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# THE COLLEGE VOICE

CONNECTICUT COLLEGE'S STUDENT NEWSPAPER, SINCE 1977

NEW LONDON, CONNECTICUT

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2023

VOLUME LVIII ISSUE 4

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## Brief Understanding: Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

ANONYMOUS  
CONTRIBUTOR

What happened? On Oct. 7, 2023, Hamas launched an attack on Israel. This was the same day as Simchat Torah, a celebratory Jewish holiday that often involves dancing, festivals, and community gatherings. This initial attack killed more than 700 people and an unknown number were captured. Khaled Qadomi, a Hamas spokesperson, said this assault and the ensuing war is because they "want the international community to stop atrocities in Gaza against Palestinian people." In response to the attacks, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu launched a counteroffensive in the Gaza Strip. The Israeli counter-attack killed more than 400 people. In addition, Israel has imposed a complete siege on the Gaza Strip, intensifying its 16-year blockade of Gaza, cutting electricity and blocking the delivery of aid. In his first announcements, Netanyahu said, "Citizens of Israel, we are at war. Not in an operation or in rounds, but at war. This morning, Hamas launched a murderous surprise attack against the State of Israel and its citizens." Since

then, he has announced Israel's two aims of the war: "to eliminate Hamas by destroying its military and governance capabilities, and to do everything possible to get our hostages back."

This fighting is different from the previous assaults that have occurred already in the 21st century, with high casualties that have exceeded the sum of all previous conflicts between Israel and Palestine since 2008. "This is not a [hit-and-run] operation; we started an all-out battle. We expect fighting to continue and the fighting front to expand. We have one prime target: our freedom and the freedom of our holy sites," said the Hamas deputy chief Saleh al-Arouri.

The conflict is ongoing. According to AP News, as of Oct. 29 at 3:00 PM, 1,400 Israelis and 8,121 Palestinians have died and 5,431 Israeli and 22,242 Palestinians have been injured. This is part of a long string of violent conflict between Israel and Palestine.

**Headlines:** Hostages & Settlers & Terrorism  
Many articles can be found from top news sources in the United States and the world that report on the captured Israelis, calling them "hostages"...

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Article continued on page 3.

## A Camel for a Camel?: New Camel Web Feature

KERI KRASNOFF  
NEWS EDITOR

If you've been on CamelWeb recently, you might have noticed a new feature called "Camel Marketplace." Similar to Facebook Marketplace, when you click on it, you can view various items for sale across campus, like from a 30-piece Christmas village accessory set for \$35 or antique dishes for \$45. Connecticut College Technical Lead for Web Apps, Thomas Palazzo, and Data Integration Specialist, Michael Matovic, are the creators of Camel Marketplace. "In a previous version of CamelWeb, there was a Camel List modeled after Craigslist. When we moved to the new version of CamelWeb, Camel List couldn't be imported over and we decided we needed to build something for the new version of

CamelWeb," says Palazzo. This new feature has been in the works for a while now and was finally completed this September. Students from COM306: Software Engineering had the opportunity to share their thoughts before the official upload.

With this new version, Palazzo and Matavoic had the opportunity to improve the feature through feedback from the campus. Palazzo met with the SGA e-board last year and reported a lot of interest for a RideShare section to be added to the website. With this section, students can now inquire about or offer a ride anywhere to/from campus. Students can also post other inquiries for things such as laptops and bikes. Also, Camel Marketplace now has an expiration date to prevent items from staying up on the site forever and to keep the catalog of items up to date.

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Article continued on page 5.

## IN THIS ISSUE

### NEWS



Courtesy of Sean Elliot

## Chris Campbell: Strengthening the New London to Conn Pipeline

Chris Campbell, the new Director of Race and Ethnicity Programs at Connecticut College, has lived in New London since the age of three.

See Page 4

### ARTS



Courtesy of Emma Dinkelspiel

## Finding the Thread at the Mystic Film Festival

"It's not as pretentious as it sounds," joked Claire Rose Kennedy as she talked about her short film, "The Thread," which was screened on Oct. 22 at ...

See Page 15

## Letter From the Editor

Hello Camels,

We are happy to be back with you in this print edition, our fourth of the semester! It seems unbelievable that it's already November. Being from Houston, I feel like the changing of the seasons is always surprisingly and shockingly beautiful. Though I overheard a remark that the leaves were not as vibrant this year as in the past, they are still undeniably stunning. The gentle fall of the yellows and oranges and reds that cascade down as I walk across campus certainly gives Conn an ethereal vibe. The loud plop of acorns on the roofs of cars parked along Cro Boulevard juxtaposes this.

Things have changed in The College Voice since I last wrote a letter to the editor. I am excited to say that I am now Co-Editor-in-Chief and we are elevating Kevin Lieue, previous Sports Editor, to the role of Managing Editor!

In this edition (my first as Co-Editor-in-Chief!) we have a diverse spread of fantastic articles! A few have rolled over from our previous edition and were originally only published online, but we feel they deserve the spotlight of a physical publication. I would like to specifically recommend "Finding the Thread" co-written by Claire Protano '25 and Arts Editor Emma Dinkelspiel, which reviews an annual local short film festival; "Camels of the Edition: Marco Cerezo" and "Camels of the Edition: Matt Scoffone" both by Managing Editor Kevin Lieue, which spotlight Conn's Men's Soccer captains; and Opinions Editor Davi Schulman's spotlight on Chris Campbell in "Chris Campbell: Strengthening the New London to Conn Pipeline." In this edition, we also present an article providing a brief overview of the current Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It is our hope that this article can help our readers begin to understand the war as it continues to unfold.

Whether you read TCV for its coverage of campus events, a student perspective on local arts, or well-written coverage of Conn's sports, I hope you find this edition valuable. As always, our pitch and writer's meetings are open for everyone to attend, whether you plan to write an article or not! If you can't make it, feel free to email us with article ideas or articles you would like to write about! We love hearing from the campus community and would love to hear from you.

Best,

Adrien Prouty  
Co-Editor-in-Chief (!)

## THE COLLEGE VOICE

The views and opinions expressed in *The College Voice* are strictly those of student authors, and not of Connecticut College. All content and editorial decisions remain in the hands of the students; neither the College's administration nor its faculty exercise control over the content.

ADRIEN PROUTY '25  
FRITZ BALDAUF '24  
*Editors-in-Chief*

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## Brief Understanding: Israeli–Palestinian Conflict

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*Article continued on page 3.*

... of Hamas. Hamas differentiates between Israeli civilians that live in the Gaza Strip or the West Bank and those that live in other areas of Israel; Hamas believes those living in the Gaza Strip or the West Bank are “settlers” living on Palestinian land. Hamas does not consider the people it has taken to be “hostages” because it has “declared settlers [to be] part of the occupation and part of the armed Israeli force,” according to senior spokesperson for Hamas Osama Hamdan. Qadomi said, “[T]hey are not hostages. They are prisoners of war.” This rhetoric is typically reserved for soldiers or those actively engaged in the military, but Hamas claims violence has often been enacted against Palestinians by Israeli civilians. These attacks have been on the rise since the start of this war, most notably in the West Bank where neighborhoods are hoping to set up watch groups to help alert and protect each other. In many articles, these attacks are called “settler attacks.” The Israeli military claims 229 people have been taken hostage by Hamas since the start of the war. Four of these people have been released. Hamas claims that almost 50 of these people have been killed by Israeli strikes on the Gaza Strip.

Hamas has been designated as a “terrorist organization” by the United States and the European Union. There is no standardized definition of terrorism, but the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights defines terrorist acts as those that involve “the intimidation or coercion of populations or government through the threat or perpetration of violence, causing death, serious injury, or the taking of hostages.” The United Nations also notes that the lack of one universally-agreed definition of terrorism has led some states to develop policies and practices that discriminate against particular groups that do not have a governmental authority from which to speak or act, since the definition of terrorism permits a higher level of violence than would typically be acceptable.

**Relevant Recent History:** In 2005, Israel agreed to disengage from the Gaza Strip and pulled as many as 8,000 Jewish Israelis from the area. Since then, Israel has claimed it is no longer occupying the Gaza Strip. The international community and political authorities in the Gaza Strip have contested this claim, stating that the occupation has continued since Israel retained physical control over the area.

In that same year, Israel (along with Egypt) imposed a temporary land, sea, and air blockade on the Gaza Strip. After Hamas came to power in 2007, they decided to impose an indefinite blockade. Israel has maintained control over Gaza’s airspace, territorial waters, and two of its three border crossing points (the third is controlled by Egypt). Movement in and out of the Gaza Strip has been heavily restricted since Israel’s construction of an electronic and concrete fence around the Gaza Strip in 1995. In 2020, Michael Lynk, the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Palestinian Territory occupied since 1967, reported that Israel’s blockade contradicts Article 33 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, which prohibits collective punishment that prevents the realization of a broad range of human rights. The blockade has led to shortages of food and fuel as well as limited access to education, healthcare, and clean water within the Gaza Strip.

There have been several other violent conflicts between Israel and Palestine since 2007. In 2008, rockets were fired in southern Israel and the Israeli government responded with a 22-day military offensive in the Gaza Strip called “Operation Cast Lead.” In 2012, Israel killed the Hamas military chief of staff and continued to carry out eight days of air assaults in “Operation Pillar of Defense.” In 2014, Hamas kidnapped and killed three Israeli teenagers, which led to a seven-week war. In 2021, hundreds of Palestinians were injured by Israeli security forces at the Al-Aqsa Mosque. Israel claimed rockets were fired from

the Gaza Strip and then responded with an air assault that lasted for 11 days. In 2022, Israel carried out air attacks and Palestinians responded by firing rockets into Israel. In May of 2023, Israel began “Operation Shield and Arrow,” which consisted of air strikes on the Gaza Strip that lasted for five days. According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, from 2008-August 2023, there have been 6,407 Palestinian and 308 Israeli deaths in conflicts between the two entities.

**What is Hamas?:** Hamas, officially the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas being the acronym for Harakat al-Muqawama al-Islamiya), is the political group in charge of the Gaza Strip. Hamas was founded in 1987 and was an offshoot of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. Hamas has led the Gaza Strip since the group was elected in 2007. The main goals of Hamas are to liberate historic Palestine (according to the 1967 borders) and to confront what it calls “the Zionist project” (which refers to the goal of establishing a Jewish homeland in Palestine, which is Israel today).

**What is Palestine?:** Hamas recognizes Palestine as the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, and East Jerusalem, which are territories over which Israel has claimed control. In 1917, the United Kingdom incorporated the Balfour Declaration, which called for the establishment of a national homeland for Jewish people in Palestine (this can also be understood as Zionism). In 1922, Palestine was a former territory of the Ottoman Empire that was placed under the rule of the United Kingdom. By 1947, violent conflict was on the rise in the region between the Arabs who had been living there and the large number of Jewish immigrants who had fled Europe during World War II. The UK passed Palestine’s management over to the United Nations. Though the UN proposed a two-state solution, war broke out in 1948 and one side declared its independence as the State of Israel, which controlled 77% of the UK’s previously determined territory of Palestine. Jordan and Egypt controlled the rest. In 1967, war broke out again and Israel expanded to the remaining territories: the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, and East Jerusalem.

Broadly speaking, Palestine is the nation of Palestinians. Some countries contest whether Palestine is a state, which means that they debate things like whether Palestine should be allowed admittance to the United Nations and whether it should be acceptable for it to take actions permissible of states (like declaring war).

**What is Israel?:** Israel is a state founded for Jewish people. Though Israel is recognized as a legitimate state by the majority of the countries in the world and has membership in the United Nations, Hamas does not recognize its statehood. It is worth noting that Jews have lived in modern-day Israel since well before the large numbers of immigrants that came into the territory during and following WWII. Like other religions, Judaism feels a strong sense of connection to the land and the city of Jerusalem.

**What is the Gaza Strip?:** It is difficult to provide a wholly accepted definition of the Gaza Strip. The Gaza Strip is an autonomous region within Israel ruled by Hamas, who aim to liberate it from Israel and establish Palestine as a recognized state in the international community. The Gaza Strip is part of Palestine, along with the West Bank and East Jerusalem, and is ruled by Hamas. It is a piece of land, approximately 141 sq mi, that borders the Mediterranean Sea, Egypt, and Israel and has a population of over 2 million people. It is one of the most densely populated regions of the world. It has also been described as “the world’s largest open-air prison” by people like Omar Shakir, the Israel and Palestine director at Human Rights Watch. Palestinian-identifying residents living in the Gaza Strip have been heavily restricted in their physical movements and civil liberties. •



## Chris Campbell: Strengthening the New London to Conn Pipeline

DAVI SCHULMAN  
OPINION EDITOR

Chris Campbell, the new Director of Race and Ethnicity Programs at Connecticut College, has lived in New London since the age of three. He attended Nathan Hale Elementary School, Harbor Elementary School (recently closed), and Bennie Dover Jackson Middle School. After beginning at New London High School, Campbell transferred to Ella T. Grasso Southeastern Technical High School in Groton. Campbell emphasized the “close-knit” nature of the New London community: “I’m still friends with some people I went to kindergarten with.”

Community engagement runs deep in Campbell’s roots. “I come from a public service family,” he shared. His relatives are police officers, members of the military, teachers, and other public service workers. He was taught to always “do what you can to help your neighbor.”

Campbell initially wanted to pursue a career in sports science. However, he realized that education in New London was his calling. Campbell enjoyed volunteering in classrooms, tutoring, and babysitting his neighbors and wished to remain in his home city. He graduated from the University of Connecticut with a B.A. in English Literature, B.S. in Special Education, and M.A. in Educational Psychology. Campbell’s interest in special education stems from his family, as his younger brother and sister both have disabilities. Noticing the disparities in special education through their experiences, Campbell was inspired to pursue the field himself.

For the next ten years, Campbell taught special education in the New London Public Schools (NLPS), describing the experience as “eye-opening.” He feels that teaching made him “more sympathetic” to the challenges that teachers face. His position as an alumnus of the NLPS helped him connect with his students on a deeper level, as he understood what it was like to grow up in New London: “It says a lot to the students in New London to see people that grew up here come back and choose to work in New London... it’s powerful,” Campbell expressed.

At the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, Campbell co-founded the nonprofit organization Whalers Helping Whalers. The organization provides meals and grocery items for community members in an effort to combat food insecurity in New London. Whalers Helping Whalers has expanded to distribute other necessities, such as diapers and school supplies. Founding and working for Whalers gave Campbell a “new perspective on nonprofits” and made him more aware of the needs of New London residents.

Similar to most New London residents, Campbell viewed Connecticut College as the “school up on the hill” before he became associated with the institution. Aside from the fact that his older cousin graduated from Conn in 1999, Campbell did not know anyone from the College. That changed when Campbell decided to leave public education in February of 2022. He knew he wanted to stay in New London, and connected with Patrick Lynch and Rebecca McCue from Conn’s Holleran Center for Community Action. They asked Campbell to join the center’s staff as Assistant Director of the Program in Community Action (PICA) in October of 2022. “Seeing the work that Holleran did dispelled a lot of those notions [about the College] I had as a person growing up in New London... Now I’m able to see that there are offices on campus trying to bring students into the community, wanting to collaborate, wanting to give back, and that was really huge for me,” Campbell expressed. He appreciated the opportunity to support full-time

New London programming and play a part in bridging the gap between the College and the local community.

In the spring of 2023, Campbell co-taught part of the PICA gateway course, “New London Community Practicum,” with Megan Griffin, also Assistant Director of PICA. Together, Campbell and Griffin coordinated students’ community placements and facilitated class discussions about the ethics and methods of community engagement. Campbell enjoyed sharing his experiences with students and enabling them to give back to the New London community.

During his past year at Conn, Campbell assisted with the Enrich and Genesis Mentoring Programs, Horizons Beyond High School, and the New London High School Voice 4 Change Grant. These programs intend to expose New London middle and high school students to the career paths and post-secondary education options available to them. Conn students visit the public schools and facilitate activities with the students, providing them with the tools to pursue their passions. Campbell noted that there are not a lot of New London natives who attend Connecticut College. The initial goal of Horizons Beyond High School was to help New London students matriculate into Conn after high school and “stay local.”

This past July of 2023, Campbell stepped into the role of Director of Race and Ethnicity Programs (REP) at Conn. He enjoys working with students “who look like [him]” in addition to his “awesome team” of staff members, including Interim Dean of Institutional Equity and Inclusion Nakia Hamlett. Campbell shared that this new role “allowed [him] to be innovative and think outside the box.” Considering the campus protests last semester, Campbell feels that Conn is at a pivotal moment in time and positive change is imminent. As Director of REP, Campbell hopes to increase collaboration between Unity House and other parts of campus, prioritize the sustainability of his initiatives, and foster the partnership between the College and the community.

When asked how his position as someone who grew up in New London and now works at Conn has influenced his view of the relationship between the city and the College, Campbell underscored the importance of and need for the relationship. He explained that New London has so many resources to offer people at Conn, and likewise, Conn has resources to offer New Londoners. The relationship between New London and Conn has the potential to be “mutually beneficial” and we must take full advantage of all that the city has to offer, according to Campbell.

There are a variety of ways in which Conn students may participate in Race and Ethnicity Programs. The Genesis Mentoring Program pairs upperclass first-generation and/or students of color with first-year students at Conn. Campbell teaches a “How College Works” course on Tuesday evenings for first-year students as well. Unity House hosts several events each week, promoted via the REP newsletter and Instagram account (@cc\_raceethnicityprograms). Unity House recently celebrated its 50th anniversary during Fall Weekend. The house continues to serve as a safe and welcoming space for all students on campus. Campbell shared that he wishes to support students in whatever they need and is open to student input about ways to enrich Unity House programming for everyone: “If I can’t do it, hopefully I can connect you with someone who can.” •

## Camels Abroad: Mia McKersie

EMMA DINKELSPIEL  
ARTS EDITOR

**Major:** Psychology  
**Minor:** Gender and Intersec-  
tionality

**What program are you enrolled in?**  
DIS Copenhagen

**Why did you choose this program?**

“I was attracted to the positive psychology course they offer at DIS because Denmark is rated one of the happiest countries and I wanted to investigate why that is.”

**How have you adjusted to life abroad?**

“I came in swinging—no problems—but now that I’ve reached the halfway point I’ve started to miss the comfort of home and the people there. I’m still happy to be here. I appreciate how fleeting study abroad is, and I am eager to make the most of my time here.”

**Were there any cliches that were proven true or false?**

“Danish people won’t look at you or talk to strangers in public, but they simultaneously trust society enough to leave their babies outside cafes in strollers while they’re eating inside. They keep to themselves and their friend groups, but they have a lot of trust in their communities which is an interesting dichotomy.”

**What is your housing situation? What is that like?**

“I’m living in a kollegium which is six floors, each with about 10 abroad students and six Danish residents that live there full time. Each floor shares a kitchen which is cool because there’s always some-



Provided by Mia McKersie

one around to hang out with, but different standards of cleanliness among residents is a source of juicy drama.”

**What is a typical day like? Is there anything similar to Conn? Is there anything very different?**

“A typical day includes taking the metro to and from class, doing homework in the beautiful city library, going to the gym down the street from my kollegium and generally dinking around the streets with earbuds in.”

**Are you involved in anything outside of classes?**

“If you consider my dinking around an extracurricular...”

**What is the best part of being abroad?**

“The endless new things to see! It’s all very exciting.”

**What is the biggest challenge?**

“Probably prioritizing rest when there’s so many things to do.”

**What advice would you give to people preparing to go away?**

“Plan how you’re going to stay in touch with friends and family back home and bring the things you do to relax abroad with you. I didn’t think I’d have time for those things for some reason, but I could use them now.”

**What is something you wish you had known that you know now?**

“There is beauty, excitement and adventure everywhere. Being in a different culture emphasizes these things because the newness is more obvious, but where I’m from is equally beautiful just in a different way.” •

## A Camel for a Camel?: New Camel Web Feature

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Article continued on page 5.

Another new feature is that faculty and staff members can post and inquire about housing in the area. “Faculty and staff have a challenging time finding housing, [it’s] hard for new staff moving in the area,” says Palazzo. With the apartment/housing section, faculty and staff can post about apartments and housing for rent in the area. Palazzo and Matovic also collaborated with the Office of Sustainability to create an “Office Swap” section. As stated on the website, this feature allows for faculty to “submit [their] college owned items to the Office Swap category to see if there is another office that could use them... at no cost associated.” Other categories include “musical instruments,” “services,” “art supplies,” and more. Moreover, Camel Marketplace is linked to the CCMobile app, which allows students to access the feature and to upload photos from their phone.

When asked about the goal of the website, Palazzo ultimately hopes for students to be able to use it. While the feature is still new to campus, it provides an easy and accessible opportunity to provide and

inquire about items for students who may not have the transportation or funds to get the things they need, whether that be a laptop for class or furniture for the dorm. Camel Marketplace is a great tool to bring the community together. Be sure to check it out on CamelWeb! •



Courtesy of Robbie Lynch



## Testing the Dirt at Sprout Garden: Student and Community Interest in Agriculture

GRACE CONTRENI FLYNN  
STAFF WRITER

When you think about the careers that young adults today are entering your mind may land on fields such as the economic sector, medicine, or education. However, according to the 2017 US Census of Agriculture, the number of young adults working in agriculture has risen by 2%. While this number may seem small, it is significant considering that the field has been historically dominated by people over 65. The Sprout Garden Summer Internship Program at Connecticut College provides students with an opportunity to engage with agricultural work while continuing their studies.

Sprout Garden is a community produce garden located next to Crozier-Williams Student Center. It began as a student-led project in 2004 and was originally placed next to Earth House, the sustainability-focused student home on campus. The founding community members, Alaya Morning '06 and Jim Luce hoped that the garden would provide agricultural education to people on and off campus in the broader New London community. The garden was also designed to provide fresh produce to the dining halls on campus. Both of these goals have been expanded and developed in the almost 20 years since Sprout's founding.

In 2020, the garden—having moved to its current location—expanded its influence in the Conn College and New London communities. This expansion was, in part, thanks to the recent onboarding of Botany Professor Eric Vukicevich. Vukicevich took the helm at Sprout in 2019, the same year he joined the Botany Department, and quickly got to work establishing connections between the garden and New London food security programs like FRESH New London.

The partnership between Sprout and FRESH has provided 30 New London families in need with fresh produce each summer and fall since 2019. This work is a part of Sprout's identity as a mission-based CSA. CSAs are community-supported agricultural programs. These programs get community investment by offering a certain number of shares to local families. These shares are typically represented by a pay-what-you-can investment by shareholders at the beginning of the planting season who, in return, receive fresh produce throughout the year. The formal CSA element of Sprout Garden manifests itself in the form of a by-donation table at FRESH every Saturday from 11-1 p.m. in the Summer and Fall. As of writing, this table is hosted at Mercer Garden in New London.

The crop plan at Sprout is adjusted on an annual basis based on New London community surveys offered in English and Spanish. In addition to the work at the by-donation table, Sprout interns donate time to the FRESH youth program during the summer. All Sprout interns are Connecticut College students who choose to live on campus during the summer and dedicate their time to the field and community work needed to run the garden.

Summer 2022 Sprout Intern, David Garcia, found a fulfilling connection with agricultural work and chose to dedicate his time to working at

the nearby Stone Acres Farm. When asked why he chose to put classes aside and focus on farming, Garcia responded “It brings a feeling of home for me. I grew up visiting my grandmother's homestead ranch in Northern Mexico. She has citrus trees, chilies, and chickens she takes care of. I find I'm so much less stressed outside and I guess I just—literally—dig it.” He also remarked that he's not turning his head on education but rather seeking out a program that provides him with this kind of outdoors and sustainability-focused educational experience. Garcia also finds emotional fulfillment in working at CSAs like Sprout and Stone Acres. Stone Acres has 180 shares and Garcia noted that this is a valuable way for community members to not only get involved in agriculture but to support local farming while getting value back regularly.

On the value that agricultural work brings to individuals, Garcia emphasized that “I feel like, today, many of us are so displaced and disconnected from the natural parts of life. It's a very humbling experience to plant something and make it grow with lots of trial and error. I feel like it should almost be second nature, in the sense that we know how to read, that we know how to grow our own food.” These salt-of-the-earth experiences are diminishing in the United States with direct-on-farm employment in the United States accounting for only 1.3 percent of the US economy.

2023 Sprout Intern, Caroline Skrebutenas built on Garcia's sentiment and spoke about her own experience at Sprout, “Eric was like telling us, ‘Okay, go and put your finger in the soil and check the soil. What does the soil need? In farming, there's such an intuitive aspect. It's about getting in tune with what the plants are needing.’ It's worth mentioning that Skrebutenas gave her interview while painting one of the many remarkable Sprout Garden signs. These handpainted signs were all made by interns and highlight the history of the Garden as well as its community contributions.

Skrebutenas spoke to the position that Sprout plays in the development of her own education as an Anthropology major, “Food justice is super interesting to me, and I would love to focus on the administrative side of anthropology, to ask how we can make fresh food and involvement in growing food more accessible? So, I'm absolutely going to do more work with FRESH this year and maybe I'll take up food studies in grad school.” The educational value of gardening and farming cannot be overstated, as expressed by Vukicevich. The Botany Department currently provides a Sustainable Agriculture Concentration which provides students with the chance to work at Sprout during the school year as a part of their major.

As shown by these Conn community members, Sprout Garden has proven itself to be a cornerstone of environmental and social education on Conn's campus. If you'd like to learn more about Sprout, you can read the full interview with Vukicevich on the opposite page or below this article online. His expertise in and dedication to agricultural education is appreciable. •



Courtesy of Grace Contreni Flynn '25

## Are Camel Moments Real?

MADELINE MOTES  
CONTRIBUTOR

On their first day of orientation week, first-year students at Connecticut College learned a new term: “Camel Moments.” Curious about the meaning (an encounter with Humphrey? A junior year abroad in the desert?), we gathered on Tempel Green and listened as a handful of upperclassmen shared their Camel Moments. These uniquely personal experiences—a fulfilling connection with a teacher, a deep laugh with new friends, or simply the feeling that they’ve mastered their new schedule and loved their classes— all represented moments when something clicked, and they could really call Connecticut College their home.

First-year students left that gathering in anticipation of their own Camel Moments. Many first-years are waiting for theirs, while others have already had theirs. “My Camel Moment was probably a special tradition we have on the sailing team,” said Lily Saffer, ‘27. “I’ve also had a few little moments that I can count as Camel Moments, but I don’t think they need to happen in your first year. They can happen at any time.”

Yet other students question whether the idea of a Camel Moment should be promoted so much. “I haven’t had my Camel Moment yet. It’s a cute idea, but I do think it’s a little forced on first years,” said Olivia Siegel ‘27. “Not every student has to have a Camel Moment,” she added.

In fact, a search of the archives of The College Voice and the Conn website reveals that mentions of “Camel Moments” don’t date back further than 2018, just five years ago. While these moments of feeling established at Conn are lovely, is the branding of a Camel Moment just a marketing ploy to put new students on the path to settling in at Conn faster?

Many students don’t feel the need to pinpoint one moment when Conn became their home, instead recognizing all the smaller moments along the way

to feeling settled. “My Camel Moments so far have been mostly small but sweet things, like taking a leisurely walk in the Arbo or in the library. I don’t think only a big event can be a Camel Moment,” said Claire Kingsbury ‘27.

Upperclass students have varied perspectives, but starting at Conn during the peak of the pandemic didn’t seem to deter the Camel Moment. “My Camel Moment happened during my first semester right at the beginning of the Covid pandemic. I had the opportunity to perform in an alumni-written play, which was an amazing opportunity given the fact that almost all theater had been halted due to the pandemic. When I was standing in front of the audience and performing a monologue...I knew I had chosen the right place to be for my undergraduate education,” said Lara Beckius ‘24.

“I’ve had several small—but memorable—camel moments over the course of my time at Conn. My first one was probably the most magical of the bunch: during the fall of my first year, I was watching a movie outside on Tempel Green with a friend. The stars illuminated the crystal-clear sky above us, creating a beautiful backdrop for the film. Late into the movie, an orange, fiery shooting star crackled through the sky, directly above the screen. Everyone on the Green turned to their friends to excitedly talk about what they had just seen. This moment happened in 2020, where outdoor events were one of the only ways to safely connect with others amid the pandemic. Having such a special moment during a very challenging (and quite frankly, scary) time in my life was a small, but much-needed reminder that everything was going to be okay. For just a brief moment, all of us were enthralled by the magic of the shooting star, taken by wonder and curiosity rather than uncertainty and fear,” said Taylor Austin ‘24. Whether you think the Camel Moment is one moment or a collection of smaller ones, one thing is clear: it is a widely experienced phenomenon among Conn students. •

## Heating: Addressing Questions and Concerns

LILY TOBIN  
CONTRIBUTOR

Now that we’re officially over the hot and humid hump, Conn has turned on the radiators.

Many students complain about the uncomfortable conditions created by the radiators. Catie Clarke ‘26 said, “The radiators smell weird. You won’t know what it is at first, but it’s the radiators.” Personally, I haven’t noticed a stench yet, but then again, I haven’t experienced the heaters for as long as she has. Bea Shannon ‘27 says the “sound is absolutely terrible.” As a fellow resident of the Branford House basement, Ellie Frisbie ‘27 agrees with Bea, stating that “the ticking sound that they make is equatable to the ticking time bomb of my patience.” It’s clear that the radiator-generated sound is disrupting students’ sleep and causing annoyance in their day-to-day lives.

It’s clear that there are many unanswered questions and concerns regarding heating, so I decided to ask Facilities for answers. Assistant Dean of Student Engagement and New Programs Geoff Norbert put me in contact with Interim Vice President for Administration/Executive Director of Facilities Management and Campus Planning Justin Wolcraft.

I first asked him about my dorm’s primary concern: the noise. He said, “Steam radiators will often hiss or bang due to a buildup of condensate or a leaking valve. If this occurs, please submit a work request through CamelWeb.



Courtesy of Robbie Lynch

The radiator may need to be bled or a valve may need to be replaced.” This means that those noises we all hear are actually indicative of potential genuine problems with our radiators. This was news to me, and probably would be to other as well.

As far as the procedure for turning on the heat, he explained that first the “boilers’ safeties are tested,” and after “tests have been completed, the steam boilers are brought up to about 10 psi.” Though each dorm building is raised to the same or near-same pressure, there are obvious differences in the temperature experience felt across campus. He said that “Many of the campus buildings are provided with steam heat from the Powerhouse. There are sensors in various locations throughout the buildings. The Powerhouse takes an average of the sensors to determine the temperature of the building and cycles the steam valve or pump to maintain the average temperature setpoint for each building.” It seems that most dorms rely on a factored average in determining temperature.

What I gleaned from the variety of students’ opinions is that there is frustration with radiators and general unawareness regarding how heating actually works. Regardless, the heating is on, and here to stay for a considerable time. Wolcraft predicted that the heating will end “anytime between April 15th and May 15th.” Until then, all we can do is deal with the conditions it creates in the meantime. •



## Just How Far Can the Camels Run?

ELLIS IURILLI-HOUGH  
STAFF WRITER

Think of how good your favorite sports teams would be without the potential of injury. How many points could they score? Where would they rank? What kind of mark would they have left on history? In an ideal world, sports teams wouldn't have to focus on keeping their athletes healthy. Even the best athletes and teams have to deal with injury and sickness, the great ones just figure out how to overcome them.

That's where the men's cross country team found itself this past Saturday, when it hosted 26 teams for their annual home meet at Harkness State Park. Before Saturday's meet, the team had already ran five races. But with multiple runners out sick or hurt, the top seven competed in only three of those races.

Brendan Mellitt '24 and Ethan Bush '24 have been consistently placing well among strong fields. At the Conn Invite, Bush placed 39th out of 209 runners. Mellitt crossed the line in 80th, a solid finish considering his spikes blew out within the first few minutes of the race forcing him to finish the 8K without shoes. Rounding out the scoring was Harry Harwood '25, Chris Davis '24, and Ellis Iurilli-Hough '27 who placed 82nd, 88th, and 94th respectively. Blake Rogers '25 and Ronan Staab '27 also looked strong taking the sixth and seventh spots for the team. The team placed 14th overall, with nine runners racing under 27 minutes.

What could the rest of the season look like for the men's team? Two key runners, Matt Scardigno '25 and Jonathan Norton '26, are out for the remainder of the season. Harwood and Rogers are starting to come into form now, with Rogers inching back from a spring appendix surgery. Additionally, the loss of important runners like All-Americans Jeff Love '23 and Matt Carter '23 have left a hole in the team's depth.

Faced with this adversity, the Camels have continued to stay optimistic. "I think we need to keep faith in ourselves. Everyone does the physical side of the training pretty well, but the difference is made by the mental side. That's where we can find our advantage, and I think we've done really well with that both last year and this year in gritting out those close wins over teams we really wanted to beat," said captain Mellitt.

That faith is what keeps runners focused and motivated during the latter stages of one of the longest seasons in college sports. But given the fact that it's 2023 and the NCAA Division III is the most competitive it's ever been, Conn needs to prove themselves in these next few races if they want a bid to the National Championship on November 18th.

So as the men of the desert head to Amherst this weekend for the NES-CAC championship, the team is looking at the positives. The home meet at Harkness has given them momentum to finish the season strong and consider what next year's team will bring. It starts with Coach Sam Alexander, who is starting his first full year with the team. A former professional runner, Alexander helped recruit one of the strongest first-year classes in recent years. And with a basket of juniors waiting to call their shot as senior contributors, the 2024 season is looking promising. Scardigno and Norton look to assume the top two returning positions, the freshman will have a year of college training under their belt, Harwood and Rogers will have the opportunity to train hard while abroad during the winter and spring, and many others recovering from injuries will finally be at full strength.

There's also the potential for unexpected members of the squad to step up at the right time. In the sub-varsity race, Lucas Vasquez '25 and Nicholas

DeMarco '26 were the top two finishers for the Camels, nearly beating the varsity's seven and eight based on time. Zach Stoddard '26 and Tony Belford '27 have also looked strong all season. Any of these men could play an important role in the team's development in the coming years.

"The future is bright for this team, we're deeper than we've ever been. Even as the old guard is phased out, there's just as much talent, if not more, to replace it," says Mellitt.



*Courtesy of Clarus Multimedia Group*

All things considered, the team is currently ranked 7th in one of the toughest conferences in the nation.

Fighting for this season won't be easy, but with a little luck, Conn still has a shot. It all comes down to these next two races. This weekend if Conn can beat teams like Bates or Wesleyan, it will put them in a good position looking ahead to the Mid-East Regional meet, where the men will need to secure crucial wins over similarly ranked inter-region teams like Vassar and St. Lawrence to have a shot at qualifying for the National Championships as a team. The men can even take some motivation from the women's team, who were recently ranked 26th in the nation.

"The future of Conn XC is bright. Echoing something that Coach Sam said, we've had a ton of guys step up and take crucial positions when it mattered most. From here on in we need to be opportunistic, we need to pack up, and we need to play on our strengths in order to stay in the hunt for that team bid," said captain Robbie Lynch '24.

Judgment time has come for men's XC, and one thing is for sure: Camels aren't known for going down without a fight. •



## Camels Find Their Sea Legs!

**FRITZ BALDAUF**  
CO-EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

On Wednesday, October 4th, the Learn to Sail Class wrapped up their classes with a “bring a friend to sailing” day, where the new sailors could share their newly acquired sailing skills with their friends. The course met once a week over the first half the fall semester, and was taught by Sailing Coaches Jeff Bresnahan and Emilie Blinderman.

Coach Bresnahan said of the class that “having more students use the waterfront is great for the Conn community. Being able to use the whole property makes campus a great place for students, staff and faculty. Expanding the waterfront past varsity and club sports gets more people using the waterfront.”

Sailing is a niche sport, which many who don't grow up competing in don't fully understand. It requires a very different approach and set of skills than the typical ball or field sports that most think of when they think of college athletics. The new waterfront at Conn is now just over a year old, and the benefits for the entire Connecticut College community can clearly be seen. Of course the varsity sports – sailing and rowing – have gained an obvious benefit from the upgrades in facilities and docks, but the community as a whole now benefits from a far more accessible and visually appealing waterfront.

Coach Bresnahan's beginner sailing class, which is offered to Conn students most years, teaches students the important basics of sailing, providing an on campus opportunity to learn the sport that isn't available at most other colleges. As the only NESCAC school to feature a waterfront, Conn is in a unique position to offer sailing to the entire community.

Bresnahan states that “the class gets students on the water in the first week. Most students can't believe that they are sailing by the second class, and bringing a friend by the fifth class. It is empowering, and learning new things as an adult is something you have to do for the rest of your life.”

Unlike many other sports, sailing is something that can be picked up at any point in one's life, and not just for leisure. One can sail for the first time as an adult, and if they find a true passion for it, they can compete at a very high level, given that it is a sport where one can compete long after their college years.



*Courtesy of Jeff Bresnahan*

The learn to sail class is just one of several ways in which Coaches Bresnahan and Blinderman and the Coed and Women's Sailing Teams at Conn look to share their sport with the community as a whole. Bresnahan highlighted “Sailapalooza,” a bring a friend to sailing event hosted by the whole Varsity Sailing Team in early May. He encouraged all members of the campus community who are interested to come to this year's Sailapalooza in the spring.

“Sailapoolza is a great way to kick off Florialia because anyone can do it and it is more about just hanging out.

Doing something fun, athletic and outdoors at the end of the semester is great to get ready for finals,” states Bresnahan.

By May, the weather and water will have warmed up. The team will once again be sailing in board shorts again, out of the drysuits that are necessary in the colder, early parts of the spring season. In Sailapalooza, the team hosts a barbeque and teaches their friends the basics of sailing on the picturesque waterfront of Conn's campus. Bresnahan and the sailing team also encourage the campus to come down to the waterfront anytime the sailing team is hosting a home regatta, and support the team. Go Camels! •



*Courtesy of Jeff Bresnahan*



*Courtesy of Jeff Bresnahan*



## AOCC's Second Annual Camel Madness Event Electrifies Conn Athletics

FRITZ BALDAUF  
CO-EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

KEVIN LIEUE  
MANAGING EDITOR

On October 20, 2023, the Connecticut College Athlete of Color Coalition (AOCC) hosted the second ever Camel Madness event. Occurring in the recently renovated Luce Fieldhouse, the bleachers were filled with athletes from nearly every team, who cheered on many of their teammates participating in competitions ranging from

knockout to oreo eating.

Founded in the fall of 2020 amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, the AOCC has sought to create a safe space for student-athletes of color. "AOCC's primary goal is to provide a safe space for student-athletes of color," said AOCC President and Track and Field athlete Jazmyrn Gillespie '24. "We want to be a community where our coalition members can openly talk about their experience as a minority on their team without feeling singled out or judged."

Jayson Firmin '25, who is a member of the Track and Field team and the Campus Outreach head for AOCC echoed Gillespie's sentiment. "AOCC's goals are to unify the community of athletes of color and create an inclusive environment," said Firmin. "We want to support all student athletes, especially those of color." He continued to elaborate on goals for the upcoming year. "This year we hope to continue having events that bring our community together and spread the goals of our coalition," said Firmin. "We have already been planning our next event!"

Likewise, the Camel Madness event sought to unify the athletics community at Conn. "The primary goals of Camel Madness were to bring school spirit around athletics through a pep rally," said Firmin. "Also, to show how student athletes need a specific outlet to be proud of all the work we put in and to celebrate that pride in a fun way."

The night kicked off with a large knockout game, which was won by Charlie



*Courtesy of Madylen Dombal '26*

Gillespie said it was successful. "I think the event was a success! The bleachers were packed, coaches were pried, we got the chance to raise money for ourselves, and Camel Madness is starting to get traction as an annual event," said Gillespie. "I already knew Camel Madness was going to be a hit when I heard my teammates and other friends in Athletics talking on the street, in class, or in Harris about what games they were going to play a week before."

Though similar to last year's event, Camel Madness featured some new events this year. One of these was a two person balloon popping competition. With many creative methods of balloon popping, this event seemed to be an instant hit and drew many laughs from the audience. "My favorite part of Camel Madness was the balloon popping without using your hands," said Firmin. "There was some creativity and some wipeouts which made it riveting to watch."

Looking to the future, the AOCC hopes to host many more events during the school year. "During Camel Madness this year we were not able to have the student vs. faculty basketball game and want to do it as a separate event in the next few months," said Firmin.

While the organization would love to host another large event similar to Camel Madness, they understand that it may be hard to do so. "In an ideal world, we want to host Camel Madness in the winter and to host another large event to celebrate the start of the Spring season," said Gillespie. "With the e-board being student-athletes, we understand that our time is spread thin...with that said, we are brainstorming what similar event we want to host in the Spring so no team feels excluded."

Firmin and Gillespie both emphasized that any students looking to get involved with the AOCC should reach out to them. "Anyone interested in getting involved with AOCC can join our deputy program," said Firmin. "You could also ask any of the members who are highlighted on our Instagram page: @conncoll.aocc, another way is to email the AOCC." Gillespie added "If you are an underclassman, want your voice to be heard, and are interested in planning events with us, sign up to be a deputy to shadow our current e-board members by using our Deputy Interest Form!" With exciting events planned, the future looks bright for the AOCC. •



*Courtesy of Madylen Dombal '26*

Bresnahan '24 of the Sailing Team. The event featured competitions that varied from relay races, to basketball musical chairs, and even two games of tug of war. The games of tug of war were between the women's basketball and volleyball teams, and the men's lacrosse and ice hockey teams. A highlight for everyone was the end, when athletes had the opportunity to pie some of their coaches and peers in the face. This included a heart-warming moment when Men's Basketball Head Coach Tim Sweeney was pried in the face by his son.

When asked how she thought this year's edition of Camel Madness went,



## Camels of the Edition: Marco Cerezo '24

KEVIN LIEUE  
MANAGING EDITOR

Admissions Fellow, at Coffee Closet, and as an accounting tutor. On the Men's Soccer team, I'm a center-back and captain.

### What was your journey in sports prior to Conn like?

MC: My family has always been very sporty, so I really touched on every sport. I used to surf a lot, I played basketball, and I ran track and field for a few years. I didn't play soccer originally because my dad didn't like the mentality around soccer at the time in Spain. I started playing soccer later, at 10 or 11, because all my friends played soccer. I soon wanted to play at a higher level, so when I was 12 I got recruited to play for a team that was kind of far from my home. My family moved because I got recruited for that team and I played there for five years. I had a few calls from other teams but there was nothing official, so when I was 17 I moved to France for a year to play at a higher level. After this, I was called for a week to train with Real Sociedad, which is a professional team in Spain, but they didn't end up keeping me. I played for one more year in Spain. Because I was still a junior in high school, my family and I decided to try to do my senior year in the US. That's when I found Williston Northampton and where I did my senior year before committing to Conn.

### Marco, you have had the unique experience of playing soccer at a high level in Spain. Did you ever really envision yourself coming to the US to play soccer?

MC: Not really; soccer is different in Europe and is more competitive. I was playing at the highest level for my age from age 15. Right now, I have friends who are playing in the first division of Spain, so my goal was to play professionally. The US became an option when I saw the options I had in Spain were playing for not a lot of money. Also, in Spain when you play at [a high] level, you either study or play for a team because it's hard to combine both. So seeing how in the US you could play while you studied, it really appealed to me.

### How did you end up choosing Conn?

MC: I didn't really choose Conn. Coming from Spain, I didn't know how the recruiting process worked. You don't send emails to coaches or networks. Like at my games in Spain, every weekend there were scouts from Real Madrid and Barca. Even though they don't call you, they're always there so you know if you're good they'll call you. I really faced the reality that it wasn't like that in America. I had a lot of Division III coaches watching my games and reaching out to me, but I really wanted to play in Division I. I told my coach my decision would be based on how much Division I schools could help me financially because I have four brothers so I couldn't pay full price. Later, Conn's coach Ruben Burke made me an offer. I had already committed ED to Gettysburg College, but I realized how good NESCAC schools are and so I changed my commitment.

### What is your favorite and least favorite thing about your position?

MC: My favorite thing [about being a center-back] is that I am the last man so a lot of things rely on me. My least favorite thing is that sometimes I wish I could contribute more in the game like [being able to] dribble more and get higher up the field.

### What makes the Men's Soccer team at Conn so competitive nationally and in the NESCAC? Is there anything the program does differently from other teams you have played on?

MC: I think that the whole team takes everything very seriously. Even though we are DIII, we take a lot of pride in what we do to be competitive. So we try to do everything to be good whether it's 6 a.m. [practices], stretching, pool sessions, or anything that we think can help the program. I would also say in the recruiting

### Could you please introduce yourself?

Marco Cerezo: My name is Marco Cerezo and I come from Málaga, Spain. I'm a senior here at Conn and a Quantitative Economics Major and Finance Minor. On campus, I work as a Senior

Admissions Fellow, at Coffee Closet, and as an accounting tutor. On the Men's Soccer team, I'm a center-back and captain.



*Courtesy of Camel Athletics*

process [Coach] Ruben does a great job bringing in guys who want to play soccer at a high level. We won the national championships two years ago, and I think [this happened] because of the past players who have taken it seriously too.

### And what was the national championship experience like?

MC: For me it was weird because it was my first season at Conn [with games] because of COVID. So that was my first experience of NESCAC soccer. I didn't play a lot which was frustrating for me because I thought I deserved more playing time. Every game I would play for like 30-40 minutes which is not bad, but for me it wasn't enough. As more of the season went by, I played more because of injuries. I think we had a great group because we had a good mix of players who had talent and technical ability to save the day and also players who were physical, passionate, and loud. I think we were resilient overall because we scored a lot of late goals.

### The Conn Men's Soccer team has already surpassed last season's record and conference win total. How has the team performed better this season compared to last?

MC: Last year, I think everyone was waiting for us because they knew who we were and how we could play. We didn't really know how to respond to that. Maybe some players were a little too confident because we were underdogs before and we didn't have to prove ourselves as much. This year, we're trying to be more strict, stay healthy, eat well, go to bed earlier, not go out until the first NESCAC win, [and] not go out after ties or losses. We're really trying to create a culture that is accountable and as professional as possible. I think that the incoming freshman class has also done a good job adapting to that. We were very clear we wanted a good year and last year was not something that could happen again. So from the beginning, everyone knew the sacrifices we wanted to make.

### As a senior of the soccer program at Conn how has the team changed over the years and do you have any particular highlights?

MC: Winning the National Championship. We had great team chemistry. We weren't the best team every time but we would find a way to win. Like in the national championship, we were down but we found a way to win in the last minutes and trusted each other. In terms of memories, I think when Lorenzo Bocchetti '21 scored to win the national championship that was very memorable. This year, in the first game, Tufts scored on us and I had my flashbacks of [the failures] last season, because I'm a senior so I need to make this year count. I'm a captain so I feel I have more pressure. When Sam Boehm '23 scored [to equalize] I remember being so happy and saying in my head "I love you!"

### How would you describe the experience of being a team captain?

MC: I think in soccer, there are captains without armbands. For me at least, being captain only means that I wear the armband in games. But I also think that I have more of a voice and respect from the team. Before, I was relying on others to speak, but now it's me who has to do it. I've always tried to speak to people, be loud, and motivate on the field and we have people who are freshman and sophomores who speak and are loud. But I think being a captain really helps you gain a bigger respect from everyone else because when you speak they know that you have the trust and respect for saying what you are saying.

### What do you hope for the future of the team when you all have graduated? Is there anything you would change about college soccer/the team?

MC: I wish college soccer was year round. Maybe having less games every week but having a year round league or playing in the fall and winter and stopping in March. For athletes in college, not being able to compete during the whole year is a bit of a joke. You kill your body for three months and suddenly after three months you don't have anything to compete for. In terms of the program, I think everyone behind me knows what we fight for and what it means to play here and be successful. So I hope they pass it down because you always want to be proud of the place you've been and as long as the team is competitive and one of the best programs in division three I will be proud.

### What are your plans going forward following college?

MC: I never thought of myself not playing soccer, so I'm still wondering about this myself. I have wanted to work in finance the last two years but I have wanted to play soccer since I was ten. My dream would be to be able to work a finance job and be able to play for a team after 6 p.m. Realistically, I think I might have to work for a few years and then try to combine it. •

## Camels of the Edition: Matt Scoffone '24

KEVIN LIEUE  
MANAGING EDITOR

**Could you please introduce yourself?**

Matt Scoffone: I'm Matt Scoffone, a senior from West Chester, Pennsylvania. I'm a Quantitative Economics and Econometrics Major with a minor in Finance. I

work as a Senior Admissions Fellow and I'm in the Peggotty Investment club. On the soccer team, I'm primarily a winger and a captain.

**How did you end up choosing Conn?**

MS: I wanted a good education as well as just soccer. The NESCAC schools are some of the best schools in the country and I also didn't want my whole time [in college] to be soccer. This is why I wanted to go to a high [level] DIII school instead of a DI school that had year-round training and had a worse education. When I came to visit Conn, it was awesome and I pretty much chose the school the next day because I loved the campus and everything about the school.

**What is your favorite and least favorite thing about your position?**

MS: My favorite thing about being a winger is that you are high enough up the field to try to score some goals. My least favorite thing would probably be that it's a lot of running being a winger. It's a tough position to play because you have to run up and down [the pitch] a lot.

**Matt, you played as a center midfielder in high school and but ended up playing winger in college; how did this change happen?**

MS: It's funny actually. I played on the same club [soccer] team with Rye Jaran '24. He was a winger and I was the center mid [on the club team]. But once we came to Conn freshman year, we were just practicing because it was the COVID year and we somehow ended up switching positions. I think I was just recruited as a player who could fill whatever was needed and the change just kind of happened slowly.

**What makes the Men's soccer team at Conn so competitive nationally and in the NESCAC?**

MS: First, I think Coach [Ruben] Burke does a really good job pushing intensity in everything we do whether it's in season or out of season. I think a lot of off season work is what has given us success. Like my freshman year was the COVID year so we didn't have a season. We worked harder than any other team in the country and it paid off because the next year we were able to win the national championship. This past spring and summer every single guy on the team has been putting in so much work and I think this has contributed so much to the success we're having this year.

**Matt, you mentioned that the Conn team worked harder than any other team in the country, could you explain what this experience was like?**

MS: We would train maybe five or six times a week and the practices were tough because it was very intense. We had ten freshmen in our incoming class and three juniors. It was just us 13 players practicing, so we got a lot of touches and we got familiar with playing with each other during this time. It was also kind of a good experience to have because a lot of freshmen come straight into a season and this [experience] kind of bridged the gap between high school and college soccer for myself.

**And what was the national championship experience like?**

MS: It was a thriller. Obviously when you're going that far it's easy to say that everything was going well the entire time, but there were a lot of tough games. Our first NCAA game, we won in a penalty kick shootout and that [game] could've easily gone the other way. We really showed our resilience through a bunch of games. For example, we lost to Tufts in the NESCAC finals that year and ended up beating them in the Elite 8, and we lost to Amherst earlier in the year and we ended up beating them in the final. So we really came full circle and matured as the season went on.

**What traditions, superstitions, or pre-game rituals do you or your team have?**

MS: After every win, we play our first song, "Wagon Wheel," which is like our team national anthem. Immediately after, we listen to "Sweet Caroline." So after every win, the locker room is electric. Everyone is together whether you played one minute or 90 minutes, which shows our culture and how much of a family our team is.

**Matt, you currently are tied for most goals scored on the team with 7 goals in 15 games, which is more than you've scored in your previous two seasons in 17 games, what's caused this change?**

MS: I don't think I'd say there's a reason. I think in general our team is very good attacking-wise; we have a lot of guys who are very dangerous and I've just been fortunate enough to put some in myself. But I think without some of the other guys, like Jake [Creus] '24 and the rest of the attackers, I wouldn't be able to get many of the chances [to score]. If my teammates weren't beating defenders themselves, I wouldn't be able to get into a position to score.

**How would you describe the experience of being a team captain?**

MS: It's definitely something I enjoy a lot and also comes with a lot of responsibilities. I think that not just me, Marco and Ale (Alessandro Diano '23) are the captains, and the leadership is very very team oriented. There is a lot of interaction and a lot of good communication within our team. I think that also goes back to last year and maybe our lack of success last year in comparison to this year and 2021.

**What are your plans going forward following college?**

MS: While this semester I'm going to be at school, next semester I'm not going to be...next fall, I'm coming back to use my extra year of soccer eligibility [that we got] from [not being able to play during] COVID. In terms of after that, I'm looking into asset management, wealth management, and financial advising. This past summer, I worked at an asset management firm so something along that line of work.



*Courtesy of Sean Elliot*

**Anything else you would like to add?**

MS: I also want to say the fans are awesome. Whenever we play at Freeman Field, it's like none other. We have one of the best fan bases during games in DIII, and it gets us so pumped up whenever we play here.

**Note: This interview has been edited for clarity and brevity.**

Please reach out to The College Voice (thecollegevoice@gmail.com or @the\_collegevoice on Instagram) to nominate an athlete for the next edition! •



## The NBA Tips Off the 2023-24 Season

**FRITZ BALDAUF**  
CO-EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

October is one of the best months in professional American sports. The MLB playoffs are reaching their climax, the NFL season is in full swing, and the first pucks have dropped in the NHL. Additionally, the NBA is tipping off for another exciting campaign. Here are some of the key teams and storylines to watch this season.

### **Eastern Conference:**

#### ***Milwaukee Bucks: Is Damian Lillard the missing piece?***

The 2021 NBA Champions made waves this offseason by acquiring all-star point guard Damian Lillard from the Portland Trailblazers, seeing their title odds jump to the favorites. After their 2021 title, the Bucks have crashed out of the playoffs in disappointing fashion the past two years, and last year most embarrassingly in the first round as the number one overall seed. Milwaukee is looking to capitalize on superstar Giannis Antetokounmpo's prime, and adding Lillard to the core of Antetokounmpo, Khris Middleton, and Brook Lopez gives Milwaukee one of the most formidable starting fives in the league. But there are significant questions about their lack of depth off of the bench, and about their perimeter defense, where Lillard has been atrocious throughout his entire career, despite his offensive prowess. These concerns could be Milwaukee's undoing in the playoffs, but they should still be viewed as the favorite to represent the East in the NBA Finals in June.

#### ***Boston Celtics: Is shaking up the old core the answer?***

For much of the past decade the Celtics have always been the bridesmaid, and never the bride. They have consistently gone deep into the playoffs since 2015, but all they have to show for it is a series of disappointing losses in the Eastern Conference Finals and a loss in the NBA Finals in 2022. With concerns about the team growing stale, General Manager Brad Stevens shook up the roster around star forwards Jayson Tatum and Jaylen Brown. Longtime defensive ace and energy guy Marcus Smart was traded to Memphis, and then later replaced by Jrue Holiday via another trade. Robert Williams III has given way to Kristaps Porzingis, who has always shown flashes, but has historically disappointed at every stop he's been at in the NBA. It was clear that Boston needed to shake something up after another playoff disappointment last season, but replacing Smart with Holiday feels redundant, even if it is a slight upgrade, and the Porzingis addition is uninspiring and risky.

### **Western Conference:**

#### ***Denver Nuggets: Who can stop them?***

The defending champs are coming off one of the more dominant playoff runs in recent memory. The Nuggets cruised to last year's title, turning in the best playoff record (16-4) by a champion since the juggernaut 2016/17 Golden State Warriors. Led by Nikola Jokic, who firmly planted his flag as the league's best player last season, they are an offensive juggernaut perfectly constructed around the Serbian big man. Jamal Murray is the perfect sidekick to Jokic, and Kentavious Caldwell-Pope and Michael Porter Jr. fit in seamlessly. Losing key role player Bruce Brown hurts, but Denver should be able to fill that void. The only question they have left to answer is whether or not they are prepared to play this season with the target on their backs that comes with being the defending champion. Denver is the undisputed favorite, and as of now they are head and shoulders above not only everyone in the West, but above the entire league.

#### ***Phoenix Suns: Can this superteam of mercenaries translate their play style to postseason success?***

It's hard to deny that this team feels anything but organic, but also impossible to deny that Phoenix has one of the best collections of superstar talent in the

league currently. Devin Booker has ascended to become the best shooting guard in the NBA. He is the face of this Suns team, and a potential MVP candidate. Last season's trade for superstar forward Kevin Durant and this offseason's trade for scoring machine Bradley Beal gave Phoenix a scary collection of talent, but a collection that is not without questions. Durant isn't getting any younger, and has dealt with significant injury issues over the past four seasons of his career. While he is still an incredible scorer, he doesn't get to the rim the way he used to. Beal's numbers have always been gaudy, but it's a fair question to ask whether or not he's just a "good numbers on a bad team" kind of player, because that's all he's been for most of his career. And then there's the question of defense. None of Phoenix's three stars are particularly good defenders. Durant was, once upon a time, but age and injury have taken away his defensive prowess. There are also questions of depth. While the talent collection is impressive, teams constructed in this manner haven't made any real deep runs in recent years.

#### ***Los Angeles Lakers: Can they carry over the momentum from last season?***

After a disastrous year and a half, the Lakers finally hit their stride last spring, making it to the Western Conference Finals. They return largely the same core that got them there, highlighted of course by LeBron James and Anthony Davis. Austin Reaves' emergence as a legitimate third star last season was a massive reason for the Lakers' run. Questions do remain, however. The Lakers had no answer for Jokic in the West Finals. Additionally, James and Davis are both very injury prone and James isn't getting any younger (he's currently the oldest player in the NBA). Equally concerning is Davis' habit of disappearing in big moments. The Lakers have a championship ceiling, but their floor is also incredibly low, given all of the volatile variables on their roster.

#### ***Golden State Warriors: The twilight of a dynasty.***

The Warriors have defined the past decade of basketball. After four titles and six Finals appearances, they have nothing left to prove, and are playing with house money. Their 2022 title win sealed the legacy and legendary status of Stephen Curry and his co-stars Klay Thompson and Draymond Green. However, the team is hungry for a fifth ring, to match the Lakers and Spurs title count for the highest total since Michael Jordan's Bulls. Last season was the most drama filled campaign the Warriors had experienced. The animosity between Green and Jordan Poole (who was traded to the Wizards this offseason) hung over the team like a cloud, the defense struggled, injuries persisted, key swingman Andrew Wiggins missed half the season for a personal reason, and it culminated in an embarrassing loss to the Lakers in the second round. This year's roster has returned to many of the principles that originally built this dynasty: solid veteran playmaking, prioritizing fit and defense, and with athleticism sprinkled in. The acquisition of longtime nemesis Chris Paul should stabilize the second unit, and the Warriors will count on improvements from Jonathan Kuminga and Moses Moody, and the steady, vital presence of Wiggins and Kevon Looney. Ultimately, this team will go as far as Curry, Thompson and Green take them. There's no concern about Curry. He's still at the peak of his powers and showing no signs of slowing down. Thompson and Green, however, looked old and mortal for much of last season. If they can replicate the lightning in a bottle of the 2022 title run, the Warriors will be one of the most dangerous title contenders in the league, and can potentially capture an incredible fifth title since 2015. If not, they could flame out in disappointing fashion early in the playoffs again. Either way, with their core aging, every individual season has the potential to be the last dance all together for the legendary trio of Curry, Thompson and Green.

### **NBA Finals Prediction:**

Nuggets over Bucks in 6. •



## MLB Playoffs Show Regular Season May Not Be Terribly Important

EVAN YOUNG  
SPORTS EDITOR

Expectations continue to be shattered in the baseball world as this year's MLB postseason trudges along. Top seeds have gotten pummeled and subsequently eliminated by lower seeds, and as such, most people's predictions for whichever team was to come out on top have been flipped on their heads. With that said, this is not by any means the first time that this has happened in baseball leading up to the Fall Classic, and rule changes in recent years coupled with the nature of the sport may well be the culprit.

In 2022, the Los Angeles Dodgers finished their season with a franchise record 111 wins. They were a terrifying team led by Mookie Betts and the recently acquired Freddie Freeman. However, they would inevitably be usurped in the National League Division Series by the Wild Card San Diego Padres, who, with only 89 wins, had already eliminated the 101-win New York Mets in the Wild Card Round. This is similar to an infamous historical example of the 2001 Seattle Mariners. After having logged 116 wins, tying the 1906 Chicago Cubs for the most regular season wins in the modern era, the Mariners would go on to fall to the 95-win New York Yankees in the American League Championship Series four games to one, proving that this is no new occurrence.

This postseason has proved similarly surprising. The National League top seed Atlanta Braves fell to the Philadelphia Phillies in four games in the NLDS for the second time in a row. Even more jarring, the American League top seed Baltimore Orioles were swept in the American League Division Series, falling to the fifth seed Texas Rangers who had just eliminated the 99-win Tampa Bay Rays and remained undefeated upon entering the American League Championship Series against the reigning World Champion Houston Astros.

With baseball having now reached the World Series, a matchup that seemed incredibly unlikely given their underdog status in their respective leagues, has arisen. The Texas Rangers from the American League face off against the Arizona Diamondbacks from the National League, after the D-Backs ended the Phillies' run in 7 games. Being fifth and sixth seeds in their respective leagues, it would have been very reasonable to suspect that neither team would see the World Series, much less their league championship series. Since 2013, only

six of the winning teams have been number one seeds, as well as only 12 since 1995, with this season being yet another exception.

Why does this seem to be the case? There could be a few possible reasons as to why teams that performed in the regular season at a lower level than 100+ win teams have a similar competitive edge to the latter. The first of which being the Wild Card Round of the playoffs. Starting in 1994, the MLB instituted the Wild Card Round, allowing another team from every league a spot in the postseason. This would be expanded to two teams in 2012, and eventually three teams in the 2022 season. The increase in the number of teams allowed more lower ranked teams to enter the playoffs, thus making the month of October a more competitive tossup. Another change that made it easier for lower seeds is that the Wild Card was expanded from a single-game round to a three game series. By doing this, the lowest seed potentially has a greater chance of advancing, with one loss no longer spelling the end of the team's run. Another important factor is pitching. In the regular season, games are played almost daily by every team with the All-Star Break being the exception. This has important ramifications for pitchers. Because the postseason has plenty of off-days, pitchers are able to recover better and for far longer than they normally would, which can lead to better performance and bullpen utilization in the postseason than what was previously seen through the regular season.

A huge factor that seems to have been plaguing the higher performing teams is rust. Rust is when a team that was at the top during the regular season begins to play at a lower level in the postseason. This can be due to a combination of factors, from performance fatigue to the lack of rest that comes with big league baseball. As a result, the "better" teams perform at a lower standard than normal whereas the various Wild Card teams have several advantages on their side when it comes to advancing.

The World Series is around the corner, with one team that has never won it all facing off against another that has only claimed the title in 2001. As a result, the endgame of Major League Baseball seems more like a game of chance as opposed to being rewarding to teams that worked the hardest throughout the regular season. Whether any attempt at change is to come remains to be seen, but for now it seems the MLB is leaning more into the parity side as opposed to the raw competitive side. •

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**12-1 PM** LUNCH BREAK  
**1-4 PM** PRESENTATIONS  
**4-4:45 PM** END-OF-DAY CELEBRATION

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## Finding the Thread at the Mystic Film Festival

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Westerly, RI. The festival consisted of independent films, workshops, Q&As, panel discussions, and other special events.

At a networking and wine tasting reception that preceded the viewing of the Sunday Documentary Shorts Block, we got the opportunity to chat with Kennedy. She provided us insight on the inspiration for her work which she described as “a poem with visuals” intended to parallel the patchwork quilts and collages her grandmother and mother created as their own mediums of artistic expression. Kennedy began work on the film 15 years ago after the passing of her father, but she was unable to complete it at the time. Working with clips from the original shoot alongside family videos, new material, and poetic screenwriting, Kennedy truly found “the thread” in order to create a beautifully quilted homage to the women in her family.

“It’s not what it was, but it is what it is,” said Kennedy in one of the concluding lines of the film, alluding to how the mosaic of narratives and her own personal history contributed to an unpredictable present. Kennedy’s film was one of the six featured in the Documentary Shorts Block on Sunday. Each of the films was connected by the common thread of communicating historically neglected narratives.

The viewing began with “Witch Hunt,” a historical documentary about Hollywood blacklisting during the Cold War. Conrad Bromberg, the narrator of the film and son of actor J. Edward Bromberg wanted to give a voice to his father who lost his career and passion to the cultural Cold War. “The synopsis is really long, they usually edit it,” joked Anthony Sherin, the editor and co-director who sat next to us at the film screening. Sherin won the award for Best Documentary Film Editing later that evening.

Up next was “The 29th Connecticut,” a local documentary about 11 African American soldiers from Berlin, Connecticut who fought for their rights and freedom during the Revolutionary War. The directors emphasized that while this film reflects an important historical milestone for African American rights in Connecticut, it simultaneously demonstrates the ongoing

“It’s not as pretentious as it sounds,” joked Claire Rose Kennedy as she talked about her short film, “The Thread,” which was screened on Oct. 22 at the 6th annual Mystic Film Festival. Kennedy was one of the many filmmakers from across the country who brought their work to the four-day event hosted in Mystic, CT and

Westerly, RI. The festival consisted of independent films, workshops, Q&As, panel discussions, and other special events.

struggles of these soldiers who were underpaid for their service and faced periods of neglect and malnutrition following the war. “The 29th Connecticut” was the recipient of the Best Connecticut Film award. One of the most experimental documentaries of the block was “Molten” directed by Matt Andrew and Hillary Federico. The film used innovative editing and visuals in order to communicate Federico’s relationship with the grief of her father’s passing. “The inspiration was love, and the outpouring of love that comes when you lose someone that manifests as grief,” Federico said at the Q&A panel following the screening. Multiple audience members made comments during the panel about how moving the film was, particularly in one scene where Federico stood in a white dress with family videos projecting onto her. The touching image stuck with viewers, and ultimately granted the film the Audience Choice Award Documentary.

“Camera and Clay” and “Make a Mark” were the final two films showcased on Sunday, both centering their narratives around the role of under-represented people in the art community. Cormac O’Malley was inspired

to make “Camera and Clay” in order to tell the story of his mother, Helen Hooker O’Malley who was an Irish sculptor and photographer. “So many artists would not have existed without her patronage and without her support,” O’Malley explained. Her works are now available in 18 different museums as well as at the Greenwich Historical Society.

“As I got older, I started to feel invisible,” Susan Mangiero, director of “Make a Mark,” shared while expressing the inspiration for her film. Her work followed Mark Sciff’s artistic career following his retirement from dentistry, an inspirational story which challenges viewers to

take risks in hope of finding the beauty in life. In the film, Sciff encourages audience members to ask themselves, “Do you want to open up the door and go through?”

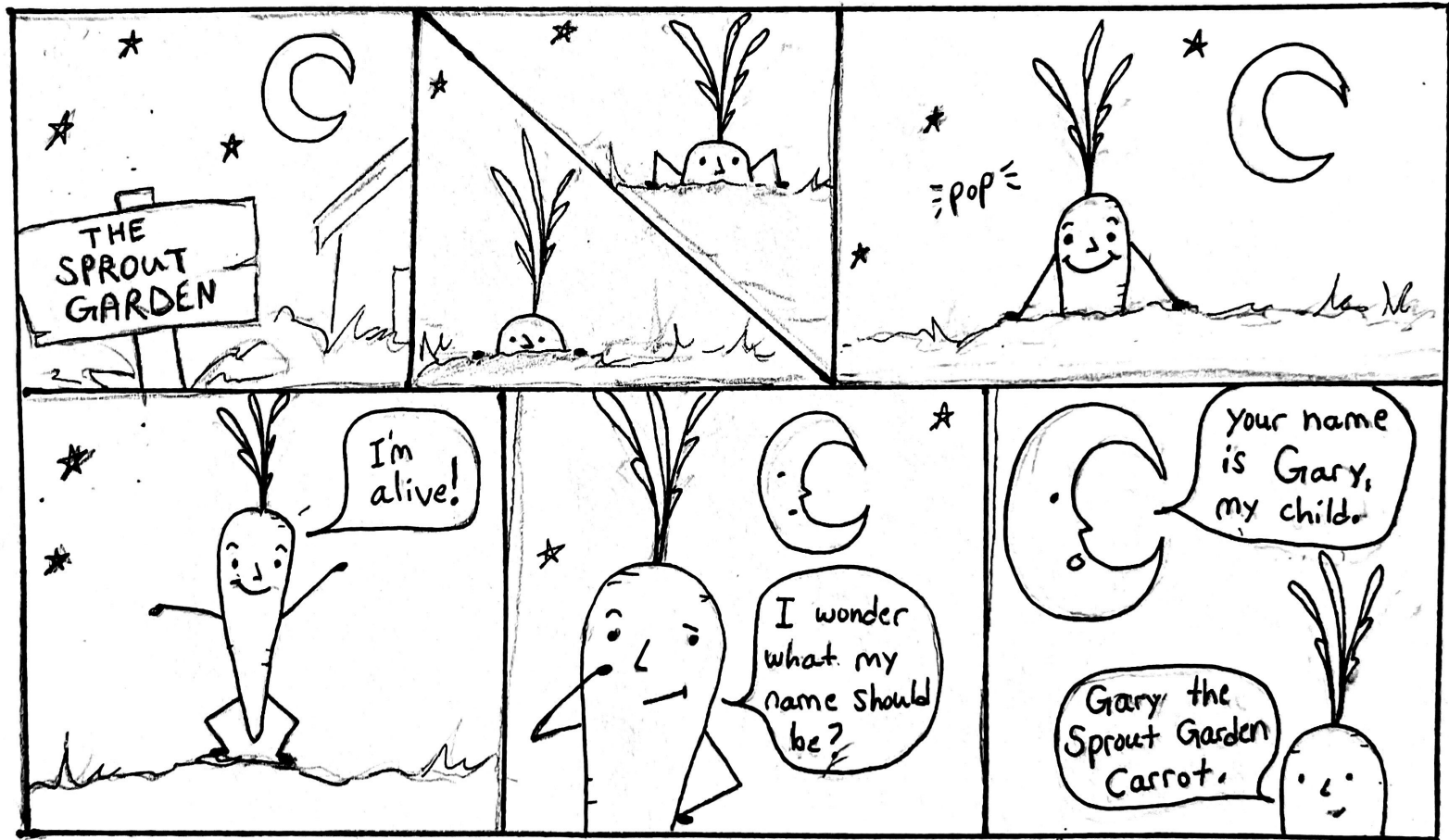
The film festival concluded Sunday night with an awards ceremony at Mystic Luxury Cinemas. Janet Roach of Old Lyme, Connecticut was the recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award for her dedication to film education and her impressive career in screenwriting. Roach accepted the award with a speech reflecting on her career. Her parting words paralleled the themes we witnessed throughout the day: “Doorsteps are well and good, but you need the courage to get anywhere.” •



*Courtesy of Emma Dinkelspiel*

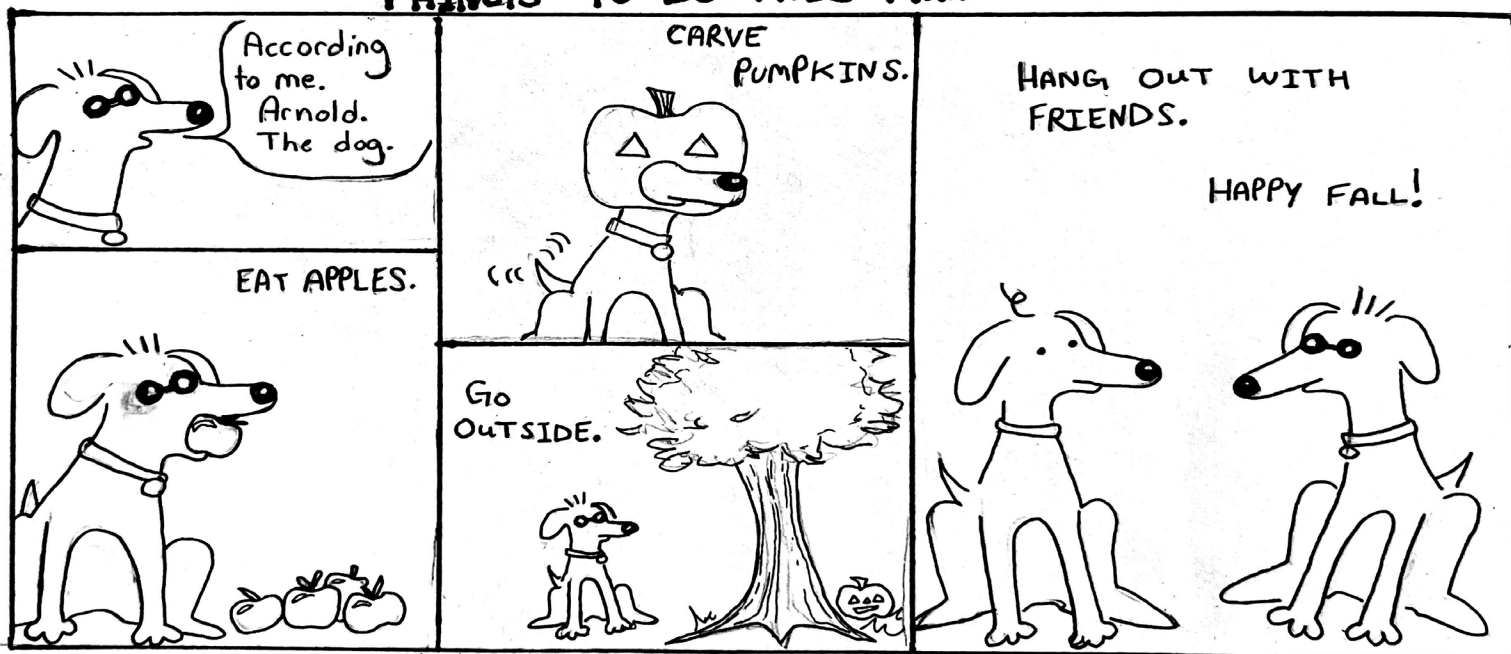


### THE NIGHT GARY WAS BORN



By Ava Mary Aloia

### THINGS TO DO THIS FALL:



By Ava Mary Aloia