

BUZZER BEATER



DYLAN LONG • The Reporter

The men's basketball team punched their ticket to the Elite Eight in Evansville, Indiana after Elijah Hazekamp (12) hit a transition buzzer beater to steal the game from Missouri State Tuesday. Following the buzzer beater to go up one point in a low scoring 43-42 win, students stormed the court to celebrate the one of a kind victory.

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\$3 million allocated to student fees



ALEXIS DARKOW • The Reporter

By EMMA JOHNSON
Editor In Chief

Minnesota State's Student Government recommended \$2.78 million in allocations Wednesday after seven hours of deliberation.

With the senate's decision students will pay \$9.81 per credit more in student fees, an 11.86% increase over this year. Because the increase was larger than 2%, and because the Senate is not using reserve funds, the student body must approve the increase. That question will appear on the ballot in the up-

coming election, set for April 8 and 9.

The Student Athletics Fee will also be on the ballot with the Student Activity Fee with a 21.8% increase.

Campus Rec, Student Activities and Student Activities Fee Administration received the most money with \$890,835, \$233,600 and \$964,620 respectively.

If students do not pass the recommended budget, the Senate's backup budget will go into effect, severely decreasing several depart-

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Attorney
General
visited MSU
with a
keynote speech

By AMALIA SHARAF
Staff Writer

Minnesota Attorney General Keith Ellison visited Minnesota State Tuesday to discuss the intersection of law and business.

Before being sworn in as Minnesota's 30th attorney general, Ellison represented Minnesota's 5th Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives, advocating for consumer, worker, environment and human rights protections for state citizens. Ellison made a keynote presentation on antitrust in agriculture and the importance of environmental and social investing.

The event, organized by the College of Business, was open to the public. Ellison's presentation aimed to help students understand economic trends and make better choices as business owners while considering the environmental consequences.

Additionally, Ellison gave a speech about human rights in the economy. He described a lawsuit against a company that was steering students away from loan forgiveness to loan forbearance.

"Forbearance means the student debt is still there, and it's gaining interest, but they never become aware that you may be eligible for a loan forgiveness program," said Ellison. "What does that mean? It means that we're going to protect you and your housing circumstances. We're going to go after bad landlords."

Following his speech, faculty members Wade Davis and Anaam Hashmi asked additional questions and discussed topics such as business, law and environmental sustainability.

Hashmi asked, "Governor, you have been a big advocate of carbon-free power generation by 2040, which is a very ambitious goal. However, that is only 16 years away and I've been told by quite a few people in the field that the approval process is very complicated. Counties have their barriers. Is your office looking into the issue of harmonizing the approval process?"

"We don't know if we're going to hit the goal, but we got to

ATTORNEY on page 3 ▶

Convict to professor: “Scholars Serving Time” helps inmates



Courtesy of Vicki Hunter

The Minnesota State Mankato Scholars Serving Time Program offers Associate of Arts (AA) degrees to incarcerated individuals in Minnesota correctional centers.

By EPHRATA BEZUAYENE
Staff Writer

The Minnesota State Mankato Scholars Serving Time Program offers Associate of Arts (AA) degrees to incarcerated individuals in Minnesota correctional centers.

Program Director Vicki Hunter, a sociologist and professor at Minnesota State University, began the program with a colleague.

“I became interested in doing this because I was actually incarcerated myself,” said Hunter. “In my 20s, I did a couple of years in prison. I did not do college while I was in prison, but the education director at the prison, within months before I was getting out, talked me into applying for college. When I got out, I started college two weeks after my release. I went full-time for 11 years, till I got my PhD.”

Hunter explained that it had never occurred to her that she could attend college, considering the lack of advanced education in her family. She did, however, graduate as the class valedictorian for her undergraduate degree. She also succeeded in earning a 4.0 GPA while completing her PhD and Master’s degrees.

What had started as an initiative back when Tim Walz was Congress representative for Minnesota, became a full-fledged program 10 years later.

“Back in 2015, Glen Walz (wife of current governor, Tim Waltz) was actually very supportive of efforts that I and one of my colleagues at the time had, and worked pretty closely with us trying to get a program started,” said Hunter.

The program officially started in the middle of the pandemic. The first sessions took place in auditorium-style classrooms.

The Scholars Serving Time program is essentially a “college in prison” program.

“The program is an AA degree.

To an average student, it means completing all your general education requirements and 16 more credits of 100 or 200 level classes. It offers courses from a wide array of different departments. Everything from biology, art, psychology, and sociology, so that students can meet all their general education requirements,” said Hunter.

The program is currently operating at the Minnesota Correctional Facilities—women-only state prisons—in Faribault, Waseca, and Shakopee. MSU offers seven Gen Ed courses per semester. After a student fulfills their general education requirements, they can take other courses that happen to be Gen Ed, for their electives, to satisfy the required 16 additional credits. Forty-two students participate in the program, where each student takes four classes. Only 24 students can fit into the single classroom in the facility that has been designated for MNSU. Classes meet once per week.

The students in the program are convicts, incarcerated for a wide array of offenses.

“We have people with all kinds of offenses. We have people with homicide crimes, we have people with drug crimes, people with assault charges, things like that. Most things you can think of, we have them,” said Hunter.

According to the program director, student’s offenses are irrelevant the moment they enter their classes.

“The students at the facility are incredibly motivated. They work very hard in their classes. On campus, it’s often difficult to get students to complete the readings before class. These students, generally speaking, will not only complete the reading, but they will also complete the reading and have three or four pages of notes on the reading. It’s sometimes hard to get through a lecture because they’re raising their hands and wanting to make a comment, add an exam-

ple, or ask a question. They are just incredibly energetic and engaged,” said Hunter.

With an average age of 30, the student body is made up of women ranging in age from 19 to 60. The program director suggested that their engagement and preparation can be explained in part because they tend to be older, but also, because they have very colorful histories.

“Most of them have experienced really traumatic things. A lot of them have grown up in foster care and others have grown up in poverty or with parents who struggle with substance abuse and addiction. There is also a racial component to the way we incarcerate people in this country, so there is racial oppression and racial trauma that some people have experienced. Many of the women in the class have been sex trafficked from an early age,” said Hunter. “They can connect in a very personal way with a lot of the things they’re learning in their courses, like racism, gender inequality, and sexual violence.”

The program is designed to help students improve their critical thinking abilities, writing and oral communication skills, and application of new knowledge in a range of academic areas. This greatly enhances their career opportunities and marketability. One of the most crucial aspects is that it alters their perception of themselves and their abilities.

“The program impacted my life tremendously,” said Safara Shortman, a participant of the program.

Shortman, 36 years old and a parent to three children, served a mandatory 10 year sentence for substance use at 15 years old and is now continuing a degree in philosophy.

“I really struggled with a lot of things. It just showed me that, I’m able to go and put my mind to

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Raise the trophy



DYLAN LONG • The Reporter

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Police officer accused of spying for China

By DAVE COLLINS
The Associated Press

Baimadajie Angwang thought he would be reinstated to his dream job as a New York City police officer after federal prosecutors dropped criminal charges alleging he spied for China. Instead, he is fighting the police commissioner's decision to fire him.

In a decision made public recently, Commissioner Edward Caban ordered the immediate firing of Angwang on Jan. 29, saying he disobeyed an order to submit to questioning by internal affairs investigators about the spying case.

Angwang, 37, said he declined to appear before the investigators last year on the advice of his lawyers, because the NYPD refused to give them department documents ahead of the questioning that would have allowed them to prepare.

Now he is considering taking the commissioner to court over his firing.

"It's extremely disappointing," Angwang told The Associated Press in a phone interview Wednesday. "I have to continue to fight, not just for me, for anyone



JOHN MINCHILLO • The Associated Press

Baimadajie Angwang is interviewed at the Law Office of John F. Carman, Esq., Feb. 1, 2023, in Garden City, N.Y.

who were wrongfully accused in the past who's getting the wrongful treatment I just got at this moment, or any potential discrimination victims in the future. ... I will not give up until I find the justice."

Police officials declined to comment and referred the AP to Caban's written decision to fire Angwang.

"The Department is a paramilitary organization, and failure to

obey and comply with questioning under an official investigation undermines its ability to carry out its mission," Caban wrote.

Angwang, who was born in Tibet and granted asylum in the U.S. in his teens, was arrested by federal agents in September 2020, charged with feeding information about New York's Tibetan community to the Chinese consulate in New York.

ATTORNEY from page 1
have a goal. We can't just say we're going to hope for the best. We've got to have a goal and work toward it," said Ellison. "Some very important thing about our economy is the principle of creative destruction. We think, 'Oh my goodness, this is industry, the oil industry; what's going to happen?' Well, what's going to happen is new stuff is going to come up. People will innovate as they do all the time. People are innovative and creative and will make the

proper adjustments, and as some industries go down, others always come up."

Davis continued the conversation and brought up potential hardships that students might face when entering the workforce and joining the economy.

He asked, "How do you think we can approach that as a community and as students?"

"We believe that you're resilient, you're creative and you're going to find a way. My job is to help you navigate this economy and

society in a way where you have a fair opportunity," Ellison said. "We can make sure that you don't have illegal, unfair barriers tripping you up. So this is why we brought lawsuits against some student loan lenders because we don't want you to start out in your professional life with a massive debt burden that's not even fair."

The session ended with a Q&A session, where students were given an opportunity to ask additional questions.

Willingham brothers on to the Elite Eight



DYLAN LONG • The Reporter

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North Korea progresses in developing a hypersonic missile

By HYUNG-JIN KIM
The Associated Press

North Korea successfully tested a solid-fuel engine for its new-type intermediate-range hypersonic missile, state media reported Wednesday, claiming a progress in efforts to develop a more powerful, agile missile designed to strike faraway U.S. targets in the region.

A hypersonic missile is among an array of high-tech weapons systems that North Korean leader Kim Jong Un publicly vowed to introduce in 2021 to cope with what he called deepening U.S. hostility. Outside experts say Kim wants a modernized weapons arsenal to wrest U.S. concessions like sanctions relief when diplomacy resumes.

On Tuesday, Kim guided the ground jet test of the multi-stage solid-fuel engine for the hypersonic missile at the North's northwestern rocket launch facility, the official Korean Central News Agency reported.

It cited Kim as saying the strategic value of the new missile with an intermediate-range is as important as intercontinental ballistic missiles targeting the U.S. mainland and that "enemies know better about it." It said that a timetable for completing the development of the new weapons system was "set through the great success in the important test."

Intermediate-range missiles possessed or pursued by North Korea are the weapons systems primarily aimed at attacking the U.S. Pacific territory of Guam, home to U.S. military bases. Those missile can also reach Alaska, and with a range adjustment they can be used to strike closer targets like U.S. military installations in Japan's Okinawa island, experts say. In recent years, North Korea has been pushing to develop more weapons with built-in solid propellants, which make launches harder to detect than liquid-propellant missiles that must be fueled before liftoffs and cannot last long. The North's pursuit of hypersonic weapons is also meant to defeat U.S. and South Korean missile defense systems, but it's unclear the North's hypersonic vehicles proved their desired speed and maneuverability during tests in recent years, analysts say.

In January, North Korea said it flight-tested a new solid-fuel intermediate-range ballistic missile tipped with a hypersonic, maneuverable warhead, in a likely reference to the missile mentioned in Wednesday's KCNA dispatch.

Election misinformation is a problem in any language. But some gets more attention than others

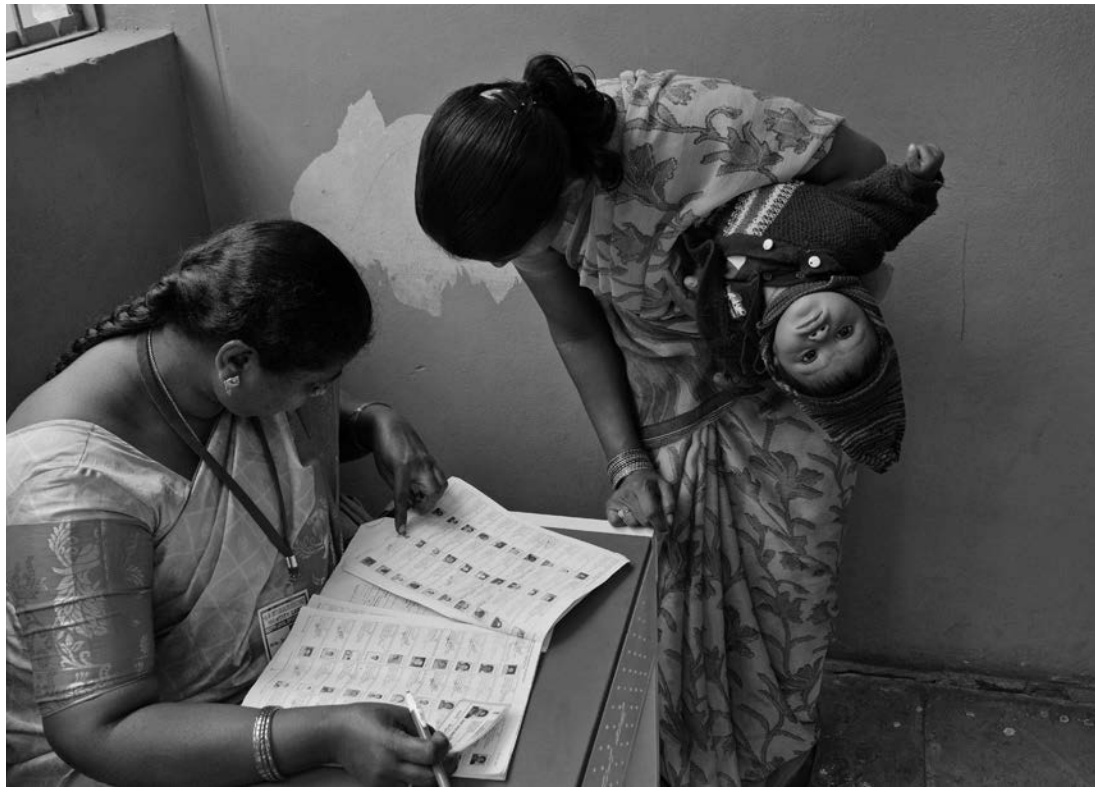
By DAVID KLEPPER
The Associated Press

Warnings about deepfakes and disinformation fueled by artificial intelligence. Concerns about campaigns and candidates using social media to spread lies about elections. Fears that tech companies will fail to address these issues as their platforms are used to undermine democracy ahead of pivotal elections.

Those are the worries facing elections in the U.S., where most voters speak English. But for languages like Spanish, or in dozens of nations where English isn't the dominant language, there are even fewer safeguards in place to protect voters and democracy against the corrosive effects of election misinformation.

It's a problem getting renewed attention in an election year in which more people than ever will go to the polls.

Tech companies have faced intense political pressure in countries like the U.S. and places like the European Union to show they're serious about tackling the baseless claims, hate speech and authoritarian propaganda that pollutes their sites. But critics say they've been less responsive to similar concerns from smaller countries or from voters who speak other languages, reflecting a longtime bias toward



MAHESH KUMAR • The Associated Press

A woman checks for her name before casting her vote at a polling station during the Telangana state assembly elections in Hyderabad, India, Nov. 30, 2023.

English, the U.S. and other western democracies. Recent changes at tech firms — content moderator layoffs and decisions to rollback some misinformation policies — have only compounded the situation, even as new technologies like artificial intelligence make it easier

than ever to craft lifelike audio and video that can fool voters. These gaps have opened up opportunities for candidates, political parties or foreign adversaries looking to create electoral chaos by targeting non-English speakers — whether they are Latinos in the U.S., or one

of the millions of voters in India, for instance, who speak a non-English language.

"If there's a significant population that speaks another language, you can bet there's going to be disinformation targeting them."

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something and accomplish it. That I am still capable of going back to school, getting an education, finishing it, and having a better future," said Shortman. "I would recommend it because, before I went, I had no signs of going and getting

an education. And when I went there, I was able to focus on myself.

I feel like it was a perfect time for women to be able to focus on themselves and have that time to decide what they really wanted to do. It changed my life for the better."

Hunter explained that they are very careful about selecting faculty who are enthusiastic and work toward creating engaging experiences.

"We really try to steer away from people who are just going to do straight-up lecturing, because

these students are just so hungry that they will do the work.

The faculty we have recruited for this program is unbelievable. They are very dynamic, caring, compassionate, and enthusiastic," said Hunter.

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Anticipation and anger on Texas border as immigration law is on hold



ERIC GAY • The Associated Press

A divided Supreme Court on Tuesday, March 19, 2024, lifted a stay on a Texas law that gives police broad powers to arrest migrants suspected of crossing the border illegally, while a legal battle over immigration authority plays out.

By VALERIE GONZALEZ
The Associated Press

A federal appeals court late Tuesday again prevented Texas from arresting and deporting migrants accused of entering the U.S. illegally, hours after the law briefly took effect.

Before a divided U.S. Supreme Court earlier let the state law take effect while a legal challenge plays out, some sheriffs were ready to relish an unprecedented state expansion into border enforcement, while others were reluctant.

Texas was silent in the hours after the ruling on whether and when state troopers or Texas National Guard soldiers — who have the most interaction with migrants — would begin enforcement. Hours later, an order by the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals put the law again on hold. By a 2-1 order, a panel of the appeals court lifted that pause ahead of arguments before the court on Wednesday.

Mexico's Foreign Affairs Secretary said in a sharply worded statement that it would refuse to take anyone back who is ordered

to leave the country under the state law and that it "categorically rejects" any state or local government enforcement of immigration laws.

"Mexico reiterates the legitimate right to protect the rights of its nationals in the United States and to determine its own policies regarding entry into its territory," the government said.

Kinney County Sheriff Brad Coe, who has largely embraced Texas Gov. Greg Abbott's multi-billion-dollar border enforcement effort, said he was "prepared to proceed with prosecutions" but officers would need "probable cause" to make arrests. His county covers a stretch of border near Del Rio that was recently the busiest corridor for illegal crossings but quieted considerably.

"It is unlikely that observers will see an overnight change," Coe said.

El Paso County Judge Ricardo Samaniego, the top county executive, said immigration enforcement should remain a federal, not state, responsibility, echoing the Biden administration's view.

He said heightened law enforcement presence in the city of El Paso during a previous migrant surge brought high-speed chases and traffic stops based on assumptions that passengers were in the country illegally.

"We had accidents, we had injuries, we got a little glimpse of what would happen if the state begins to control what happens in respect to immigration," Samaniego said.

The impact extends far beyond the Texas border.

Republican legislators wrote the law so that it applies in all of the state's 254 counties, although Steve McCraw, the director of the Texas Department of Public Safety, has said he expects it will mostly be enforced near the border.

Other GOP-states far from the border are also already looking to follow Texas' path.

In Iowa, the state House on Tuesday gave final approval to a bill that would also give its state law enforcement the power to arrest people who are in the U.S. illegally and have previously been denied entry into the country.

Gangs target peaceful communities at Haiti's capital

By PIERRE-RICHARD LUXAMA
The Associated Press

because the neighborhood was in the hand of the bandits," said Samuel Orelus. "They were about 30 men with heavy weapons. If the neighborhood had mobilized, we could have destroyed them, but they were heavily armed, and there was nothing we could do."

Armed gangs launched new attacks in the suburbs of Port-au-Prince early Wednesday, with heavy gunfire echoing across once-peaceful communities near the Haitian capital.

Associated Press journalists reported seeing at least five bodies in and around the suburbs, and gangs blocked the entrances to some areas.

People in the communities under fire called radio stations pleading for help from Haiti's national police force, which remains understaffed and outmatched by the gangs. Among the communities targeted in the pre-dawn hours were Pétion-Ville, Meyotte, Diègue and Métivier.

"When I woke up to go to work, I found I could not leave

By Wednesday afternoon, another victim had been reported: a police officer killed in broad daylight in a Port-au-Prince neighborhood known as Delmas 72, according to the SYNAPHOHA police union.

As the attacks continued, the U.S. State Department announced Wednesday that it had completed its first evacuation of American citizens from Port-au-Prince.

More than 15 Americans were airlifted to neighboring Santo Domingo, the capital of the Dominican Republic.

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◀MILLION from page 1 ment's budgets.

The biggest motion of the night was an omnibus bill that passed unanimously, approving allocations for 19 different student groups including Community Engagement, Greek Life and Gender and Sexuality programs.

One of the longest-debated appeals was Maverick Adventures lasted around 30 minutes. They requested \$27,000 but met resistance from several senators.

Senator Brooke Van Gelderen made a motion to amend the SAC recommendation of \$24,800 to the requested \$27,000. Sen. Darnell Speltz made a motion to amend the request down to \$26,000. Sen. Camille Hart said she liked the idea of meeting in the

middle for the budget.

"I think we've got to understand that it's not always fair to go 'they request it.' Everyone requests money, everyone needs a certain amount of money but we can't do that," Hart said. "Meeting in the middle is a great way to show our support but also be mindful of the other organizations that we're voting for on their budgets today."

The amendment passed in a 12-10-1 vote.

Maverick Involvement Team members appealed their program's \$21,800 request, saying they were trying to regain money from the 23% budget cut they saw last year. The money would go to a leadership retreat and ongoing leadership training.

Assistant Director for RSOs

Michelle Harvey said if the current staff of four students went down to three, it would "not be sustainable for all the support that it needs." Instead of reducing the salary stipend, the retreat would be canceled.

In discussion, Sen. Samuel Oladeji made a motion to amend to change SAC's request of \$18,000 to \$21,000 but in a failed motion, the Maverick Involvement Team was given the \$18,000 SAC recommendation.

The Student Government budget was amended and raised from \$137,428 to \$138,478. The sustainability fee was passed to become \$1.44 per credit.

Next week, the technology fee, Student Health Services fee and Student Union fees are set to be discussed.

Editorial

Editorials represent the opinions of The Reporter editorial board. The opinions expressed here are not necessarily those of the college, university or student body.

Emma Johnson
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Luke Jackson
News Editor

Mercedes Kauphusman
Variety Editor

Mohamed Warsame
Sports Editor

Now is the time further our education

There are many reasons why we attend Minnesota State University. Whether you wanted to make new friends, are on a sports team or just threw a dart at a map and applied to whatever college it landed on we are all here for one reason at the end of the day - to learn.

College is a place of opportunity and it is time to seize the moment. We are surrounded by great minds and it is paramount to soak it all in before it is your time to walk on graduation day.

Beyond the textbooks, the lectures and the exams lies the real essence of college life - the chance to grow, explore and discover not just academically, but personally. Every class attended, every project completed and every challenge faced builds the foundation of your future.

MSU offers a diverse range of courses and programs designed to not only provide knowledge but to also cultivate critical thinking, creativity and problem-solving skills. These are the tools that will empower us to tackle the complexities of the real world and create a future for ourselves.

However, the value of education extends beyond personal growth and career preparation. It's about becoming informed citizens who can contribute to society in meaningful ways. It's about learning to understand different perspectives, cultures and ideas. It's about becoming a part of a community that values knowledge, respects differences and strives to make a positive impact in the world.

So, as we navigate through our college years, let's remind ourselves of the bigger picture. Attend that extra lecture, participate in discussions, join a club or organization that challenges you and take advantage of the resources available.

Connect with your professors and peers, because the relationships you build here are just as important as the knowledge you acquire. Never be afraid to ask the extra question to further your understanding. Don't hesitate to network and make relationships with your classmates.

College can be a scary and overwhelming place. You may be lost, you may not know what you want to do next in life and you may feel stressed while here but that is OK. You are never alone in college and more than likely your peers feel the same way.

In essence, valuing your education is about more than just earning a degree. It's about making the most of this unique time in our lives to prepare for the future, to become well-rounded individuals and to lay the groundwork for a life of learning and growth.

Embrace this journey with open minds. Push yourself. Test yourself. Become familiar with the uncomfortable and again, seize the moment while you're here. Make every moment count.

Perspectives

Won't somebody please think of the queerest children?



Flickr photo

It's a phrase that was made popular by The Simpsons. When the town of Springfield had a debate over whether or not to allow prohibition, it was Helen Lovejoy who said, "won't somebody please think of the children?"

It's also a phrase or at least sentiment, that too often is utilized in the midst of anti-queer moral panics. "Won't someone think of the children" is the rallying cry that gets used to justify book bans and drives protests against drag queen story hours.

People claim that they want to protect children when they justify keeping trans youth away from gender affirming medical care like puberty blockers or hormone therapy. But actual research has shown that access to gender affirming care is the best means to guarantee the health and safety of transgender youth.

WHY NOT TODAY?
By JEREMY REDLIEN

I have even seen people go so far as to claim to be against sex education in general due to the misguided belief that sex education harms kids, when in fact the evidence points to age appropriate sex education being one of the better means of preventing child sexual abuse.

Not to mention that groups that promote homophobia and transphobia often wind up being the ones most likely to have serious sexual abuse scandals.

The Boy Scouts of America for example was notorious for expelling LGBTQ members for decades. It also experi-

enced a serious sexual abuse scandal that nearly bankrupted the organization over accusations that the BSA had helped cover up thousands of sexual abuse cases across the country.

While the Boy Scouts of America eliminated its ban on LGBTQ youth members in 2013 and in 2015, overturned its ban on LGBTQ leaders, it spent the decades prior expelling any members it found to be queer.

The root of the Boy Scouts anti-LGBTQ policies lay in a simple decision made by a Mankato police officer back in 1978, when Lowell Creel expelled two members of the Blue Earth County Police Explorer Post for being gay. The incident led to the Boy Scouts of America to issue a statement addressing the matter and explicitly stating that they endorsed Creel's actions.

According to the Mankato
COLUMN on page 7▶

Pulse

“What movie best describes your life?”

Compiled by Nathanael Tilahun



ABDALLA MOHAMED,
SOPHOMORE

“Home.”



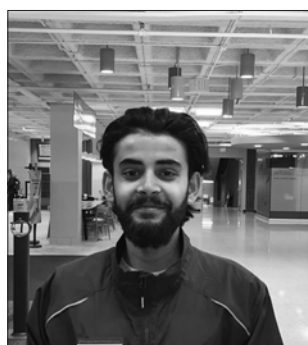
HANNAH CAFLISCH,
JUNIOR

“In the Army Now.”



KARAACHARO OMAN,
SENIOR

“Karate Kid.”



KIRAN SAPKOTA,
SOPHOMORE

“Top Gun.”



MASRESHA TOWARD,
SOPHOMORE

“The Princess and the Frog.”



NOMIN SENADHEERA,
SENIOR

“Rush”

US inflation rises once again



GENE J. PUSKAR • The Associated Press

Shoppers carry their purchases in Bradenton, Fla., Friday, Feb. 9, 2024. On Tuesday, March 12, 2024, the Labor Department issues its report on inflation at the consumer level in February.

By CHRISTOPHER RUGABER
AP Economics Writer

Consumer prices in the United States picked up last month, a sign that inflation remains a persistent challenge for the Federal Reserve and for President Joe Biden's re-election campaign, both of which are counting on a steady easing of price pressures this year.

Prices rose 0.4% from January to February, higher than the previous month's figure of 0.3%, the Labor Department said Tuesday. Compared with a year earlier, consumer prices rose 3.2% last month, above January's 3.1% annual pace.

Excluding volatile food and energy prices, so-called "core" prices also climbed 0.4% from January to February, matching the previous month's rise and a faster pace than is consistent with the Fed's 2% inflation target. Core inflation is watched especially closely because it typically provides a better read of where inflation is likely headed.

"It's a disappointment, but not a disaster," said Eric Winograd, U.S. economist at asset manager AB. "The underlying details are more encouraging than the top-line number, which was boosted by a few volatile categories — the type of prices that tend not to repeat month-to-month."

Those volatile items include gas prices, which jumped 3.8% just from January to February but are still below their level of a year ago. Air fares surged 3.6% after two months of much smaller increases. Clothing prices rose 0.6% after three months of declines but are unchanged compared with a year earlier.

Housing and rental costs, though, which tend to change more gradually, cooled in February: They rose 0.4% from January, slower than the 0.6% increase the previous month.

Measures of new apartment leases, which have cooled, are expected to feed into the government's inflation data in the coming months.

New car prices ticked down 0.1% in February. Though these prices remain much higher than they were before the pandemic, they're expected to decline further as more vehicles show up on dealer lots.

Grocery prices were unchanged last month and are up just 1% from a year earlier.

Despite February's elevated figures, most economists expect inflation to continue slowly declining this year. At the same time, the uptick last month may underscore the Fed's cautious approach toward interest rate cuts.

Voter perceptions of inflation are sure to occupy a central place in this year's presidential election. Despite a healthy job market and a record-high stock market, polls show that many Americans blame Biden for the surge in consumer prices that began in 2021. Though inflationary pressures have significantly eased, average prices remain about far above where they stood three years ago.

In his State of the Union speech last week, Biden highlighted steps he has taken to reduce costs, like capping the price of insulin for Medicare patients.

The president also criticized many large companies for engaging in "price gouging" and so-called "shrinkflation," in which a company shrinks the amount of product inside a package rather than raising the price.

"Too many corporations raise prices to pad their profits, charging more and more for less and less," Biden said.

Rob Considine, who lives near Minneapolis, said he has noticed shrinkflation in consumer products like deodorant, shampoo, and soap.

Considine, 38, said he doubts, though, that Biden's criticism of shrinkflation, or proposals in Congress to restrict the practice, will have much effect.

◀COLUMN from page 6

Free Press, quoting Russ Bifkin who was at the time, the BSA director of public relations, the BSA said, "we support the action taken by the post adviser (Creel) as a prerogative of the organization to accept or reject members."

To get back to the original point, pushing homophobia and transphobia does not protect youth. In fact, doing so often places youth and children in greater danger.

LGBTQ youth are at elevated

risk of suicide, being targeted by bullies, and homelessness, relative to their cisgender heterosexual peers. Policies based on homophobia and transphobia only exacerbate the problems faced by LGBTQ youth, while failing to protect cisgender heterosexual youth.

LGBTQ youth are also at risk of being abused by their own family members or being subjected to conversion therapy if they wind up being outed against their will. This means

that LGBTQ youth are more likely to run away, leading to LGBTQ youth being more likely to be homeless.

Once living on the street homeless queer youth are more likely to be sexually exploited or trafficked, serious issues that are ironically and incorrectly blamed on the LGBTQ community.

If one really wants to "think of the children" then one must think of all of the children, queer and straight alike.

1 of the few remaining survivors of Pearl Harbor attack dies at 102

By AUDREY McAVOY
The Associated Press

Richard C. "Dick" Higgins, one of the few remaining survivors of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, has died, a family member said Wednesday. He was 102.

Higgins died at home in Bend, Oregon, on Tuesday of natural causes, granddaughter Angela Norton said.

Higgins was a radioman assigned to a patrol squadron of seaplanes based at the Hawaii naval base when Japanese planes began dropping bombs on the morning of Dec. 7, 1941.

He recounted in a 2008 oral history interview how he was in his bunk inside a screened-in lanai, or porch, on the third floor of his barracks when the bombing began.

"I jumped out of my bunk and I ran over to the edge of the lanai and just as I got there, a plane went right over the barracks," he

said according to the interview by the National Museum of the Pacific War in Fredericksburg, Texas.

He estimated the plane was about 50 feet (15 meters) to his side and 100 feet (30 meters) above his barracks.

He described "big red meatballs" on the plane, in reference to the red circular emblem painted on the wings and fuselages of the Japanese aircraft.

"So, there was no doubt what was happening in my mind, because of the things that had been going on," he said.

Norton called her grandfather a humble and kind man who would frequently visit schools to share stories about Pearl Harbor, World War II and the Great Depression.

Norton said he wanted to teach people history so they wouldn't repeat it.

"It was never about him," Norton said. "The heroes were those that didn't come home."

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SPORTS

Hazekamp's game-winner puts Mavericks in 'Elite' company

By HAYDEN LEE
Staff Writer

4,519 fans filled up Taylor Center for the NCAA Central Region Championship Tuesday, and what they witnessed was truly "March Madness."

It was looking grim for the Mavericks with 5.5 seconds left, down one and the Northwest Missouri State Bearcats at the line for a one-and-one with the Championship on the line.

As Wes Dreamer released his first shot, it seemed to hang in the air for hours before NCAA Central Region Tournament MVP Kyreese Willingham pulled down the defensive rebound.

Head coach Matt Margenthaler decided to trust his players by not calling a timeout, and Malik Willingham pushed the ball up the court and found Elijah Hazekamp for a last-second right elbow shot that was heard all around Mankato.

Hazekamp scored only two points on the night, but they were the most important points scored in the entire game.

"The whole time I was counting on Malik, Ky(reese) or Justin (Eagins) to take that last shot because that is who we wanted it to be in the hands of," Hazekamp said.

"Right when I shot it it felt really good, which none of the first six or



DYLAN LONG • The Reporter

It came down to the final seconds in Taylor Center Tuesday evening, but a last-second shot by Elijah Hazekamp gave #2 Minnesota State the 43-42 win.

seven shots felt really good so I am glad that one did."

The shot sent the Taylor Center into a frenzy, with fans and players rushing onto the court to celebrate a 43-42 Central Region Champi-

onship win for Minnesota State. MSU's 43 points scored were the fewest scored in a win in the Margenthaler era.

"In my 23 years (of coaching), I never thought I would see a gym

like that. It was such an electric environment," Margenthaler said.

"I didn't know how much time was left, so I was just trying to shoot it quick," Hazekamp said.

"I work on shooting it off of a

high release, but I haven't really done it all year. What a moment to have it work."

Everything that preceded the last-second chaos was based around defense and pace, as the Bearcats controlled most of the game with their physicality and ability to play at their own speed.

"They sped us up a lot early by just being so physical.

Their physicality really got us out of our rhythm," Margenthaler said. "We just needed to settle in and I thought we did that really well in the second half."

The Bearcats held the biggest lead of the night at 25-15 with 3:45 to go in the half, but Kyreese Willingham was able to cut it to eight at 25-17 as the teams went into the locker room.

As the final score indicates, scoring was at a premium all game long, but the Mavericks picked it up in the second half.

With 10 minutes left in the game, they cut the Bearcat lead to six at 34-28. In the next 6:34, the Mavericks would go on a 10-3 run that put them back in the lead at 38-37.

It was their first lead since the opening minutes.

The next few minutes saw each team score four points each, and when the Mavericks were unable to

BUZZER on page 11

Abby Gronholz: The story of an All-American

By MOHAMED WARSAME
Sports Editor

Ever since she was a little kid in Victoria, Minnesota, Abby Gronholz always found herself around water.

The Minnesota State women's swimmer finished second and earned All-American honors at the NCAA Championships Friday.

Gronholz set a personal best and school record in the 100 backstroke with a time of 53.66.

"It was unreal. I was in a state of shock. I finished and I had no clue as to what I finished before looking at the board. When I saw it said second, I was just elated. The best part of those races is being able to look at your coaches and teammates who are just ecstatic on the pool deck," Gronholz said.

This is the second time that Gronholz has achieved All-American honors at the 100 backstroke event. Last season, she earned seventh place with a time of 54.71.

Whether it was at a lake or a swimming pool, Gronholz always had a fondness for swimming. Things took a turn once she began to swim competitively.

"Once I started competitive swimming in middle school, it introduced an additional element of



Courtesy Abby Gronholz

The Victoria, Minnesota native's favorite moment on the Minnesota State swim team was when they went to Hawaii to train. She described the experience as a "once in a lifetime" trip.

challenge and competition to the sport. Setting goals, whether it's beating personal records, qualifying for meets and achieving specif-

ic times was highly motivating for me," Gronholz said.

Gronholz's dad played baseball at Augustana University and

St. Cloud State University, and her siblings played sports as well, which meant she was always in a sports-loving environment.

"My family always played sports growing up. My sister and I did softball and basketball, and my brother played baseball. My parents were always very supportive of all of us in our athletic endeavors. I played softball all my life, and it was a difficult decision between the two as to what I would play in college. But regardless of which sport I chose, both of my parents were very supportive and encouraging," Gronholz said.

Due to getting into competitive swimming later than most, she didn't need to find a professional swimmer to show her the ropes.

When deciding what her future beyond high school would be, she narrowed her options down to Minnesota State and another school.

"My recruitment process was very different. I went through it during COVID, so there were many restrictions with being on campus, and overnight visits. I was down between MSU and another school, but ultimately chose MSU after my official visit I had with my coaches," Gronholz said.

She believed that the coaches at MSU could help her reach her full potential, and push her to build on her mental and physical toughness.

GRONHOLZ on page 12

The Strand era off to strong start

By AHMED HASSAN
Staff Writer

After falling to Michigan Tech in the semi finals of the CCHA playoffs, the Minnesota State men's hockey team ended the 2023-24 season with an 18-15-4 overall record, and a 12-10-2 conference record.

The Mavericks were faced with many challenges heading into this season, which caused many questions to be asked from the fans, along with much doubt for the season ahead of them.

The Mavericks lost longtime head coach Mike Hastings who was at the helm of the 2022 NCAA Frozen Four run.

The Mavericks also lost 14 players in the process, which amounted to half of their team.

Hastings had been the backbone of this Maverick team.

Leading them to seven NCAA tournaments, reaching the Frozen Four in 2022, capturing three WCHA post season tournament titles and the MacNaughton Cup, while never having a losing season in his time.

The Mavericks hired Luke Strand not too long after Hastings' departure, and with this came much pressure to continue the dominance and winning ways of the Hastings era.

With the Mavericks losing more than half of their team, the pressure was put on the veteran players who stayed as many didn't expect them to do so.

Head coach Strand signed 10



DYLAN LONG • The Reporter

The Minnesota State men's hockey team's first season under first-year head coach Luke Strand came to an end after suffering defeat in the CCHA Semifinals against Michigan Tech.

new players in response to half the team leaving.

The 2023/24 season saw the emergence of Sam Morton as the star of the Mavericks.

Morton had a CCHA-leading 24 goals, while dishing out 10 assists and accumulated 34 points. Morton's breakout season earned him CCHA Player of the year, CCHA forward of the year, All-CCHA First Team and Hobey Baker top 10 finalist.

The veteran duo of Lucas Sowder and Morton emerged throughout this season, and both players led the Mavs in points for a combined 61 points.

Freshman Evan Murr was a breakout star for the Mavericks as he scored six goals and dished out 20 assists for 26 points, which made him a CCHA Rookie of the Year finalist, All-CCHA Second Team and the CCHA All-Rookie Team.

The Mavericks got their season off to a fairly good start after sweeping St. Cloud State, but soon saw themselves fall under some inconsistency with losses in October and November. The Mavericks went 5-7-1 in this stretch.

From that point on, the Mavs began to catch heat and find some more consistency, winning games and putting on a run to contend for the MacNaughton Cup.

The Mavs went 11-8-3 during

this stretch, and didn't get swept until the final regular season series against Bemidji State.

Throughout the season, the Mavericks struggled with starting games and found themselves struggling during the first game of a series, but would respond during the second game which was what helped them not get swept during that stretch.

The Mavericks entered the postseason as the No. 4 seed where they faced No. 5 seed Northern Michigan in the quarterfinals of the playoffs.

The Mavericks, backed by the support of their fans, swept Northern Michigan in a dominant display winning 2-1 and 6-1.

The Mavericks went into the semi finals with their offense being on a roll, and seven Maverick players accumulated 20 plus points.

The Mavericks proceeded to face Michigan Tech in a single-game elimination in the semi-finals of the post season where they were ultimately eliminated after a thrilling game.

The Mavs took control throughout the first two periods, but a penalty goal and a lucky bounce of the puck ended their season in a 4-3 loss.

The Mavericks are losing eight seniors after this season: Sam Morton, Lucas Sowder, Jordan Powers, Brandon Koch, Jordan Steinmetz, Tony Malinowski, Tanner Edwards and Connor Gregga. Morton was signed by the Calgary Flames (NHL) on a one year deal.

BUZZER from page 10

score on their penultimate possession, they were forced to foul and send the Bearcats to the line.

This is where the magic happened.

Despite the offensive struggles, defensive lapses at times and how frustrating the pace of the Bearcats was, the Mavericks ultimately came out of their home tournament as champions.

"We knew we were going to have to be disciplined for 40 (minutes), and the boys showed it tonight. We locked down on defense, and then the offense was there," Kyreese Willingham said.

"It was an amazing environment out there tonight."

Kyreese Willingham led the team in scoring with 14 points and was named Tournament MVP.

Malik Willingham and Hazekamp

joined him on the NCAA Central Region All-Tournament Team that also featured Bennett Stiritz and Daniel Abreu of NWMSU.

"We're a veteran team. Each and every one of us has been in situations like this before," Kyreese Willingham said.

"We're so close as a team that we were able to stay composed with each other when times got tough. 'Be confident and head up,' that's

what we say."

Tuesday's crowd was the sixth largest in DII men's basketball this year and the second largest crowd ever at the Taylor Center.

The Mavericks are now a part of the NCAA Elite Eight for the second time in program history, with the only other time coming back in 2011.

The Mavericks earned the no. 1 seed, and will take on no. 8 Ferris

State Tuesday, March 26 at 6 p.m. at Ford Center in Evansville, Indiana.

Hazekamp's heave made national news, including SportsCenter's top play of the night on ESPN.

It has since been uploaded to the Minnesota State Mavericks YouTube and can be viewed here: <https://youtu.be/JRIBPLqN-6QU?si=-o4iY-gyVmvfHZ9j>.

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Kyrie Irving, Luka Doncic lead Mavericks past Spurs



ERIC GAY • The Associated Press

Dallas Mavericks guard Luka Doncic, left, and Dallas Mavericks guard Kyrie Irving, right, celebrate their win over the San Antonio Spurs in an NBA basketball game in San Antonio, Tuesday, March 19, 2024.

By RAUL DOMINGUEZ
The Associated Press

Kyrie Irving scored 28 points, Luka Doncic had 18 points, 16 assists and 10 rebounds, and the Dallas Mavericks held off the San Antonio Spurs 113-107 on Tuesday night.

Doncic shot 6 of 27 from the

field but still finished with his eighth triple-double in 10 games, helping Dalls win a game critical to its playoff hopes. It was just the sixth time in his career he's shot worse than 25% while playing regular minutes.

"Yes, it does count as a 'W,'" Mavericks coach Jason Kidd said. "Not all wins are pretty."

Dallas (40-29) trails Sacramento (39-28) by percentage points for sixth place in the Western Conference and the final automatic playoff berth.

Tre Jones scored 22 points and Devin Vassell added 19 points for San Antonio. Victor Wembanyama had 12 points, 11 rebounds and six blocks for his 37th double-double.

◀GRONHOLZ from page 10

"There has never been a doubt in my decision. I couldn't be prouder to be a Maverick," Gronholz said.

Gronholz's freshman year wasn't easy for her as she thought about calling it quits on swimming on multiple occasions. Her joy for swimming and training schedule helped keep her distracted from outside noise.

"My freshman year was pretty brutal mentally for me. I had lots of times where I wanted to quit from things that had nothing to

do with swimming. Thankfully, I had teammates who were there for me, as well as my coaches who helped me navigate my mental health," Gronholz said.

Being a part of the MSU swim team has given Gronholz a sense of belonging. The team is full of people that have similar goals to her and she has built friendships that will last her a lifetime.

The Minnesota State junior is a political science major and is double minoring in english and ethnic studies.

"I fell in love with law, and I am

hoping to attend law school after my four years here at MSU," Gronholz said.

As for next season, one of her biggest goals is to take the crown as national champion in the 100 backstroke.

"My coaches have implemented some training changes, and I'm excited to see how those work. It would be amazing to win conference my last year. I was able to be a part of the team my freshman year when we won, and it would be an amazing send out," Gronholz said.

Jokic's 35 points pace Nuggets in win over short-handed Timberwolves



ABBIE PARR • The Associated Press

Denver Nuggets center Nikola Jokic walks across the court during the first half of an NBA basketball game against the Minnesota Timberwolves, Tuesday, March 19, 2024, in Minneapolis.

By DAVE CAMPBELL
The Associated Press

Nikola Jokic had 35 points and 16 rebounds and Michael Porter Jr. scored 13 of his 26 points in the fourth quarter as the Denver Nuggets fended off the undermanned and undersized Minnesota Timberwolves 115-112 on Tuesday night.

Jamal Murray added 18 points and 11 assists and Aaron Gordon had 14 points and 11 rebounds for the Nuggets, who blew an 18-point lead in less than 12 minutes before finishing a four-game road trip strong.

"You have to put teams away," coach Michael Malone said. "That's something we really have to get better at."

The Nuggets (48-21) moved

within percentage points of idle Oklahoma City (47-20) for the Western Conference lead. The Timberwolves (47-22) dropped one game back into third place.

Anthony Edwards had 30 points — his fourth straight 30-point game — and eight rebounds and eight assists. The clean look from the wing he created with a crossover dribble for the tie at the buzzer hit the front of the rim, leaving him scoreless in the fourth quarter after the Nuggets cranked up the double teams. The shot was similar, Jokic noted, to the one Edwards missed for the tie at the end of Game 5 in their first-round playoff series last year.

Kentavious Caldwell-Pope got knocked down trying to defend Edwards on the final play and was relieved to watch the ball fall short while lying flat on his back.

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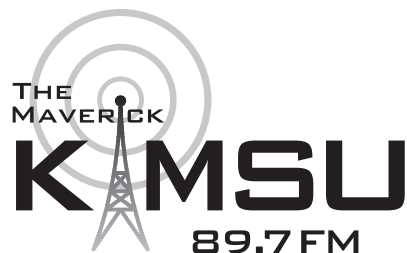
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Jimmy Garoppolo discloses reason for PED suspension

By GREG BEACHAM
The Associated Press

After seven seasons of success and setbacks as a starting NFL quarterback, Jimmy Garoppolo decided it was time to take a step back to recharge his career.

He couldn't think of a better place to do it than with Sean McVay and the Los Angeles Rams.

"I'm excited to start this new journey," Garoppolo said Tuesday after the Rams officially announced their signing of the longtime San Francisco starter. "I don't know exactly what's in store for me — but maybe reset, reinvent, whatever you want to call it. I'm just excited to get back on the football field and start slinging it around with some new guys."

The 32-year-old Garoppolo also gave some insight into the reason he must sit out the first two games of the new season under suspension for violating the league's policy on performance-enhancing drugs. The quarterback said the suspension was the result of a mistake in his filing for a therapeutic use exemption for an unspecified substance.

"I just messed up the TUE, really," Garoppolo said. "I hate to joke about it, but I messed up the TUE when I first got to Las Vegas. Bad timing, I guess."

Garoppolo agreed to join the Rams last week, two days after Las Vegas released him. His only year with the Raiders was tumultuous and ultimately disappointing, considering Garoppolo started it with a three-year, \$72.75 million contract and ended it on the bench behind a rookie.

It was a large step down from his years of success with the 49ers. When he hit free agency, Garoppolo decided he wanted to follow in the footsteps of Tampa Bay's Baker Mayfield, who revitalized his career in late 2022 with a successful five-game stint under McVay.

"What Baker did, that was tremendous, incredible," Garoppolo said. "Sean is a phenomenal offensive mind. A lot of the guys around here are."

I think that played a big part. Reinventing, whatever you want to call it, a quarterback, having good people around you. It's not all going to be done by you.

You've got to have people around you to put you in a good position, call the right plays, all those little things. It's an opportunity, and I got excited. It just seemed right."

After beginning his career behind Tom Brady in New England, Garoppolo has been a starting quarterback for most of the past seven seasons, not including several lengthy injury absences.

Is there a way to slow Caitlin Clark?

By ERIC OLSON
The Associated Press

Many have tried to slow down Caitlin Clark. Few have succeeded. The numbers bear that out.

Opposing coaches will try again in the NCAA Tournament to come up with schemes to defend Division I's all-time leading scorer but know it's hopeless to completely shut down the Iowa guard. The only question is how many points she will add to her record total of 3,771 as she winds up her career before heading to the WNBA.

"You can do everything right and not stop her. That's the problem," said Kansas State coach Jeff Mittie, whose team has faced Clark and the Hawkeyes three times over two seasons in nonconference games and could meet them again in the Sweet 16 next week.

Clark has scored at least 20 points in 118 of her 133 career games and at least 30 in 56. She is the only player in NCAA women's basketball history to lead her conference in scoring and assists four consecutive seasons. Her 173 3-pointers this season are an NCAA record.

The goal for opponents, then, is to mitigate the damage the national leader in scoring and assists can do. Easier said than done.

"Anything you do," Robyn Fralick of Big Ten rival Michigan State said, "she counters."

Either Holy Cross or UT-Martin will face Iowa later this week. Though there's no how-to manual for defending Clark, coaches offered thoughts on the subject in interviews with The Associated Press.

All pointed out what Clark observers have long known: she

prefers to go to her left when she shoots her signature step-back 3-pointer and to her right when she drives to the basket. When she can't get a shot or her path to the basket is blocked, she uses her superior court vision to find her teammates with precision passes. And she loves to make long passes in transition that can be converted into easy baskets. She leads the nation with 294 assists this year, as she does in triple-doubles (six).

Kansas State was effective against Clark in its 65-58 win in Iowa City on Nov. 16, though Clark scored 24 points. She was 9 of 32 overall and 2 of 16 on 3s and had just three assists.

Jaelyn Glenn and Zyanna Walker took turns defending her. Mittie emphasized picking her up early to discourage those long outlet passes. Another defender would take over if Clark got a head of steam or had an advantage against the player assigned to her. The Wildcats varied their coverages when she came off ball screens.

"We tried to mix up what we were doing enough that maybe you have her off a little bit," Mittie said. "Going right, we would try to get under some screens so we could shut off that drive and not give as much help. Going left, we just tried to be as physical as we could and get in the shot line when she got separation."

Indiana coach Teri Moren decided to go with a physical game plan against Clark when it won 86-69 in Bloomington on Feb. 22. Chloe Moore-McNeil, Sara Scalia and Lexus Bargesser were assigned to her, and the Hoosiers would switch out of man-to-man and use a triangle-and-two with two guards playing man and two forwards and the center playing zone.



ABBIE PARR • The Associated Press

Iowa guard Caitlin Clark (22) gestures toward a referee during the first half of an NCAA college basketball game against Nebraska.

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VARIETY

James Mackey debuts first author talk at home campus

By JACK HARDING
Staff Writer

Author James Mackey, better known as JP Mackey, hosted his very first author talk event Wednesday in the southwest corner on the first floor in the Memorial Library. It was free to attend; free food and drinks were available as well.

During the event, Mackey went through a slideshow talking about his history with writing, drawing and future projects and events he'll be at. He even read a chapter from his newest book, "Ichabod Strange Bounces Back." Then, Mackey answered some questions people had.

A table was set up in the back with some of his books for sale as well as free copies of his "CRAP! Magazine" series, small monthly issues he distributed to coffee shops and other small businesses around Mankato and Minneapolis.

Mackey has been writing stories and drawing cartoons his entire life. He writes books for people of all ages and illustrates his books with his own drawings. Every book



Minnesota State graphic designer for Creative Productions James Mackey reveals his alternate career with his first author talk in the Memorial Library Wednesday.

ALEXIS DARKOW • The Reporter

is based on stories and characters he's had in his head for years, which tend to be in the sci-fi and fantasy genres.

Mackey started his own publication company called "Autumn Night Books," which he self-publishes most of his books under

without the struggle of finding an agent to work with.

When it comes to getting in a good headspace for ideas, some people take a shower. For Mackey... he does chores.

"I usually seem like I do my

best work when I'm supposed to be doing something else, so if I plan on doing chores or work that I'm supposed to be doing, I usually do better writing or drawing if I'm supposed to be doing that instead," Mackey said.

Some advice he has for aspiring

authors is to put plenty of time and effort into writing and editing. Not editing enough on his earlier work is one of his biggest regrets. He encourages them to get multiple perspectives and ask close friends who you know can be brutally honest.

AUTHOR on page 16▶

PURIM PALOOZA

Maverick students embrace Jewish traditions

By ANAHI ZUNIGA
Staff Writer

Minnesota State students gathered in the CSU Tuesday for the celebration of Purim, a holiday celebrated between the Jewish community, hosted by the Jewish Student Association.

Purim celebrates the salvation of the Jewish people in the ancient Persian empire from the plot of the ancient Persian king's vizier, Haman, to kill and annihilate all the Jews in Persia in a single day. The story of Purim is told in the Book of Esther, also known as the Megillah reading.

President Abigail Raper and vice president Talia Rodich shared the history behind the creation of Purim.

"It started in the fourth century BCE in Persia and there was a king, Ahasuerus, who had a wife, Queen Vashti, and she was executed for failing to follow his orders. He then wanted to find a new wife and had a beauty pageant, and then found a Jewish girl, Esther, who wanted to be the new queen," Rodich said. "But then, there was her cousin Mordecai, who kind of was leading the whole thing. But she didn't want to classify that she was Jewish because otherwise she would be turned away and executed."

After Esther became the new queen, Haman was appointed vizier of the empire which then led to the conflict between Mordecai and Haman, setting off Haman's plot and convincing the king to issue a decree to eliminate all the Jews.

"During that time, I believe it

was Haman who said, 'Everyone, bow down to me,' and Mordecai did not. Haman declared 'You know what? To show you, I'm gonna kill all of the Jewish people in this town.' And so then everyone's like, 'We got to figure out a plan for that not to happen,' because Esther's in this space of authority in some ways as queen," Raper said. "They worked some things through it. There were things like, 'Gather them, gather the Jewish people to fast and repent, and then we'll give the king a feast to make him happy.'"

During the feast, Esther ended up revealing her Jewish identity to the king, who in turn was enraged with Haman. Haman was then executed and Mordecai was appointed the new vizier, ending with a newly issued decree to give Jews the right to defend themselves against their enemies.

For the celebration of Purim at MSU, hamantaschen, a traditional Purim food translated as Haman's ears, was shared with students. Other activities included making masks as Purim is a festive holiday and reading the Megillah which contains the story of Purim and having students cheer for Esther's name and boo for Haman's name.

With Purim being a traditional holiday among the Jewish community, Rodich and Raper shared how they personally celebrate Purim with their families and community.

"We usually go to a synagogue and do the Megillah reading and you usually dress up in costumes and it's kind of like Halloween, but you're not going to go door-to-door



NATE TILAHUN • The Reporter

The Jewish Student Association hosted a celebration for the Jewish holiday, Purim, in the Centennial Student Union Tuesday.

trick or treating. But we dress up and we just have fun," Rodich said. "Usually a lot of synagogues will do something like a little carnival. We'll do some carnival games and just engage the community, and that's kind of how we celebrate."

"I know my family and I go to restaurants and we go over and we start reading the Megillah. Just having a good time. That's pretty much the main criteria that my family does," Raper said.

Minnesota State is a diverse campus where students are allowed to celebrate their identities. For the

JSA, celebrating a Jewish holiday such as Purim, creates a huge impact for students who are Jewish and for students who wish to learn more about Judaism and its culture.

"We're doing Purim just because it fits into this semester, but I think it's just important to bring it to the university just to raise awareness to what the holiday is since it's a very minor holiday, and just kind of show that there are Jews on campus and we're here and come hang out with us," Rodich said. "I think it's really nice that there's other students who are willing to learn and

celebrate it with us. Just because there hasn't been a lot of Jewish representation on campus for the past few years so it's nice to be able to bring it back and celebrate with students who are curious and want to learn more."

"The main thing is the community. I didn't really grow up in a very practicing Jewish household, so this is a great experience just to get that sense of community over here as well," Raper said.

For more information on JSA, visit <https://mavcentral.mnsu.edu>

A newspaper says video should halt royal rumor mill

By JILL LAWLESS & SYLVIA HUI
The Associated Press

The late Queen Elizabeth II used to say that the royal family has to be seen to be believed.

That became glaringly evident as the absence of Kate, the Princess of Wales, from public view unleashed an escalating frenzy of wild speculation, skepticism and flat-out conspiracy theories fueled by online armchair detectives.

It's unlikely to let up even though Kate and husband Prince William have reportedly been filmed at a farm shop near their Windsor home — the first footage of the 42-year-old princess since she had abdominal surgery for an unspecified condition two months ago.

The Sun newspaper plastered its front page with "Great to see you again, Kate!" and said it had decided to publish the footage "in a bid to bring an end to what the Palace has called the 'madness of social media.'"

But that probably won't stem the tide of feverish and at times fantastical speculation that has swirled about the princess's condition during her absence.

"The potency and legitimacy of monarchy comes from visibility," said Anna Whitelock, professor of history of the monarchy at London's City University. "Visibility is the 'contract' between a monarch and their people."

Evidence of that lies in the steady stream of photos of King Charles III meeting dignitaries and officials released by the palace since the monarch announced in February that he is being treated for an unspecified form of cancer. Charles' relative openness about his diagnosis was a departure for the generally secretive royal family.

Kate has not been as open, or as successful, at controlling the narrative.

Palace officials gave little detail about Kate's condition beyond saying that it wasn't cancer-related, the surgery was successful and recuperation will keep Kate away from public duties until after Easter. That's likely to mean she'll be out of sight until her children go back to school on April 17.

Experts who study conspiracy theories say the snowballing conjecture surrounding Kate isn't so different from how dozens of other "nonstandard beliefs" gain momentum.

"The moment there's an information gap, people will fill it. And they can fill that space quite quickly ... when we have such a fast-moving mediascape," said Simeon Yates, a professor of digital culture at the University of Liverpool.

Speculation didn't stop after William and Kate's Kensington Palace office released a photo of Kate.

Finding how fruits and veggies heal all wounds

By MERCEDES KAUPHUSMAN
Variety Editor

On many days of the week, I find a quick swing through a drive thru is easier than working a sweat from cooking at home.

However, my stomach hurts, my bank account hurts and it's quite obvious I've been lacking in the fruit and vegetable department.

In order to jampack the nutrients I have lost from a poor diet as a college student, I challenged myself to incorporate fruit and veggies into my daily consumption and keep my meals made inside the kitchen.

According to the National Institutes of Health (NIH), diets high in fruits and vegetables are widely recommended for their health-promoting properties because of their concentrations of vitamins, minerals and phytochemicals. Fruits and vegetables are also a source of dietary fiber, decreasing the risk of cardiovascular disease and obesity.

Prior to this challenge, I genuinely could not recall the last time I consumed a fruit or vegetable besides as a flavor of drink, and my body felt more sluggish than usual. I was inspired to make a change, so I did the research, prepared my list of ingredients and took off toward the local Aldi, the most affordable and my personal favorite grocery store.

While walking through the aisles, I packed my cart with essential fruits I knew I could trust: apples, strawberries, blueberries, lemons, blackberries and bananas. Then, I reached for the greens: celery, cucumbers, carrots, tomatoes (up for debate) and sugar-snappe peas.

I grabbed quick and easy ingredients for meals to pair with my nutritious goods like eggs, meat, bread, crackers, noodles and cheese. I also snagged a few sauces and hummus for extra motivation.

I happily strutted away from self-checkout, pleased with my healthy decisions, and my purchase was under \$65.

During the week, I ate fruit for breakfast every morning paired with toast, eggs or yogurt. As someone who often skips breakfast after a late morning routine, it was difficult to feel hungry in the early hours. I worked my way up from solely an apple to breakfast sandwiches with fruit on the side, and I feel more energized throughout the day.

I snacked on fruit and vegetable plates when I had the urge to reach for chips and dip, and I added lemons to my water to encourage healthy drinking habits.

The most daunting task of the week were the actual meals I had to prepare. I swallowed a sandwich nearly every day, but I got comfortable with mixing vegeta-



Courtesy Mercedes Kauphusman

For a weekly challenge, I decided to go a week consistently eating fruits and vegetables while cooking meals in the kitchen. Pictured is me enjoying some corn.

bles to create the most elite sandwich combinations of all time. I also created charcuterie board-like plates for lunches, and other easy meals like pasta, salad, tacos and wraps.

After this week, I feel a difference in the energy I have for the

day and most importantly, my stomach hurts a lot less. As someone who struggles with processing food in general, this week taught me how incorporating foods as tolerable as fruits and vegetables can make such a difference in the way you feel.

▲AUTHOR from page 15

"It's just a matter of putting the time and effort into it and doing what you love to do," Mackey said.

Unlike most authors, Mackey

doesn't use a computer when writing and drawing books. Instead, he writes on his old typewriter and hand-draws everything with standard utensils. His reasoning for this is because of his other job,

which forces him to use computers constantly.

Apart from his author career, for several years, Mackey has been a graphic designer for Creative Productions at Minnesota State.

Creative Productions offers a wide range of in-house design and print services.

So if you ever see him on campus, don't be afraid to ask for an autograph.

GOOD LUCK MAVERICK BASKETBALL!



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Ramy Youssef constantly asks if jokes are harmful or helpful. He keeps telling them anyway

By **KRYSTA FAURIA**
The Associated Press

Fresh off his awards season high after attending the Oscars with his fellow “Poor Things” stars — and presenting — Ramy Youssef is heading back into more familiar territory. The actor and comedian, known for the critically acclaimed Hulu series “Ramy,” will premiere his latest stand-up special Saturday on HBO and Max.

In keeping with much of his previous work, “Ramy Youssef: More Feelings” doesn’t shy away from fraught topics, including religion, the upcoming presidential election and the ongoing war between Israel and Hamas. Although Youssef says he is “constantly interrogating” whether tackling these subjects through comedy is a good use of his time, he thinks there is enough reason to keep doing it — for now. The interview has been edited for clarity and brevity.

AP: This special felt very timely. I wondered how soon after Oct. 7 and the war in Gaza began that you started working on it.

YOUSSEF: I think actually what’s really interesting about the special is that it appears more topical than it is. There’s definitely jokes in there that were written in the last few months, and there’s some

of them that were even written a few days before. But I think that the bedrock of a lot of the stories that you would think I was writing in terms of a response to what was happening, I had been actually workshoping for years. I think that there’s a lot of focus on Oct. 7, rightfully so, because it was obviously a horrific day. And Oct. 6 was horrific, you know?

I think that’s kind of the point I’m making in terms of like this not being topical material. I think there actually is some press from that first week of October that talks about it being the deadliest year ever for children anywhere, in regards to Palestinian children. So, you know, this is something that’s heavy. And I think in terms of trying to find light and trying to find commonality between people, which I think is the goal of the special and kind of the goal of what I’ve always done.

AP: I could see some people being reluctant to broach such taboo topics through comedy. Is it a way for you to process things?

YOUSSEF: Yeah. I think for me personally it’s a processing thing. It’s a place again to kind of create an alternative space that is kind of without logic. Obviously, I kind of go out of my way to be pretty dumb when I’m doing stand-up. I think there’s something in just figuring



CHRIS PIZZELLO • The Associated Press
Ramy Youssef poses for a portrait, Wednesday, March 13 in Culver City, Calif.

out, you know, is there a pocket here to let the air out somehow in terms of it being healing? It might be. It could also not be. It also could be part of the problem. I actually have no idea, to be honest with you.

And I think I’m constantly interrogating myself of like, is this helpful? And I don’t think I’ll ever really know. But I do know that there’s a feeling that I get when I do a live show and people kind of walk out and the things that I get from the people who I meet and I get to shake their hand, or the people who write where they kind of

feel, like we’ve kind of recharged a little bit. But yeah, no tangible answers or solutions or anything like that. Just maybe, a bit of a recharge, hopefully.

AP: Do you think the fear of it being hurtful is that it minimizes serious things?

YOUSSEF: Yeah. It could. It could be, maybe I should be doing something else with my time. You know, all these things are possible.

AP: It’s like the Bo Burnham joke that he’s healing the world with comedy.

YOUSSEF: It’s interesting be-

cause I think I’d had that conversation with Bo about that actually like many years ago, just kind of around the topic of, at the very least, like when we’re doing what we’re doing, that we should be interrogating ourselves.

AP: You don’t shy away from making jokes about faith. I wondered if you have felt like people are kind of holding their breath when you do that or if it’s like a welcome topic.

YOUSSEF: I think there was a bit of a breath-holding when I first started talking about my spiritual inclinations on stage. And I think that’s what made me realize it was really ripe for something in comedy. I would say atheism or a certain mocking of religion is almost like a baseline feature of a comedy set, as much as like going on a date is, you know? God’s a punch line. Jesus is a punch line. It’s funny, like when you’re raised as a Muslim, it’s like you never make fun of Jesus, you know, which would probably surprise people too, right?

I’m obviously not a puritan in any sense. I mean the whole point is that I totally get the culture that I sit in. But I just kind of like to analyze it from a different way. And so it doesn’t come from any sort of, truly there’s no holier than thou.



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