

# THE HUDSONIAN

THE INDEPENDENT MULTIMEDIA NEWS ORGANIZATION OF HUDSON VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

## EVENTS

TUESDAY || Feb. 10

10AM-2PM: NYS Office of Children and Family Services: Employer Information Table (CTR Lobby)

10AM-2PM: SUNY Oneonta: Transfer Advisor Visit (CTR 290)

10AM-5PM: Discounted Regal Movie Ticket Sales (CTR 210)

11AM-12PM: Let's Taco 'Bout It: Social Well-Being (CTR 204)

11AM-1PM: Tobacco Cessation Program Information Table

12PM: Yoga (CTR 270)

2-3PM: Criminal Justice Club Presentation - Hockey Bag and Homicide (BRN 001)

2-3PM: Sensory Therapy with Play-Doh (CTR 204)

WEDNESDAY || Feb. 11

9:30AM-2:30PM: University at Albany: Transfer Advisor Visit (CTR 294)

9:45AM-2:30PM: Siena University: Transfer Advisor Visit (CTR 290)

10AM-2PM: Trustco Bank: Employer Information Table (CTR Lobby)

10AM-2PM: NYS Dept. of Transportation: Employer Information Table (Williams Hall Cafe)



The Hudsonian is the student-run newspaper of Hudson Valley Community College, dedicated to informing, engaging, and representing the campus community. We support diversity, inclusion, and accurate representation while encouraging creativity, critical thinking, and responsible journalism. Our mission is to provide a platform for student voices and to report on issues that matter to HVCC with integrity and professionalism.

Photo: BUILD



## HISTORY MONTH

### Preparedness Over Fear: Public Safety Decision to Arm Officers

Isabelle Holt  
Editor-in-Chief

Hudson Valley Community College has taken a significant step toward strengthening campus safety and emergency preparedness with a newly approved plan that authorizes sworn campus peace officers to carry firearms. The decision, approved by the Board of Trustees at its Jan. 27 meeting, is part of a broader, assessment-driven safety strategy that emphasizes preparedness, accountability, and community engagement.

The authorization allows the college president to permit trained peace officers within the Department of Public Safety to be armed following the completion of extensive training and the implementation of updated policies. Hudson Valley is one of only four SUNY community colleges that had not previously authorized armed peace officers, placing the college behind prevailing practices both state-wide and nationally.

“Our foremost responsibility is the safety of our campus community,” said Hudson Valley President Michael Brophy. “After a careful review of national standards and extensive discussions with students and employee governance groups, we believe this transition is a thoughtful, responsible and necessary step forward.”

The Department of Public Safety serves as a constant presence on campus, operating 24 hours a day, seven days a week, throughout the academic year and during breaks. Its responsibilities extend far beyond traditional law enforcement functions and include community engagement, emergency response, mental health crisis intervention, event coordination, and support for students navigating difficult situations.

Public Safety officers work within a community-focused framework that prioritizes approachability, visibility, and trust. Officers are regularly involved in campus life through College Forum classes, safety trainings, and collaborative efforts with student services, counseling staff, and Title IX officials. Confidentiality and student privacy are central considerations in the department’s work, guided by FERPA regulations and institutional policies, with information shared only when necessary to prevent harm.

Mental health emergencies and non-criminal crises are addressed through coordinated responses that may include on campus counselors

and Mobile Crisis teams, alongside officers trained in de-escalation and crisis intervention. This approach reflects the department’s emphasis on care, support, and prevention rather than enforcement alone.

The decision to authorize firearms follows a comprehensive review process that began in October 2025, when the college convened a task force to assess campus safety needs, policies, and best practices. The review included stakeholder input from students, faculty, staff, and community partners, and will continue throughout the academic year as implementation progresses.

According to data from the U.S. Department of Justice, approximately 95% of public safety and police agencies serving four year colleges authorize the use of handguns for full time sworn officers, including 98% of those at public institutions. Community colleges with sworn peace officers, who possess full arrest authority under New York State law, follow similar patterns. While campus crime rates at Hudson Valley remain extremely low, as reflected in Clery Act data, college leadership emphasized that preparedness is a necessary complement to prevention.

“Preparedness complements prevention,” Brophy said. “It ensures institutions are ready to respond quickly and responsibly when rare but serious incidents occur.” Hudson Valley’s sworn peace officers are certified through New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services academies, including the Zone 5 Law Enforcement Training Academy and the New York State Police Academy. Officers receive annual firearms training, and the department includes certified firearms instructors. To strengthen accountability, officers will wear body worn cameras that automatically activate if a firearm is removed from its holster. Firearm authorization is limited to sworn peace officers and is contingent upon training completion, policy adherence, and presidential approval.

Faculty leadership acknowledged the importance of these safeguards. Dr. Robert Whitaker, president of the HVCC Faculty Association, emphasized that training, oversight, and transparency are essential components of the transition, and noted the administration’s continued engagement with faculty on campus safety concerns.

The authorization to arm peace officers is only one part of a



wide ranging effort to improve safety and emergency response across campus. Over the past year, the college has invested in upgraded communications systems, expanded patrol capabilities, enhanced surveillance and access control infrastructure, and increased staffing levels within Public Safety.

Additional initiatives include GPS integration with the county 911 center, expanded use of non-lethal defensive tools, participation in county behavioral threat assessment teams, and the creation of a community engagement center designed to strengthen relationships between officers and the campus community.

Public Safety has also increased outreach through social media, campus committees, and educational programming, reinforcing a people first, community policing philosophy that centers on collaboration and trust.

College officials have emphasized that the arming of peace officers does not signal a shift away from Hudson Valley’s commitment to inclusion, support services, or student wellbeing. Instead, it reflects an effort to align preparedness with prevention, ensuring that officers have the tools, training, and oversight necessary to respond effectively if serious emergencies arise.

“Safety is fundamental to our mission,” Brophy said. “This work reflects a careful, evidence informed approach to protecting our campus while maintaining a safe and supportive learning and work environment.”

As implementation moves forward, newly formed college safety committees will continue to guide policy development and ensure that student, faculty, and staff perspectives remain central to campus safety decisions.

GO TO ... PG. 2

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## NEWS

**Editor-in-Chief** Isabelle Holt  
i-holt1@hvcc.edu  
**News Editor** Prajeeth Rangamudri  
p-rangamudri@hvcc.edu

## EVENTS

WEDNESDAY || Feb. 11

12PM-1PM: University at Albany Cybersecurity Information Session (CTR 294)

12PM: Live Trivia - Black History Month Edition (CTR Lobby)

1PM-2PM: Financial Fitness (CTR 204)

2PM-3PM: GEN-1 (Growing, Empowering, Navigating - First Generation) Meet-up (CTR 204)

THURSDAY || Feb. 12

10AM-1PM: Albany College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences: Instant Admit Day & Transfer Advisor Visit (CTR 290)

12PM-1PM: Kathleen Parks Band (BTC Auditorium)

2PM: Black History Month Movie Series (CTR 202)

6PM-7:30PM: Aeronautical Technical Institute (ATI) Open House (HVCC West ATI Institute)

FRIDAY || Feb. 13

9AM-2PM: "Have a Heart" Blood Drive - Sponsored by the Nursing Club & American Red Cross (BTC Meeting Rooms)

9AM-10:30AM: Viking Novel Writing Month; Write-in Session (Marvin 235)

1PM-3PM: Civilian Response to Active Shooter Events (CRASE) (CTR 204)

**billboard  
top 5  
last week**

1.  
Aperture  
Harry Styles
2.  
Choosin' Texas  
Ella Langley
3.  
Man I Need  
Olivia Dean
4.  
Golden  
HUNTR/X
5.  
The Fate of Ophelia  
Taylor Swift

## Latin Emergence In The Public View: Ice Out, Bad Bunny Makes His Stance Known



Richard James Anthony Jr.  
Staff Writer

Puerto Rican artist, Benito Antonio Martínez Ocasio, known as "Bad Bunny," is taking this year by storm.

The year has just started and he has already made headlines from winning multiple Grammys just this year, and his anticipated halftime show for the 60th Super Bowl on the 8th of February, located at the Santa Clara, California. Being invited to such prodigious events like the Grammy Awards and the Super Bowl just shows the present and ever growing influence of the Hispanic community in the United States, despite the heavy strain on the relationship of that Hispanic community due to organizations like ICE. It's clear that Bad Bunny is not only making a statement to government organizations, but also to remind Latinos around the country to stay strong,

"We're not savage. We're not animals. We're not aliens. We are humans and we are Americans." (Bad Bunny, Grammy Speech 2026). This is a statement he made publicly reminding them that they're here too, and they matter.

On the second of February, during the Grammys, Bad Bunny was nominated for 6 categories. By the end of the ceremony, he had managed to win in 3 different categories. These were: "Album Of The Year," "Best Global Music Performance," and "Best Música Urbana Album," or the Best Album in

"We're not savage. We're not animals. We're not aliens. We are humans and we are Americans."



the Latin music genre. However, what is most shocking is that he is the first majority Spanish speaking artist to win Album Of The Year. That means while not recording in English, he had managed to out perform everyone despite the majority English dominating audience. So not only is he the first to win the award, he will also be the first to perform in the Super Bowl as well, performing only in Spanish!

Bad Bunny has had a long history of speaking out though his music and appearances he's made. Some of his songs also speak out about Puerto Rican history, using traditional instruments and sounds in his music. It's clear he doesn't want traditions to be ignored or forgotten. Growing up

on the island he has a strong connection to both the music and the people. Puerto Rico is his home, the history is important to him and so educating other people who aren't as aware of its history is a strong goal of his.

Being in the spotlight and a figure for many Latin Americans to admire, a lot of eyes will be on him in the coming weeks. Many can theorize what he might end up saying or doing during his performance in the Super Bowl, but what can be sure of is that it will be a performance to remember.

Photo: CNN

## Center for Disability Services Celebrates One Year of Cleaning Crew

Lindsay Powers  
Staff Writer

The Center for Disability Services cleaning crew is celebrating one year of volunteering at STRIDE. They clean the gym every other week, and they show no signs of putting down the vacuum or Lysol anytime soon. In fact, they would like to have more opportunities to volunteer, because "helping people feels good", according to Shawn, one of the cleaners.

In addition to cleaning at STRIDE, the group volunteers with Meals on Wheels.

At Meals on Wheels, Shawn is the heart of the operation, tracking each delivery to make sure it goes to the right person, at the right time, with

the right food.

Shawn motivates his peers, telling people they did a good job, and even patting himself on the back. He's eager to get to work, and likes "working with [his] friends".

John, Shawn's twin brother, enjoys vacuuming and can be heard singing as he works. If John hadn't started volunteering, he wouldn't have fallen in love with the elliptical.

John takes his workout seriously, and says they make him feel happy. When his peers started playing Corn Hole, John wanted to continue using the elliptical, with a goal of 1 hour on it that day.

Zach enjoys dusting, which he learned to do through his volunteering and is a chore he now does at home

regularly. Zach is proud of himself for learning a new skill, and says he'd like to learn how to live on his own, a goal he never had before.

Volunteering is crucial to people with disabilities, as it fosters social inclusion, helps people build their confidence, and reduces the isolation many people experience.

They unanimously agree that they'd like to volunteer more.

*For more information on volunteer opportunities at STRIDE, adaptive sports, or to learn more about their recreation programs for individuals with disabilities, email [abrame@stride.org](mailto:abrame@stride.org) or call (518) 598-1279.*

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LONG STORY  
SHORT...

## Mother Sentenced to 25 Years for Death of Child

Isabelle Holt E.I.C.

A 24-year-old woman named Persia Nelson was sentenced for the death of her daughter, an 11 month old infant. Report says that Halo Branton, the child, was dropped down a shed-like structure on the GE campus in Schenectady.

The shed-like structure opened up to a large amount of shallow water.

Halo was found deceased with a head wound underneath pipes at the bottom of a hole.

Halo was reported missing, but prosecutors said that Nelson was staring at that hole for 28 minutes before walking away from it.

Nelson also claimed that she was drunk and high on marijuana on that night, and her attorney argued that she was also suffering from cold stress at that time and thought she was placing her baby in a "safe place."



Prosecutors also argued that even though she was drunk and high, the surveillance video showed her acting straight and very deliberately without signs of severe impairment.

Nelson was in tears during her sentencing while apologizing to her son, her family, Halo's father, and her daughter.

She said that she was sorry for her self-centeredness and not being a better mother and that she accepts the responsibility and will feel the weight of her actions for the rest of her life.

Nelson was sentenced to 25 years to life on murder, five to 15 years on manslaughter, and one year for endangerment.

These sentences will run concurrently to each other.

Photo: CNY Central & CBS 6



## Candlelight Prerformance: Listeso String Quartet

Editor-in-Chief Isabelle Holt  
i-holt1@hvcc.edu  
News Editor Prajeeth Rangamudri  
p-rangamudri@hvcc.edu

Lindsay Powers  
Staff Writer

On Friday, the Listeso String Quartet blinded the audience with their radiating passion for Taylor Swift, and with a rogue stand light during the first song of their captivating candlelight performance, at the UAlbany Performing Arts Center.

As guests enter the chamber, they're guided up a beautiful staircase with flickering candles, to the recital hall, where ushers checked guests in and showed them to their seats. Pictures could be taken near the stage, if you paid a \$5 fee. A fee that may be a little steep for what amounted to a Fiji Instax photo.

Once seated, the stunning semi-permanent acoustical shell, part

of the building's original design in 1969, made every candle seem to flicker that much brighter, illuminating the hall from the front row all the way to the balcony above. As the lights dimmed, the performers entered the stage and carried the guests away through all of Taylor Swift's decades except her debut album.

From the first bow stroke to the final lift, the music swirled around the chamber in a flawless rhythm that at times was so mesmerizing, some guests forgot it was a candlelight concert and began singing the lyrics as songs and melodies were played.

The Listeso String Quartet Performers were Jamecyn Morey, Violin 1, Jessica Belflower, Violin 2, Heather Chan, Viola, and Tara Hanish, Cello.

All of whom have extensive careers as soloists, orchestra members, and hold a variety of degrees in fine arts.

The set list consisted of: "Love Story", "Red Medley" "Anti-Hero", "Enchanted", "Reputation Medley", "Cruel Summer", "Folklore Medley", "Shake It Off", "You Belong With Me", "The Fate Of Ophelia", and "I Can Do It With A Broken Heart".

This program was presented by Fever, who hosts several events in the Capital District to make the arts accessible to all.

Photo: The Arkansas Democrat Gazette



## Politics

## Trump Signs Bill to End Partial Government Shutdown Setting

Andrew Mausler  
Staff Writer

Trump signed a bill to end partial government shutdown, which is setting a stage for the next fight. Trump signed a \$1.2 trillion government funding bill on Tuesday that will end the partial federal shutdown that began over the weekend, and it sets the stage for a big intense debate in congress over homeland security funding. Trump was able to move quickly to sign the bill after the house approved of it with a 217-214 vote.

Trump called the bill a great victory for the American people. The vote on Tuesday wrapped up congressional work on 11 annual appropriations bills that fund government agencies and programs through September 20. The legislation marked the end point for one funding fight, but it will be the start of another. It's because the package only funds the Department of Homeland Security for two weeks, through February 13, at the behest of Democrats that are demanding more

restrictions on immigration enforcement after the shooting deaths of Alex Pretti and Renee Good by federal officers in Minneapolis.

There are difficult negotiations ahead, mainly for the agency that enforces the nation's immigration laws- U.S. Immigrations and Customs enforcement, or ICE. The house Democratic leader Hakeem Jeffries warned Democrats would not support any further temporary funding for Homeland Security without substantial changes to its immigration operations., raising the potential for another shutdown for the department and its agencies. Speaker Mike Johnson said he expects the two sides will be able to reach an agreement by the deadline.

Johnson's counterpart across the capitol, Senate majority leader John Thune, R-S.D. sounded less optimistic of a deal. The funding bill that cleared Congress had provisions that appealed to both parties. Republicans avoided a massive, catchfall funding bill known as an ominous as part of this year's appropriations process. Democrats

were able to fend off some of Trump's draconian proposed cuts while adding language that helps ensure funds are spent as stipulated by congress. But still, Johnson needed near-unanimous support from his republican conference to proceed to a final vote on the bill.

He narrowly got it during a roll call that was open for nearly an hour as leaders were working to gain support from a handful of GOP lawmakers that were trying to advance other priorities unrelated to the funding measure. The final vote was not much easier for GOP leaders.

At the end, 21 republicans sided with the vast majority of democrats in voting yes.

Trump weighed in on Monday in a social media post, calling on republicans to stay united and telling holdouts, "There can be no changes at this time."

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# Opinions

**Editor-in-Chief** Isabelle Holt  
i-holt1@hvcc.edu  
**Opinions Editor** Matthias Mojalli  
m-mojallali@hvcc.edu

## Markiplier: Iron Lung Review

Samarun Suhana  
Copy Editor

Iron Lung, created by beloved YouTuber Markiplier, has finally been released. I watched a day before it officially came out and here's what I've got to say.

I have been consuming horror media my whole 20 years and honestly, Iron Lung has been the first and only piece of horror media that actually scares me. That might be partially

due to the fact that I went into the movie almost completely blind. I only knew of the ocean of blood with creatures, but I didn't know truly how much blood there'd be.

I'll admit there were certain parts that were a bit lackluster, for example, the beginning was a bit slow and the dialogue was quiet compared to the soundtrack. That being said, I feel as though a lot of what might have been lost could be made up for with context.

Fun fact: Iron Lung the movie used over 80,000 gallons of fake blood, surpassing the original record of 50,000 gallons for the 2013 remake of Evil Dead.

Final verdict: I loved Iron Lung and would 100% recommend it to anyone who loves horror and Markiplier!



## New Alternative called Nano Hydroxyapatite: What should you know?

Richard James Anthony Jr.  
Staff Writer

“Is this a new alternative to cleaning your teeth?”

Recently, a striking and upcoming alternative to the generic everyday toothpaste has suddenly surfaced, receiving applause.

This new toothpaste uses a compound called Nano Hydroxyapatite. This alternative has been increasing in popularity throughout social media, and there is a high likelihood some of you reading this have probably heard about it while scrolling, but what exactly is Nano Hydroxyapatite, and what makes it so different from fluoride based toothpaste?

Nano Hydroxyapatite has a list of benefits: it has been shown to strengthen the enamel (the outermost layer of your teeth), whiten your teeth, provide protection from cavities, and remineralize them.

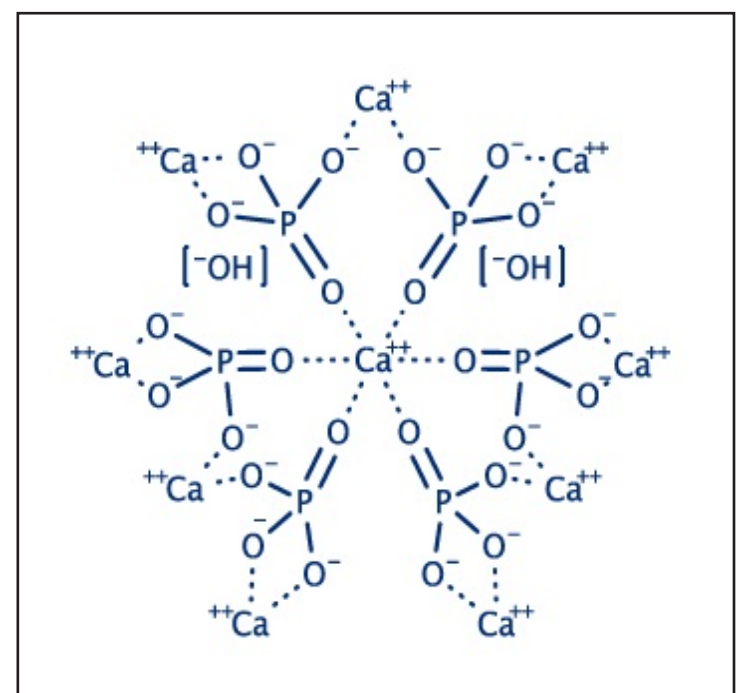
“How does it work?” some of you may ask: The enamel is made of dense materials, one of which being Hydroxyapatite which is a derived form of calcium, “wait so this toothpaste is made of the same material found in your teeth?” Yes! While brushing, the material in toothpaste naturally fills in microscopic holes and cracks in

your teeth, repairing them during the process.

The effects aren't all powerful; however, like all things there is a limit to how much can be filled in. In contrast, fluoride strengthens existing enamel, practically creating a protective barrier around the enamel, but it can't restore it.

If your enamel is sensitive or damaged, then there's nothing much you can do about it besides protecting it from getting worse. Fluoride is a great way to protect your teeth from cavities and decay, but with Nano Hydroxyapatite gaining rise in popularity in the East and growing in the U.S. market, will fluoride stay the standard for long? That is to be seen further.

Left: Turtlee Organic; Right bottom: EPRUI Biotech; Top right: Davids Toothpaste



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LONG STORY

SHORT...

### HVCC Uses AI Art in Catalog, Why Not Original? Matthias Mojallali

Shortly before the semester started, HVCC sent out a catalog that seemed like just any ordinary catalog. However, there was something interesting on the cover. Across the front was a strange photograph of a melting snowman with a tuft of white hair on the top of its head. At first glance, this image might arouse feelings of confusion, until you realize it's AI generated. After taking a photo of the cover, multiple websites have proven that the image on the cover of this catalog is AI generated.

This leads into an obvious question: with an amazing art, digital media, and photography department, why would HVCC need to go on ChatGPT or any sort of AI program to get a picture of a snowman during the summer?

It's such an odd choice to use AI when they clearly could've gone to their own campus photographer or any sort of digital media professor for an image like that. This is especially confusing when you put in the fact that the snowman photo has clear signs of an AI generation that won't go over Gen Z's head. In some ways, an AI generated cover of their Professional Development and Personal Growth catalog is promoting the exact opposite of what they're trying to advertise.

My best piece of advice for HVCC is that it's time to turn to your Departments of The Arts and Media to help promote the school's potential skills better.

Matty Kelly-Haller  
Staff Writer

Technology. It can best be described as the death of me, my worst enemy, my nemesis, if you will.

The way that technology has slithered into our lives has been fast-almost instant, and rather annoying. I would like to go back to VCR's, floppy disks, cassette tapes, DVD players, walkman's, BlackBerry's, pagers, fax machines, public telephone booths on the sidewalk, GPS devices (oh how I hate the GPS in my car), and other forms of great technology that have unfortunately been forgotten by this generation.

Whenever an assignment of mine requires uploading or downloading, it takes the help of YouTube tutorials, the CLC in the library, and at least a day to figure it out. Technology can be an extremely helpful tool such as with Gmail or Zoom, but more often than not, I find myself mulling over why newer forms of technology came to be.

The people who created technology thought they were doing a good thing- making it easier for people to work and study, but they didn't know what they had created- a monster with a blue screen.

The easiest thing I can do is send an email, very easy, no complications, just compose and send. Now when you ask me to upload pictures on my phone to a document I have open on my computer, I haven't a clue. I am still learning how to connect my phone to bluetooth, let alone to a computer. I love paper copies of things, assignments, meeting agendas, paperwork, etc.

## Confounded: A Technology Opinion

My life is so much easier when I can read documents in ink, on paper, in my hands. That goes for books too, Kindle is not working for me. I like a good book also, in ink, on paper, in my hands.

The trends of everything going online that started with COVID, such as meetings on Zoom, we still do it. Do you know how many users installed zoom in 2020/2021? Over 485 million. That's a lot of meetings online. Now, I like meetings, in the winter months, on Zoom. That's reasonable. What's not reasonable is in April, May, June, you continue to have Zoom meetings fully online- not in person option at all. That's laziness.

Things need to start to get back into in-person events, and they have, mostly. Although, when I am in my lazy mood, and I may not want to leave the house, Zoom sounds like a good option.

Now Brightspace, it is easy to use, but once you've learned about it and got the hang of it. If you have never used the type of technology that HVCC has, you may find it harder to use. I praise the person who has sheltered him or herself away from the confines of technology in 2026.

What bothers me the most with Brightspace, is that most assignments must be handed in that way. This is one of the online trends that we should get back to doing on paper. For me, a paper assignment is so much easier to complete and hand in than one online. Now this isn't a complaint, every class has a right to learn and submit assignments in the way that suits the class. But for someone who is technologically challenged, this would be extremely helpful for him (wink

wink). Wired, on the other hand, was recently updated and at first I had no idea what was going on. I thought I was in some new technological world, but nonetheless was confused and I struggled to find my grades. It took me several hours to navigate the site even though I had been to Wired 100 million times in my time here. When a site or program updates, it's not like, "Oh we're just updating our display," no, "It's we're updating our ENTIRE site." With Wired, I thought it was just updating how it looked (which it did) but it also updated literally everything. That's a lot for me, I need to be carefully walked through it like a baby learning to walk.

I am a technological baby in a sense I don't know anything, I just babble and giggle and cry when faced with technology. I have always wanted to be a hermit, away from the technological evils of the world, but that's unrealistic because even as a hermit, the way technology is rapidly growing, it will find you and hunt you down till you're bowing to it. We pay for so many subscriptions and streaming online- that's why I like my Nat Geo magazine. What I don't like is when Disney Plus or Netflix says they're upping their prices 10 dollars every 5 days. That's ridiculous, but worth it for shows like Criminal Minds, Community, 30 Rock, and Once Upon a Time.

It will take some getting used to this newer and newer technology- but I'll get there. Just wait till they bring out 6G technology. Oy Vey!

Just one last question- What the heck is Wi-Fi?

## Values for Vikings: Meal Deal Madness

Molly Graiff  
Staff Writer

Meal Deal Madness is back! I've gone over Wendy's, McDonald's, and Burger King's meal deals but another chain is putting meal deals on the map! KFC is premiering their new \$5 Bowl Deal.

With 5 options to choose from, customers with an area of preferences are sure to enjoy! The options include a Nashville Hot Loaded Fries Bowl, a Nashville Hot Mac and Cheese Bowl, a Nashville Hot Famous Bowl, a Mac and Cheese Bowl, and a Famous Bowl featuring KFC classics such as mashed potatoes and chicken nuggets.

Each bowl comes loaded with flavor packed into each bite. This is a great value for customers looking to try a little of everything!

Last time I discussed the \$5 meal deals popping up at fast food chains, I shared how valuable the meal really is. It's true that many fast food restaurants are affordable and worth your buck, if you order correctly. Choosing a meal that's on a value menu allows you more choices at a low price.

Unlike places like McDonald's with two options for meal deals, KFC offering five choices allows for something for everyone.

Additionally, KFC offers \$10 Tuesdays where customers can choose between the 8-Piece Tenders or 8-Piece Dark Meat Bucket. This is perfect for those looking to share with a friend or for a filling meal. Partner this with a few \$5 Bowls and you have a family meal deal for a fraction of the cost! KFC's generous portions and variety in menu items allows for variety in choice!



Photos: KFC

# Arts & Life

Editor-in-Chief Isabelle Holt  
i-holt1@hvcc.edu

## Why is most of your closet plastic, and how can we do our part in changing that?

Olivia William  
Staff Contributor

If you walk into almost any clothing store today, luxury, fast fashion, or the in between, you'll find racks dominated by polyester, nylon, acrylic, and spandex.

Which translates into one thing, plastic. The fashion industry didn't just stumble into this synthetic takeover; it engineered it. And understanding why requires looking at economics and our complicated relationship with fashion.

Synthetic fibers first began to surge in the mid-20th century.

They were marketed as futuristic, glamorous, and liberating. Polyester promised wrinkle-free elegance.

Nylon offered durability and stretch. Acrylic mimicked wool without the itch. These materials weren't just cheaper, they were sold as something better. And consumers bought in.

Today, synthetics make up the majority of global fiber production. Polyester alone accounts for more than half of all textiles. It's the backbone of everything from activewear to evening gowns.

So in this carbon footprint conscious world, why are these fabrics so popular? The first reason is

because it's cheap to manufacture. Polyester costs a fraction of what cotton, wool, or linen. It's derived from petroleum, which despite the environmental cost remains inexpensive and globally abundant.

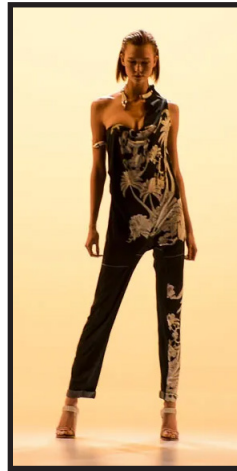
The second reason is that manufacturing is limitless. Natural fibers depend on land, weather, water, and labor. Plastic fibers depend on factories. Lastly they are designed to follow the everchanging trend cycle. Plastic fibers hold color, resist wrinkles, and can mimic almost any texture. What can we do about this issue? Here's the hard truth. We can't solve the plastic problem with slogans or a few "eco-friendly" collections.

Real change requires structural shifts across the entire fashion ecosystem.

It specifically means a change in manufacturing and needing an industry to go back to quality over quantity. However, on our own microlevel we can help turn the tides.

The biggest thing we can all do is buy clothes second hand. This even includes synthetics. This is because the fabric will still be used in some way, preventing more of it from ending up in landfills. Even though we can't completely fix this problem, we can still fix it by minding our consumption of fashion.

Left: USA Love List; Middle: Vogue; Right: Olivia William



## Song Recs by Hana: Start Spring Semester Right

Samarun Suhana  
Copy Editor

Welcome back Vikings! I hope you've settled in nicely.

I will be sharing about four or five song recommendations each week, but enough with the introduction, let's just get right into it!

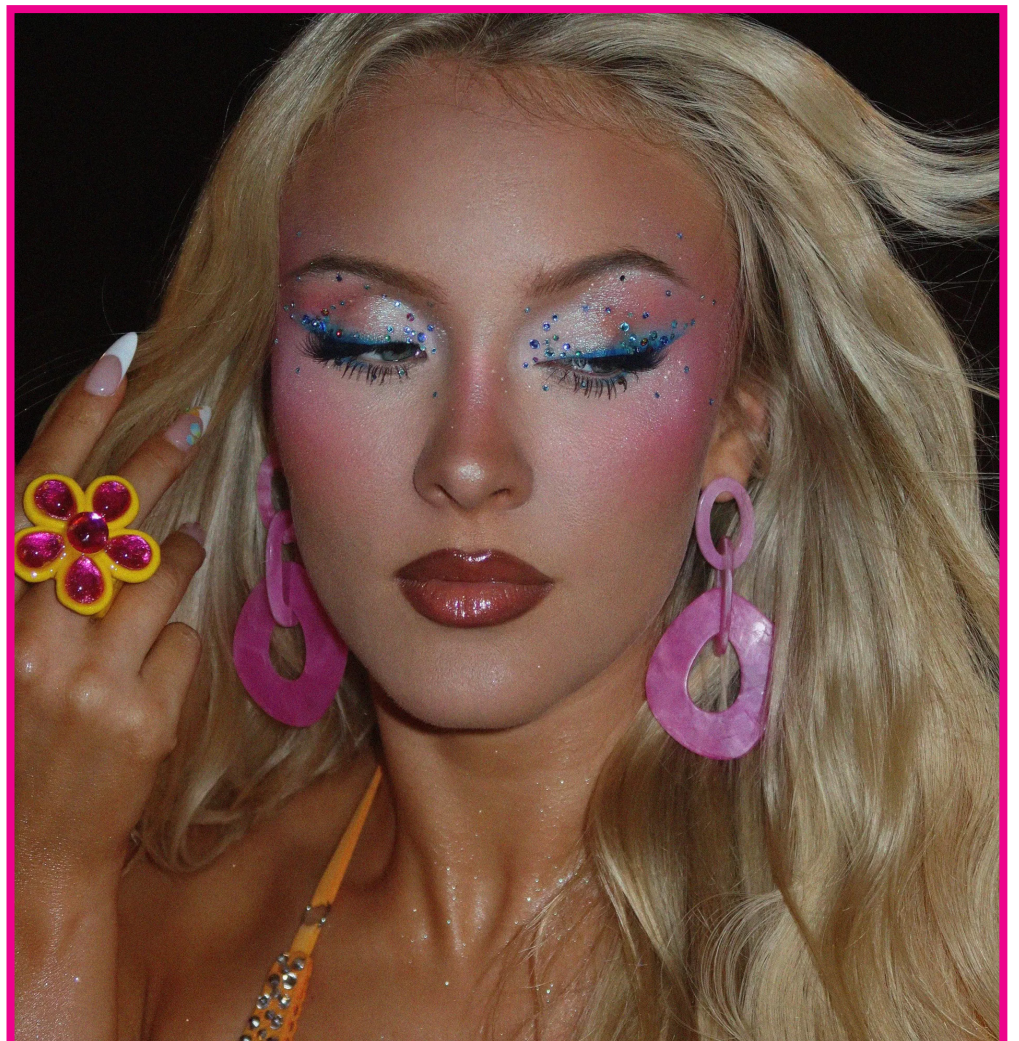
**PIXELATED KISSES** by Joji: For my long distance baddies, PIXELATED KISSES focuses on the digital disconnection and longing of being in a long distance relationship, with lyrics like "Pixelated kisses got me goin' insane/ Replicate this moment from a million miles away." The bass-heavy, gritty, glitched instrumental incites a familiar rage while the soft vocals offer comfort. With Valentine's Day coming up, this song has been on repeat in my headphones, #missmyman.

**Midnight Sun** by Zara Larsson: This wouldn't be "Song Recs by Hana" if Zara Larsson wasn't somewhere in here. Midnight Sun is about enjoying life truly to the fullest, and also a literal midnight sun because in Sweden, where Zara grew up, during the summertime an actual sun around midnight can be seen. As she says herself, "Summer isn't over yet!"

**DtMF** by Bad Bunny: Possibly one of the most comforting songs I have listened to in recent days. DtMF

is living in the moment but capturing that moment on photo, something that Benito, Bad Bunny, admits he regrets not doing; it's about nostalgia, cherishing memories, and even regret. A song that can bring everyone together if only people were looking for the beauty in life. That is one of my goals this year, to find the beauty in life and get it on film because that is what makes life worth living.

**Do the Dance** by ILLIT: Another song that feels oddly nostalgic. Do the Dance is about feeling nervous and a bit awkward on a first date but just going with it. The title translates to "borrowed cat," or "rent-a-cat," to symbolize feeling awkward, like you're out of place in a new situation. In the end, this song is about letting go and enjoying the present, with the whimsical lyrics like, "Dance, dance, meow," the idea is to step out of your comfort zone with a sort of newfound confidence.



## Comfort in the Cold: Staying Cozy this Winter

Editor-in-Chief Isabelle Holt  
i-holt1@hvcc.edu

Shia Lang  
Photo Editor

On February 2nd, Punxsutawney Phil, the ground hog, saw his shadow and has decided that winter will prolong for 6 more weeks. As the weather gets colder, here are some good tips and tricks to use so you can keep warm: make sure to check your heating vents, and check to see if they are open and that nothing is blocking it. You can also put blankets on the

windows and/or the doors to block out the cold.

A fun way to keep the house warm would be to bake some treats, as it warms up the house and you get a yummy reward from it! More tips when you're not at home can be to layer up your clothes, have hand warmers, get a heated vest, stay active like exercising or moving around, and drinking warm beverages or foods.

With the weather sometimes being in the negatives, it can be unpleasant to walk from class to class

if you're a college student or faculty member. You could explore the campus and find pathways to be indoors as long as possible to get to your classes, and find the warmer parts in a building. Parking in the parking garage can also eliminate a lot more walking outside and windy conditions from getting to you. Just remember to keep warm and that the spring will be much nicer because of this long lasting winter.

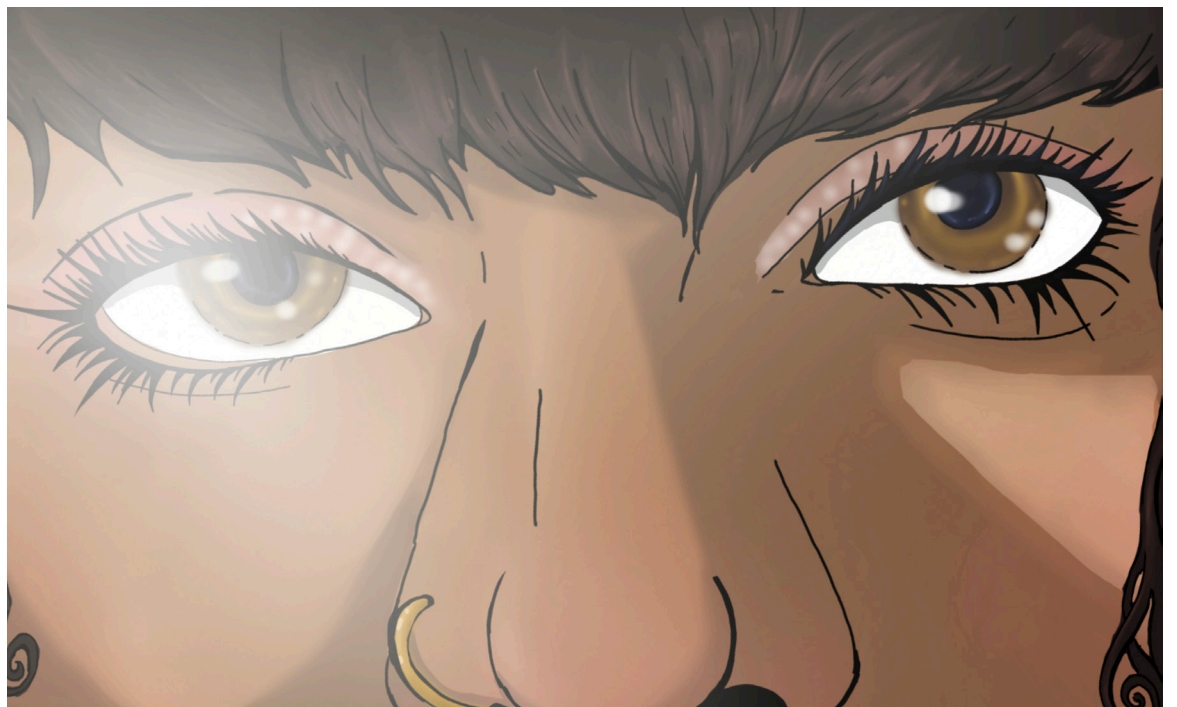
Photo: The Morning Call



## Romanticizing Life

Samarun Suhana  
Copy Editor

*The windows to the soul  
could be any color you could possibly imagine.  
Darker than dark chocolate;  
these deep pools of mystery.  
They have the ability to hypnotize but,  
in order to be completely mesmerized,  
you must find the need to romanticize.  
There comes days where darkness is desired.  
The occasional sparkle that withers as time passes.  
When the sun shines, everything is seen;  
each pattern within is visible.  
The iris is no longer dismal, but rather bright,  
and sparkles find their way back to home.  
Watch as the pupil dilates, only then can you know  
beauty is indeed simple.  
It is everywhere.  
Look for it in life.  
Only then can you look past the greyness of modern day,  
only then can you fall in love once again.  
With feeling the sun on your face,  
with waking up every day,  
with life.*



*Open your eyes  
to see the beauty that lies.*

## Horoscope Overview: What are they and what can we learn from our sign?

Andrew Mausler  
Staff Writer

Here is an in depth overview of horoscopes, reviewing the details of each.

There are 12 of horoscopes. All of them have their own strengths and weaknesses, specific traits, desires, and attitude towards life and people.

By analyzing the projection of the position of the planets, sun, and the moon at the ecliptic at the moment of birth. Astrology can give you a glimpse of a person's basic characteristics, preferences, flaws, and fears.

Each of the 12 horoscopes signs belong to one of the four elements - Air, Fire, Water, and Earth.

These elements represent an essential type of energy that acts in each of us. Astrology focuses on helping us focus these energies on the positive aspects and to gain a better understanding of our potential and

our positive traits and deal with negative ones.

These four elements help describe the unique personality types associated with astrological signs. The four Zodiac elements exhibit profound influence on basic character traits, emotions, behavior, and thinking.

Water signs are exceptionally emotional and ultra-sensitive. They can be highly intuitive, and they can be as mysterious as the ocean itself.

Water signs love profound conversations and intimacy. They will rarely do anything openly and are always there to support loved ones.

The water signs are Cancer, Scorpio, and Pisces. Fire signs are usually more passionate, dynamic, and temperamental.

They can get angered quickly, but they can also forgive easily. They are adventurers with immense energy

They are physically strong and a source of inspiration for others.

Fire signs are also very intelligent, self-aware, creative, and idealistic people, they are always ready for action. Fire signs are Aries, Leo, and Sagittarius.

Earth signs are grounded and the ones that bring us down to earth.

They are mostly conservative and realistic, but they can also be very emotional. They are connected to our material reality and can be turned to material goods.

They are practical, loyal, and stable, and they stick by their people during hard times. The earth signs are Taurus, Virgo, and Capricorn. Air signs are rational, social, and love communication and relationships with other people.

They are thinkers, friendly, in-

tellectual, communicative, and analytical.

Photo: Medium

