AOCC is Here to Stay

The Athletes of Color Coalition (AOCC) celebrated its second anniversary this summer and hit the ground running when students returned to campus in August. Established in the tumultuous summer of 2020, the Coalition has persevered against adversity and is proving that they are bigger and better than ever this year.

In the midst of a global pandemic, the resurgence of the Black Lives Matter movement, and a pause on regular life, academics, and athletics, the founding members of AOCC worked to create a community that would outlast their time at Conn. Most notably, Stephania Lopez ’21, AOCC’s first president and then-captain of the women’s water polo team, along with Athletic Director Mo White and Women’s Basketball Coach and AOCC adviser Jackie Smith, were all instrumental advocates for the group’s formation.

Current president and senior squash player Angela Cao was also involved from the very beginning. “It was a really rough start at first just because it was remote. Getting people to join meetings was rough,” she said. They also had inconsistent leadership, with executive board members struggling to balance their academics and athletics with their commitments to the group. Junior and secretary Jazmyn Gillespie said she didn’t even know about the Coalition until her sophomore year. After attending an informational meeting with the encouragement of her track & field teammate, she decided to join the executive board.

In spring 2022, Cao helped set a stronger foundation with clearer expectations to reinvigorate their mission for the upcoming year. As COVID levels were dropping and Conn was opening up to in-person events again, AOCC’s ambitions and goals for community-building grew. “We had a slow start, but now I feel like we’re stronger than ever,” said Cao.

Camel Madness was the Coalition’s largest and most popular event to date, inviting all athletes and community members to celebrate the start of winter sports season on Oct. 21. Hosted in the Luce Gymnasium, the bleachers were packed with athletes of all disciplines, cheering on their teammates in various games and competitions. First-year Priscilla Ameyaw (women’s soccer), senior Maria Sell (women’s water polo), and sophomore Abby Illusorio (women’s basketball, track & field) all agreed that this was their favorite AOCC event to date. “Our E-board members worked hard to pull off an event like that and the turnout was amazing,” said Illusorio. “It was fun to see all the athletes at Conn come together for a night and have fun!” With a student DJ, lights, and new merchandise for the occasion, AOCC hopes that Camel Madness will become a tradition for years to come.

In addition to bringing athletes together for the first time, Gillespie was inspired by high school pep rallies and the school pride that comes with community: “I can’t speak for the entire student body, but I’ve always noticed that our collective school pride isn’t necessarily there.” Cao agreed, adding that publicity was a challenging yet vital aspect of the event’s success. They found that word-of-mouth was the most effective way to promote the event, as coaches told their teams and friends told friends. Hearing about the event from other athletes was more encouraging than seeing a faceless poster or Instagram post, especially for a first-time event.

Cao and Gillespie want to make AOCC a household name on campus, and large community events help establish them as a force for student engagement. Unlike other affinity groups, AOCC is not a club; rather, it is under the Camel Athletics umbrella, so the way they receive funding and reserve spaces on campus is different from typical student-run clubs. Although they are now part of Conn’s Race and Ethnicity Programs, along with the Men of Color Alliance, Asian Students in Action, and other stu-

Article continued on page 3.
Letter From the (Managing) Editor

It’s that moment of the semester when final exams are the subject of our small talks, camaraderie grows among students speed-walking to catch deadlines at similarly slow paces, and professors conclude our classes with the ironic sameness of, “Yeah. It’s just been a weird semester this year.”

On a lazy afternoon last Friday, when Sam should have been making drinks, I should have been baking, and Catja was actually doing her work, we were prompted by a blank page in the questions notebook in Coffee Grounds. I wrote in the book, “What are you proud of this semester?” in a feeble yet sincere attempt to brighten the undeniable anxiety I had been observing and admittedly emitting myself. I have no idea what kinds of things have populated that page since, but it did, in truth, get me thinking. Catja wrote down “TCV” and I wholeheartedly agree.

For instance, rolling out our new TCV newsletter was a huge milestone, spearheaded by Zoe Dubelier on layout and Adrien Prouty and Grace Flynn on the editing team. You can check it out as soon as you open The College Voice website, or scan the QR code below:

And, my current visual is as humbling as it is a source of pride: all of us on this layout Sunday, huddled in the hot TCV office with little to no concept of time since we have no real window – unless you’re counting the generous 3’x5’ view we have of the 1962 room. Constantly in the business of “making it work” together, it’s gratifying to see everyone putting their heads together and watching the many sides of student journalism join in one space. Our last issue of the semester is packed with the power of collective protest over campus projects, centered around the recently proposed Crozier-Williams building and boulevard renovation projects. You can find Sam Maidenberg’s spotlight on the cross country team on page 8, a highly-anticipated review of The Moors on page 14 by Caleb Butler ’26, and iconic cartoons by Althea Tierney ’25 on page 18.

I have a “managing editor” confession: despite having several “managing” titles on campus, I struggle with the implied authoritativeness of it. I shrink when I have to command – or expected to reprimand – large groups of people, being a point-person, and fail mostly at the balance between being accessible and maintaining boundaries. Fortunately for me, The College Voice has a slew of student staff who are inspired, dedicated, and constantly producing bright ideas to keep our beloved paper running with tight turnarounds and deadlines.

Looking forward, we intend to hit the ground running next semester. Interested in joining us? Come to our first pitch meeting of 2023 on our first Sunday back at 8pm in the Alice Johnson room, or follow @the_collegevoice on Instagram for reminders in real time. We are also on Connquest, and reachable by email at thecollegevoice@conncoll.edu. We’re always looking for writers, artists, and those interested in layout design and photography.

I hope you all take a moment to reflect on an accomplishment of any size this semester and enjoy your well-deserved break. Happy Holidays from TCV!

Warmly,
Lucie Englehardt (Managing Editor)
A $10,000 grant from country musician Kenny Chesney’s grassroots project No Shoes Reefs and their partner the Reef Ball Foundation helped kickstart Rosa’s project, which she titled Camels Reef.

With the aid of the grant, Rosa and a team of students and volunteers were able to construct thirty homemade reef balls on an empty campus parking lot throughout the summer and fall of 2021.

According to the College’s website, this process was done through pouring marine-friendly concrete into a fiberglass mold with inflatable buoys and tetherballs implanted to create holes for water and marine life to pass through. Sand is then added to create a natural surface for marine species. Finally, a layer of sugar water is added to give the reef balls an ideal texture for barnacles.

Following the deployment of the first thirty reef balls, Rosa has been able to secure around $200,000 of funding according to The Day. This money has been spent on purchasing additional reef balls and paying student interns.

Of the many organisms in the river, crabs, blackfish, and menhaden have already been spotted inhabiting the reef balls, according to an interview Rosa gave to The Day. In this interview, Rosa added that eventually oysters, mussels, and barnacles will all settle on the balls.

In the spring, more monitoring of the reef balls will be done by Rosa, members of Rosa’s first-year marine science methods course, and student interns. This monitoring will include measurements of wave action and sediment level to monitor the level of sediment loss from the shoreline.

The data collected from this monitoring will “help other scientists and conservationists understand how reef balls might best be used in other New England waterways,” according to an interview Rosa gave to the College.

Through data recorded by Rosa given to The Day, the College’s waterfront has already lost four to five feet of shoreline since Rosa’s arrival to the College in 2018.

Eventually, Rosa plans to place more reef balls in the spring and summer of 2023 to continue furthering her efforts to prevent erosion and create a sustainable habitat for marine species.
Critiques of Campus Renovations

Just Another Facelift

JESSICA BAILEY - CONTRIBUTOR

Commercial buildings often stand for at least 50 years and with the high price tag and time commitment, renovations are few and far between. One of the biggest hurdles in designing these buildings and renovations is how to best update buildings while also trying to suit the needs of the community for another few decades. As if raising anywhere from $10-$60 million isn’t hard enough, predicting the needs of the future? Pretty impossible. But selling the campus community on the need for renovations, even just cosmetic ones? Quite easy. Communities often feel the need for renovations even 10 years after the construction of a building to keep it looking nice and modern.

As part of the ongoing strategic plan to both maintain the college campus and improve the space, the College has proposed a series of renovations centered around the Crozier-Williams Campus Center. As part of the design and consulting process, students were invited on Nov. 17 to attend forums, view the design moodboards, and give input. Walking into Cro, and seeing the futuristic, modern vision juxtaposed against the current design was incredibly exciting. Designed using a nice warm, clean, modern palette, the end result is Cro looking like it got a fancy new facade. But that’s it, the renovations are simply a very, very pricey facelift, without any acknowledgment of any core usage problems, or sustainability initiatives.

Simply put, these renovations do not support a changing world and community for the next 30+ years. When asked about the proposed project, it became clear that many of the renovations weren’t focused on increasing functionality in currently underused places but rather increasing the square footage of student space. Pitching to students the addition of more spaces for students is great… except we already have spaces. We just don’t know how to utilize them beyond study spaces. There’s a litany of rooms located in Cro that are all large and general purpose: 1962, 1941, and Cro’s Nest, but they are largely empty on the weekdays and weekends.

Including equipment which acknowledges common uses of these rooms would make for a much better student experience, and likely increase usage of these rooms. Take for example the MOBROC showcase held in Cro’s Nest this fall. Live student music is a cornerstone of this College, with over seven student bands and several open mic nights, yet there is no good place to host with good acoustics. Cro’s Nest makes an effort and has a small stage and small booth area, yet it has significant drawbacks. There isn’t much in the way of acoustics for live music leaving students with an echoey room and a dominating drum set. In comparison to a building renovation with a $15 million dollar price tag, allocating money to improve the acoustics in a room would use just a fraction of the total cost while leaving a lasting impact.

Additionally, whenever the 1962 room gets used for college events, such as orientation or Fall Weekend, electrical cables are often run duct taped to the floor. Incorporating a 4 inch raised floor into the proposed renovations would eliminate this need. You wouldn’t need to run cables on top of the floor, and it would provide more flexibility in coming decades when HDMI cables are likely replaced. This would be a massive investment into the future safety and useability of the college spaces.

While increasing the curb appeal of a building is vital, at the price tag currently pitched, the College cannot afford to only spend money on aesthetic appeal without addressing key spacial needs. Looking forward to more renovations in the years to come, approaching renovation ideas with flexible designs meant to change with the growth of the community would be a step in the right direction for the college.

In 2018, Connecticut College created a 20-year Campus Master Plan including proposals for renovations to nearly every part of campus that will take place through 2038. As stated in the plan, the central goals are to “reveal the life of the campus – both academic and social,” “ratio-
nalize campus systems and organization,” “renew and reinvest in existing campus environment,” “promote accessibility and diversity,” “embody sustainability best practices,” and “celebrate Conn's setting.” This summer, the renovation of the College Center at Crozier-Williams will begin with the transformation of Cro Boulevard into a pedestrian walkway and the creation of a cohesive lawn between Cro and Harris, making it easier to walk from one building to the other. As a result of this campus landscaping, all of the parking spaces on Cro Boulevard and in front of Harris will be removed. According to the Campus Master Plan, “In its current condition, Crozier Boulevard creates a barrier to comfortable pedestrian circulation within the most active area of the campus core. By relocating parking to perimeter lots along the proposed campus loop road, vehicular traffic along Crozier Boulevard can be limited to service and emergency vehicles.”

The College originally intended to make up for this lost parking space by creating a fourth major parking lot right in front of Zachs Hillel House, eliminating the majority of its green space. North Lot is at the northernmost part of campus and South Lot is at the southernmost part of campus. If the renovation plan intended to create an East Lot on the former Zachs Hillel House green, the house would become the easternmost part of campus, excluding it from the campus community. Upon hearing about these preliminary renovation plans, we (the CC Hillel Board) voiced our concerns at the various open forums that took place and gathered support from the Conn community through an online survey. We are grateful that the College has been receptive and is now considering alternatives to placing a major parking lot in front of Zachs Hillel House. It sounds like the replacement of our green space with at least some parking is inevitable; but, we might gain additional green space directly in front of Zachs Hillel House. According to the most recent email from the Office of Finance and Administration (OFA), “The project team is now rethinking the plan in order to make the lot smaller by adding parking to another area of campus, to maintain green space in front of Zachs Hillel House, and, finally, to shift the loop road further to the west so that the road is positioned further away from the building.” While we are glad that the College has responded to our concerns, we believe that it was an oversight to even consider...
putting a large parking lot in front of Zachs Hillel House in the first place. This initial idea sent the message that our sole safe haven belongs on the "perimeter" of campus as a mere extension of campus rather than a part of it.

The OFA’s email also addressed the concerns with the wording of their previous email and its implications regarding “Zachs Hillel House’s position on campus.” The email was not apologetic for the stress caused in the Conn Jewish community after seeing the word “perimeter” when referring to Zachs Hillel House; it simply justified this message by saying that the previous email “did not make clear an important principle.” The OFA claims that the renovation plan actually intended to connect Zachs Hillel House with the rest of the campus community and add it to the new campus loop. We feel that this justification does not excuse the preliminary idea to further isolate Zachs Hillel House and destroy some of its valuable green space.

As the current Vice President, Communications Chair, and Co-President of the Conn Coll Hillel Executive Board, respectively, we deeply value the green space in front of Zachs Hillel House and the various opportunities that it provides for the community. One of Hillel's largest events of the year is our annual Welcome Picnic Shabbat, which takes place on the Hillel green during the first week of the fall semester. This first event is vital to introducing the campus community to our weekly Shabbat dinner ritual and increasing our club membership. Soon after, we celebrate Sukkot, where we decorate the sukkah outside and enjoy meals and other gatherings in the Sukkah on the green. The loss of the green space would not solely affect our programming and events; the aesthetic of Zachs Hillel House would drastically be changed into something far less beautiful, welcoming, and inviting. We ask that, if the current green space is removed, the additional green space built right in front of Zachs Hillel House is still large enough to host events with around 50 people.

Even if there will be a pedestrian walkway to Zachs Hillel House, many of us will not feel comfortable walking to and from nighttime events while adjacent to a busy parking lot with cars coming in and out. Giselle Hunter-Korn ’26 expressed her concern: “Because of the lack of common rooms, Hillel is used by students as a gathering place both for religious and non-religious activities. Conn is already not a very accessible school and the lack of easy walking access to Hillel poses an accessibility issue and a safety issue especially at night.” With the loss of most common rooms as well as most game rooms on campus, the game room in the basement of Zachs Hillel House has become one of the only open areas for students to hang out. Further isolating Zachs Hillel House from the main campus would do an incredible disservice to Conn social life given the severe limitations that have taken place since Covid-19. In a survey taken last week of 116 people, 88.5% of respondents expressed having an issue with the lack of safe walkways to Zachs Hillel House and 100% supported the creation of accessible walkways to Zachs Hillel House, which the proposed plan should accomplish.

Zachs Hillel House is a foundational part of Jewish life at Conn. The consideration of
Building for the Future: Crozier-Williams Renovations Must Address Sustainability

Ilan Listgarten ’25 - For The Climate Collective Contributor

One way or another, the 15 million dollar renovation of Crozier-Williams will prove to be a defining moment in Connecticut College’s history. Either the College will act consistently with its values and its commitments and take a big step toward meeting its 2030 net-zero pledge, or it will set a harmful precedent for campus development for years to come. The proposed Cro plan contains only basic environmental upgrades. However, if the College is to honor its net-zero pledge, sustainability needs to be the focus of this project rather than a footnote. Cro must be designed for the long-term future of the College and the campus community. The only way to do so is by ensuring the carbon footprint of Cro is net-zero.

Less than three years ago, Palmer Auditorium was renovated in a similar manner, without net-zero emissions in the design. In response to the College’s consistent failure to promote sustainability and consider input from the campus community, students wrote letters, more than a thousand members of the community signed a petition, and, when construction went ahead anyway, they staged a protest. In 2020, the Administration claimed it was too late to change the construction plans for Palmer. Afterwards, students and faculty collaborated to create a sustainable building policy so that sustainability would be woven through all stages of future projects. This policy was approved by the Presidential Sustainability Council. Through this action, the College made a promise to the students: a promise that next time there was a major project, sustainability would be at the forefront. Currently with Cro, they are breaking that promise.

Our student center should be a place that reflects the values of the students and the College. The School’s missions and values state that Conn “is proud of its pioneering tradition of ecological awareness and responsibility and intends to remain a leader in safeguarding the environment.” This statement claims that we want to remain a leader, but with every project that is completed without sustainability as a central focus, we fail to uphold our values and fall further behind our peer institutions. NESCACs such as Colby, Middlebury and Bates already have carbon neutral campuses. Meanwhile, Conn can’t even design a net-zero building.

Sustainability cannot continue to be the first thing sacrificed due to budget constraints. Projects that do not adequately budget for a focus on sustainability must not be allowed to proceed. While implementing improved energy technologies may involve higher up-front costs, lower operating costs will save the College money in the long run. Developing the campus with a focus on sustainability is the economically, environmentally, and morally right thing to do. We must be aggressive with climate action, because if not now, then when?

In accordance with our 2030 goal of net-zero emissions, the Crozier-Williams construction and final building must be net-zero. The implementation of geothermal heating and cooling are essential in reducing the campus’ reliance on the faulty campus steam plant and should be part of the plan for construction. Other energy-efficient and low-carbon output systems must be prioritized, as well as sustainable building practices.

We sincerely hope that the College learns from its past, remains open to student and faculty feedback, and is willing to adapt its plans at this early stage. We do not wish to see a repeat of the protests of Palmer Auditorium, when a collaborative effort would be far more effective and consistent with our values. One building will not stop climate change, but a sustainable Cro could be a symbol that Conn truly is serious in honoring its net-zero pledge. For the sake of our collective future, we hope to see change.

If you want to voice your opinion, scan the QR code below and support our petition. •
Cross Country Caps Successful Season

On Nov. 19, 9 members of the Men's and Women's Cross Country teams competed in the 2022 NCAA Division III Cross Country Championships in East Lansing, Michigan. While the Men's team received an at-large bid following their fourth-place finish at the Mideast Regionals, senior Julia Curran and junior Lauren Hino were invited to compete after earning All-Region honors after top 20 Regional finishes. This was the second straight appearance for Curran, who placed 183rd in the 2021 race. Hino, however, made her first appearance on the national stage. The Men's team competed for the first time in 20 years.

Despite a snowy backdrop and freezing conditions, teammates of those running drove over 12 hours to support their peers. The course was slick, which proved a difficult venue as recent snow and freezing temperatures turned the Forest Akers Golf Course into a picturesque winter scene. However, the runners did not let the poor conditions affect their performance, as the returners improved greatly on last year's finishes. Seniors Matt Carter and Jeffrey Love, who qualified individually and finished the 2021 race in 144th and 95th place respectively, earned All-American honors after securing top-40 finishes this year. Carter, who churned out the top performance of the day, finished in 19th place, while Love was not far off in 32nd of 294 total runners from colleges all across the country. Carter and Love, in conjunction with 5 other male runners from Conn who finished in various places throughout the field, helped Conn secure a 24th-place finish overall based on point accumulation across all male runners.

Love, who concluded his career as an All-American runner, saw the successful culmination of his career after years of hard work and countless miles. After a long career in which “the team fell short of reaching our goal over and over while being so close,” Love felt vindicated to have achieved both team and personal success, as “finally reaching it was truly worth it as now we all have something we can share.” Love concluded that while the team’s success and competing on a big stage with his fellow runners was most important, “doing well once we got there was just the cherry on top.” Echoing this sentiment, Chris Verstandig, a senior captain, dubbed this event as “an unforgettable experience.” For Love, Verstandig, and the class of 2023, “making it as a team was a goal us seniors have had for the past 4 years and to finally make it happen was a really special feeling.” The extremely accomplished seniors will leave a legacy of excellence in their wake.

Ahead of her final collegiate race, Curran proclaimed that her “ultimate goal is definitely to improve upon [her] performance at last year’s championship.” After crossing the line with a time of 23:27.9, Curran placed just outside of the top 100, significantly moving up from her previous performance. Prior to the regional race, Curran was sick and relied on Hino to push her to keep pace, saying, “Lauren’s amazing performance at regionals (helped) me along during the race and (allowed) both of us to qualify.” With the conclusion of this race, Curran satisfied her goal of improving on last year while capping off a decorated career.

While the fall season shaped out to be an overall success with members from both the Men’s and Women’s team competing in Nationals, the program will lose experienced veterans and extremely talented athletes to graduation. However, Hino, along with first-year Jonathan Norton, junior Brendan Mellitt, and sophomores Matt Scardigno and Harry Harwood will return after gaining valuable experience on the national stage and will look to continue elevating the program to new heights.
Sports Spotlight

Upcoming Events

12/12 Women's Basketball vs. St. Joseph's University, New London, CT
12/12 Men's Basketball vs. Johnson & Wales University, New London, CT
12/29 Women's Hockey vs. Maine Maritime Academy, Naples, FL
12/29 Men's Basketball vs. Emory University, Atlanta GA
12/30 Men's Basketball vs. Piedmont University, Atlanta GA
12/30 Women's Basketball vs. Keene State College, Naples, FL

Courtesy of Robbie Lynch '24
Griner Returns Amidst Further Controversy

On the morning of Thursday, Dec. 8, Cherelle Griner got the news she had waited 293 days to hear: her wife was on her way home. Brittney Griner was wrongfully detained in Russia after attempting to enter the country with multiple vape cartridges containing THC in her possession. To learn more about Griner’s trial, sentencing, and the work to bring her home please read the article titled “Brittney Griner Spends First Week in Penal Colony, Heartbreak Felt Across Basketball Community” published in our last edition. In this article, we will attempt to discuss the conditions of Griner’s release and some of the controversies of leaving former U.S. Marine Paul Whelan in Russia.

She’s home. She’s home and it’s hard to believe that months of apparent hopelessness switched on a dime with an early morning meeting in the Oval Office. Cherelle Griner was called to the White House without being told why. The U.S. Government feared if anything was leaked about a potential trade it may have been called off. Cherelle walked into the Oval Office and President Biden said, “She’s safe, she’s on a plane, she’s on her way home.” After speaking with her wife on the phone, Cherelle joined President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris at a press conference, and spoke, saying, “I will remain committed to the work of getting every American home, including Paul (...but) today is a happy day for me and my family so I’m gonna smile right now.”

Who is Paul Whelan? If you’ve followed this case at all you know he is a former U.S. Marine who was arrested as an alleged spy back in 2019. The U.S. classified him as wrongly detained and have been working to get him released ever since. However, since Russia has charged Whelan with espionage, his case is being treated differently. “Sadly, for totally illegitimate reasons Russia is treating Paul’s case differently than Brittney’s,” President Biden said in his press conference. “While we have not yet succeeded in securing Paul’s release, we are not giving up. We will never give up.” Whelan’s brother, David, echoed this sentiment in his statement, saying, “It is so important to me that it is clear that we do not begrudge Ms. Griner her freedom. As I have often remarked, Brittney’s and Paul’s cases were never really intertwined. It has always been a strong possibility that one might be freed without the other.” There have been rumors going around that Russia is looking for a Russian spy in exchange for Whelan, but has not made any move to indicate who that may be.

Many absurd and negative statements have been made about this situation, including white male privilege doesn’t exist, Biden chose Griner over Whelan, and that Trump would have gotten Whelan home. We will not be addressing the entirety of these claims because there is too much unsubstantiated information. What we do know is Griner’s celebrity status brought eyes and voices to the issues of Americans held as geopolitical pawns. Biden has also voiced his commitment to continuing to work with Russia to bring Whelan home as soon as possible, but it does require Russia to be willing to trade for Whelan, which they haven’t indicated yet. For now, we can celebrate the homecoming of an American and continue to fight for the return of all wrongfully detained Americans. It is possible to be happy for the Griner family and devastated for the Whelan family at the same time. •

Hannah Foley
Sports Editor

Grace Contren Flynn
Opinions Editor

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INFORMATION SERVICES
Grant Wahl's Untimely Death

A World Cup in Qatar that was already rife with controversy amidst the backdrop of human rights abuses took another dark, and incredibly sad turn on this past Friday night. Grant Wahl, one of the most prominent soccer journalists in the United States, and in the world, unexpectedly passed away at the age of 49 while covering a quarterfinal match between Argentina and the Netherlands. The news was first reported by NPR, later confirmed by Wahl’s wife and brother.

Not much is known about the circumstances of his passing, but witnesses in the press box at Lusail Stadium described Wahl suddenly collapsing, appearing to be suffering from a heart attack. Wahl was then rushed to a local hospital, where he later passed. Apparently, there wasn’t an available emergency vehicle, and he was taken to the hospital via Uber.

The reaction across the sports world as the news broke on Friday night was an overwhelming mixture of shock, sadness, anger, and suspicion of the Qatari organizers of the tournament. The incredible outpouring of condolences from writers, former co-workers, and even the likes of LeBron James demonstrated how beloved and admired Wahl was within the world of sports media, for his incredible work, his humanity, and his bravery.

Many within the sports world have expressed suspicion and anger towards Qatar around the circumstances of Wahl’s death, calling for his body to be returned to the United States and for a full autopsy to be conducted. Wahl’s coverage of the tournament had drawn global attention, challenging the Qatari regime and organizers on the blatant and well-publicized human rights abuses in Qatar during the build up to the tournament, and Qatar’s strict anti-LGBTQ+ laws. This has stood in stark contrast to FOX Sports’ coverage, the primary link between the U.S. and Qatar, as its leading pundit Alexi Lalas and company have essentially pedaled whatever official Qatari state approved propaganda they’ve been given.

While covering the United States’ opening group stage match against Wales, Wahl attempted to enter Al Bayt Stadium wearing a shirt with a rainbow on it, in support of the LGBTQ+ community. Wahl was told he had to remove the shirt by tournament officials before he could enter the stadium and was then detained for half an hour before being allowed to enter the stadium. He documented this experience on his Twitter feed, which caught the attention of news broadcasters around the world. Wahl’s final article, published a day before he passed, was an investigative piece on a migrant stadium worker who had died under mysterious circumstances during the tournament, joining the thousands of workers who died building the stadiums in the decade leading up to the tournament.

It is not yet known whether or not Wahl’s death was truly of natural causes, but the timing does feel far too convenient on Qatar’s part, a state that, like many of its Middle Eastern autocratic neighbors, has a history of silencing criticism and opposition. Wahl’s brother, who is gay, posted a video shortly after the news of Grant’s passing broke. In tears, he said that he was the reason that his brother had worn the rainbow shirt to the USA/Wales match and stated that his brother was in incredible health in the build up to the tournament, despite recently falling ill alongside lots of supporters and journalists in Qatar. He strongly concluded that he didn’t believe his brother had “just died,” clearly stating that he suspected foul play on Qatar’s part.

Whatever the circumstances of Wahl’s untimely death were, this tragedy is another dark chapter in a bloody World Cup. Whether or not foul play was involved, why wasn’t there the adequate medical equipment and personnel on hand to rush Wahl to the hospital? Nobody suffering a heart attack should need to Uber to the hospital. Qatar spent the years leading up to the World Cup boasting their state of the art infrastructure that was being constructed, and how everything would run smoothly. If there was indeed foul play involved, which many, including Wahl’s brother, suspect, then there is blood on the hands of FIFA President Gianni Infantino, on Qatar itself, and on all of the FIFA members who took bribes to give a World Cup to an autocratic, oppressive Middle Eastern state.

Rest in peace, Grant Wahl. Thank you for being a role model for sports journalists everywhere. You will be missed.

Fritz BaldauF
Sports Editor

*Courtesy of @GrantWahl*
The FIFA World Cup, currently being played in Qatar, may seem to some like just another sporting event, a way to bring the world together over a shared pastime. In reality, it is much more than that. Like other large-scale international sporting events, the World Cup is also a stage for diplomacy, controversy, and politics, and the 2022 World Cup is no exception to this. There have been many politically-charged moments throughout the tournament so far. Ahead of the matchup between Iran and USA, Iran demanded that the USA team be kicked out of the World Cup due to a social media post involving an edited version of the Iranian flag. The social media team for US Soccer made the decision to post the edited flag as a protest, in solidarity with the women fighting for equal rights in Iran, but changed the posts after FIFA asked them to.

After a contentious few months in Iran, it is not surprising that protests against the Iranian government would appear at such a high-profile event. However, protest attempts have been squashed by Qatar before they can make it on international television. Protestings in Iran has landed thousands of protesters in jail and killed hundreds more. The protests began after the death of a young Iranian woman in custody after accusations of improperly covering her hair. Demonstrations have grown since then, some calling for the end of the Islamic Republic. During an event like the World Cup, Iran's government definitely wants to make it seem that all is well on the home front, but in reality, this could not be further from the truth.

It’s no secret that world sporting events and politics go hand in hand. Highly televised sporting events that go on for several weeks, such as the Olympics and the World Cup, are great opportunities for countries to gain some extra attention on the world stage. For this reason, countries definitely want to be putting their best foot forward. Becoming associated with controversy, such as acts of protest during games, is not a good look for the Iranian government. Additionally, Iran and Qatar have very close diplomatic ties. This is a huge reason there have been crackdowns on protests during the World Cup.

The Iranian team has been placed in a difficult position. On one side, they are essentially acting as representatives of their country, and face pressure from the government to remain neutral as the government condemns and tries to squash the protests going on in the country. On the other, they have thousands of Iranian fans looking to the team to stand with them and condemn the actions of the government. At the beginning of the World Cup, the Iranian team made a statement by not singing along with the national anthem as it played in the stadium. They also wore black jackets over their uniforms. This was seen as a show of support for protesters. However, subsequent games have seen them singing the anthem again, albeit quietly. This enraged Iranian fans and was seen as the players submitting to the government.

The host nation has kicked fans from the stadiums for various reasons, including protests for LGBTQ+ rights, worker rights for migrants, the Russian invasion, and support for Iranian women. Seven teams planned to wear armbands supporting the LGBTQ+ community. However, after FIFA threatened to impose sporting sanctions on those wearing the armbands, they stopped wearing them. In response, the German team took a photo with their hands over their mouths, showing their thoughts on how FIFA is silencing them. Fans wearing rainbow armbands have also been kicked out of stadiums by Qatari officials. There was also a pitch invader who waved a rainbow flag and wore a shirt that said “Save Ukraine” on the front and “Respect for Iranian Women” on the back. These are just a few examples of protests that have happened, but the general feelings from fans has been disapproval of how Qatar has handled several human rights issues. In a World Cup with so many great stories on the field, it’s unfortunate that the stories off the field have trumped them.
Together Again with Craig and Sour Patch: An "Emerging" Review

On Dec. 2 and 3 the Connecticut College Dance Department performed “Emerging” in Palmer Auditorium. The show included ten dances choreographed by professors, students, and two guest artists and displayed the hard work of talented student dancers from all class years. As a student who has attended almost every dance show performed at the College in the last four years, this show had many of the same styles as past shows, but incorporated new techniques that made this one of my favorites.

The show started with a bang. Choreographed by guest artist Jennifer Archibald, “Duty” fused powerful statements on feminism with militant drumming and soft piano, creating a clear picture of the weakness of feminism without intersectionality. My personal favorite part of the piece was a moment of unison early on when the dancers moved like warriors to the beat of staccato drumming. It was crisp and powerful. After speaking with other audience members, there was consensus that this piece had a different voice than the others and stood out as a fan favorite.

Three pieces choreographed by students Tali Sureck ’23, Yeseri Rosa Vizcaino ’23, and Zion Martin Hayes ’23, for the fall Dance Club show were selected by faculty members to perform again. As the paper has already reviewed these performances, rather than discussing them again, I encourage you to read our previous article on the Dance Club show.

Following Rosa Vizcaino’s piece after the intermission was Rachel Boggia’s piece titled “Trajectory.” This piece featured solely first-year dancers and showcased the various styles and personalities of these new dancers. A highlight for me was seeing Ariel Mayer ’26 show off her ballroom technique, with graceful steps and fantastic facial expressions that stood out from the rest of the piece. Although it was exciting and fun to see new faces and the talented first-year performers, much like “Linger In the Limbo,” this piece fell into the post-modern blur and felt somewhat disorganized. After discussing the piece with other audience members, I think there was simply too much scattered individual dancing occurring that made the piece feel less coherent than others.

Continuing his tradition of leaving the audience in utter confusion, Professor Shawn Hove’s piece, “looking for doors that are not there anymore,” followed the post-modern trend but was just wild enough to stand out. Dancers dressed in painter suits moved across the stage, yelling at each other and playing invisible instruments. An unforgettable moment was when Haley Michel ’24 was dramatically lifted into the air where she hilariously played what appeared to be the invisible upright bass. This piece left me with many questions: Why painter suits? Why is Craig so sad? Why is there someone named Sour Patch? What was the dirt? …And so many more.

Closing out the show was a West African number choreographed by guest artist and Wesleyan Visiting Professor Iddi Saaka entitled “Together Again.” This piece was the fan favorite by far. The energy and excitement of the live drumming, yelling, and dancing together could be felt throughout the auditorium. Simply put by a fellow audience member, this dance was “pure joy.” A moment that exemplified this feeling for me was when Kelsey Halio ’25 showed off her gymnastic abilities with a back walkover back handspring and Joel Embry ’26 followed with a backflip, causing the audience to erupt in applause. The genuine smiles across each dancer’s face brought the dance to life and was clearly contagious as I looked around the audience to see people smiling, laughing, and clapping along. The joy felt in this dance brought the audiences both nights rightfully to their feet in a thundering round of applause.

Overall, this show was incredibly enjoyable to watch and showcased styles of dance that I rarely see explored in the department. Reflecting back on the many performances I have seen over the years, this is most definitely one of my favorites. Huge congratulations to all of the dancers, choreographers, musicians, and stage crew for an amazing performance!
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CALEB BUTLER
Staff Writer

The Moors, the Connecticut College Theater Department’s mainstage play, took place the weekend of Nov. 18 in Tansill Theater. As a passionate lover of the sardonically funny and the macabre, I can say wholeheartedly that The Moors is one of the best plays I have had the pleasure of seeing. It beautifully toes the line between the comedic and the twisted, featuring a tragic love story between a dog and a bird, a maid who is simultaneously three different women, all vying for power, and a climactic murder ballad performed by a woman covered in her sister’s blood. The Moors is explosive; its characters constantly push against the constraints set for them by the barren landscape, and even through such a temporal distance, it remains ever so grounded in issues we see in our 21st century world.

As I was the dramaturg for this production, I was given the opportunity to become very well acquainted with the play. By the end of its run, I had probably read the entirety of the script close to five times, and I managed to fall even more in love with it every time. Written by playwright Jen Silverman in 2017, The Moors tells the story of two sisters, Agatha and Huldey, their maid, and the new governess. Tensions arise between the four women as their goals and ambitions begin to conflict, alliances – even romances – form, and the desire for domination results in more than one character meeting a bloody end. Since first reading the script, I have been entranced by Silverman’s writing, each character seeming so fully realized. Throughout The Moors, Silverman beautifully balances moments of levity and humor with the underlying darkness of the gothic genre. Each decision made by the characters is thoroughly thought out, nothing present without a purpose.

With lines such as “God loves women. On their knees. Scrubbing,” “This isn’t gravity, this is love,” and “There is nothing in this world more honest and dependable than self-interest,” Silverman’s words linger in audience’s minds long after they are spoken; this is made even more true by those speaking the words. The Moors featured Brielle Blood ’24 as Agatha, the stern, conniving lady of the house, Amanda Brady ’25 as Huldey, Agatha’s flighty younger sister with ambitions of fame, Nadia Hopkins ’25 as Marjory – possibly even Mallory or Margaret – the house’s dour maid with a desire for control, and Sophie Bianchi ’26 as Emilie, a new governess who has been summoned to the house under dubious circumstances. These four women all inhabit one house which steadily grows more and more cramped by their warring desires and ambitions.

Rounding out the cast by playing the only non-human characters were Lucas Vasquez ’25 and Ava Mary Aloia ’26 as the Mastiff and the Moor-Hen. Vasquez perfectly channeled the Mastiff’s melancholy yearning for companionship, and Aloia complemented such desperation perfectly with the Moor-Hen’s grounded humor and plain-faced understanding of the world. Together, they were able to keep the audience engaged in the tragic romance between their characters, understanding why it had to end this way but still wishing for something better. The tragic love between the Mastiff and the Moor-Hen is never once played as a joke, the audience only laughing when the Mastiff mistakes the Moor-Hen for God. In fact, this storyline is likely the most realistic part of the play, carefully illustrating the relationship’s descent into its violent end.

At the darkest core of the show are Agatha and Emilie. Having taken drastic measures to prevent her older brother from causing any more messes that she would have to clean up, Agatha has summoned Emilie in order to guarantee that her family will be a lasting one, with Agatha at its head. Blood portrays Agatha with a steely core, an unwavering refusal to bend to anyone’s will but her own. Yet, over the course of the play, as she grows closer to Emilie, who reveals herself to be far less naive than she initially appears, Agatha seems to soften, allowing herself moments of vulnerability at Emilie’s hands as the play approaches its climactic conclusion. Despite her abrasive personality, the audience cannot help but root for Agatha as she reveals the desperation for some level of control that drove her to make her choices, even as she meets an untimely end. Bianchi, on the other hand, gently leads Emilie through what is almost the opposite character arc of Agatha’s. She convincingly peels back Emilie’s layers, revealing her to be far more than a naive young governess; she is instead growing into the new lady of the household, determined to keep her position.

Despite leaning into the dark, twisted nature of the gothic genre, The Moors does not shy away from absurdity. With a primary storyline being a romance between a dog and a bird, such an avoidance would do the show a disservice. But instead, both the script and the actors committed wholly to the comedic aspects of the story, simultaneously in on the joke with the audience, but believing in their character and their words entirely. In her portrayal of Huldey, Brady never once let the audience believe that she thought herself to be a joke. Huldey was entirely committed to her melodramatic ways, not behaving that way in order to elicit laughter, but because that was simply who her character was.

Also carrying much of the humor of the show – though in a much more biting way – was Marjory (among other names). Hopkins’ Marjory was conniving, constantly looking for a way to slip out from Agatha’s controlling watch. She may not read as the most comedic character, but her intense, unblinkable stare, blunt words and complete determination to put Emilie in her place consistently elicited laughter from the audience. Hopkins’ unflinching portrayal of Marjory and commitment to Marjory’s habit of – quite literally – creeping around the periphery of the stage gave the character the perfect touch to pair the unsettling with the comedic.

Even through the humor of the show, The Moors has an unbelievably strong core, wrestling with questions of gender, power, and class, and the actions that count as unwarranted cruelty with limited options. Professor Ken Prestininzi’s direction gave the audience no opportunity to flinch away from the action, bringing the actors right into their faces. The audience was barely given a chance to look away, to ignore the unspeakable violence that occurred in the story through the removal of choice, of agency, of power from the lives of the characters. Although it may seem as if The Moors has a somewhat tragic end, it can also be seen as a victory for Emilie and Marjory, the two women left standing in the wreckage at the end, as they have finally been given the power they so desperately crave, leaving the audience to wonder about the nature of power, and what one must do to get it. •
On Nov. 30, Conn’s Jazz Ensemble performed its fall concert, “Classical Jazz,” in Evans Hall. There was a notably large audience considering the severe stormy weather, but not so large that the auditorium was completely full. The ensemble performed seven pieces, featuring nine Conn students and a faculty member on the clarinet, a Conn alumna on the bass, and a New London community member on the trombone.

The first selection was “Splanky” by Neal Hefti, arranged by Sammy Nestico. It featured many trombone solos, as well as piano, bass, electric guitar, and a baritone saxophone solo by Enrique Lopez ’26. “Splanky” was written in the 1950s, when the composer, Hefti, began collaborating with jazz legend Count Basie. It was an excellent introduction to the concert as it was a fast paced piece with a joyful mood and every instrument had its chance to shine.

The band performed a second selection: a suite based on Edvard Grieg’s “Peer Gynt,” arranged by jazz legends Billy Strayhorn and Duke Ellington. Kelli O’Connor, the faculty clarinetist, was featured, and the suite had five pieces: “Morning Mood,” “In the Hall of the Mountain King,” “Solvejg’s Song,” “Ase’s Death,” and “Anitra’s Dance.” The first piece, “Morning Mood,” was based on the famous “Morning Theme,” a common tune to indicate morning in television. It featured Davi Schulman ’25 on tenor saxophone, O’Connor on clarinet, and Lopez on baritone saxophone. Strayhorn and Ellington captured the quaint mood of the piece, while also keeping the quaint mood that Grieg intended. The second piece, “In the Hall of the Mountain King,” was a jazzy version of the well-known piece with the same title, and featured Alex Jutt ’24 on the electric guitar and Manoli Despines ’23 on piano. The third piece, “Solvejg’s Song,” featured a muted trombone and O’Connor’s amazing cadenza skills on clarinet. The fourth piece, “Ase’s Death,” was a somber piece which included all instruments. The fifth and final piece in the suite, “Anitra’s Dance,” was a fast and joyful piece that featured the saxophones and clarinet. This selection was an interesting variation on songs so famous that they have cemented themselves in music history, by two iconic musicians from centuries later.

The third selection was “Orange Colored Sky,” a medium tempo romantic song written by Milton DeLugg and Willie Stein and arranged by Roger Holmes, which included all of the instruments except for guitar, as Jutt was on vocals. The piece was made famous by Nat King Cole, and separate versions of the song were performed in 1966 by Adam West and Burt Ward, who were famous for playing Batman and Robin on the TV show in the 1960s. It was a sweet, happy song about love, and Jutt’s voice was perfectly suited to the song.

The fourth selection was “Jelly Roll,” written by Charles Mingus and arranged by Sy Johnson. May Kotsen ’23 began the piece with a trombone solo, Karina Rosario ’26 played a drum solo, and Despines shone on the piano. The medium tempo, big-band style piece “was originally meant to provide a musical bridge from Jelly Roll Morton to Mingus’ own unique compositional voice,” as stated in the concert’s program.

The fifth selection was “The Nutcracker Suite,” a Strayhorn and Ellington arrange-
Alternative Housing for Class of 2027

The very first members of the Class of 2027 – yes, you heard that right – have just been accepted! After the spring semester housing debacle when Conn admitted the infamous 661 students (no really, we’re so glad you’re here), you’re probably wondering where they will be housed. Following Jackie Chalghin’s ’22 bright ideas in a May 2022 issue, including housing in “The Third Train Car on the Boston to New London Roundtrip Amtrak” and “our very own TCV office,” we have brainstormed a second round of innovative housing solutions to prepare for another large incoming class.

Submarine at the Waterfront: It’s finally time for us to include housing in “the only NESCAC institution with a waterfront” slogan: we’re offering underwater living. Our friends at the Naval Base have loaned us some decommissioned subs to turn into rooms. It’s group-style living with individual bedrooms, a common room, and a kitchen. The missiles have been removed from the silos, but those are study corners now! The occupants will receive a 200 point deduction for the next year and a year’s supply of potassium iodide pills to help digest the nuclear radiation leftover from previous usages of the sub.

Old Coffee Closet in Cummings: Shut down in 2020 to prepare, the new dorm room in Cummings is for the ultimate artist. Ever get inspired at 3am to paint a picture or tickle the ivories? Then living in the arts building could be for you! Your own private bathroom (ok, it’s shared during the day when people are in the building, but after hours it’s all yours!) and prime viewing of all soccer games are just some of the perks of this new housing spot.

Two Bathrooms in Coffee Closet: We really only need one bathroom, so for the caffeine addicts, it would be quite convenient to roll out of bed and be in a coffee shop. The room has a bathroom next door. It’s communal during the day, but private after hours, and includes a 50% discount for all purchases at the Coffee Closet.

Tents in the Arbo: For dedicated Environmental Science majors and Outdoor Adventures club members only, students will be able to live in our famed Arboretum for the first time! With 750 acres of space to work with, applicants who are interested in truly immersing themselves in everything outdoors can compete for the chance to sleep under the stars. Mini-circus tents (similar to the current OA tents) that sleep four students will be erected amidst the trees, and a brand new outhouse would be constructed where the gazebo is currently.

High Tunnel in Sprout Garden: With fresh vegetables, the occasional woodland friend, and a skylight to the stars, this is the hot new place for outdoorsy students. Though your Harris meal plan will be canceled, you have endless fresh veggies just outside your window and access to lots of squirrel meat. With all the greenery surrounding you, you’ll have the best air-quality dorms on campus. Things will get steamy, even when there’s no one else around.

Library Collab Rooms: Don’t worry, we’ll frost the windows. Reserved for biochemistry majors who study most of the time, anyways. This one-of-a-kind housing opportunity offers the delightful buzz of first-floor Shain gossip – you could write a column on everything you overhear – and a half-Harris, half-Blue Camel meal plan. You’re already edging out most other students housed in dorms with access to a water fountain and a single-stall bathroom.

Barn Bunk Beds: With all the Cro renovation hubbub, we hope MOBROC will get better performance spaces because the Barn will now be packed with three triple-decker bunk beds! With easy access to gravel parking and Cro bathrooms just next door and a short walk away from Harris fine dining, what more could you want?! The high ceilings (perfect for a loft common area) and fantastic acoustics make this prime housing real estate.

Congratulations, 2027! We can’t WAIT until you get here and try out all the new housing options!
Red Cards and Red Flags

Across
1. Big glacial ridge (2)
2. French story
3. P.M. times
4. College in Northfield, Minnesota
5. Mails or ships
6. Basketball offensive play, alley—

7. Crawfish, crayfish, and crawdads
8. Alma mater of Melvin Calvin, discoverer of the Calvin cycle
9. Tat
10. Caesar’s 62
11. Substance banned in Qatar stadiums
13. Book-worthy armband for footballers
14. Lacking principles
15. DOD, DOJ, or DOS
16. Not moving
17. There in Lat.

18. Common antidepressant, abbr.
19. Prince William’s alma mater
20. “the ___” Johnson
22. City of Jorge Chávez International Airport
23. Popular nail polish brand
24. Vietnamese New Year
25. Wheel of Fortune request
26. Former Eastern bloc state, abbr.
27. Double curve letter
28. Itidarad terminus
29. Spiritual pole
30. Prem. team of 38 across players Son, Kane, and Richardson

31. Sports network broadcasting World Cup games in the US
32. Vampire activity
33. “Dracula” author Stoker
34. Sandwich staple
35. South African coins
36. Computer created by Steve Jobs
37. Alpha, beta, gamma, delta, epsilon, zeta, eta, theta, iota, kappa, lambda, mu, xi, omicron, pi, rho, sigma, tau, upsilon, phi, chi, psi, omega
38. Anti-slip
39. Of lyric poetry
40. Mount of Moses
41. The Maidenberg family on Food Network
42. Phrase said by teams knocked out of the World Cup
43. Opposite of a double stuf Oreo
44. Where the sun rises
45. “What ___ thinking?”
46. Ajar
47. What the crew team does on the water
48. Had the answer
49. Class of 2023, abbr.
50. Queue before Q
51. Surpees
52. Paris, Ross, and Monica surname
53. Queue after Q
54. Director of “Seven Samurai” and “Rashomon”
55. Star spice
56. Shrek or Fiona
57. Grievances
58. Amanecer dirección
59. Math subj.
60. The cross country team did this in Michigan
61. Site of conn-traversal renovations
62. Virginia delicacy
63. Endearing nickname for Rory Gilmore

Down
1. Common antidepressant, abbr.
2. Prince William’s alma mater
3. Dwayne “the ___” Johnson
4. Basic chem.
5. Wheel of Fortune request
6. Former Eastern bloc state, abbr.
7. Double curve letter
8. Spiritual pole
9. Prem. team of 38 across players Son, Kane, and Richardson

10. Festival of Yuletide
11. The Festival of Joy
12. The Festival of Peace
13. The Festival of Thanks
14. The Festival of the Sun
15. The Festival of the Winds
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Word Search
By Merriam and Webster

Hail
Grateful
CookPig
Nog
Far

Earth
Finals
Paper
Family
Coal

Festivus
NewYears
Tests
Winter
Grown
Green

Break
Stress
Games
Slush
Jolly
Red

Santa
Tears
Capitalism
Cocoa
Bells
Blue

Hanukkah
Reflection
Snow
Ho Ho
EightDays
Cookies

Christmas
Fireplace
Presents
Love
Slay
Naps

Kwanzaa
Home
Freezing
Toy
Sleigh
Cheese
December Comics

Althea Tierney
Cartoonist

Creative Assistance from Alex Kowal
December Horoscopes

Cassiopeia
Staff Writer

These next couple weeks are going to be heavy for most of us – and yes, Pisces, that includes you. So, we’re going to do a little mindfulness exercise. I want you to notice your feet on the floor or floating in the air as you sit. Just notice them. Now, do the same with your emotional boundaries. Oh? You can’t find them…yeah, that adds up. It’s the end of Sagittarius season (Dec. 14 – 21). This part of the season is throwing us all in the middle of a massive social and emotional Nor’Easter. You’ll want to keep that mindfulness exercise in mind and read on to get into the nitty gritty details of what’s in store.

Aries: Take several steps back these next couple of weeks, Aries. You have had a lot more drama than usual floating around you and you’re not totally innocent. Take responsibility for your actions and also tune in to forgiveness for everyone involved including yourself. No one is perfect.

Taurus: Advocate for yourself, Taurus! You’ve hit a couple rough patches recently and, although you may have convinced yourself differently, there are people in your life who would love to help you. Your loved ones are not mind readers, so it’s up to you to communicate what you need.

Gemini: Gemini. You have been giving so much of yourself lately and receiving very little back from others. It is ok to put yourself first. In fact, it’s essential to a healthy and grounded life. Spend quality time alone these next few weeks. Go for a walk on the beach, have your favorite ice cream, or do a little fashion show for yourself. Do what makes you feel the most like you.

Cancer: Speak openly about your feelings these next couple of weeks, Cancer. Of course, always practice thoughtfulness as well. Your current situation could benefit from a comfy brunch with old friends, a place with no pressure to be anyone other than exactly who you are. Pay attention to your generous impulses and, if you don’t have any, it’s best to embrace a few quiet moments.

Leo: Your hard work is slowly but surely paying off. I know it may not feel that way right now. You are utterly exhausted but for good reason. Don’t doubt your intuition or your past decisions for it all has led you to the spot you are in now. For better or for worse, you are here so embrace hope and patience. Everything will be alright.

Virgo: Hello party animal! You have more energy and verve for life than any of the other signs these next couple weeks. This might feel odd to you, Virgo. You’re likely used to cozying up with a good book and a pint of Ben & Jerry’s and then calling that a good time. However, this means your social skills could use some work. This fresh kick of energy is exciting, but try to steer away from starting conversations about the proper way to construct a sonnet or the mechanics of your favorite stapler at your next holiday party.

Libra: You’re finding yourself wishing you had both a time turner and an extra…48 hours in a day, right? Of course you are, you’ve been busy! Yes, it is that time of year, but that does not give you permission to run yourself into the ground trying to complete every task you set your sights on. Make a ‘Pros’ and ‘Cons’ list and sort out your priorities. Only a few things really matter. The rest can fall by the wayside, honestly.

Scorpio: There is a wealth of wisdom around you right now, soak it up! You’ve been entering new spaces and surrounding yourself with people who have far more experience than you in many areas. Rather than getting down on yourself for being an amateur, embrace it. Everybody starts at the bottom and works their way up. Ask all the questions that come to mind. Unabashed curiosity is impressive and shows confidence. Move forward with grace.

Sagittarius: Wooahhh, hold your horses there buddy. Your life recently has been…something! In fact, I’m getting a little overwhelmed just writing this. You need a massive energy release like go smash something (safely!) or scream your heart out in the middle of the woods. You are fully lost in your mind. Unless you’re looking to greet 2023 by taking an impulsive solo roadtrip to “find yourself” then you need to pull yourself together. Have a good, hearty cry and show yourself some rich self-compassion.

Capricorn: You’re feeling a bit romantic this season, huh? Whether you have a little crush in mind or just a close friend, don’t be afraid to wear your heart on your sleeve. Everyone could use a bit of extra love this time of year and your compassion will be welcomed.

Aquarius: Alright, Aquarius! You’ve learned a lot about your relationships these past couple weeks and, looking ahead, the holiday season will give you some time to process. Although you may not know exactly how to express yourself right now, it’s worth it to start sifting through your emotions. I would recommend making a Pinterest board or maybe even a collage.

Pisces: You’re feeling ambitious these next couple weeks, Pisces. Don’t. It’s the holiday season, and it’s time to rest. Channel your anxious energy into constructing a few detailed plans of action. Then, start on all your wonderful projects in mid-January. Trust me, future-you will be grateful that you took time to slow down.
Happy Holidays from TCV!