felicity, who I had formed a close working relationship with. Although this was also a lie of addiction: no one can cause me to drink except me. It was no excuse; I had the sixer in my dresser drawer for weeks prior. It was merely a feeble, immature chance to not take responsibility for my life. She never saw me in the true recovery that would soon follow, and that still makes me sad. She dropped dead of heart complications one night as she was crawling into bed. A few days before that, we were talking about mortality during a break from my math homework and she had said in her wonderful British accent, "Don't fuss about me when I'm gone. Just get on with it."

I did.

By the summer of 2013, I was spending most days in bed, or sitting out on the back porch smoking up. I had been in the hospital a few times; there was something wrong with my heart. I honestly don't remember the details, but I do remember being in the back of the ambulance. The steady wail of sirens above me sounded strange. I was used to that sound fading or growing stronger. I realized in that moment how messed up I really was. I didn't drink much for a few days after that, maybe only four or five a day, because I was scared I was going to die.

That week, I had to sell my shoes to a friend for 10 bucks to get a few tallboys.

"Okay, but don't use it for beer or any of your...stuff," he said. I could see the desperation in his face. He wasn't stupid. He knew he was being manipulated.

"I won't," I said. It hurt me to say that, because addiction tells many lies, one of which was that I didn't have a choice but to be a lying sack of shit to one of my best friends.

I got a weird look from the people working at the liquor store when I walked in with

torn dirty socks. I bought as many tall black cans of Faxe Extra Strong as I could, thinking of all the promises and hearts that were broken. I did nothing but drink, take drugs, pass out, then do it again; I was nothing but a useless waste of space on this planet.

*Maybe one day I'll die from this.*

That thought made me smile as I left my regular beer store, and walked down Aldridge Street towards Richmond Road. I wanted to cry. The tears wouldn't come.

By August of 2013, I saw no way out, and, honestly, couldn't wait for booze to finally kill me.

I came to an intersection: *Walk on the green light*, I thought. *Do it*. Everyone would think I was just too loaded and made a mistake. But most people choose life, even on the worst days. No one ever gets enough credit for that.

On days I tried to take it slow, I would end up crying and shaking. I tried to carry on with some resemblance of a life. Work made me feel normal. One of the things about being addicted is that you can actually still work and function fairly okay, but in a really half-assed way. I had met a potential client at the bar one night in Lake Cowichan (I sold kitchen cutlery; it was an awful job) and we made plans to meet at A&W the next morning. I was still gooned when I woke up just before 8 am. I had a couple shots so a hangover wouldn't set in as I was telling him my pitch. As I rounded the corner between the carport and the house, the world tilted like a teeter-totter.

I fell into blackness. A strange warm liquid seeped over my heart. When I woke up, that same feeling of near death and exhaustion I had felt in the ambulance engulfed me, only this time it felt closer than ever.

Over the next month, I rarely showered or ate. Every time people spoke to me, they seemed to yell (for good reason; it's easier to get mad than it is to show people a broken heart).

I had had enough. My parents gave me an ultimatum: the street, or 90 days in a private residential treatment centre on the Sunshine Coast. I was petrified. I didn't know if it would be like jail, but the deciding factor for me was the knowledge that if I did live on the street, there would really be no reason to quit. *Being on the street sucks; why wouldn't you drink?* I thought.

There was no fucking way I was going to be homeless. Another lie addiction tells is that there is no choice. For the first time ever, drinking was the greater of two evils.

I made my choice, and spent my last night with alcohol and drugs on September 9, 2013. My mother stayed by my side the whole night and listened to my drunken jumble. I don't remember anything except an invigorating excitement to be normal again, orange emeralds burning in that awful pipe, and sadness that it was time to let go of substances when they had provided a warm fuzzy cocoon for so long. The late summer air was warm. But the cocoon had turned to ice in recent months.

Eventually, drugs stop doing their job; the only question worth asking at that point is if you want to live or die.

When I woke up in the parking lot of the treatment centre, my father looked at me all funny when I told him I wanted to have one last beer before going in.

"What's the point?" I said.

"I would tend to agree," he said.

I don't remember the last drink I had, but on that last night, they were Caribos—the ones in the green can—and I remember gagging at one point. It tasted like fucking lighter fluid going down.

## THE HITS OF RECOVERY

When I phoned home from Sunshine Coast Health Centre in Powell River for the first time, my mother answered. It felt like the first time I had spoken to my parents in years, even though it had only been about a week since they dropped me off.

"Hi, bud," she said, in the same compassionate way she did when I was a young boy.

I heard the phone get fuzzy.

"Dad's here, too," she said.

I told them detox was worse than the first time around, but the worst was over, from a physical standpoint. I could taste my food for the first time in years, and was playing ping-pong with Jay, a friend I had made there. I had been assigned a counsellor, went to the gym every morning before group, and had taken to morning coffee like a normal person.

The sense of camaraderie at the centre was essential to those first few months, during which the only thing keeping me afloat was the program I was working and the incredibly welcoming group of guys working it with me.

One of the workers there who provided ozone therapy, Davis, filled my head with tales of back-country hikes, meditation retreats, and chopping wood at dusk in his yard as

I have never felt a loss of control over my actions in all my time clean as strong as I did in that moment. I thought about the weight of a gallon bottle of Jack Daniels in my hand, the incredible sting of it in my throat. Then the real memories came: shaking, confusion, month-long blackouts.

mosquitoes buzzed among the ferns. I sat in the white ozone machine and sweated toxins out of my body. Dark black stained the towel when I stood up afterwards. *Jesus*, I thought.

The world was new to me. I took up water volleyball in the pool with the boys after dinner, and enjoyed basic hobbies again. When I have a really bad day now, I'm still really grateful that I have a low to compare it to that most people don't. It puts it in perspective.

"It's really hard to taste the flavour of your environment when you're swimming in it." Someone instrumental in my recovery said those words recently, during a phone check-in. They were talking about being loaded and how it just seems normal when you're floating in the bottom of a brewery barrel, but the same can be said for getting used to being clean. September will be five years since I had a sip or a hit of pot from that disgusting glass pipe, and some days during that time have felt just as bad as being loaded feels. Sometimes I'll look at a bottle somewhere and my heart will skip a beat and my mind will flash back to the warm sting in the chest, the quilt it put over my heart. Alcoholism is a sickness, because sometimes I'll look at someone pushing a shopping cart of empties down the street and I'll get fucking jealous. Going to meetings occasionally and using my support systems allows me to see the truths of the environment I'm swimming in.

People have asked me how I quit. The answer: I made a choice that I didn't want to go out that way, then was put in an environment where booze was not an option, an environment where I was taken care of, and shown, in a non-traditional, humanizing, and gentle way, exactly what to do 24-7, but I knew that after 90 days, no one would be telling me what to do. The test began then.

I worked harder than I had ever worked in my life on my after-treatment plan. I made a schedule for myself when I got home: up at 7, gym, counselling, yoga, LifeRing meeting, coffee with a friend from that meeting, basketball, go home, meditate for an hour, journal, eat dinner, then wind down, asleep by 10. It sounds rigorous and strict. It was. I purposefully made it more strict than actually being in treatment. I would say the part of the planning that saved me the most was hypothetical: what would I do in unthinkably stressful scenarios? What would I do when tragedy hit? That came in very handy in January of 2017, after the fate of someone I love very much was very suddenly in jeopardy. I stood outside Victoria General Hospital in tears. I was helpless and petrified, so helpless that my legs started to move toward a nearby liquor store without me telling them to.

*It's been four years; don't do this*, I thought. *You can't fuck up now. Stop walking. All you have to do is turn around and breathe.*

When all I wanted to do was self-destruct, when the covert suicide that is alcoholism called, stopping my steps was one of the simplest and hardest things I've ever done. Tears blurred my vision. Snowflakes melted away on my lips. I have never felt a loss of control over my actions in all my time clean as strong as I did in that moment. I thought about the weight of a gallon bottle of Jack Daniels in my hand, the incredible sting of it in my throat. Then the real memories came: shaking, confusion, month-long blackouts. Addiction is so horrible that the hell of watching someone you love fight for their life is about on par with drinking. If I started I would be too ashamed to ever stop. I knew that. I picked up the phone and called Stephen, my dear friend who is over 25 years sober. He dropped everything, and came to meet me in the hospital parking lot. He hugged me and stayed by my side until I calmed down. I owe him more than I could ever convey for picking up the phone and meeting me in the parking lot that cold January day.

Out to summer of 2018—I'm walking through the Lansdowne campus courtyard. I'm stressed. Deadlines are approaching fast. I compartmentalize and use the obsessive parts of my personality to focus on what needs to be done.

When I get into bed, just before slumber comes, I picture foam smiling over a freshly cracked IPA, the emeralds of marijuana burning in a glass pipe. It would be nice, but it just isn't an option anymore. Now, I go to sleep with clean water by my bedside and sore muscles from a long run—without fail, when I wake up, I never regret not getting fucked up.

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## music DJ Murge hits Phillips Backyard Weekender with The Champion Sound



XAVIER WALKER

DJ Murge is one half of locals The Champion Sound, playing at the Phillips Backyard Weekender.

**ADAM MARSH**  
STUDENT EDITOR

“What would I want to hear if I walked onto that stage at that point, at that time?” This is the first question that local producer DJ Murge asks himself as he envisions being up on stage spinning tunes.

For Murge, each show is a chance for him to guide the audience through the night. The music he plays reflects the impact he wants it to have; it only makes sense, then, that songs played at the beginning of the night are sometimes very different than those played at the end of the night.

“You have this golden opportunity,” says Murge. “You can have them in the palm of your hand, playing music and [being] really engaged with the people; there’s a connection that can happen. You can also lose that connection quite easily. It’s not tension in a negative way. But there’s a relationship you form with the dance floor.”

Murge—who is playing this year’s Phillips Backyard Weekender with long-time pal DJ Verse as The Champion Sound—tries to play tunes that he is passionate about, but he knows that in a festival setting, when people are there to see

many musicians, he has to throw in some familiar sounds.

“Bring them in, then school them a little bit,” he says.

It’s different to prepare for a festival set than it is for a club set, says Murge, but change is the name of the game. When he came to Victoria from Port McNeill at 18, he was confined to playing only what he had on vinyl. Now, technology allows him freedom.

“We just got electricity when I lived in Port McNeill,” he says with a laugh. “I’m just kidding. My medium has always been the turntable; starting out, all I could

“My job is done if someone comes up and says, ‘Hey, what was that song you played?’”

**DJ MURGE**  
THE CHAMPION SOUND

do was buy records. Nowadays, there’s things like [vinyl emulation program] Serato Scratch Live. You can still use a turntable, but now you’re using your laptop. Your entire music library becomes playable.”

That freedom is good for him, but he says that’s not the case for everyone.

“That allows us to play things like the Phillips Backyard Weekender, where you’re playing to a pretty broad, diverse crowd in those three nights,” he says. “You’ve got different lineups each time... you’re able to kind of jump and bounce around between things quicker than, let’s say, if you had record crates. Now you’ve got whatever your entire music library consists of at your disposal.”

The Champion Sound’s set at Phillips will be a balance of mainstream songs and Murge’s remixes.

“Those remixes range from Dawn Penn reggae stuff into Van Morrison remixes,” says Murge. “Shit that I love to listen to.”

However, if everyone can sing along all night, says Murge, his job isn’t done.

“My job is done if someone comes up and says, ‘Hey, what was that song you played?’”

Although it might be easy to go up and spin the tunes everyone knows, Murge says he and his colleagues in the Victoria music scene have bigger responsibilities.

“It’s our job to break new music,” says Murge, adding that it’s an important role of DJ culture in general.

The philosophy of a DJ from 1970s New York—David Mancuso—rings true with Murge.

“He applied this Buddhist approach to it where, as people come in to a party, there’s a certain level of music that should be played, then there’s the circus,” says Murge. “It’s fun. Givin’er. And then the return to reality. You want to play music that relates to sending people back home.”

**Phillips Backyard Weekender**  
Various times, Friday, July 20  
until Sunday, July 22  
Various prices, The Phillips  
Backyard  
backyardweekender.com

## stage Blue Bridge takes a Canadian theatre classic out of the drawer

**KATY WEICKER**  
STAFF WRITER

For many, Michael Healey’s *The Drawer Boy* is considered a gem in Canadian theatre. A three-person, two-act play that takes place on a farm, *The Drawer Boy* blends humour and drama into a tale about memories and stories, and the blurred lines between them.

As their tenth season begins to wind down, Blue Bridge Repertory Theatre is tackling this Canadian classic, transforming the Roxy Theatre into an Ontario farmhouse.

Director Jacob Richmond took on the challenge of bringing this show to Victoria with enthusiasm.

“It’s a beautiful story. Just beautifully written, beautifully constructed,” says Richmond. “It just packs a really emotional wallop, and you never really see it coming.”

For Richmond, one of the biggest draws was the intimate cast of Michael Armstrong, Griffin Lea, and Gary Farmer, a group of actors with great chemistry who Richmond had worked with in the past and was enthusiastic to work with again.

“I’ve known Gary Farmer as an actor since I was a kid, and Michael and I have done a couple of shows together,” says Richmond. “Griffin works a lot with another company I work with.”

This dream team has allowed the production process to run fairly smoothly, according to Richmond; however, that’s not to say it hasn’t been without its challenges. Although the play is on the shorter side (the first act clocks in at around 50 minutes, the second about 40 minutes), with only three actors on stage, there’s a hearty amount of dialogue for the characters.

“It’s a tricky one because it is a play about memories, but actually, believe it or not, when you’re always talking about memories and losing your memory, it’s really hard to remember your lines,” laughs Richmond. “So, that’s been a challenge.”

Richmond believes that because the writing is so strong the audience feels like they’re peeking inside a house, watching three people talking.

“Because it all revolves around one particular story they tell each other, whether it’s true or false, you leave feeling that it’s quite an uplifting piece on that front because you leave realizing what’s important is friendship, connection to things, and people trying to protect each other,” he says.

Richmond hopes that people will walk away from the play with an appreciation for humanity.

“It’s always great to see something that reminds you of the beauty



JAM HAMIDI

*The Drawer Boy* is considered a Canadian classic, and it’s on now at Blue Bridge Repertory Theatre.

of friendship and collective stories,” he says. “The beauty of these three characters is something that will really resonate with the audience.”

The play centres around the stories the three tell each other while unravelling the past, and leaves audience members to question whether what the characters are saying is true or false and wondering, on a larger scale, who gets the right to tell a story.

“Who does a story belong to?” muses Richmond. “It really gets into those kinds of things. It really creeps up on you.”

The slow build of the play gives multiple facets to the characters and plot, something Richmond has enjoyed discovering through the rehearsal process.

“The more I’ve worked on it, the more I’ve discovered how many actual layers are in it,” says Richmond.

**The Drawer Boy**  
Various times,  
until Sunday, July 15  
Various prices, Blue Bridge  
Repertory Theatre  
bluebridgetheatre.ca

## art Tree house art exhibit focuses on working together, artistically



PHOTO PROVIDED

An example of one of the tree house models in *The Tree House Project*.

**ADAM MARSH**  
STUDENT EDITOR

Tree houses are an iconic part of childhood. So it makes sense that a trip back to her hometown in Ontario was the start of *The Tree House Project* (THP) for multidisciplinary Toronto-based artist Jennie Suddick.

THP is an art exhibit of architectural models based off drawings

of tree houses that others sketched in a workshop in Victoria last year.

“It was a time for self-reflection,” says Suddick. “I also realized I wanted to bring in other people’s experiences, and a real diversity of experiences.”

Those who drew the original sketches came and sat with Suddick and talked about nature-related plans they had as children, plans

that included tree houses. People drew their tree houses, some of which Suddick only used as a rough guideline for the finished models.

“It sort of materialized to be about this idea of a tree house as a place to really make one’s own space,” says Suddick. “It was kind of connected to both that urge for a sense of autonomy, but also thinking about how this quintessential idea of childhood is one most of us have, and yet we kind of dream of it.”

Those dreams started to become a reality for Suddick when she started spending hours and hours in the studio—working mainly with paper and glue—to create the models. The process of creating models from others’ sketches made Suddick think of herself as a contractor, she says.

“I looked at where there were similarities, or also where things were really unique in people’s designs, and what I was drawn to,” she says. “A lot of them are hybrids of different people’s ideas.”

Architectural models are Suddick’s medium of preference because of what they represent.

“I like working with architectural models as an aesthetic because architectural models have this promise of something that is possible,” says Suddick. “It kind of makes it seem like this is a proposition... And then also just creating the model itself. It is a realization of these people’s ideas.”

She has to find a balance between what is possible with what she has to work with and what seems impossible, she says.

“There are some that are just hanging in the air and don’t look like buildings until you see the shape

“I like working with architectural models as an aesthetic because architectural models have this promise of something that is possible.”

**JENNIE SUDDICK**  
ARTIST



PHOTO PROVIDED

Jennie Suddick wants to bring other people’s experiences into her art.

formed by the shadows; so I take on the challenges as well as ones that might not really be possible,” says Suddick. “But yet, I still want to make them tangible for the people in some way.”

From material explorations to paper folding, gluing, and cutting, Suddick works long hours in her studio and says a key part to the creative process is getting out into the world and getting feedback.

“I’ve learnt a lot about myself, that I really like to have that community around me and let things form through discussion. I think a lot of artists work that way,” says Suddick. “It’s just in many varying degrees. If you share a studio with someone, or you’ve been in school, they’re working a lot with expand-

ing ideas through the conversations with others.”

Suddick says that while she would love to have the models made into full-size tree houses, there are no definite plans for that yet, as that comes with complications, such as where she will put the large tree houses.

“The plans are my dreams,” she says. “If there’s anyone out there who hears about this or sees the exhibition that would like to make that possible... there’s definitely the potential there. I would love that.”

**The Tree House Project**  
Until Saturday, July 28  
Free (donations welcome),  
Open Space  
openspace.ca

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### New Music Revue



**Ray LaMontagne**  
*Part of the Light*  
(Sony)  
3/5

Ray LaMontagne is back with his seventh studio LP, *Part of the Light*, a return to form after the 2016 Pink Floyd-inspired concept album, *Ouroboros*. *Part of the Light* is more reminiscent of 2014’s Dan Auerbach-produced *Supernova*.

Musically, LaMontagne is drifting. The first single, “Such a Simple Thing,” is a good song with the feel of a Rolling Stones ballad, and “As Blood as Black is Blue” is a bass-driven blues track that nods to Led Zeppelin and Pink Floyd, but these tracks seem out of place surrounded by folk songs. *Part of the Light* has the feel of a compilation with no hits on it.

At his best, LaMontagne is one

*Part of the Light* has the feel of a compilation with no hits on it.



**Umi Copper**  
*Requiem*  
(Black Acre)  
3.5/5

LA alternative/soul singer Umi Copper brings a sound that is uniquely his own to the four songs on his debut EP, *Requiem*.

The thing I like most about Copper’s music is that it doesn’t remind me of anything. While it drips with R&B, soul, and jazz influence, it refuses to conform to mainstream limitations.

However, as much as I love the unique, velvety quality of the music, I did find some of the songs repetitive. During the title track, I found myself growing bored of the lyrics before the last few bars ended.

Despite minor flaws, the track progression is spot-on and the passion of the artist is unmistakable. If you’re interested in alternative soul that will make you feel that you’ve stumbled across something one of a kind, grab *Requiem*.

—FRED CAMERON

—TRULY HUNTER

review
More to approve than not in Langham Court Theatre's A Chorus of Disapproval

The creative sets—from 1970s British pub to an upper-class country house sitting room—were a nice sight for the eyes, and the quick, seemingly effortless scene transitions made the play flow well. The costumes were also extremely well done.

ADAM MARSH
STUDENT EDITOR

Langham Court Theatre's A Chorus of Disapproval makes for a night of good clean laughter. However, Langham's claim on their website that the play is appropriate for all ages is a stretch. While most of it is, some of the humour does not shy away from sexual innuendos; there's even a swinger party involving a woman in her 90s. While the absurdity of this situation makes for side-splitting, well-timed punch lines, it's not something I'd take my seven-year-old cousins to see.

Opera. There is often a fine line between letting the play-within-a-play scenario drive the plot forward or sideways, and in this case it devalued it a bit; however, the delivery of lines in a fresh and punchy way compensated for this.

The creative sets—from 1970s British pub to an upper-class country house sitting room—were a nice sight for the eyes, and the quick, seemingly effortless scene transitions made the play flow well. The costumes were also extremely well done.

Some of the actors' singing struggles were quite obvious, while others sung effortlessly and elegantly.

The play—written in 1984—didn't start behind the 8 ball, as plays put on by amateur theatre groups about amateur theatre often do; they have to be above the talent level they are trying to portray to



PHOTO PROVIDED

A Chorus of Disapproval is set in the 1970s and uses material from another play, from 1728.

have the on-stage awkwardness come off as funny. That works in this play, and the mockery was hilarious. The blocking was also done well,

which is always a challenge with large casts on a small stage. As someone who directed plays in high school, I'm confident in

saying that A Chorus of Disapproval conveys the madness and stress of the rat race that is endless hours of tedious, frustrating rehearsals.



Let's Talk?

by Katy Weicker

No, I will not bake you cookies

A few weeks ago, I was sitting at my desk at Nexus, deep in writing mode, when the fire alarm went off. It decimated my concentration and sent a steady, deafening ring blasting through Richmond House. After about 30 seconds of trying to ignore it, I turned to student editor Adam Marsh and hypothesized with him about whether or not we should leave.

After debating this for far too long, we begrudgingly went into the hall, where we ran into another guy who works in the building. The three of us proceeded to debate, yet again, if this was a drill and if we should actually leave the building.

Just as we accepted that we should probably evacuate, a maintenance man informed us that he had tripped the alarm and we were not in danger of being barbecued—which is a good thing because at this point the alarm had been going off for a few minutes and I'm fairly certain we legit would not have survived if there was an actual fire.

I am not a domestic goddess who goes weak in the knees at the sight of firemen and wants to impress them with my baking skills.

Shortly after we determined that we were not in fact running the risk of becoming charcoal, I had a run-in with a few firefighters—boots and all! Silver lining?—who, I guess, had to come investigate.

During all this, I also had the privilege of crossing paths with an older man—firefighter? Fire chief? Camosun maintenance person? I'm not sure, but whoever he was, he didn't have boots. He informed me, "They aren't staying long. Don't bother baking cookies."

My cheeks grew pink; I giggled and joked, "Thanks for the heads-up."

I then went back into Nexus HQ and unleashed a feminist rant on poor Marsh. Because, no. No, sir.

I am not a domestic goddess who goes weak in the knees at the sight of firemen and wants to impress them with my baking skills.

I hated myself for not being able to say it to his face. I wanted to unleash my inner Beyoncé on his ass, but the reality is, in the moment, I didn't want to be rude or make waves. It was an innocent comment, right? Only it wasn't. It was a patriarchal swipe at my societal role.

Sure, he probably didn't mean any harm by it—I hope—but it still struck a nerve.

The reality is that where there's smoke, there may be fire, but even without smoke, we can still be burned.



Getting There Together

by Johnny Frem

The ultimate response of e-skateboards

North American society revolves around the car, but that never made sense. If we recognize and decry the gross waste of energy in hauling around a ton of metal wherever we go, then a skateboard is the ultimate response: four wheels and a small platform to stand on, which is even less weight than a bike and, because you stand sideways on a board, has less wind resistance.

Electric skateboards have been around since 1997 and can be as little as \$300. Some are operated with a hand-held wireless throttle and brake system, which can take some getting used to. Other powered skateboards operate via weight sensors, which provide hands-free control. When you lean forward or backward, sensors detect this mo-

pression of the skateboard's deck. These signals tell the wheel motors to accelerate or to brake regeneratively. Energy that is consumed in the process of braking is fed back into the batteries.

Earlier power boards used lead batteries and then NiMH batteries. The latest versions use lighter and slimmer lithium batteries recessed into the underside of the board, which means a slick build that, at first glance, looks like any non-electric longboard.

Habits need to change, but change is inevitable and we learn to adapt. Most experienced boarders will kick the pavement by habit. That weight shift can confuse the weight sensors, but soon they will be programmed to detect this mo-

tion and revert to a pre-determined constant speed. Roller skaters know how easy one small rock can throw them for a tumble; because longboard wheels are wider, you don't have to worry about small rocks.

If you're already comfortable in traffic on a skateboard, you'll soon be comfortable on a power board. Careful, though—they're almost silent. Bicyclists and drivers won't expect you to travel so fast with such little effort. Keep to the lower power levels until you're accustomed to the feel, but, regardless, e-boards will not keep accelerating up to more dangerous speeds. With the electric motor, an electric longboard handles like you're always going downhill, so it's similar to downhill snowboarding. Happy trails!



Unpacking the Bags

by Renata Silva

One step back, two steps forward

Moving to another country requires several adaptations that we could call setbacks. Besides facing the difficulty of daily communication, we students need to adapt to a new job market that will require us to start over.

Being a newcomer in search of work is one of the major difficulties in the life of a young person. And those who choose to move to another country will face that difficulty twice.

Before arriving in Victoria, I had eight years of experience in journalism in my hometown. So, I already had a network and knew how the dynamics of the profession

worked. Here, I don't, so I felt like I was taking a step back in my professional life.

This can be discouraging at first; after all, we all came in search of better professional opportunities. However, we must have patience with ourselves and understand that this is a natural process. On the other hand, we need to refocus our determination and seek to understand how the labour market works. I do this mainly through my teachers at Camosun. They're a source of direct information and are present in my daily life. I also try to get involved with extracurricular activities related to my profession.

As well, I use the experience that I have in my home country to my advantage; since it's the second time that I've faced a new job market, I know what my strengths and weaknesses are. The secret is not to get discouraged, and to use the willpower that made us leave our country of origin to adapt in the best way possible to our new location.

When you put all this into perspective, you see the step back you need to take so you can take two steps forward in your personal and professional future. The experience in a new job market can be incredible and stimulating; we just need to know how to get the most out of it.

Ever wanted to be a columnist? Now is your chance!

Email editor@nexusnewspaper.com with your column idea today!



Communication Error

by Nate Downe

Understanding media literacy

Media literacy is perhaps one of the most important skills to have in today's culture, but few people are even aware of what media literacy is, much less how to use it. In short, to be media literate is to evaluate and think critically about the media we consume.

First off, "media" encompasses more than you may think. We commonly refer to news, television, and advertisements as "the media," but

think of Subway next time you're hungry (which as a student, I'm sure you always are).

With this in mind, we can assess our media with a more critical lens. If we were to open up our definition of media to include things like food packaging, for example, then we can start to see things such as more and more snack foods highlighting phrases like "100 percent natural," "no artificial ingredients," and "no

The Subway ads in the Camosun bathrooms aren't evil—they're just carefully placed there in hopes that you'll think of Subway next time you're hungry (which as a student, I'm sure you always are).

as well as those things, "media" can include everything from the labels on soda cans to the welcome screens on computers. Secondly, given that we are consuming so much media communication every day, it's important that we know how to carefully navigate it all.

Think of a recent public relations campaign for a celebrity product endorsement—for example, Beats by Dre—or a provincial election; in every case, the purpose of the media is trying to persuade you of something—to think, to buy, or to believe a certain view (except this column, of course). So, how do we make it through this storm of solicitations?

It's important to realize that all media isn't bad; rather, the bad thing would be to think of all media as neutral. The Subway ads in the Camosun bathrooms, for example, aren't evil—they're just carefully placed there in hopes that you'll

preservatives." Taken for granted, you could say, in effect, "Well, I don't want artificial ingredients, so that's a good thing." But, leaving it at that we'd miss why they're choosing to state that.

Now that we're all on the same page, let us get back to those Subway advertisements. On one hand, it's a few extra advertising dollars for the college, and Subway recognizes that college students are likely to eat their food, so the pairing seems to make sense.

On the other hand, exercising our media literacy, we might say that a company as large as Subway has extensive marketing experience with a set advertising budget and certain return expectations for said budget.

Literacy—to read—is us getting halfway there; media literacy—to think critically about what we read, see, and hear in the media—is the full picture.



House of Columns

by Joel Satre

Students should support proportional representation

As many students may be aware, BC will be holding a referendum this fall on changing the electoral system. The system currently in use, first past the post, while simple, is outdated and highly unreflective of the overall choice voters make. In a single riding today, a candidate simply needs to receive the most votes—not a majority of votes—in order to win. This usually leads to most voters wanting someone else, but this is only part of the problem.

Across the entire province is where the disproportionality is really felt. A party often wins a majority government with less than a majority of the vote. For example, from 1952 to 2017, BC had no minority governments. This means that cooperation and collaboration amongst parties is not required to pass legislation, and means that only the interests of a select group get to make decisions for everyone.

And this group is never students. Students simply don't have the money, political participation, or concentrated numbers to matter under the current system. When elections come down to only a few ridings flipping between parties by

slim margins, and with so few voices being represented in the legislature, there is no wonder that students are often disengaged and apathetic about politics.

Students are geographically dispersed, but strongholds for either party are not. Students in the Okanagan will not be represented by the NDP, and students on Vancouver Island won't be represented by the Liberals. First past the post distills cynicism. Student matters do not carry the weight, in most places, to determine the outcome. We mostly have safe seats and a robust two-party system. Student issues are drowned out at the polls, and ignored because they aren't crucial to any party winning. Yet, we are the future.

This is why we need to spread the word and do all we can to make BC the first province to abandon our old-fashioned system for a modern one used in most western countries. A system that makes every vote count, everywhere.

So please, I encourage you all to do some research, tell your friends, get involved if you can, and, most importantly, to vote.

Contest section with three panels: 'Captain's Log', 'They continue to misunderstand our intentions...', and 'HA, got the bastard!' with a drawing of a hand holding a card.

Humour section featuring various comic strips and a 'You draw comics.' advertisement. Includes strips like 'Baby come here', 'Emergency Preparedness planning', and 'P Error 404 Not Found'.

Contest section titled 'Find the hidden Nexus and win' with a photograph of a hallway and a 'GREG PRATT/NEXUS' credit.

Let's see if you can find this copy of the last issue of Nexus, which we hid somewhere at Camosun College's Lansdowne campus. The first person to find this copy of the paper and bring it in to our office wins themselves a free prize!

Web Exclusive section titled 'What's happening at nexusnewspaper.com' listing top five most read stories from the week of July 4, 2018.

katy's colourful language word search

For our last issue's feature story ("Losing me," still up on [nexusnewspaper.com](http://nexusnewspaper.com)), staff writer Katy Weicker detailed what she learned after losing 110 pounds. And in doing so, she used some very colourful language. Here's a sampling of that.

Find the words on the left in the puzzle on the right; as always, stop by the *Nexus* office (Richmond House 201, Lansdowne campus) if you complete this puzzle to pick up something from our pile o' prizes!

- BATWINGS
- BULLSHIT
- BURPEES
- COCAINE
- CREVASSES
- DECAPITATED
- FATTY
- FUCKING
- GOO
- HELLA
- HOMEBOY
- JUNKIE
- PUPPY
- SADIST
- SASQUATCH
- SPANX
- SPRINKLES
- TEMPTATION
- TEQUILA
- UNSOLICITED



**JOURNALISMISM**

an independent voice.

With a few keystrokes you can sample thousands of opinions, afloat in a sea of information. But as the volume increases, the accuracy and reliability of professional journalism is essential. Gathering and sorting the facts, weighing and interpreting events, and following the story from beginning to end is more important than ever.

Adam Marsh  
Student editor for *Nexus* newspaper. Marsh has covered issues such as students successfully protesting tuition raises and student issues surrounding the federal election.

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what's going on by katy weicker



Check out a free outdoor screening of *Wonder Woman* in Esquimalt's Bullen Park on Wednesday, July 11. PHOTO PROVIDED

**UNTIL THURSDAY, AUGUST 30**  
**Touring Jewish History**  
Congregation Emanu-El Synagogue on Blanshard Street, the oldest Canadian synagogue in continuous use, is offering summertime tours to the public every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday at 12 pm and 2 pm. The tours cost \$10 for adults; for additional information, visit [congregationemanuel.ca](http://congregationemanuel.ca).

**WEDNESDAY, JULY 11**  
**A wonder(woman)ful evening**  
Esquimalt Parks and Recreation is hosting Esquimalt Outdoor Cinema, which this time features an outdoor showing of *Wonder Woman* at Bullen Park. The movie will start at sunset (approximately 8 pm); show up early to secure a patch of grass. Admission is free; there will be a paid concession (proceeds support community fundraising). For more info, search Esquimalt Outdoor Cinema on Facebook.

**FRIDAY, JULY 13 TO SUNDAY, JULY 15**  
**Rock on, Colwood**  
Rock the Shores 2018 will welcome several musical acts—including Brian Wilson, X Ambassadors, Social Distortion, Bahamas, and more—to West Shore Parks and Recreation Lower Fields. All ages are welcome to this three-day event; ticket prices, full lineup, and additional information is available at [rocktheshores.com](http://rocktheshores.com).

**FRIDAY, JULY 20**  
**Unleash your inner Indiana Jones**  
Who says summer camps are just for kids? Royal BC Museum is hosting four summer day camps for adults, the first of which is an Archeology Boot Camp, focusing on their new Egypt exhibit. The cost is \$50 per camp (with a 10-percent discount for museum members); the camp runs from 10 am to 3 pm. Tickets and more information are available at [royalbcmuseum.bc.ca](http://royalbcmuseum.bc.ca).

**SATURDAY, JULY 21**  
**Veggie lovers unite!**  
Vendors, speakers, vegan food, and the Vancouver Island Vegan Association are coming together for Vegtoria, Victoria's Vegan Festival. The event will be held in Centennial Square; a complete schedule and more info can be found at [vegtoria.ca](http://vegtoria.ca).

**THURSDAY, JULY 26 TO SUNDAY, JULY 29**  
**Twirling skirts and fast fingered guitar**  
The sixth annual Victoria Flamenco Festival is offering evening performances and three afternoons of free shows in Centennial Square and Beacon Hill Park. The festival will showcase a variety of flamenco dance schools, local flamenco artists, and musicians. For festival schedule and information, visit [victoriaflamencofestival.com](http://victoriaflamencofestival.com).

**SATURDAY, JULY 28**  
**Keeping it classical**  
The Breakwater Barge at Ogden Point is hosting Beer and Beethoven—a 45-minute Victoria Symphony concert with a buzz. The event runs from 4 pm to 6 pm; tickets are \$25 (and include your first drink) and can be purchased at [rmts.bc.ca](http://rmts.bc.ca).

**SATURDAY, JULY 28 AND SUNDAY, JULY 29**  
**What was old is new again**  
The Island Mavins Handmade and Vintage Market is back for a weekend of antiques, upcycling, and handmade decor. Located at 2734 Island View Road, several vendors are coming together at the market to provide unique items for purchase. Entry fee is \$3 per day or \$5 for both days. Hours are from 10 am to 4 pm on Saturday and 10 am to 3 pm on Sunday. Search The Island Mavins Handmade and Vintage Market on Facebook for additional info.

**SATURDAY, AUGUST 4**  
**That's so fetch!**  
If you, or anyone you know, has ever felt personally victimized by Regina George, the Free-B Film Festival has the perfect cure-all: an outdoors screening of *Mean Girls!* This free event begins at 9 pm at the Cameron Bandshell at Beacon Hill Park. Grab your pink shirt and best frenemy and head to [freebfilmfest.com](http://freebfilmfest.com) for additional info.

**NEXUS**

If you're interested in doing some volunteering at an award-winning student newspaper, stop by our offices at Richmond House 201 on the Lansdowne campus, or contact us by email ([editor@nexusnewspaper.com](mailto:editor@nexusnewspaper.com)) or phone (250-370-3591).

No experience necessary!

**NEXUS**

The content doesn't end in the paper.

Find web-exclusive stories at [nexusnewspaper.com](http://nexusnewspaper.com).