

Miracle Arts promotes careers in creativity

By EMMA JOHNSON
Editor In Chief

It can take a lot of work to turn passions into professions. Miracle Arts is trying to help students make that leap.

Miracle's mission is to help people of all ages take their hobbies and passions and turn them into careers. Founder Xavier Thomas said he wants to be the person and program that helps launch creators into their preferred jobs.

"I focus on the infant stages of artists, those open mics, those first exhibits and those first publications when they're going through these hurdles," Thomas said.

Thomas got the idea from his sister who loves fashion and wanted to help her get into the industry.

"All she really needed was the base resources such as where to go. It was going to be a social networking app to help people connect, and I realized education is way more needed," Thomas said.

Writer Darlington Sehgbear heard about Miracle when Thomas reached out asking for support for Miracle. Sehgbear said it's been interesting to see how the platform has grown in a short period of time.

"I think it's very important because he's not only promoting his own work, he's promoting other



EMMA JOHNSON • The Reporter

From left, Liv Meinberg, Jordan Moore, Elizabeth Tep and Xavier Thomas have all been involved with Miracle Arts, a program that allows creators to gain more knowledge about their passions and network.

people. I think it's a great resource," Sehgbear said.

Sehgbear said Miracle is a diverse, inclusive platform when it

comes to showing different types of art and the creators behind them.

"Art is a broad idea, so having a platform that incorporates differ-

ent pieces of art and promotes it, I think it's amazing," Sehgbear said.

Photographer Elizabeth Tep got involved after Thomas came

to her saying the Big Ideas Challenge didn't go his way. She said he should still pursue his dream of starting Miracle.

"Xavier and I's vision aligned really well and having more people with the same kind of goals was a good idea, so we kept bouncing ideas off each other," Tep said.

Thomas said he wants Miracle to be STEM for those in creative arts.

"I want to get kids at a young age learning the technical skills so when they get into middle or high school, they can actually start having these businesses," Thomas said.

Miracle's Instagram (miracle.arts), has two video series. One highlights what skills certain creators need and the other contains interviews with Minnesota State students. Thomas said he wants to show "there's talent anywhere," not just in major cities.

Later in February, a visual art event will take place with a written art event on March 22 and a performance art event on April 17.

Besides informing others on how to market their creations, it allows students to meet others. Fashion designer Jordan Moore said Miracle has been a great networking opportunity for him where at a Pathfinder event, he made six new

MIRACLE on page 2

Student Health Services offers HPV vaccines

By LAUREN VISKA
Staff Writer

According to studies, the highest human papillomavirus (HPV) prevalence in the United States is among college students. This makes college students a target for HPV vaccination and prevention campaigns.

Student Health Services has provided doses of the vaccine since 2006. Most insurance plans cover the vaccines, depending on the student's plan.

Student Health Services Medical Director Jodi Egeland said people ages 9 to 14 should get two doses 6-12 months apart.

People ages 15 to 26 should get three doses over six months.

"Some adults aged 27 through 45 who were not already vaccinated might choose to get the HPV vaccine after speaking with their doctor about their risk for new HPV infections and the possible benefits of vaccination for them," said Egeland. "HPV vaccination of adults provides less benefit because more people in this age range have been exposed to HPV already."

HPV is a viral infection commonly resulting in skin or mucous membrane growths (warts). There are over 100 different types of HPV.

Some HPV infections result in

warts, while others can lead to various types of cancer.

Egeland said, "Only cervical cancer can be detected early with a screening test. The other cancers caused by HPV may not be detected until they are more serious. HPV vaccination prevents infections that cause these cancers."

Egeland said she strongly encourages students to get vaccinated as HPV can cause many types of cancers.

There are many types of cancers, mainly affecting the genitals and throat in both men and women.

"The CDC (Centers for Disease Control) said that 85% of people will get an HPV infection in their lifetime. Almost every unvaccinated, sexually active person will get HPV in their lifetime. About 13 million Americans, including teens, become infected with HPV each year," said Egeland. "Most HPV infections will go away on their own. But infections that don't go away can cause certain types of cancer."

Egeland also mentioned a study in Scotland in the Journal of the National Cancer Institute that talked about the real-world impact of vaccines against HPV.

"The country has detected no cases of cervical cancer in women born between 1988 and 1996 who



DAVIS JENSEN • The Reporter

Student Health Services offers vaccinations against HPV. Getting vaccinated helps prevent several types of cancer.

were fully vaccinated against HPV between the ages of 12 and 13," said Egeland. "The study also points to how crucial the timing of vaccination is. "The girls that didn't develop any cancer were vaccinated before becoming sexually active."

Egeland said that the Student Health Services provides many other sexual health treatments, such as full-service STI screenings.

Students can talk with any of the medical providers on campus for resources or concerns they have.

The Student Health Services is in the lower level of Carkoski Commons.

Students can set up an appointment for the vaccine in the patient portal on the Student Health Services website.

US warns of further retaliation if militias continue



JAKE GREEN • The Associated Press

This photo issued by the Ministry of Defence (MOD) on Sunday, Feb. 4, 2024 shows a RAF Typhoon FGR4 aircraft back at the base, following strikes against Houthi targets in Yemen.

By TARA COPP
The Associated Press

After a weekend of retaliatory strikes, the United States on Sunday warned Iran and the militias it arms and funds that it will conduct more attacks if American forces in the Mideast continue to be targeted, but that it does not want an “open-ended military campaign” across the region.

“We are prepared to deal with anything that any group or any country tries to come at us with,” said Jake Sullivan, President Joe Biden’s national security adviser. Sullivan said Iran should expect “a swift and forceful response” if it — and not one of its proxies — “chose to respond directly” against the U.S.

Sullivan delivered the warnings during a series of interviews with TV news shows after the U.S. and Britain on Saturday struck 36 Houthi targets in Yemen. The Iran-backed militants have fired on American and international interests repeatedly in the wake of the Israel-Hamas war.

An air assault Friday in Iraq and Syria targeted other Iranian-backed militias and the Iranian Revolutionary Guard in retaliation for the drone strike that killed three U.S. troops in Jordan last weekend. The U.S. fired again at Houthi targets on Sunday.

“We cannot rule out that there will be future attacks from Iranian-backed militias in Iraq and Syria or from the Houthis,” Sullivan said. He said the president has told his commanders that “they need to be positioned to respond to further attacks as well.”

The U.S. has blamed the attack at the Tower 22 base in Jordan on Jan. 28 on the Islamic Resistance in Iraq, a coalition of Iranian-backed militias. Iran has tried to distance itself from the drone strike, saying the militias act independently of its direction.

Biden “is not looking for a wider war,” Sullivan said, when questioned about the potential for strikes inside Iran that would expand the conflict in the volatile region. But when asked about the possibility of direct escalation by the Iranians, he said: “If they chose to respond directly to the United States, they would be met

with a swift and forceful response from us.”

While pledging to respond in a “sustained way” to new assaults on Americans, Sullivan said he “would not describe it as some open-ended military campaign.”

Still, he said, “We intend to take additional strikes and additional action to continue to send a clear message that the United States will respond when our forces are attacked or our people are killed.”

There will be more steps taken, he said. “Some of those steps will be seen. Some may not be seen.”

The U.S. attack on dozens of sites in Iraq and Syria hit more than 85 targets at seven locations. These included command and control headquarters, intelligence centers, rockets and missiles, drone and ammunition storage sites and other facilities that were connected to the militias or the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps’ Quds Force, the expeditionary unit that handles Tehran’s relationship with, and arming of, regional militias.

The Biden administration has so far appeared to stop short of directly targeting Iran or senior leaders of the Quds Force within its borders.

The U.S. military does not have any confirmation at this time of civilian casualties from those strikes, Sullivan said. “What we do know is that the targets we hit were absolutely valid targets from the point of view of containing the weaponry and the personnel that were attacking American forces. So, we are confident in the targets that we struck.”

Some of the militias have been a threat to U.S. bases for years, but the groups intensified their assaults in the wake of Israel’s war with Hamas following the Oct. 7 attack on Israel that killed 1,200 people and saw 250 others taken hostage. More than 27,000 people have been killed by Israel’s offensive against Hamas in Gaza, the territory’s Health Ministry has said,

The Houthis have conducted almost daily missile or drone attacks against commercial and military ships transiting the Red Sea.

GOP governors back at Texas

By VALERIE GONZALEZ
The Associated Press

As more than a dozen Republican governors gathered Sunday on the Texas border, Kyle Willis was across the river in Mexico considering his next move to enter the U.S.

The 23-year-old Jamaican, who said he left his country after facing attacks and discrimination due to his sexuality, had followed the path of a historic number of migrants over the past two years and tried crossing the Rio Grande at the border city of Eagle Pass. But he waded back across the river after spending hours, in soaking clothes, failing to persuade Texas National Guard soldiers behind a razor wire fence to let him through.

“It’s not just something they’re saying to deter persons from coming in. It’s actually real,” said Willis, who for now is staying at a shelter in Piedras Negras.

His experience would be considered a victory for Texas Gov. Greg Abbott, who returned to Eagle Pass on Sunday surrounded by GOP governors who have cheered on his extraordinary showdown with President Joe Biden’s administration over immigration enforcement.

But declines in crossings are part of a complex mix of developments along the U.S. border, including heightened enforcement



JAY JANNER • The Associated Press

National Guard soldiers guard Shelby Park in Eagle Pass, Texas, on Sunday Feb. 4, 2024.

in Mexico. Meanwhile, migrants are moving further down the river and crossing elsewhere.

The issue was also at the forefront in Washington, where senators on Sunday raced to release a highly-anticipated bill that pairs border enforcement policy with wartime aid for Ukraine.

Abbott said he would continue expanding operations along the Texas border but did not provide details. For nearly a month, Texas has restricted U.S. Border Patrol’s access to an area along the river known as Shelby Park, accusing the Biden administration of not being tough enough on crossings.

“We are here to send a loud and clear message that we are banding together to fight to ensure that we will be able to maintain our constitutional guarantee that states will be able to defend against any type of imminent danger,” Abbott said.

The record number of border crossings is a political liability for President Joe Biden and an issue that Republicans are eager to put front and center to voters in an election year. Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis last week committed to send more National Guard troops to Texas and other governors are also weighing new deployments.

◀ MIRACLE from page 1

connections. “In Minnesota, there aren’t as many people that have the same mindset as you. It’s hard to find people who find your vision,” Moore said.

Ceramist and Printmaker Liv Meinberg said Miracle has given her ideas on how to figure out what she wants to do with her art.

“The first question I get as an art major is ‘What are you going to do with that?’ and it’s usually a negative response,” Meinberg said. “Miracle gives you an opportunity to see local artists or people who are doing things you’re interested in, but just have no idea where to start.”

Tep said she wished she had

a program like Miracle when she was younger as it would have made her feel comfortable embracing her artistic side.

“In middle and high school, I loved art, but I was always discouraged to go for something other than art because people would say ‘What is art going to do for you in the real world? How are you going to make money?’ Having something to nurture creativity when you’re young is a great stepping stone,” Tep said.

Meinberg said her future goal is to encourage other people to create.

“I think the coolest thing as humans is we create and explore and we just want to try different things,” Meinberg said.

One of Tep’s future goals is to bring art programs to BIPOC communities.

“I want to involve children and bring their own uniqueness and embrace their culture to put that in their communities,” Tep said.

Moore said students should get involved with Miracle to get more exposure in their field and meet others with similar interests.

“You can find people who can uplift you with your ideas. It’s a great opportunity to get yourself in a community that can accept you,” Moore said.

Thomas said all students have to do to join is to “simply reach out” through either attending events or reaching out through their socials.

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Centennial Student Union 218

California storms bring flooding and mudslides



NOAH BERGER • The Associated Press

Workers clear a tree that fell onto a home during heavy wind and rain on Sunday, Feb. 4, 2024, in San Jose, Calif.

By CHRISTOPHER WEBER
The Associated Press

A powerful storm fueled by an atmospheric river pounded Southern California on Monday, causing widespread flooding, turning hillsides into rivers of mud and rocks, knocking out power to many and leading to evacuation orders in some areas.

About 1.4 million people in the Los Angeles area, including the Hollywood Hills and Beverly Hills, were under a flash flood warning Monday morning. Up to 9 inches (23 centimeters) of rain had already fallen in the area, with more expected, according to the National Weather Service, which called the flash flooding and threat of mudslides “a particularly dangerous situation.”

A text late Sunday alerted Keki Mingus, who lives in the Studio City section of Los Angeles, that a neighbor’s house at the top of a hill was in trouble.

“Mud, rocks and water came rushing down through their house and another neighbor’s house and into our street,” Mingus said as water continued to rush down the road around dawn on Monday. “I can’t believe it. It looks like a river that’s been here for years. I’ve never seen anything like it.”

A record 4.1 inches (10.41 centimeters) of rain fell Sunday in downtown Los Angeles, blowing past the previous record of 2.55 inches (6.48 centimeters) set in 1927, the National Weather Service said. Sunday was also the third-wettest February day ever recorded for the city’s downtown and was tied for its 10th-wettest day ever since records began in 1877.

In Northern California, the storm inundated streets and brought down trees and electrical lines Sunday throughout the San Francisco Bay Area, where winds topped 60 mph (96 kph) in some areas. Gusts exceeding 80 mph (128 kph) were recorded in the mountains.

Just to the south in San Jose, emergency crews pulled occupants out of the windows of a car that was stranded by flooding and rescued people from a homeless encampment alongside a rising

river.

In Yuba City, about 100 miles (160 kilometers) northeast of San Francisco, police said they were investigating the death of a man found under a big redwood tree in his backyard Sunday evening. A neighbor heard the tree fall, and it was possible the man was using a ladder to try and clear the redwood when he was killed, police said on Facebook.

The storm then moved into Southern California, where officials warned of potentially devastating flooding and ordered evacuations for canyons that burned in recent wildfires and that are at high risk for mud and debris flows.

“We’ve had flooding. We’ve had gusty winds. We’ve had the whole gamut here,” said Todd Hall, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service near Los Angeles.

“I’ve been doing damage reports all night, so I’ve seen a fair amount of damage and of people being evacuated from homes due to mudslides,” Hall said.

Classes were canceled Monday for schools throughout Santa Barbara County, which was devastated by mudslides caused by 2018 storms.

Further down the coast, strong winds and heavy rain brought treacherous conditions to the city of Ventura, said Alexis Herrera, who was trying to bail out his flooded sedan. “All the freeways are flooded around here,” Herrera said in Spanish. “I don’t know how I’m going to move my car.”

More than 543,000 customers were without electricity statewide on Monday morning, according to poweroutage.us.

Palisades Tahoe, a ski resort about 200 miles (320 kilometers) northeast of San Francisco, said Sunday it was anticipating the heaviest snowfall yet this season, with accumulations of 6 inches (15 centimeters) per hour for a total of up to two feet (60 centimeters). Heavy snow was expected into Monday throughout the Sierra Nevada and motorists were urged to avoid mountain roads.

Much of the state had been drying out from the initial atmospheric river-powered storm that blew in last week.

Biden warns of Trump ‘nightmare’

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE and GABE STERN
The Associated Press

President Joe Biden on Sunday ticked through a list of reasons he says a second Donald Trump presidency would be a “nightmare” for the country as he urged Nevada Democrats to vote for him in the state’s presidential primary this week and for his party at large in November.

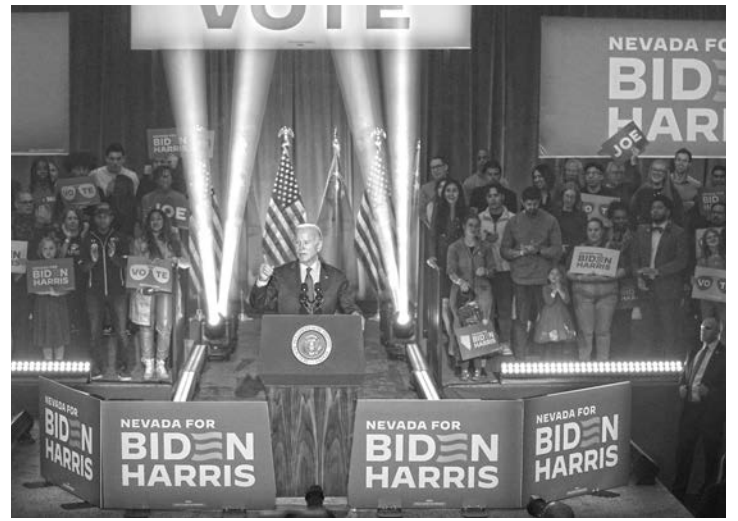
Biden opened a campaign swing with a fundraiser where he focused on Trump’s ample history of provocative statements — his description of Jan. 6 rioters as “hostages,” his musing about a former top military officer deserving execution, his branding of fallen soldiers as “suckers” and “losers,” his wish to be a Day One “dictator,” his vow to supporters that “I am your retribution,” and more.

Then it was on to a community center in a predominantly Black section of Las Vegas, where he told his crowd of several hundred that “you’re the reason we’ll make Donald Trump a loser again.”

Biden said the stakes were huge when he took on Trump in 2020 — “what made America America, I thought, was at risk” — and they are even larger now as a likely rematch looms.

He told donors at the private home in Henderson, Nevada, that if they came to Washington, he’d show them the White House dining room table where Trump, according to ex-aides, sat transfixed for hours in front of the TV as the rioters he’d fired up with his rhetoric stormed the Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021.

“We have to keep the White House,” he said, “We must keep the Senate” and win back the



JOHN LOCHER • The Associated Press

President Joe Biden speaks at a campaign event Sunday, Feb. 4, 2024, in North Las Vegas, Nev.

House.

Accomplish that, he said, and “we can say we saved American democracy.”

He was equally blunt in talking up his record at his subsequent rally where he implored voters to “imagine the nightmare of Donald Trump.”

Trump campaign spokesperson Steven Cheung responded in kind, saying Biden “has been a nightmare for this country in just three short years in the White House, and no amount of gaslighting will make Americans forget about all the misery and destruction he has brought.”

In Tuesday’s Nevada Democratic presidential primary, Biden faces only token opposition from author Marianne Williamson and a few relatively unknown challengers. He won Nevada in November 2020 by fewer than 3 percentage points. But he came to Nevada to rouse voters for the fall

campaign as well.

The state known largely for its casino and hospitality industries is synonymous with split-ticket, hard-to-predict results. It has a transient, working-class population and large Latino, Filipino and Chinese American and Black communities. Nevada has a stark rural-urban divide, with more than 88% of active registered voters — and much of its political power — in the two most populous counties, which include the Las Vegas and Reno metro areas.

In 2022, Democrats successfully defended their Senate seat and lost the governor’s office. The six constitutional officers elected statewide are split evenly among Democrats and Republicans.

The narrow victory of Sen. Catherine Cortez Masto helped Democrats party keep control of the Senate for the remainder of Biden’s current term.



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Make time for your hobbies

A daily routine without a creative outlet becomes repetitive. We wake up, go to work, go to class, finish assignments and go back to sleep only to repeat the same cycle the next day.

In order to decrease burnout, it is important as students and as human beings to make time for hobbies we enjoy.

Whether it is going for a walk, playing a sport, drawing, crocheting or even scrapbooking, including a portion of our creative outlets within our day will help boost our mental health.

According to a study completed in New Zealand by psychologist Dr. Tamlin Conner, engaging in creative activities can lead to an improved sense of wellbeing with potential long lasting effects.

Participants felt a higher positive affect or mood and a sense of flourishing days after they engaged in a creative activity.

Regardless of learning the benefits, it can be difficult to get started with a change in routine.

We may contradict plans to be adventurous because of time, and prioritize other obligations than our own interests. Breaking structure is intimidating, but we can arrange gaps in our day to coordinate with a hobby.

If the time in a day is overwhelming, it may be helpful to look at a bigger picture: a week. For the more organized, writing down spare time and keeping it in a schedule gives a reminder to look for this healthy distraction.

If a week's worth of obligations lack a minute of time to self, it may be time to turn down tasks. It is okay to say no to things when we don't have time to ourselves.

As college students, being online is not only a part of our curriculum, but also our social lives. Social media can sometimes be an endless, unescapable hole and all of a sudden, all of our free time disappears. Being aware of the time we spend on our phones, television or tablet and switching it to a hobby will be more beneficial to our minds.

If the most difficult part of finding time for a hobby is the hobby itself, a simple google search can make a big difference.

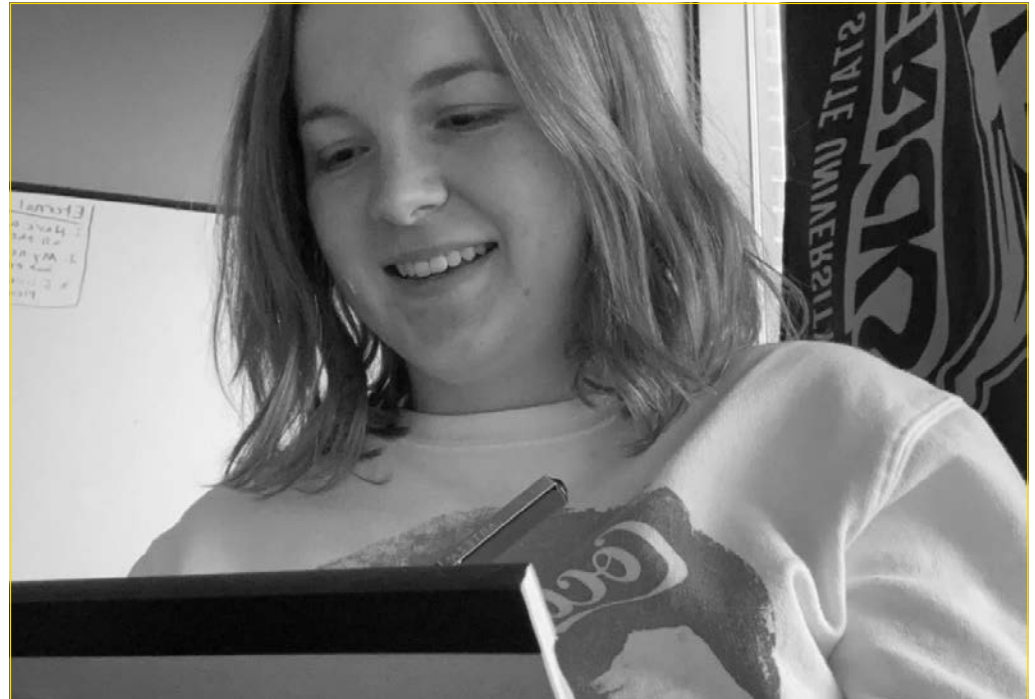
There are quizzes online with recommendations based on interests we already have, or a deep dive into YouTube videos with people indulging in creative expression can spark a few ideas for how to get started.

Hobbies give us a sense of self; they are spaces to enjoy life outside of pressure.

Dedicating time for our hobbies will not only help our minds, but also help us get to know ourselves as people.

Perspectives

One month down, 11 to go



Courtesy Emma Johnson

I was sitting in the teleprompter room of my winter job at KELOLAND Media Group, waiting to come back from commercial break. While advertisement jingles played in the background, I was working on my new year's resolutions for 2023. Usually, I wouldn't have written out goals for myself. After seeing one too many Instagram posts talking about how writing goals down makes them more achievable, I thought 'why not?' I wrote four down and saved them in a safe place, reminding myself to come back to them at the start of 2024 to see how well I'd done.



Emma Johnson
Editor in Chief

health took a toll on me along with my physical health. After going to the doctor and getting a diagnosis, it would still be two and a half months before I would get on medication or see my therapist for the first time.

I have quite a few memories at this time, some not as pleasant as I'd like, while others are pretty blurry. During this time, I was so focused on keeping my symptoms at bay that I couldn't focus on things I used to enjoy. My mind would be worried about events that never came into

fruition, but at the moment, they seemed very real. Living in a state of constant fear is exhausting. By the end of the day, all I wanted to do was sleep, even though I'd laid around most of the day because of my depression.

Once I had my resources, I was able to slowly start focusing my attention back to my writing, reading and being fully present with my friends when we would hang out. There were tons of life changes coming my way and the stress of trying to take it on all at once only heightened my mental demons. All of Thanksgiving and Christmas break were an absolute blessing. During that month and a half (even the one week before finals), I felt like I had finally returned back to myself. I can't tell you how much joy and peace it brought me.

The first few weeks of spring semester went great

COLUMN on page 5▶

Pulse

"What invention would you create?"

Compiled by Dylan Long



NIFTALEL DINNY,
SOPHOMORE

"Helicopter Hat"



CHARLIE SLANA,
FRESHMAN

"Lightweight affordable way to breath underwater."



NIGAR NASIB,
FRESHMAN

"Smart Pad to write anything for you."



COURTNEY YOUNG,
SOPHOMORE

"Record dreams."



LEANA FUGATE,
SOPHOMORE

"Freeze time."



MARVIN LAMIM,
SENIOR

"Cloning."

Some Americans have become saddled with credit card debt



MATT ROURKE • AP File

Noticeable pockets of Americans are quickly running up their credit card balances and increasing numbers are now falling behind on their debts.

By KEN SWEET
The Associated Press

While the U.S. economy is broadly healthy, pockets of Americans have run through their savings and run up their credit card balances after battling inflation for more than two years.

Experts worry that members of these groups -- mostly lower- and middle-income Americans, who tend to be renters -- are falling behind on their debts and could face further deterioration of their financial health in the year ahead, particularly those who have recently resumed paying off student loans.

"The U.S. economy is currently performing better than most forecasters expected a year ago, thanks in large part to a resilient consumer," wrote Shernette McLoud, an economist with TD Economics, in a report issued Wednesday. "However, more recently that spending is increasingly being financed by credit cards."

Americans held more than \$1.05 trillion on their credit cards in the third quarter of 2023, a record, and a figure certain to grow once the fourth-quarter data is released by Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. next month. A recent report from the credit rating company Moody's showed that credit card delinquency rates and charge-off rates, or the percent of

loans that a bank believes will never be repaid, are now well above their 2019 levels and are expected to keep climbing.

These worrisome metrics coincide with the average interest rate on a bank credit card of roughly 21.5%, the highest it's been since the Federal Reserve started tracking the data in 1994.

"Overall, the consumer is credit healthy. However, the reality is that there are starting to be some significant signs of stress," said Silvio Tavares, president and CEO of VantageScore, one of the country's two major credit scoring systems.

Most analyses of Americans' financial health tend to tell a tale of two consumers. On one side are the roughly two-thirds of Americans who own their homes and those who've invested in the stock market and done substantially well. They generally had the savings cushion necessary to weather high inflation. Delinquency rates on single-family homes remain at near historic lows and home prices have continued to climb.

But for the rest of America, things are looking rough.

"You have these noticeable pockets of consumers -- mostly middle- and lower-income renters who have not benefitted from the wealth effect of higher housing prices and stock prices -- who are feeling financial stress and that's driving up these delinquency lev-

els. They've been hit very hard by inflation," said Warren Kornfeld, a senior vice president at Moody's, in an interview.

Kornfeld, who co-wrote a report last week looking at the climbing levels of delinquencies, expects them to keep climbing this year.

Consumers' financial health could play a big role in the 2024 election. President Joe Biden is running in part on his efforts to bring down costs for U.S. families. Republicans counter that Biden is to blame for higher costs in the first place.

One way to gauge this bifurcation of the American economy is by looking at the results of some major credit card companies. The customers of Capital One, Discover Financial and Synchrony have historically been those with lower credit scores, while American Express typically serves the wealthiest and well-to-do.

At Synchrony Bank, the largest issuer of retail co-brand credit cards, the charge-off rate jumped from 3.5% to 5.6% in a year. Meanwhile, roughly 4.7% of Synchrony customers are 30 days or more behind on their bills, which is also up from a year ago.

Discover's customers are carrying \$102 billion in balances on their credit cards, up 13% from a year earlier.

◀COLUMN from page 4

as well. Syllabus week and the second week of school have never given me much stress because there's not a lot going on. Then my health anxiety (which I wrote about last week) kicked in and threw me into a spiral I had not felt for quite some time and it scared the crap out of me. With school picking up the pace for how a normal semester would go, it only threw

a wrench in the plans, but ones that I knew would show up. Despite knowing homework and illnesses abound during the winter, I still didn't enjoy how I was feeling and I knew there was no way I wanted to get back to how bad I felt before. My anxiety comes and goes occasionally, but I'm trying to work on it.

I wasn't disappointed at the start of the year when I saw I

hadn't completed my full list of goals from 2023. I took my wins where I could get them. Eventually, I realized my goal of getting through the year despite my hard days was the best resolution I hadn't initially put on my list. So this year, I decided to write my top five goals down again. This time, I believe I can do it, especially number one: improve my mental health to the best it can be.

Psychedelics gives way to pharma economics



CRAIG MITCHELLDYER • The Associated Press

A grower cuts psilocybin mushrooms to prepare for distribution in Springfield, Ore., Monday, Aug. 14, 2023.

By MATTHEW PERRONE
The Associated Press

Money is pouring into the fledgling psychedelic medicine industry, with dozens of startup companies vying to be among the first to sell mind-expanding drugs for depression, addiction and other mental health conditions.

While psychedelics are still illegal under federal law, companies are jostling to try and patent key ingredients found in magic mushrooms, ayahuasca and other substances that have been used underground for decades or — in some cases — for millennia by indigenous cultures.

Wall Street's sudden exuberance for hallucinogens has rankled longtime advocates and philanthropists, who dreamed of making low-cost psychedelics widely available for mental health and personal growth.

Instead, many now see a very different future for drugs like psilocybin and LSD: as expensive, specialty medications controlled by a handful of biotech companies.

"It's disappointing," said Carey Turnbull, an investor and philanthropist who sits on the board of several psychedelic nonprofits. "All the air is getting sucked out of the room by these for-profit companies who say, 'Wow, this stuff is awesome, if I could patent it I'd make a fortune.'"

Since 2010, Turnbull and his wife have donated millions to fund psychedelic research at New York University, Yale and other top academic centers.

Promising results from those studies have sparked a wave of popular interest in psychedelics, amplified by books, documentaries and articles touting their potential to reshape care for mental illness, trauma and end-of-life care.

But in recent years, Turnbull has pivoted to challenging what he and other advocates consider frivolous patents filed by companies entering the field.

Most psychedelic startups are backed by venture capitalists or tech investors looking for the next industry "disruptor." Behind one of the biggest companies, Atai

Life Sciences, is PayPal billionaire Peter Thiel, whose enthusiasm for psychedelics is shared by many in Silicon Valley.

About 50 such companies now trade on public stock exchanges, including developers of psychedelic drugs, retreats and training programs. Some analysts project the industry could grow to over \$10 billion within the decade.

But recently investors have pulled back, amid reminders of the stark challenges of converting illegal drugs into money-making medicines.

Atai laid off 30% of its staff last March after its depression treatment failed in a key study. Stocks are down 80% to 90% from their highs across the industry with several smaller companies restructuring or declaring bankruptcy.

"They're in this hype cycle, but then the reality of running a biotech company catches up with you," said Chris Yetter of Dumont Global, which trades in cannabis and psychedelic companies. "You do drug trials and some of them succeed and some fail and every quarter your cash drains away."

The cash crunch recently forced fundamental changes at the field's leading nonprofit, the Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies.

For more than 30 years, MAPS' efforts have been funded almost entirely by donations from wealthy individuals, including billionaires like New York Mets owner Steven Cohen and Republican political donor Rebekah Mercer.

On principle, MAPS has never patented its work.

The group's pharmaceutical arm, the MAPS Public Benefit Corp., is expected to win U.S. approval this year for the first psychedelic medicine accepted for review by the Food and Drug Administration: MDMA, or ecstasy, to help treat post-traumatic stress disorder.

But as investment opportunities have multiplied, charitable donations have dried up.

The group was recently forced to take on private investors to continue funding the drug company, which changed its name to Lykos Therapeutics.

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SPORTS

Mavs hockey unable to sweep the Tommies

By AHMED HASSAN
Staff Writer

The Tommies were up 3-2 with one minute left in play having the win in their sights when Josh Groll fired the equalizing dagger to equalize and sink the Tommies hope of winning.

St. Thomas reclaimed their spot atop the CCHA standings after a series split against the Minnesota State Mavericks this weekend. The Tommies sit with 34 points while the Mavs have 32.

The Mavericks beat the Tommies in overtime 4-3 in a thrilling game Friday, and the Tommies beat the Mavs 4-2 on Saturday.

Friday's game was a thriller with the Mavericks playing away from home, but the Maverick fans showed up and with that came an intense energy for the Mavs.

The Mavs took an early lead against the Tommies scoring two goals in the first nine minutes of the game, courtesy of Connor Gregga and Brett Moravec.

The Mavs second goal was their 20th power play goal of the season.

After a dominant start in the first period for the Mavs, the Tommies came out firing in the second period. They erased the Mavs lead and brought the game to a 2-2 draw within the first nine minutes of the period.

The rest of the second period ended scoreless, setting the stage up for an electric third period.



DYLAN LONG • The Reporter

The Minnesota State hockey team split their series against St. Thomas. The Mavs went to St. Thomas and won in overtime Friday night before losing at home on Saturday.

The third period was a dominant display from the Mavs as they tested the Tommies time and time again. They forced Aaron Trotter to come up with save after save to keep the Tommies in it. The Tommies struck first with five minutes remaining in the period on a power play to take the lead against the

Mavericks.

The Tommies led with 1 minute remaining when the Mavs emptied their net and sent all their numbers forward. Josh Groll fired the dagger with 33 seconds left to equalize for the Mavs and send the game to overtime.

The Mavs instantly took control

of OT and dominated the Tommies. Zach Krajnik circled around the net and backhanded a pass across the goal to Kaden Bohlsen who fired the winning goal for the Mavs.

"For the longest time it was an even game," head coach Luke Strand said. "We started to let it

slip through our fingers but I was proud of the guys for sticking with the plan late for as long as it took to get the equalizer. That was a huge goal Groll scored for us."

"It's so tight. They (St. Thomas) took advantage of the errors we made tonight so we have to clean up our game because we know every point is so important. I hope it's packed at our place tomorrow," said Strand.

It was packed for the game in Mankato, with 4,973 fans showing out for the Mavericks. With a packed house and a must win game for the top of the conference, the stakes were high.

The Tommies opened up the scoring early with Cooper Gay scoring in the first minute of the game after a failed clear by the Mavs.

The Mavericks' mistakes caught up to them once again in the first period. The Mavs turned the puck over behind the net, and Liam Malmquist collected the loose puck and brought the Tommies lead to 2-0.

The Mavericks mistakes proved to be their demise in the beginning of the first period.

"I'd love to play a perfect game too you know," said Strand after the game. "Sometimes you play a perfect game and you're still behind you know and so the miscues they took advantage of and put the back of the net to their credit."

HOCKEY on page 10 ▶

Women's basketball takes care of business at SMSU

By MOHAMED WARSAME
Sports Editor

The Minnesota State women's basketball team was back in action with a 87-67 victory over Southwest Minnesota State University Friday.

The Mavericks win over the Mustangs extended their winning-streak to 16 games.

The Mavs took early control of the game with a dominant first quarter. Emily Herzberg got things started with a three-pointer at the top of key 15 seconds into the game. The Mavs scored 18 points off of 11 SMSU turnovers to give them a 27-13 lead at the end of the first quarter.

After MSU ended the first quarter on a 15-3 run, the Mustangs started the second quarter like a house on fire to get themselves back into the game. SMSU went on a 14-2 run thanks in large part to the 11 points scored by Brie Stoltzman during their run. Stoltzman scored on her first six attempts from the field.

At the end of the Mustangs' run, they had cut the lead to two points and the score was 29-27. MSU's Natalie Bremer helped get things go-



Courtesy Maverick Athletics

The Minnesota State women's basketball team was able to regain control of the game in the third quarter after SMSU made a comeback in the second quarter Friday night.

ing again for the Mavs after a pull-up jumper. After a three-pointer

by Stoltzman with 4:20 left in the second quarter, Herzberg's corner

three and Bremer's reverse layup helped the Mavs go into halftime

up 40-37.

The Mavs shot 48.7% from the field in the first half, and went two for eight from the three-point line.

The third quarter was where the Mavs were able to regain control, and pull away from the Mustangs. Early on in the quarter, MSU's Hannah Herzig blocked Madison Gehloff from behind which led to a layup off the glass by Grace Mueller to extend the Mavs' lead back to double digits. MSU outscored the Mustangs 28-13 in the third quarter to give them a 68-50 lead heading into the fourth quarter. The Mavs also kept Stoltzman off the scoreboard for the entirety of the quarter.

In the fourth quarter, the box score was a lot more even in the points category. The Mavs outscored SMSU 19-17, but the damage was already done in the third quarter.

Bremer led the Mavs in scoring with 22 points. Destinee Bursch was the team's second leading scorer with 20 points. Ava Stier scored five points and got 10 rebounds in her first start of the season.

As a team, the Mavs shot 51.3% from the field, and 28.6% from

full story on our website ▶

Track and Field jumps to new records



Courtesy Maverick Athletics

Flore Gracia recorded a 13.28 meter triple jump. Gracia's jump puts her first in the NCAA Division II leaderboard this season.

By LUKE JACKSON
News Editor

Both men's and women's track and field teams took over as they leaped past all the competition.

At home, they hosted the Ted Nelson Classic. The men took first place out of 10 teams, while the women took second out of nine. "The highlight of the day was Flore Gracia breaking her school record in the triple jump," said head coach Mike Turgeon in a press release on the Mankato Athletics website.

Gracia broke her own school record in the triple jump with a 13.28-meter distance. Gracia's jump ranks first in NCAA Division II this season, and the third-best triple jump in NCAA Division II history. This season, she has the first, second, and fourth-best marks, while MSU teammates Stella Neophytou and Lillian Washington rank seventh and eighth.

Omaha alum Nkiruka Domike set the first and second place records in 2011 with 13.76 and 13.40-meter jumps.

Four more first-place finishes occurred for the women's team in the pole vault, shot put, high jump and 4x400-meter relay team.

Hope Stangel cleared 3.71 meters in the pole vault, Madeline Fretag threw for 13.49 meters in the shot put and Lillian Washington jumped 1.67 meters in the high jump. Alexa Post, Esther Miller, Lillian Orf and Melanie Marks finished with a time of 4:14.77 in the relay.

For the men, James Gilbert and Shemar Miller grabbed the national lead in Division II long jump and triple jump.

Gilbert dominated the nation with the first, second and third-best jumps of the year. He took first with his 7.78-meter jump Saturday. MSU's Slade Heald took second with a distance of 7.49 meters. Miller's triple jump at 15.93

meters now leads all of Division II.

More wins came from various competitions. Freshman Collin Windorski won the pole vault at 4.92 meters, Carter Aguilera won the men's weight throw at 19.48 meters and Aiden Buendorf topped the high jump at 2.06 meters.

Gilbert, Miller, Heald and Onyekachi Ukaobasi took first in the 4x400-meter relay with a time of 3:27.03.

"I am very happy with how our teams are progressing this indoor season," said Turgeon. "James Gilbert and Shemar Miller taking over the national lead in long jump and triple jump were highlights. It is very enjoyable to watch them compete at such a high level."

As a team, the Mavericks (179) came in ahead of St. Thomas (124), Minnesota Duluth (97), Sioux Falls (81.5), North Iowa Area CC (63), Iowa Central CC (30), Carleton (27), Hawkeye CC (21) and Martin Luther (15).

Anthony Davis has 3rd career triple-double

By STEVE REED
The Associated Press

D'Angelo Russell scored 28 points, Anthony Davis had 26 points, 15 rebounds and 11 assists for his third career triple-double and the Los Angeles Lakers held on to defeat the short-handed Charlotte Hornets 124-118 on Monday night for their third straight win.

LeBron James added 26 points for the Lakers (27-25), who finished 4-2 on their road trip to build some much needed momentum before the upcoming All-Star break.

Miles Bridges erupted for a career-high 41 points and rookie

Brandon Miller scored 33 points with five 3-pointers for the Hornets, who suffered their eighth straight loss since trading Terry Rozier to Miami.

The Lakers shot 64% from the floor in the first half and built a 74-58 lead heading into the locker room behind 22 points from Russell and 17 from James.

James had several highlight reel moment in the opening half, driving past P.J. Washington and dunking over 7-foot center Nick Richards for a three-point play.

James had another baseline drive for a high-flying two-handed jam and also fed Anthony Davis for an alley-oop dunk.

The Lakers had 36 assists. Los Angeles extended its lead

to 21 points late in the third quarter as Christian Wood knocked down a 3 and then dunked off a pass from Austin Reaves.

But the Hornets would make it a game behind Miller, who had 16 points in the fourth quarter.

The No. 2 pick in the draft intercepted a Reaves pass and went the length of the court for a dunk and then added back-to-back 3s to cut the Lakers lead to four with about two minutes remaining.

Charlotte had a chance to make it a one-possession game, but Davis tipped Bridges' step-back 3-point attempt and Reaves made two free throws to push the lead to six and seal the win.

Bridges finished 16 of 26 from the field with five 3s.

Road trip tests no. 2 ranked men's basketball



Courtesy Maverick Athletics

Small College Basketball has announced that Minnesota State senior Malik Willingham has been named to the top-25 watch for the Trevor Hudgins Award.

By HAYDEN LEE
Staff Writer

After suffering their second loss of the season, the Mavericks were tasked with two more road games to open up the month of February.

Each opponent gave the no. 2 ranked team in Division II a run for their money.

The first game on the docket was a rematch against Southwest Minnesota State University.

The Mavericks pulled out a 10 point win over the Mustangs, 68-58.

This performance gave the Mavericks their 20th win of the season as they moved to 20-2.

As you would expect, the first half was filled with runs and lead changes that had all of the early signs of a tightly contested game.

The lead was mostly in the hands of the Mustangs, until Malik Willingham turned it on.

He scored nine points in a 14-4 Maverick run to knot the game at 31 with halftime nearing.

The Mustangs would snatch the lead back as the teams went into the locker room, 35-34.

The Mavericks got off to a poor start shooting the basketball, as they only shot 38% from the floor and went 4-14 from downtown, but their defense kept them in the game as they forced 7 turnovers and scored 11 points off turnovers.

To open the second half, the Mavericks went on a 16-2 run that in essence, put the dagger in the hearts of Mustang fans as they would never regain the lead.

Kyreese Willingham was excellent down the stretch as he made timely baskets that halted any attempt of a comeback for the Mustangs.

Kyreese and Malik Willingham each scored 17 points in the victory, but the real story was the ability of the Maverick defense to hold the Mustangs to just 58 points.

They forced 12 turnovers, had seven steals and two blocks in a 'grind it out' type of game.

"Tonight was a big road win where I thought our guys really had the ball moving and played connected for 40 minutes," said

Mavericks head coach Matt Margenthaler in a press release posted to the Maverick Athletics website. "Defensively, we were as solid as we've been for a while. That's the combination you have to have on the road."

The next day, the Mavericks traveled to Sioux Falls, where the Cougars were ready to give the Mavs all they could handle.

The Cougars jumped out to an early 16-6 lead, which included a 9-0 run that led to a score of 18-9 midway through the first half.

The Cougars held on tight to their lead, as every time the Mavericks seemed to have a spark, the Cougars matched them on their next possession.

If not for four free throws from Malik Willingham in the last 40 seconds of the half, the 34-27 Cougar lead could have been much bigger as the teams entered the locker room.

Strangely enough, there was no scoring in the first two and a half minutes in the second half, until Malik Willingham was able to make a three-pointer to light the spark for the Mavs.

The Mavs went on a 19-3 run which included Willingham's three to open up the second half of play.

This gave the Mavs a 46-37 advantage with 13 minutes left.

The Mavericks continued to push their way out to a 57-47 lead, but the Cougars weren't done yet.

The Cougars were able to re-take the lead 62-58, thanks to a 15-1 run on their last breath.

A few minutes later, with the score tied at 64, Malik Willingham hit a huge floater that became the game-winner.

Turnovers and missed shots haunted the Cougars as the Mavs left Sioux Falls victorious.

"I thought our guys really competed tonight at a high level and handled adversity as well as we have in a long time," said Margenthaler. "It was a great road victory."

That great road victory now puts the Mavericks at 21-2 on the season, and they will return home this weekend to take on Wayne State Friday and Augustana Saturday.

2026 World Cup final will be played at MetLife Stadium



SETH WENIG • The Associated Press

This is an aerial view showing MetLife Stadium in East Rutherford, N.J., June 20, 2014. The 2026 World Cup final will be at MetLife Stadium in East Rutherford, N.J., on July 19.

By RONALD BLUM
The Associated Press

The 2026 World Cup final will be played at MetLife Stadium in New Jersey, beating out Texas and California for soccer's showcase game.

FIFA awarded the July 19 championship to the \$1.6 billion venue, which opened in 2010, the culminating match of an expanded 48-nation, 104-game tournament that will be spread across three nations for the first time.

Located about 10 miles from Manhattan, MetLife was promoted by both New York and New Jersey, where the stadium was built in the Meadowlands marshes. The land of Bruce Springsteen, Jon Bon Jovi and Frank Sinatra will be the focal point of the globe

on that Sunday, when either Lionel Messi's Argentina will try to win its second straight title or a successor will emerge.

"It will be a celebration of our diversity and our values," New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy said in a telephone interview. "The bigger picture is what leads up to it and what we leave behind for the decades to come."

FIFA made the announcement Sunday at a Miami television studio, allocating the opener of the 39-day tournament to Mexico City's Estadio Azteca on June 11 and the finale to the home of the NFL's New York Jets and Giants.

Dallas Cowboys owner Jerry Jones had lobbied for the final to be at his AT&T Stadium in Arlington, Texas.

"The competition was dealing

with the perception of the coastal, of a New York, or a Los Angeles," he said. "If this were totally being played to just America and the United States, that wouldn't have been such a formidable thing to overcome. But internationally, that's formidable to overcome."

All games from the quarterfinals on are being played in the United States. Semifinals are on July 14 at AT&T and the following day at Mercedes Benz Stadium in Atlanta.

Quarterfinals are at Gillette Stadium in Foxborough, Massachusetts, on July 9, at SoFi Stadium in Inglewood, California, the following day, and at Arrowhead Stadium in Kansas City, Missouri, and Hard Rock Stadium in Miami Gardens, Florida, on July 11. The third-place game will be at Hard

◀HOCKEY from page 8

The second goal was the wake up call for the Mavericks as they began getting more looks at goal, which led to a Josh Groll goal that was ruled out due to contact with the goalkeeper.

The Mavs wasted no time responding with Brian Carrabes scoring on the power play.

The game was a very chippy and contested affair with both teams receiving penalties.

The Tommies ended the period on a five minute power play after Josh Groll received a major for hitting from behind.

The Tommies wasted no time taking control instantly with a four minute and 30 second power play, as Gay scored his second of the game two minutes into the second period.

The Mavs began to get it going and put pressure on the Tommies.

Josh Groll struck again against the Tommies, finding the rebound and scoring his seventh goal of the season.

The Mavs wasted no time attacking and trying to find the

equalizer, but failed to convert anything into a goal with Trotter denying the Mavs anything.

The Mavs finished the period with 23 shots to the Tommies 12.

The same trend followed in the third period for the Mavs.

Trotter was the outlying difference in the game, having one of the best performances on the rink.

He made two crucial saves, which included making a stop on Sam Morton's breakaway chance, and diving across the crease to kick out Adam Eisele's shot.

"I just thought he was very solid, he was very good," said Strand about Trotter. "I think he gave them opportunities for momentum throughout their own game because he was making big stops, I thought he was timely."

The Mavs weren't able to score after an amazing performance from Trotter.

Mack Byers sealed the game for the Tommies after golfing the puck down on an empty net for a 4-2 win.

"It's definitely not the way we want to start games but I liked our resiliency and just our determina-

tion to come back and play to the last minute," said Brian Carrabes after the game. "In the last seconds everyone put their best effort forward and it's the kind of outcome that sucks."

The Mavs did well to respond against a tough opponent, but silly penalties, a terrible start and a great performance from Trotter prevented them from getting the series sweep.

The Mavs now move to 10-6-2 conference record after the series split, and a 14-10-4 overall record.

The Mavericks play Michigan Tech 7:07 p.m.Friday, and 5:07 p.m. Saturday.

"We don't want to chase outcomes; we want to chase play," said head coach Luke Strand. "I think we're going to find ourselves doubling up their chances, getting looks."

Trotter played excellent in net but we chased the game because our miscues were right on their tape. But I was proud of the guys' response. I think we stuck to the right things and continued to fight the right way."

Premier League title race gets a lot tighter as Arsenal beats Liverpool



KIN CHEUNG • The Associated Press

Arsenal players celebrate after their teammate Gabriel Martinelli scored their side's second goal during the English Premier League soccer match between Arsenal and Liverpool at Emirates Stadium.

By STEVE DOUGLAS
The Associated Press

The Premier League title race just got a lot tighter.

Arsenal benefited from two second-half errors from Liverpool goalkeeper Alisson Becker to claim a 3-1 victory over the league leaders on Sunday.

Arsenal moved up to second place and just two points behind Liverpool after 23 of 38 games in what might shape up to be a three-way fight for the title.

Manchester City is in third place, five points off Liverpool but with two games in hand, and the defending champions will likely be happy with the result at Emirates Stadium. City is away to Brentford on Monday.

Liverpool fell to only its second loss in the league, with the other also coming in north London — at Tottenham. If that defeat was in contentious circumstances, this one was of Liverpool's own making after being dominated for large parts of the game and because of the nature of Arsenal's crucial second goal in the 67th that made it 2-1.

Alisson, widely seen as the league's best goalkeeper, came out of his area in an attempt to clear a long pass forward but kicked fresh air and the ball hit the back of covering defender Virgil van

Dijk. Gabriel Martinelli had the simple task of tapping the loose ball into an empty net.

The same Liverpool players had a role in a stoppage-time third, too, with Leandro Trossard's shot deflecting off the outstretched boot of Van Dijk and going through the legs of Alisson as he tried to make the save at his near post. Liverpool was down to 10 men at that point after Ibrahima Konate's sending off for two yellow cards.

Bukayo Saka gave Arsenal the lead in the 14th minute, only for Arsenal defender Gabriel Magalhaes to score an own-goal when the ball struck his hand and flew into the net.

That pulled Liverpool level at halftime, despite the visitors not having a shot on goal in the first half in what was a below-par display overall by the leaders.

"It just shows the boys are human beings," Klopp said. "Today we were really human."

Arsenal is back in sight of the lead after a third straight win, which came after a run of three consecutive losses in all competitions that led to doubts over the title credentials of last season's runner-up.

"We were top at Christmas and then had a few sloppy results," Arsenal midfielder Declan Rice said.

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VARIETY

Black History Month calls for Jeopardy

By ELLIE MESCHKE
Staff Writer

Who was the first woman to refuse to give up her seat on the bus? Who was Bayard Rustin? These questions and more were answered at Black History Jeopardy with the African Student Association Friday.

Zoe Gorah, the president of the ASA, said, "We did it because we wanted to have an event where we could celebrate some of the history monuments, the heroes, some freedom fighters that have come before us, and make it a game, make it fun, and also make it a knowledge fueled game station."

With two groups of about 10 people each, attendees played jeopardy while enjoying free snacks and hot cocoa. The game was enjoyed by all, as all attendees participated in the game.

Gorah also said "One of the things we help to accomplish in the African Student Association is to have everyone attend, anyone. We always have it on our social media or when we put it online that everybody's welcome, but we always felt like it's only the African students or the black students that ever come to our events, but that's not really who we are catered to as we are also trying to teach people, assure people, and have people experience what African culture is. And so, I think it would have been more fun



NATE TILAHUN • The Reporter

The African Student Association hosted Black History Jeopardy in celebration of February as Black History Month Friday.

if more people, who are not just African students, had shown up."

"The ASA, we are a group of international students or students with African roots who want to basically keep that African community alive on campus. But we want

to keep it alive through expressing our culture, through sharing our culture, sharing our food, our experiences, and, we also want to be the first people that students can turn to if they need any help, especially African international stu-

dents because sometimes, there's all this information around, but, no one really—it's really hard to know everything that goes on at school, and so we're there to support the African students as well. If they

JEOPARDY on page 12

Hand painting American Sign Language

By ANAHI ZUNIGA
Staff Writer

February has rolled around, and clubs are beginning to set up for the new semester. Minnesota State University is home to over 200+ recognized student organizations that enrich campus and one of them is the American Sign Language Club, an RSO that allows MSU students to learn ASL through activities.

Third-year student Anna Symens is the president of the ASL Club. She shared how hand painting ties into educating and celebrating ASL through arts, crafts and community as a way to have students feel welcomed.

"Hand painting is one of our more fun activities that we have decided to implement in our club this semester. A lot of our meetings are typically more lecture based for students to come and learn ASL, but then have a fun activity the following week such as hand painting," Symens said. "So students can look up, or if they don't have one already, a fun sign, a word in sign language and paint it on their hands. It's just like a fun way to implement arts and crafts into our meetings."

ASL is a language that is shared between the Deaf community and is taught among schools and in-



ALEXIS DARKOW • The Reporter

The American Sign Language or ASL Club met to paint their hands to match their favorite word in ASL Wednesday. They painted food, animals, bugs and more.

stitutions. Hearing students such as Symens explain how important ASL is to both the hearing and Deaf community.

"I've been given permission by a member of the Deaf community to speak about this on their behalf. As I am a hearing student myself, that is very important. American Sign Language is important to the Deaf community because it is a culture, it is not just a language. That is really important. It is just like our language, anybody has a language. It is important to communicate,

being able to talk with other people," she said.

Through its hand painting activity and other events, the ASL club hopes to spread awareness of ASL and learn more about Deaf culture.

"This semester, we have decided to start implementing more about Deaf culture in our meetings, which Kari Sween, our advisor, has offered to speak more about Deaf culture since she is a member of the Deaf community. She has decided or offered to speak more about that

since that is part of her culture," Symens said. "That is one way that we've been implementing it more, but she also has given us permission to teach the basics. Those of us who have gone through or are currently going through the ASL program, we teach basic numbers, basic words and other things."

Symens also explained ways that hearing students can spread ASL awareness and how to learn more about the Deaf community and culture.

"The best course of action is to learn ASL and sign up for an ASL class. One of my biggest things that I would be mindful of would be not pretending to know everything about it. One thing that our advisor talks about is interpreters, like if you're not a licensed interpreter, do not say that you can interpret. It's just being mindful of your surroundings and it's crucially important to be aware of your skills," she said. "The other one would be to ask them. People in the deaf community, what I found, this is only from speaking to Kari and a couple other people, but from what Kari has said to me is ask because they're more than likely to talk to you about it. They really want you to be aware of it."

For more information about the ASL Club and their events, visit <https://mavcentral.mnsu.edu>

Building community in Neurodivergent Club

By MERCEDES KAUPHUSMAN
Variety Editor

Finding a community in college is sometimes challenging—for neurodivergent students, this task can be even more daunting.

In order to find strength in numbers, neurodiverse students and allies at Minnesota state created the Neurodiversity Club.

"What we're especially focusing on right now, and I'll keep on saying this is just community, community, community," club president Alanna Worrall said. "Building that confidence and getting rid of that feeling of loneliness."

According to Harvard University, neurodiversity describes the idea of people experiencing and interacting with the world in different ways; emphasizing how there is no correct way to think, learn and behave. The term is often used for individuals with autism spectrum disorder and other neurological conditions like ADHD.

"We realized that there wasn't really a club that existed for neurodivergent students on campus, and there wasn't really a conversation happening about neurodiversity and mental health as a whole," Worrall said. "We really wanted to change that, and change some of the conversations happening around campus, as well as just building a kind of safe space for neurodivergent students."

Worrall stressed the importance of education on the misconceptions of neurodivergence, and hopes to promote, "rather than autism awareness, autism acceptance."

"Neurodiversity exists and not everything is at the norm, and that's okay," Worrall said. "It's more about, 'what are some things that we can do to make society more inclusive?' and also, 'what are some supports we can provide in order to improve individual quality of life?'"

The club fosters a space to connect, share techniques, provide support and improve mental health in its members.

"It's really about getting to know each other and building those really strong bonds," Worrall said.

The Neurodivergent Club also works with Accessibility Resources to ensure MSU students receive the accommodations they need, including the accessibility space and an incoming library space in the Memorial Library.

"Basically [we're] making sure that everyone on campus gets the accommodations they

CLUB on page 12



MERCEDÉS KAUPHUSMAN • The Reporter

Alanna Worrall (above) is president of Minnesota State's Neurodivergent Club, a club to provide a safe space for neurodivergent individuals and allies on campus. The club hosts monthly meetings as well manages as a 24/7 Discord server.

“**CLUB** from page 11 need without too many hurdles,” Worrall said.

In the past, the club has met to play Jackbox games, talk about hyperfixations and storytell, but the group has plans for bigger events further on this semester, including a collaboration with Wells Fargo and an educational event in April.

“Loneliness exists in a lot of other communities as well, but it's especially prevalent,” Worrall said. “Just anything we can do to address that and kind of work intra community, and then we want to begin working inter community.”

The club encourages MSU students with and without a diagnosis to join, either by attending a monthly meeting or joining its

24/7 operating discord at <https://discord.gg/qVEzqUTEUA>.

“It (Discord) is going to be a space where people are able to just kind of connect, figure out places they can hang out, figure out how to do body doubling, like some study techniques, figure out how to connect virtually and kind of just overall fostering a better sense of mental health,” Worrall said.

“**JEOPARDY** from page 11 have any immigration questions they can come to us and they're there, they're right there, if they have any mental health questions, we can direct them because we have a list of all the resources that

they need. So, we're there to support African students, but to teach MSU as a whole about African culture and to include them in some of our practices and stuff, if they want to,” She finished.

If you would like to learn

more about the ASA, keep an eye out for events or stop by CSU 264 and 269. The next event held by the ASA will be a Lip Sync Battle on February 16th, and everyone is welcome to attend.

Ratings for the Grammy Awards hit a sweet note

By MARK KENNEDY
The Associated Press

An average of 16.9 million viewers tuned in to see performances by Miley Cyrus and Billie Eilish and watch Taylor Swift make history at the Grammy Awards on Sunday, the largest audience for the telecast in four years and another consecutive annual increase for a show that is recovering from its pandemic declines.

Ratings were up 34% on Sunday across CBS, Paramount+ and other digital platforms from last year, and with delayed watching included was expected to amass over 17 million viewers. The telecast peaked with 18.25 million viewers during the In-Memoriam segment, with performances by Stevie Wonder, Annie Lennox, Jon Batiste and Fantasia Barrino.

The numbers Sunday easily beat the 12.4 million people who tuned in to watch Harry Styles, Lizzo and Bad Bunny perform during the show in 2023, along with a tribute to 50 years of rap history.

That's another year of growth seen under host Trevor Noah, who has hosted since 2021. Live viewership was 8.8 million in



CHRIS PIZZELLO • The Associated Press

Fantasia Barrino performs a tribute to Tina Turner during the 66th annual Grammy Awards on Sunday, Feb. 4, 2024, in Los Angeles.

2021 and 8.9 million in 2022. The numbers this year are closer to pre-pandemic levels: Music's showcase night was seen by 18.7 million people in 2020.

The upward trajectory is in stark contrast to the fate of the Emmy Awards earlier this year: That telecast on Fox reached a record low audience of 4.3 million viewers.

This year, Grammy viewers watched Miley Cyrus powerfully belt out her megahit “Flowers,”

which won record of the year, and Billie Eilish's gentle piano ballad from “Barbie,” “What Was I Made For?,” which was crowned song of the year. The album “Midnights” earned Swift her fourth career Grammy for album of the year, a record.

Live television viewership has declined across-the-board over the past few years, with pro football one of the few events to buck the trend.

Women dominated the 2024 Grammy Awards



CHRIS PIZZELLO • The Associated Press

Miley Cyrus performs “Flowers” during the 66th annual Grammy Awards on Sunday, Feb. 4, 2024, in Los Angeles.

By MARIA SHERMAN
The Associated Press

When the 2024 Grammy nominees were first announced, women dominated the major categories. And at Sunday's show, those nominations translated into awards: Every televised competitive Grammy went to at least one woman.

Several women earned their very first Grammys, including Miley Cyrus, best new artist Victoria Monét, country artist Lainey Wilson and Karol G — also the first woman to win in best música urbana, a moment that may reflect changing perceptions of reggaetón and Latin hip-hop as exclusively “men's music.”

“You know, I feel a lot of responsibility about that. As a woman, I have to say, like in my experience, it was tough, like so many things, to be a girl in this industry, in the music that I do, in urban music,” the “Mañana Será Bonito” artist told The Associated Press backstage, saying she also reflected “women in the world fighting to represent” themselves.

Paramore became the first rock band fronted by a woman to win best rock album. And Taylor Swift, of course, not only made history by becoming the first artist to win album of the year four times — but she also is still the only woman to ever win more than twice.

“First of all, I think it is just wonderful to see so many women at the top,” Dua Lipa told the AP on the red carpet, moments before she opened the show with a fiery pop medley.

“What we want is just an equal space in the industry and to be seen equally on equal levels — not just on the creative side but on the business side — so hopefully the equality in the industry will kind of level things out a little,”

she added. “I think we're still kind of figuring that part out. But we're getting there, slowly.”

The evidence points to what Lipa is referencing: Only 19.5% of all songwriters across the Billboard Hot 100 songs in 2023 were women, according to analysis from the USC Annenberg Inclusion Initiative. Women still make up a fraction of producers and engineers.

But at the Grammys, where much of the focus is on performers, it appeared like women were ruling the industry.

Phoebe Bridgers of boygenius won her first Grammys last night, taking home more than any other performer last night, with four.

In the week leading up to the Grammys, Bridgers told the AP there was some significance to the band's recognition because “it was only a couple of years ago now that that (expletive) who is now being accused of sexual violence said women need to step it up if they want to be nominated.”

She was referring to former Recording Academy President Neil Portnow, who, in 2018, said women need “to step up” if they wanted to receive Grammys and then issued an apology. He stepped down in 2019. In November 2023, Portnow was sued by a woman who said he had drugged and raped her in 2018, an allegation his representative has called “completely false.”

Bridgers renewed her critique backstage at the Grammys, telling the media room, as she held one of her four trophies, that she hopes he'll “rot.”

The Recording Academy has made considerable changes to their programming in the post-Portnow years, attempting to better reflect the current musical climate. Recently, more than 2,400 music creators joined the voting bloc.

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