Bandersnatch is a student run newspaper at John Abbott College. It is published biweekly and is partially funded by the Student Activities Committee and by advertising solicited customers. Submissions are welcome and become property of Bandersnatch. Submissions must be sent via MIO through John Abbott College’s Omnivox to the respective editors, and must be in Microsoft Word Document format (.doc). All submissions must include the full name of the contributor, as well as the e-mail address if applicable. Bandersnatch reserves the right to reject submissions or to edit any submissions for length, legality, or clarity. Submissions should be a minimum of 250 words and a maximum of 500 words. Articles lower or above these parameters may be printed at the discretion of the executives. If you should have any questions or concerns, please contact us at our e-mail indicated above or visit us at the Bandersnatch office, located in the basement of Herzberg, room H-001 (Located in Herzberg basement, on the hallway to Hochelaga basement).
ALLING ALL GRADS: the time has arrived. Yes, I’m talking about the upcoming 2021 Convocation. After a challenging academic year, all you hardworking students will complete your studies and start the next chapter in your lives. But before that journey, please look forward to Convocation.

The Convocation ceremony will be held on campus in the Casgrain building gymnasium. The dates of the event are June 17th and June 18th. However, the times haven’t been scheduled and there’s a chance that the event may be postponed. Due to the COVID restrictions, guests won’t be allowed to attend the ceremony but will be able to watch it live on JAC’s YouTube channel.

Invitations have been or will be (if some students haven’t received them) sent out this month. All graduates who have finished their program of studies in Summer 2020, Fall 2020, or Winter 2021 should expect to receive an invitation to confirm their attendance. The deadline to confirm attendance is April 30th. More detailed information can also be found on JAC’s website.

We can all agree that it has been a difficult year. College life has drastically changed to the point of no return. All students should be commended for enduring these hard times. Sebastian Socorro, our beloved Editor-in-Chief, shared his opinion on the past year: “It definitely wasn’t the way I wanted my last year to go, but all things considered I’m pretty happy with how it ended up.”

Grads, be proud of yourselves for reaching this milestone. You deserve it.

2021 CONVOCATION
Elizabeth Tulli
Student Life Editor

JAC BLACK STUDENT UNION
Social media won’t defend minorities, actions will.
José Moro Gutiérrez
Staff Writer

The John Abbott College Black Student Union is a club that aims to amplify, uplift, and unify the voice of black and other minority students on campus. The goal of this union of students is also to promote and vocalize pressing issues, black history, and culture to the JAC community in a way that aims to inform and create an open dialogue among peers. Although the club has been around for several years, their club name “JAC Black Student Union”, has been around for the past 2 years. This has never been a problem until now. (Continued Online)

SUJAC UPDATE

Hey JAC!

SUJAC recently held its first round of elections for the 2021-2022 SUJAC Executive team. At a Congress vote on March 29, Ivana Riveros Arteaga won as SUJAC President; Richard Tan as Vice-President Finance; and Dante Meldrum as Vice-President Communications. Then after a two week campaign period and Omnivox student-wide vote, Deidra Lauzon won the race for VP Internal and Gracie Diabo for VP Academic.

Congratulations to all! The by-election for VP External is under way so stay tuned for updates on @instasujac or the Omnivox portal.

SUJAC also had the privilege to welcome Dr. Christopher Labos, a cardiologist and local medical journalist, to speak at a Congress meeting, to which all students were invited. Dr. Labos spoke on vaccinations, debunking theories and answering more detailed questions in the Q&A.

For all those who will be returning students in the fall, remember to be on the lookout for some new greenery in Casgrain Student Lounge as SUJAC works to promote sustainability around the College.

As the year winds down (or up with exams), we should remember to take a look back to what we have accomplished. If you had been particularly involved this academic year at JAC (with volunteering, clubs, teams, committees, tutoring etc.), then why not nominate yourself for the SUJAC Involvement Award given to two students with a 500$ reward each! All the info is on The Portal under News (you may have to scroll back a while) or @instasujac’s bio.

The SUJAC Executive Team 2020-2021, seen here in a recent photo, would like to thank you all for an incredible year. Good luck on your exams and final papers, remember to practice self-care and have a wonderful summer!
U.S. TO WITHDRAW TROOPS

Andre Bernier
Staff Writer

President Joe Biden announced that all American troops will withdraw from Afghanistan by September 11th. In doing so, Biden has effectively declared an end to the U.S. war in Afghanistan, which has lasted nearly twenty years.

By rejecting the Pentagon’s approach to keep U.S. forces in Afghanistan until the right conditions are put in place, he’s stood his ground on his policy views on force toward Afghanistan.

Joe Biden has always been a strong proponent toward minimizing presence in Afghanistan. In 2009, when Pentagon officials were attempting to convince Barack Obama into sending additional troops into Afghanistan, he warned Obama that Pentagon generals were trying to “box in a new president” and “not to let them jam you in.” Biden has reportedly had arguments with several Obama administration officials, including then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, about force levels in Afghanistan.

According to an anonymous Biden administration official, Biden has judged that a “conditions-based approach” to leaving Afghanistan is a recipe for staying in Afghanistan forever. Many officials shared the opinion that the U.S. had accomplished what it did when it entered Afghanistan after the September 11th terrorist attacks: defeating Al-Qaeda. It was a war that has cost the U.S. two trillion dollars with no clear objective or benefit.

Biden said that he was the fourth president to inherit the U.S. war in Afghanistan and that he intended to be the last. His move to end the war in Afghanistan has been a move to end the “forever war.”

NEW FEDERAL BUDGET

Michelle Akim
News Editor

On April 19th, the Liberal government tabled their first federal budget in three years, with one distinct goal: recovery. This is Chrystia Freeland’s first budget as Finance Minister, since she replaced Bill Morneau following the WE Charity scandal in 2020. Making this budget significant is not only the fact that it will set the tone for the rest of Freeland’s term, but it is also integral in shaping Canada’s economic growth following the COVID-19-caused recession.

To help women re-enter the labour force, the creation of a national childcare program has been proposed, one that would cost $10 per day, and would be up and running within five years. Though applauded by women’s rights activists for making childcare accessible and affordable, it has been criticized by the Québec government, who views it as redundant, as a similar program already exists on the provincial level and has for many years.

Instead, Québec, along with the other provinces, would have liked to see an increase in healthcare transfers to provinces, something that was omitted from the budget. Similarly, though healthcare was at the forefront of the budget, pharmacare was not in the budget. This was much to the disappointment of NDP leader, Jagmeet Singh, for whom this was a priority, especially since Trudeau had included universal pharmacare in his campaign platform. Despite this critique (and the claim that the budget took ideas from the NDP’s 2015 and 2019 electoral promises), Singh has said that his party will support Trudeau in all budgetary votes to avoid them losing a vote-of-no-confidence. This would trigger a federal election, extremely inopportune in the third wave of the pandemic.

Similarly missing from the budget was a Universal Basic Income, a measure that had been lauded as a post-pandemic solution to creating a more equal Canada. The proposition, which saw overwhelming support at the Liberal Party convention in the beginning of April, would assure every Canadian a minimum monthly income, no strings attached.

So what does this new budget mean for you? Firstly, the budget has promised student debt relief, an increase in grants offered to students and more work and training opportunities for youth. Secondly, the minimum wage for federal jobs has increased to $15 an hour, benefiting students working through the Federal Student Work Experience Program. Finally, and possibly most importantly, the budget has offered plans for decreasing the debt-to-GDP ration and Canada’s benefit that have been critiqued by many as insufficient. Though Freeland defends them as adequate, if she is wrong, the burden of paying off Canada’s debt will likely fall onto the shoulders of our generation.

BATTLE FOR JOSH

Sebastian Socorro
Editor-in-Chief

In April of last year, a man named Josh Swain contacted as many people as he could find on Facebook with the same first and last name with one request: in precisely a year at a field in Nebraska, the many Josh Swains would have to duke it out for the right to keep the name. In his words, “there can only be one”. Many presumed this was just a meme and nothing more, but to Josh’s surprise, it gained enough traction for the event to be made a reality.

Knowing he had public attention now, Josh expanded the rules so that anyone with the first name could compete, and clarified a few things: there wouldn’t be any physical violence, everyone was to wear a mask, and they were also encouraged to bring non-perishables. This fight doubled as a food drive and a fundraiser, as the non-perishables were donated to the Food Bank of Lincoln and a fundraising page put up by Josh managed to raise more than $10,000 for the Children’s Hospital and Medical Center Foundation.

Just last Saturday, hundreds of Joshes armed with pool noodles arrived at Air Park in Lincoln, Nebraska (the field mentioned in the original post happened to be private property, so it was moved). Only the “original” Josh Swain and another Josh Swain showed up, and the former won the rights to the name through a brutal one-on-one duel of rock-paper-scissors. A battle royale ensued between the many other Joshes. Eventually the victor emerged: a four-year-old Lincoln resident by the name of Josh Vinson Jr. (also known as “Little Josh”). He was given a Burger King crown, a champion’s belt, a small trophy, and the coveted title “One True Josh”.

Source: Wikimedia Commons

Source: Flickr
TRUTHS
Sophia Jeroncic
Arts Editor

‘Cause truth is I’ve been waiting for you.
For you.
Perfect being mind is a state of mine,
But I know it isn’t true.
And help to realize it is a waste of time,
Because for sure this isn’t new.

Why won’t you
Help me sober up
From this awful drink that’s life,
Lost in strife.

Why don’t you
Come a little closer
At last I’m gonna tell the truth.
We can
Talk about our fears and
All the things we wanna do.
’Cause life these days
Is an opaque fog,
I’m looking for a cure from you.

So why don’t you
Come a little closer
’Cause truth is I’ve been waiting for you.

SPACE WHALE
Victoria Navas Via-Dufresne
Science & Tech Editor

FAHLSTROM’S ROAD
Sebastian Socorro
Editor-in-Chief

As the sun slowly fell below the horizon, Viktoria Fahlstrom grabbed the bag beside her and looked at her surroundings. Once again, she was miles away from any town both in front and behind her. She sat in the front of her carriage as her horses pulled it along the dirt road. Green plains littered with stones and hills were at either side of her, and there was no other person in sight.

Viktoria took from the bag the sword she’d retrieved from the Corveaux Estate. She pulled it from its scabbard, revealing (as she predicted) that the blade was caked in a dark substance. She took a moment to examine it, her face contorted into a mix of admiration and fear. With one hand, she gripped the sword’s hilt, with the other, she ran her fingers over the raven-like mark under her left eye. She sighed and took more items from the bag: a glass bottle filled with a clear liquid, an orange rag, and a worn scarf. She put the scarf over her nose and mouth, and started rubbing it onto the blade. The corrosive didn’t work as quickly as she would’ve hoped, but it would do the job.

Suddenly the slider to the inside of the carriage creaked open, and two empty eye sockets peered from within.

“Is it safe?” a voice rang in Viktoria’s head. She nodded and got back to her business.

While the carriage was still in motion, its door opened and the gargantuan frame of Cnàmhadiel, the skeleton king, in the open. He manoeuvred his way to the front of the carriage (next to Viktoria’s bag) and gently closed the carriage door behind him.

“I have had time to deliberate, trapped within this coffin beside your relics,” he announced. It was unnatural to see his skeletal features partially lit by the warm glow of the sun.

“I am curious as to your purpose, Fahlstrom. If your desire is truly to rid this world of threats like me, why would you ally yourself with ghouls, giants, and the like?”

Viktoria’s face wasn’t entirely visible, but there was a clear frown on her brow as she looked back at him.

“I am one woman against thousands of supernatural creatures, and all I have are my wits and an understanding of how to shoot a six-chamber gun. If my enemy isn’t intelligent and they can shrug off a bullet, I’ll need more options.”

Viktoria heard a low chuckle in her mind.

“Then I suppose you’ll find a way to get rid of us once the deed is done?” he asked.

Viktoria stopped for a moment, then stared back at the blood-dirtied sword.

“Regardless of how you look at it, I’m planning a genocide,” she said. “I’m sure you know how wars work. You were a king in life, were you not? When a nation has rid the enemy of their men, what’s left is the aftermath. The women, the children, the unfortunates who had nothing to do with it. Cruel monarchs deal the final blow, witless ones are sated once they’re neutered or assimilated, and witless ones leave them to suffer in the wreckage and plan revenge.”

A raucous laughter erupted from Cnàmhadiel.

“Well then, little warrior. What sort of monarch will you be?”

By now the sun was mostly dark, and the few rays of sun gleaming off her blade were almost gone.
TRAPPED
Sophia Jeroncic
Arts Editor

Everywhere one goes, All they see is humanity shredding itself to pieces. Nothing matters anymore. Is there any ounce of compassion left in society’s vault? Shall I retain any fragile morsel of hope That maybe humanity can prove itself to be Worth everything we have been through? Or has it all been in vain?

Every single waking hour, Humans provide me with a reason to give up. I am enclosed in a bubble Whose air is being vacuumed out.

I pray for the ability to be ignorant again. Please don’t hold me accountable for What I have seen Because I will once more feel myself lose control.

They say ignorance is bliss. I couldn’t agree more.

Every second spent in this society is a fresh nightmare. I am enveloped with the weight of society’s wrongdoings. The shadows of heavenly gates haunt me in my dreams.

Sights of everyone losing control Are too much to bear. Everyone complains about being hurt, Yet they’re the ones hurting me.

They shred their own dreams, And look for a reason to blame someone else. My life is forever held hostage by their selfishness.

As they saunter along, Their chains reach out from around their arms And entangle with my newfound stems of life. One day, their humanity will wear them all out.

Collectively, they are all enemies. An island of demons Where I am an outsider, And I could not be happier.

DRIFTING CLOUDS
Elizabeth Tulli
Student Life Editor

They say ignorance is bliss. I couldn’t agree more.

TRAVELLING BOND
Nicole Widerlund
Staff Writer
BANDERSNATCH PLAYLIST

Vanessa Marion
Assistant Editor-in-Chief

Do you ever wonder what our writers at Bandersnatch listen to? Wonder no more! Here are our favourite songs at the moment! Some are more recent, some a little older, all are current obsessions. You’ll be able to find the playlist on Spotify as “Bandersnatch Favs 2021”. Go check it out!

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<th>Song</th>
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HIDDEN TALENT: PART SIX

Sophia Jeroncic
Arts Editor

If you’re looking for some new music to listen to as the semester comes to a wrap, this article is for you! Three final artists are waiting to be discovered by a wider audience.

The first artist I recommend checking out is Lord Huron, a group that mainly releases folk rock. Although many people I know aren’t familiar with them, they are responsible for the well-known song The Night We Met, which was popularized by the show Thirteen Reasons Why. While some of their songs have amassed many streams, the band itself is still unknown to many. Their latest release, Long Lost, is a favourite, giving off atmospheres of adventure, infinity, intense emotion, and happiness. Some of my other favourite songs of theirs are Mine Forever, Love Like Ghosts, and Wait by the River. Lord Huron is a band whose songs are always sad yet cheerful, adventurous, slow, and extremely enjoyable.

The second artist I have for you is X Lovers. Their songs are memorable and of varied atmospheres. My favourite songs are Too Fast, Sweatshirt, and Haunt You ft. Chloe Moriondo. Too Fast is about falling in love quickly with an upbeat, alt. rock vibe. Sweatshirt and Haunt You are slightly slower and calmer, dealing with headspace and relationships. Both songs feature pleasant and catchy melodies. Personally, Haunt You hits harder since it deals with love and the thought of dying.

The last artist worth checking out is Saba. Saba is a rap/hip hop artist from Chicago whose songs feature electronic effects and beats. I think Saba is very smart with his lyrics and flows. My favourite song of his is Photosynthesis ft. Jean Deaux. This song is different because it mixes rap with slow, easy listening genres. I think his lines are extremely well-thought out and the whole song is smoothly put together. Some of his other songs like American Hypnosis and The Billy Williams Story are interesting. His songs are extremely unique, and I believe they can be appreciated by a lot more people.

SIX OF CROWS DUOLOGY

Lara Fakhoury
Staff Writer

If you’re looking for a duology with stunning world building, intriguing cast of characters and a few lessons on how to pick wallets and watches, the Six of Crows duology by Leigh Bardugo is the series for you. In the nefarious city of Ketterdam, Kaz Brekker, a wicked whiz with a talent for escapes and tricks, is offered a job to break the creator of a deadly drug from the strongest prison in the world for a hefty sum. To succeed, Kaz gathers local misfits to prevail in this seemingly impossible heist. Then, just when you think it’s over, Bardugo introduces an epic final half to the series.

Bardugo takes the general characters of your run-of-the-mill heist movies but gives them intriguing personalities and profound backstories that will make you feel a deep empathy for these wanted criminals.

The world in which the series takes place is beautifully painted by Bardugo, inspired by old Russia and surrounding countries. Her rich description of the atmosphere and climate make you feel like you’re in the thick of it. With one-liners that are full of meaning and witty banter that will make you grin, the writing in this novel is a marvel and the plot of how the heist unfolds will make it hard to put the book down.

Six of Crows was always recommended to me and I was hesitant due to all the hype...but found it wholly deserving of it afterward.

THE START OF SOMETHING...OLD?

Emma Doyle
Entertainment Editor

I don’t know about you, but I’m a pretty big geek. There are so many books, TV shows and movies coming out on a near constant basis – Netflix’s adaptation of one of my favourite YA series’, Shadow and Bone, for example – that it can be hard to keep up. But, for the first time in my life, I find it almost impossible to start new things no matter how intensely I’ve been anticipating it.

I think that we’re all caught in a state of low-level anxiety. I would never have considered myself a stressed or anxious person, but in the last few months that’s changed. As a result, I’ve accumulated a giant TBR list – actual piles of books I haven’t read yet! – and I’m very, very slowly making it through the heavier, but worthwhile, watchlist on my Letterboxd.

Instead, I’ve re-watched Grey’s Anatomy, seasons one to fifteen, at least three times since the first lockdown. At least.

When I pick up a book I was dying to read a year ago, the idea of encountering something I can’t predict has made it really hard to enjoy new things. Because of the never-ending state of nothing that is the pandemic, anything unpredictable means it’ll roll around in my head. It’ll be the thing I get attached to, and then bam! There goes a cliff-hanger, or a character death, or something else dramatic that my geeky heart can’t take.

But if you’re like me, and you need your predictable comfort shows to stay sane, don’t worry. We’re all in this together.
SWAN SONG FOR POKÉMON BLACK & WHITE

Sebastian Socorro
Editor-in-Chief

With the advent of the Sinnoh remakes (Pokémon Brilliant Diamond & Shining Pearl), many fans are already speculating and getting excited over the prospect of eventual remakes of the Unova games, Black & White. Seeing as I’m not a fan at all of how they’re doing the Sinnoh remakes, the idea of a Unova remake is one filled with both excitement and dread. I wouldn’t want that remake to be handled by an unqualified studio, look worse despite it being on far superior hardware, or generally not take advantage of the advancements the series has made, like Mega Evolution. There is still a lot of time for course correction and I would be ecstatic to be proved wrong, but I’m not confident in GameFreak.

With all that, it’s safe to say that these games deserve an appreciative last hurrah before they’re next in the crosshairs for a remake. Black & White came out in 2010 and their sequels, aptly titled Black 2 & White 2 followed two years later both in terms of the in-game story and the real world release date. Both were published for the Nintendo DS systems and were the last 2D main series Pokémon games before the switch to 3D in X & Y.

To this day, what stands out to me the most about Black & White and its sequel is the music. It’s understandable that the game that introduced me to the franchise as well as one of the first games I ever completed would have its music ingrained in my head, but during my recent playthrough I noticed bangers I didn’t even remember. These games paid special attention to music as well, being the only Pokémon games to date to have specific music for when your pokémon is at critical health, when you’re battling the gym leader’s last pokémon, when you’re at a lower section of a cave, etc. Even the different gyms of Black 2 & White 2 have unique themes that fit their respective leader’s personality.

Another thing to note is the amount of additions made to the franchise as a whole. Unova’s pokédex is still the only one to only have new pokémon and the only one to have so much confidence in their roster that even staples like Pikachu aren’t present. Items like Eviolite and the Rocky Helmet, moves like Volt Switch and Scald, abilities like Multiscale and Moxie were all additions made by these games. There were some quality-of-life improvements as well: the PokéMart being put into the Pokémon Center, TMs no longer being one-use, poison no longer dealing damage outside battle, etc.

The joke had always been that stories in Pokémon games were meant for kids and therefore weren’t any good, and at the time of its release there was a lot of talk about the ethics of Pokémon battles. Black & White dealt with the subject matter in a mature way despite its audience being mostly kids and did it while telling a story that had consistency and emotion in its characters. Ironically, there was very little black and white good vs. evil in Black & White.

Thanks to the music, the lively locations, the dialogue, and the animated sprites there is a level of character and personality to the people and pokémon in these games that is sometimes hard to find in other titles of the series. I would still recommend it as a newcomer’s first Pokémon game.

EARTHBLADE IN DEVELOPMENT

André Bernier
Staff Writer

Extremely OK Games, the development team behind Celeste, recently released a "vibe trailer" for their latest project, Earthblade. The trailer contained jaw-dropping visuals and beautiful music which sets the clear tone that the game is going for.

Celeste is a narrative-driven indie developer game which focuses on Madeline’s journey to the top of Celeste mountain. It is a phenomenal game which received universal acclaim by critics and won the 2018 Best Indie Game of the year award. It’s not a surprise that fans of the title were excited about Extremely OK Games’ latest project.

Maddy Thornson said in a blog post that people should look at the trailer as a “vibe reveal”. She continued by saying: “We don’t know how long it will take, just that it will take as long as it takes.” She has admittedly said that she has a sort of mental picture of what the game will look like but that many things will need change.

Thornson said they are likely to reveal less than they did with Celeste: “We’ve opted to save it all up for a big reveal that will hopefully blow your socks off.” Despite the little information on Earthblade, fans have already started to theorize about the game based on what was in the trailer. One theory mentioned that the game’s logo colours were extremely similar to the lesbian pride flag. Given Celeste’s history with implied romance, it’s possible that a lesbian relationship will be in the game. But we will have to wait and see.

OUTBREAK IN DEVELOPMENT

Andréa Nikolov
Games Editor

Last Tuesday, Jeff Kaplan, the director of Overwatch, announced in a heartfelt message that he would be leaving Blizzard after working with them for almost 19 amazing years. As a founding father of the Overwatch vision, it is truly heartbreaking to see Kaplan take his leave from the studio, especially during the production of the sequel scheduled for release next year. For years, Papa Jeff, as many fans named him, was the face of Overwatch and would host all the development update videos personally.

Although it feels like the end of an era, we can find some form of comfort by the thought of Jeff’s position being taken over by Aaron Keller, someone who has worked alongside Kaplan for a very long time, starting from way back when during the early World of Warcraft days and held the role of assistant director through first developments of Overwatch.

Coming back to Overwatch’s sequel in current development, Blizzard and Keller have both assured fans that even during these sudden changes, there will still be a solid schedule and timing will not fall into serious delay. Regardless, it is unclear how everything will be from here on out in terms of other games. For now I think that we are in good hands with Keller as the new director for the sequel since the partnership and friendship with Kaplan that formed over the years has shaped the works of the studio and we should expect promising change with their new games.
BANG!

heard the sound of a car backfiring as the familiar whine of the nightly alarm pierced the calm, electric air just before twilight. A moment later, a battered, black car sped off beside me, nearly knocking me off my feet. It was clear it had been hotwired, and the owner was now rushing to vacate the neighbourhood before the enormous spotlight swept over the suburbs.

The whine of a patrol vehicle cut the rapidly approaching darkness. Since there was no one who could vouch for me acquiring medication anymore, I had no valid proof for being outside, so I scaled a ladder and scrambled across the roof of my former school, hiding behind a pile of junk as the car rolled by. The building had been evacuated three months ago when the epidemic was first announced. If only they had taken it seriously.

I glanced around me at the ruins of what once was humanity’s selfishness. Shrugging my shoulders, I descended the ladder and continued my journey back home, trudging along the disintegrated road that led into the dusk.

Eventually he saw movement in front of him and quickly ducked back behind the tree he had used as cover. The squelching sound continued even louder now, so he presumed the source was only a few metres away from his tree. He gathered the most courage he had mustered in years, took a deep breath, and kept his knees bent as he went around the tree.

Only a few paces away, three figures hunched over one of the graves. It was hard to see clearly in the dusk. The squelching sound continued even louder now, so he presumed the source was only a few metres away from his tree. He gathered the most courage he had mustered in years, took a deep breath, and kept his knees bent as he went around the tree.

Gerhardt crept slowly once outside, using the nearby dead trees as cover. The only experience he had with combat in his lifetime was getting beat up by bouncers, and that wasn’t a fond memory. As he crept past gravestones and got closer to the strange sound, he prayed to the stars above that he’d be able to deter whatever threat there could be with a single strike of his shovel before he was noticed.

Suddenly the squelching stopped. Gerhardt shook in almost every part of his body, yet he couldn’t voluntarily move a muscle. His breath was ragged, his eyes were wide, and his heart beat like a hammer. The figure in the middle replied the one on the right. “Corpses do not live in the waters now anywhere… She found this new guy again! Just like I won’t feed the giant dung beetles, or the crazy siren pelicans, or the monsters that live in the waters now anymore. That’s all in the past!”

“Harlie, perhaps we ought to leave,” said the left one. “We could be devouring your great-grandfather.”

“Oh shut it, Otto,” replied the one on the right. “Corpses do no good wasting in the dirt. I’m sick of living off battlefields.”

“Hmmm…” Harland mused with a hand on his chin. “Gerhardt, what do you think?”

Gerhardt blinked and woke up. He was getting beat up by bouncers, it’s been a while since I actually wrote something in you. Sorry, I’ve been caught up holding down the fort on my end. Well, a lot has happened since we last chatted. First off, I finally managed to find a decent stronghold; granted, it’s a prison, but it’s a lot better than the last place we stayed at. God! I remember those mutated dogs were everywhere! I think I decided to name them Hungry Hounds, you know, cause they’re always hungry for human flesh. Okay, I know it’s lame, but I already decided on it.

Second, I found a decent supply bunker a few miles away from my base, there’s a built-in water purifier and some canned goods for months down there. I’m all set in terms of food, but you can never be sure around these parts, those could probably belong to someone. Always be careful.

Thirdly, this one is a bit sad… but I lost my girlfriend, Candice. You know the old mannequin from Winners I found a few months ago?… Yeah, she and I had to go our separate ways… She found this new guy from GAP, and she started dating him. I can’t blame her; he looked like he was quite fit. But I guess that’s what happens when you live in the Apocalypse.

Won’t make that mistake again! Just like I won’t feed the giant dung beetles, or the crazy siren pelicans, or the monsters that live in the waters now anymore. That’s all in the past!

Anyways, I’ll write in soon JJ.

Maybe next time you can tell me if you think I’m going crazy.
THE START OF SOMETHING HORRIBLE

Vanessa Marion
Assistant Editor-in-Chief

You have loved ones? Not anymore. Friends? Not anymore. Enemies? All around you. Just the other day I was galloping to fetch food from the essential store. Whilst strutting as quickly as possible, in order to avoid the up and coming pandemic, I came across the worst of our kind- the anti-vaxxer. I could tell this by their mask, as they placed it below their mouth, and it was a piece of cloth. It is mandatory, and it must be worn, but these wrinkled raisins never listen.

After they refused to get the vaccine during the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic, herd immunity was never reached, and the virus continued to spread, causing it to mutate and create a variant. This variant began slowly killing off the older generation and those with health problems. This was a hundred years ago, and now, just on schedule, something new is on its way.

You may be wondering why no one good can be in your life, well, we must remain confined. The new Kardashian-Jenner government issued this quarantine as a wave of a new virus is coming. Many of those who survived through COVID were the strongest, and have lived for longer than anyone thought possible. It is average for the older generation to live until 150, 175. That being said, there are many at risk who have already lived through the previous pandemic, me being one of them. And this time, won't be like the last, I will make sure of it.

ADULTING: THE REAL HORROR STORY

Emma Doyle
Entertainment Editor

I’m nineteen years old and this year I finally paid my taxes. I owe money to the government and everything. I had papers to file, forms to fill out, the whole shebang.

I feel like just yesterday I had no responsibilities except a decent report card. Now my COVID-19 online shopping problem has actual consequences on my bank account because I have a phone bill and taxes to pay and a savings account to build. I mean… how did this happen? How did we get here?

The worst part is it only gets worse from here. The prospect of moving away, paying university tuition, bills, driving, the future. I’m at that point where everyone I meet asks me what I want to do with the rest of my life, and I can’t help but think, “I’d like to sleep for a hundred years.”

Just a couple days ago I was reading about exercise and healthy eating. I’m a pretty lazy person, so reading about regularly doing these things, even if they’re for optimizing your quality of life and all that, was a little nerve wracking. You’ll laugh, but the truth is, as soon as I started thinking of the prospect of having to keep regular healthy habits for the rest of my life (!!) made me an anxious mess. Paying bills on time for the rest of my life, having a routine… Am I the only one feeling this pressure?

Who needs fiction when the real horror story is reality?
O n the fifteenth of April, Sebastian “Turtle Club” Socorro met his untimely demise at the hands of a rabid rejected headline. Tired of being rejected time after time and being sent to the Procrastinator section, the rejected headlines revolted against Sebastian “Anarchy Afficionado” Socorro. While resentment in the headline community had simmered for the entire semester, things reached a boiling point when “Teenagers Contract an STD Through Cybersex” was rejected on the eve of his passing.

Sebastian “Almost Mullet” Socorro was found drained of all his creativity in his own bedroom. A member of the local law enforcement testified:

“J’ve never seen anything like this in my 20 years on the force. I’ve never seen a person’s unpolished ideas and deepest secrets plastered all over the ceiling like some sort of macabre art expo.” With Sebastian “Coffee is Better Than Water” Socorro out of the picture, the quality of Bandersnatch’s headlines took a nosedive immediately after. The day after his passing, Bandersnatch published an issue with headlines such as “Vegan Eats Sea Slug. Collapses Into Singularity”, “Twit Streamer Arrested for Not Showing Enough Cleavage”, “New Korean Pop Genre is Unveiled as K-9-Pop Where All Singers are Dogs”, and “The Pandemic has Given Thousands of People Mask Fetishes”.

Law enforcement were able to recover surveillance footage of Sebastian “Lexicon Luthor” Socorro’s gruesome end. Almost all of the footage was corrupted, but Sebastian “Canadian CINemon” Socorro can be faintly heard muttering the phrase:

“Untrue, we live in a society.”

Sebastian “Polymorphous Professional” leaves behind two turtles, a guinea pig, four headlines never conceived, sixteen Smash Bros. rants, sixty-four families of dice, and four thousand ninety-six decks of Magic: The Gathering cards. With Sebastian “Bodacious Beret” Socorro’s passing, so does the legend of Spooky Luke. This legend is so mysterious that Sebastian “Final Fraternity” Socorro’s biting the dust has scrubbed all knowledge of it.

Sebastian “Venezuelan Yuvuzela” was truly a man of many names. But what many do not know is that all those names were accumulated through the side-effects of being in a quantum state of flux. Every time someone misspells Sebastian’s name by writing it “Sebastei”, they create an identical psyche in all but name that takes over Sebastian. As a result, Sebastian suffered from a form of quantum personality disorder, allowing him to do many things ordinary men could only dream of.

This tangential ability allowed Sebastian to have a seat on the Elder Council from before the Great Plague. He ruled alongside other Elders as benevolent deities, vanquishing foes and taking names until the Plague washed over everything. None remain of those days of yore except memories lost in time like tears in rain. Entropy has done its work, and Bandersnatch is now awash with headlines of questionable creativity without Sebastian “Elder God” Socorro to fend them off.

Someone else must take up the mantle of protecting Bandersnatch from somewhat subpar headlines. But the man, the myth, the legends will never be forgotten. And I can’t think of a better way to send him off than with an obituary using a somewhat unfunny but still slightly amusing headline.

"Untrue, we live in a society."
Saying Farewell to The Recently Graduated

MICHELLE AKIM
Sophia Jeroncic
Arts Editor

Michelle Akim was a very studious, curious person who loved to write articles pertaining to ongoing, real-life issues and news in the world. Unfortunately, on April 28th, 2021, she met her fateful end.

Michelle became a world-renowned journalist in order to gain firsthand experience for her articles. She often reported extremely controversial stories on politics and daring crimes.

Two weeks ago, she was made aware of a tantalizing scandal regarding exploitation happening in the depths of the Amazon rainforest. She soon became aware of the fact that the scientist in the lab. The fall-out from the explosion turned off their empathy and compassion.

Victoria continued to observe chemical mess to avoid turning Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue into a radioactive wasteland. Meanwhile, the frogs named themselves the Ribbity Guerilla and elected a frog king, King Razzy Chaz, and began the preparation to attack Victoria.

Their operation took months. We know this because moments before her death, Victoria gave a speech, in which inspired King Razzy Chaz to escape and work with the authorities to take the Ribbity Guerilla down.

Though King Razzy Chaz was gone, the fighter frogs still proceeded with the plan. Before she could scream for help, the frogs ribbiteded and launched themselves towards her, grabbing onto her until she was more frog than human.

Victoria was an intelligent young woman, best known for her work in venom milking and her role as Science & Tech Editor for Bandersnatch. She will be greatly missed.

VICTORIA NAVAS VIA-DUFRESNE
Vanessa Marion, Andrea Nikilov, Michelle Akim
Assistant Editor-in-Chief, Games Editor, News Editor

After graduating from a prestigious university and winning a Nobel Peace prize, the life of Victoria Navas Via-Dufresne was filled with purpose and meaning. Finally accomplishing everything, nothing could go wrong!

Victoria was working in a lab with dangerous compounds, but was properly equipped. These dangerous chemicals had been procured through the black market, and Victoria knew that she only had one shot at successfully executing the experiment. For the first time ever, she was observing the radioactive explosion outcome in creatures (frogs in this case), and how to help them.

Unbeknownst to Victoria, the frogs began conspiring, and developing higher intellectual abilities. Over time, they all began to mutate and plot revenge against the scientists in the lab. The fall-out from the explosion turned off their empathy and compassion.

Victoria gave a speech, in which inspired King Razzy Chaz to escape and work with the authorities to take the Ribbity Guerilla down.

Though King Razzy Chaz was gone, the fighter frogs still proceeded with the plan. Before she could scream for help, the frogs ribbiteded and launched themselves towards her, grabbing onto her until she was more frog than human.

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ANDRÉA NIKOLOV
Vanessa Marion & Sebastian Socorro
Assistant Editor-in-Chief & Editor-in-Chief

Intelligent, logical and comedic are just a few words to describe Andreea Nikilov. She lived her life competing, and winning. Andreea played several games competitively, and also created several titles of her own, including League of Legends 2: Reloaded and Valorant 3: Revenge of the Bucky.

Andreea’s death was unexpected. She took risks when it came to travel, adventures, but never her career. She worked hard and tirelessly, but loved it. One night, she was up late gaming for practice. She was so into the game she did not realize the small flood starting in her apartment. Her cat, (named RayTracer), had used his little paw to turn on the tap on the sink. Slowly but surely, water began to fill the apartment. As she was sitting far from the start of the leak, it took long for her to notice. Too long.

Before she knew it, water had entered into the electronics, sending a wave of electricity and shocking her.

As written very specifically in her will, she wanted a game created about her life and death. As the gaming world mourned her loss, several publishers came out with a different way of commemorating her. She was made into skins for several of her favourite games, the next Hideo Kojima game was named after her, and even Jeff Kaplan descended from the heavens to confirm that she would be playable in Overwatch 3 by FromSoftware. He also let everyone know that she’s just fine up there, she just unboxed a butterfly knife in CS:GO.

Andreea will be greatly missed, for creating joy in other’s lives with her intelligence, commitment and her incredibly hype Tetris any% glitchless speedrun.

GURSAGAR SINGH
Vanessa Marion & Andrea Nikilov
Assistant Editor-in-Chief & Games Editor

Gursagar Singh was a self-made billionaire from the Stock Market, who died at the unripe age of 92. He lived the way he died, in an unexpected series of events.

There were many possibilities of death that night, though it happened in the most absurd way.

It was the eve of the NBA finals, Gursagar began his yearly routine of meeting up with “the fellas” and watching it at his friend’s house. But while driving he did a 360 with his car, as the wheel slipped since he was driving with his legs rather than hands. Miraculously, he was fine, and continued his drive.

During the game, he commented over the plays, angering his old wrinkly friends and spinning them into a fuming rage. They ended up lightly choking him to get him to stop talking about Bitcoin.

Though he once again survived.

Minutes later, he proceeded to try to recline on a lounge chair, but it malfunctioned and somersaulted him out of the chair.

Bruised, but still alive, he finished watching the game with his friends whilst sore, and then proceeded to drive home. However, on his way home, is when the final tragedy struck for Gursagar. Whilst driving home, he collided with a moose. Upon this impact, he was flung out of his car and skid across the pavement until stopping, battered and cut up.

This did not kill him, but the moose, not being seriously injured, proceeded to eat Gursagar as a snack.

He will be sincerely missed for his witty banter, unwarranted opinions, and sick moves. Gursagar was a cool guy, and one of the chillest editors of Bandersnatch Newspaper.
WIFE-CARRYING
A Sport You Really Should Know Exists

Tammy Haddad
Staff Writer

I

f we're being honest, the world is an odd place: emetophilia is a thing, clowns somehow exist, and there are people out there who genuinely don’t like cake. A truly baffling world. Sports are not exempt of this. In 1992, the first ever Wife-Carrying World Championship was held in Sonkajärvi, Finland. Yes, you read this correctly. Wife-Carrying is a real sport played by real people. As I said, a truly baffling world.

Wife-Carrying, as the name suggests, is a sport where men run a 253.5-metre track whilst carrying their wives on their back. The course, a flat surface, is composed of two dry obstacles and a wet one (a pool). Contestants must keep their wives attached to them at all times to be allowed to advance in the obstacle course. Any step taken without a clinging wife will get the couple disqualified.

Wives are also subjected to a few rules. She can be no younger than 17 years of age and weigh no less than 49 kg. If she is under 49 kg, she will be weighed down by rucksacks. Wives must wear a helmet at all times, and carriers have the right to a belt to help their spouses move more easily and cling for dear life.

What is the prize for winning what is essentially the ultimate couple’s test? Your wife’s weight in beer! Other prizes are given to the second and third fastest couple, to the most entertaining couple, to the strongest carrier, and to the couple with the best costume.

Don’t have a wife? That’s okay! You can still participate! The rules don’t specify whose wife you need to carry. You can always borrow your friend’s or your neighbor’s spouse (if she is willing, that is).

Carrying a wife is no easy task. There are three main ways to carry. There is the traditional Piggyback ride, which will stop the wife’s head from being immersed when you jump into the pool, but will hinder the carrier’s arms. There is also the fireman’s carry, where the carrier flings the wife over their shoulder. Yet, the most popular by far is the Estonian method, where the wife is held upside-down on the carrier’s back with her legs around their neck. The one disadvantage? She’s sure to drown if the carrier doesn’t clear the water obstacle quickly enough.

There are three prevalent theories as to the emergence of this bizarre test of strength. Two of them revolve around a 17th century gang leader by the name of Rosvo-Ronkainen. The first theory is that one couldn’t join his gang of misfits unless they were able to clear an obstacle course whilst carrying heavy bags on their shoulders. The third theory, not connected to the gang leader, refers to the legend of a village whose men would sneak into other villages and steal the wives to make them theirs.

No matter how this sport originated, be it from brigand training or wife-napping, it remains an extremely popular and entertaining sport. People from all around the world compete in either local championships, or the World Championship in Finland. Anyone can compete. For the competition held in Sonkajärvi, the only requirement are 50 euros and, of course, a wife.

BIANCA ANDREESCU
Stay Strong

Andrea Nikolov
Games Editor

As badly as things have gotten for the world of sports during this pandemic, it is always regrettable when people’s careers is halted or even destroyed because of COVID-19. This is the case with Bianca Andreescu, the Canadian tennis star, who sadly tested positive for COVID-19 last Sunday, and will therefore need to withdraw from the upcoming Madrid Open.

After being tested several times before flying to Madrid and all tests coming back negative, Andreescu was quite sure that she would be moving along in her tennis career. Regrettably, she was informed upon arrival to Madrid that a test of hers came back positive. Andreescu has stated that she is “feeling good, resting, and is continuing to follow the health protocols and safety guidelines.” We are happy to hear that even after everything she is still impatient to get back on the court as quickly as possible.

Having come back from a 15-month knee injury and having had to retire in the second set during the Miami Open because of an ankle injury, she hasn’t had as many opportunities to play recently as she would hope. Although she will miss this month’s open, it is still necessary for hers and other players’ safety. We can only hope that the next open will be her time to shine.

The Madrid 2021 Open will begin Tuesday, April 27th, and run until May 8th; we can only imagine that Bianca will be watching and supporting her fellow players.

SPORT CULTURE
And its strain from COVID

Gursagar Singh
Sports Editor

With the former 8 P.M. curfew back in place and the variants not giving Canada any time to breathe with the lack of vaccine availability, the summer looks like it’s going to again be throttled — presumably more so than last time. This by extension places a strain on sports. The clear impact is being shown on games and leagues getting shifted or cancelled.

This however is solely the expected consequence on the sport world. The deep-rooted impact lies within the impact on sport culture. No late-night ball games or hockey nights with your friends and no pickup games under the lights. We must face again a lack of activities and spaces that allow for escapism in the sports world. Although this has already been established as the new normal, this deficiency must once again be reiterated. The prolonged lack of collaborative, physical activities unlike videogames or Netflix watch parties which solely retain the collaboration, have created a sense of isolation which is damaging to the character and personal development of those within our age group. Especially athletes who have been conditioned to use sports culture as the margins of their expressive traits.

We can sit on social media and watch sports highlights, we can talk to each other about how crazy Steph’s April has been, but sports talk has only ever been used as a precursor to the pickup, the hang-out or the big game. The temporary death of sportswear culture (as there is nowhere to go) and the inability to express your skills on the court, have castrated athletes.

This may have been the way it’s been going since the start of the pandemic. It is a consequence that needs to be reiterated until the re-ignition of sports and sports culture, we no longer have that summer we were looking forward to.
SUMMER 2021
Sophia Jeroncic
Arts Editor

For quite a while, talk of the 2021 summer season has circulated amongst young and old people alike. However, the question is: will we really be able to have a so-called normal summer?

I don’t think this summer is going to be as “amazing” and “normal” as it has been called. It definitely won’t be normal since masks are still going to be necessary; the question now is how well will people comply, especially after receiving the first dose of the vaccine?

If the summer was truly a normal one, cases would be uncontrollable, and hospitalizations and deaths would surge immensely. Therefore, already, Summer 2021 is not going to be back to normal, even if vaccines are administered. Here’s why: not everyone will want the vaccine. This means there will be a number of individuals who are not protected against the vaccine. Even if they’re healthy, there will be a risk of them contracting it and either suffering from it or passing it along to someone else. Additionally, anyone who gets the vaccine is not 100% immune. Immunity does not begin right away, nor does it mean that people won’t get the virus; people can still contract the virus, they are merely protected against potential hospitalizations or death. Moreover, the vaccine requires the second dose to be maximally effective.

Furthermore, Summer 2021 is for sure going to cause COVID-19 cases to spike. If we take vaccines out of the equation for a moment, there is a large number of people who simply don’t care. Even if we all have a good time this summer, as believed, it won’t come without a hefty cost. I personally dread summer because I will have to witness mass gatherings, but we’re not there yet, so I guess one problem at a time.

We are still able to have a fun summer despite the situation. However, for this to happen safely, masks and distancing must still remain in effect after getting vaccinated, especially since most people will only be receiving their first dose of the vaccine at the end of June. The only way this summer can be fun and safe is if we work together and protect one another instead of rushing the process and putting oneself before others’ health.

COMODAL CLASSES
Nicole Widerlund
Staff Writer

For more than a year, education has been taught online. Sitting through a lecture in front of a screen at home is a familiar part of one’s routine by now. The lack of interactions has certainly made the days more predictable and static.

A group of teachers and staff members at the college are currently working on implementing comodal classes. The way it works is that the teacher would be in a classroom and the lecture would be filmed to send synchronously to a teams meeting. Students can choose to attend the class either in-person or online. Because comodal classes are a new concept, it is still developing and is very much an experiment at the moment.

I got the opportunity to experience a comodal class at school recently. It did not feel the same as having a regular class at school when being in an almost empty classroom, seeing classmates through a big tv-screen, and the distracting presence of the camera at the middle of the room. But it was a delight to see the teacher and being able to do the small things that we are not able to do online: to raise an actual hand up, to be in a different environment than one’s bedroom, and to be able to chat before and after the lecture. For once, this school day was exciting and different. This sharp turn is one that is heading towards the classes that we used to have once upon a time.

GEORGE FLOYD AND BLM, A YEAR LATER
Palmer Krilik-Tomchishen
Opinions Editor

To preface, it has not been exactly a year since George Floyd was viciously attacked in the streets. However as we approach the one year anniversary of this horrific event, and with the recent proclamation of the conviction of Derek Chauvin for murder, it seems that this is a peak opportunity to provide an update on the BLM movement in light of a plethora of significant events, as well as provide my own insight on these matters.

Firstly, as aforementioned, Derek Chauvin has been officially convicted of murder, which should not come as a surprise to anyone. The brutal and cold-blooded murder of George Floyd captured on a video that lasted nine minutes and twenty nine seconds produced clear evidence of police misconduct. This is unlike many police murders, that oftentimes last a few seconds due to their executions being carried out with a firearm. Unfortunately many other police murders have gone without justice, affecting people of colour, specifically black people the most. Duncan Lemp, Stephen Clark, Elijah McClain, Attatiana Jefferson, and Daniel Shaver (who was shot with a gun that had the markings “You’re Fucked” on the side by the police officer who wielded it) are just a few. 17 year-old John Albers who was supposed to be getting checked in on for his mental health by police was subsequently shot to death instead, Casey Goodson Jr., Ryan Whitaker, Philando Castile, among others; way too many more.

The fact of the matter is that instances of police brutality oftentimes go without justice; this is exemplified in the aforementioned cases. It is important to note that African Americans have the largest lifetime risk of being murdered by police in contrast to all other races, and that men have a disproportionately higher rate of being murdered by police than women. In my eyes it is important to recognize the injustices we face as a whole, as people of the world, regardless of sex or race; we must reprimand police officers and hold them accountable for their actions, akin to how we treat any other individual in society. We have a policing problem, which lies at the core of the requirements for the job itself; police are the pawns of the state that help uphold the monopoly upon the force, and police officers are not made to reflect upon what they are enforcing. This lack of regard for what is being enforced sets up the preconditions for tyranny and injustices alike; it is what allows police officers to stand by their contemporaries as they commit heinous acts, as they are provided with the mental justification that they are simply following protocols or orders. Simultaneously, and not to be too cliché, with great power comes great responsibility, and thus a more stringent vetting process for police, and/or an equalization of power between police and civilians must be implemented.

In other news regarding the BLM movement, Patrisse Khan Cullors, a supposed Marxist and Black Lives Matter leader, has recently purchased a $1.4 million home with funds that cannot be traced and are likely extracted from donations to the organization. Activist Brittany King, who was one of the first founders of the Black Lives movement back in 2016, has gone on to admonish the actions of the international branch of BLM and its leaders on the podcast DarkHorse. Many of the smaller original chapters of BLM have called out the national BLM for hoarding up to $90 million worth of funds despite there still being homelessness, hunger, and lack of funds for schools for black and minority children. Brittany King has also brought up an important issue with white allyship and its performative nature, which I wholeheartedly agree with. There is a perspective that many white individuals have used BLM as a trend to hop on in order to receive clout and self gratification—essentially using the movement as a way to virtue signal. The fact of the matter is that there are still a lot of kinks to smooth out pertaining to the movement, policing, institutions and society as a whole. I think the core values of the movement however are seminal to the advancement of our society and social prosperity, and that we will continue to advance as a result of increased social awareness and effort.
NASA’S NEW LUNAR LANDER

Marc Randy
Production Manager

On April 16th, 2021, NASA announced its selection for its Human Landing System (HLS) awards. In its return to the Moon under the Artemis program, NASA is contracting private companies to independently build Lunar landers. This is a departure from the Apollo era, where NASA directed government contractors to make spacecraft to their specifications. NASA has chosen SpaceX’s Starship launch system as the spacecraft that will land humans on the Moon for the first time in over 50 years.

NASA initially selected three companies to compete for an HLS contract: Dynetics, Blue Origin and its “National Team”, and SpaceX in May 2020. NASA at the time was in talks to down select one or two HLS proposals, but ended up only choosing SpaceX.

In NASA’s evaluation report, it cited SpaceX’s bidding price being the lowest as a factor as to why Starship was chosen, as well as an excellent management rating.

SpaceX’s Starship vehicle is a fully reusable two-stage launch system composed of the Starship spacecraft, and the orbital booster Super Heavy. Its development was started before NASA awarded SpaceX an HLS development contract, as Starship is meant to be an interplanetary spacecraft capable of bringing up to 100 metric tons of cargo and crew to the Moon, Mars, and beyond. For NASA’s HLS needs, SpaceX will be making a Moon version of Starship.

NASA’s Artemis program had an initial date of 2024 for landing a crew on the Moon, but the agency is currently conducting an internal study to evaluate its timeline.

WHAT ARE COVID-19 VARIANTS?

Elizabeth Tulli
Student Life Editor

Since COVID-19 continues to circulate globally, many mutations of the virus are being detected. So, what are mutations of the virus?

To start, viruses are constantly changing or mutating. Viruses can undergo genetic changes over time. Some genetic changes in viruses are less severe than others. However, genetic changes become a problem when they affect the spread of a virus or how the body’s immune system reacts to a virus. These genetic changes are called variants. A variant is a virus that has changed — mutated — enough to represent a separate branch of the family of the virus. A virus mutates when it replicates its RNA, a nucleic acid responsible for protein synthesis and carrying the genetic information of some viruses, in a host’s cells.

Regarding COVID-19, scientists are closely studying the variants to learn more about their infectiousness and how they react to treatment and prevention. Coronavirus are named for their crown-like spike proteins on their surfaces. Scientists are observing changes in the virus such as changes in the spikes of the virus. Mutations also occur at different rates; new variants may emerge and disappear or persist and survive.

Some COVID-19 variants spread more easily. These variants are called Variants of Concern. The variants include B.1.1.7, B.1.351, and P.1. Researchers have found preliminary evidence that these variants may re-infect people who have recovered from earlier versions of the virus. Contrarily, the vaccines are still effective in neutralizing the variants, but the vaccine efficacy rate differs. Stay safe and healthy, everyone.

TORNADOES AND WEATHER

Victoria Navas Via-Dufresne
Science & Tech Editor

From the month of March to the month of June, the U.S. suffers tornado season mostly on the Tornado Alley located at the center of the country.

Tornadoes form during supercell storms which are regular thunderstorms with a vortex in the center. As the supercell storm grows, the vortex at its center siphons warm air and moisture upward while pushing cold dry air down towards the earth. For the tornado to form, the air on the ground needs to be spinning. This happens when enough warm and cold air is in flow. The movement of the wind then causes a spiraling movement which, as it gets closer to its rotation axis, allows a tornado to form.

Meteorologists, understanding how tornadoes form, are then able to issue warnings to possibly affected areas by checking the movement of the wind with systems such as Doppler weather radars.

Doppler weather radars, first used during World War 2, are radars that allow for the locating of rain, snow or other precipitations and determining their motion. By analyzing the type and strength of precipitation, the Doppler radars allow meteorologists to determine the severity of a storm. The weather radars work by projecting directional microwave radiation pulses which depending on the precipitation will bounce back towards the radar. Between pulses, the radar acts as a receiver, waiting for any signals that bounced back from droplets. The pulses are then spaced out enough as to not have returning signals from different pulses overlapping.

Radiosondes, weather satellites, buoys and other technologies can also be used to obtain weather data. Radiosondes are instruments that are usually attached to weather balloons to collect data on atmospheric parameters and transmit back to a ground receiver by radio. This type of technology was first attempted in the second half of the 19th century using kites and meteographs.

Buoys are also common in weather data collection. Weather buoys also collect ocean data. These buoys have been used since 1951 and have helped in studying El Niño in the Pacific ocean. Weather buoys collect better data than ships since they report data closer to the water than ships and have less possible sources of error.

The NWS (Numerical Weather Prediction) collects the data and compares it to previous meteorological data to suggest weather forecasts to meteorologists. NWS predicts the weather by creating simulations using mathematical models of the Earth. Although initially attempted in the 1920s, the technology had not accurately or realistically predicted weather until the ‘50s.

Tornado warnings are issued after a tornado, funnel cloud or rotation in the clouds has been perceived. These warnings are not to be confused with a tornado watch. A tornado watch simply indicates weather conditions that are favorable to creating tornadoes. In the U.S., a tornado watch can easily turn into a higher level of alert when the possibility of tornadoes is to affect an area that is highly populated.

Tornadoes come in different types and intensity going from EF0 to the most severe EF5 depending on wind speeds and the amount of damage to the human environment. Yearly, the U.S. receives an average of 1000 tornadoes, and Canada an average of 100. Watch out for tornado season this spring.
ASTROLOGY: TAURUS SEASON
Elisabeth Beazijle
Staff Writer

As the Sun travels the Taurus constellation from April 19th to May 19th, a substantial change in energy will be felt. Indeed, after fiery Aries season, which bursts of impulse, creativity, and rush, earthy Taurus slows everything down. When its motivation is sparked, The Taurean spirit is naturally determined, practical, and productive. In the next weeks, mindfulness sets in; prioritize quality over quantity by getting rid of what does not speak to you. However, be aware of the shadowy bull. In its low vibrations, stubbornness wins over, and our own comfort zone and desire of control is overexploited. Letting go of the small details will help you strike balance within Taurean energy.

As Mars entered Cancer on April 23rd, hyper-sensitivity and moodiness can be expected. In this placement, Mars is in its fall, the total opposite of its exaltation in Capricorn. Essentially, the natural expressions of the planet could be slightly more arduous to release spontaneously. However, here comes in the Pluto retrograde in Capricorn four days later, to helps us review all the lessons learned so far. You have to move on; don't succumb to the Cancerian energy clinging to the past!

On May 3rd, Mercury enters Gemini, and so does Venus on the 8th. At home, the planet of communication will love witty and flirty banter. As for Venus, the fickle and adaptable airy Geminian energy will zest up areas of love and beauty. All of this air can blur our vision, but the new moon in Taurus on May 11th will be the ideal time to recenter our plans and manifest our desires!
THIS IS IT FOR THIS SEMESTER FOLKS!

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