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Winter Cycling, Bike Theft, and Safer Streets: Saskatoon Cycling Advocates Weigh In

Jason Hanson and Arika Block from Saskatoon Cycles discuss the benefits of winter cycling, challenges like bike theft, and how advocacy shapes safer streets.

Nammi Nguyen

Cycling doesn't have to be just a summer activity. Even in Saskatchewan winters, it can be a year-round transportation option. But what keeps people from cycling more often?

To understand the benefits and challenges of cycling in Saskatoon, I spoke with two members of Saskatoon Cycles: Jason Hanson and Arika Block. Whether you're a seasoned cyclist or considering your first ride, their perspectives might inspire you to get on your bike more often—no matter the season.

Jason Hanson, a lifelong environmentalist and cyclist, is the communications manager for Saskatoon Cycles. He's had this role since 2022 but has been a member of the organization since its inception in 2010.

Arika Block, a fourth-year engineering physics student at USask, is a new board member of the organization. She started cycling regularly after moving off-campus in her second year of university. Block shares, "I was walking to school and there were people riding their bikes on the road, and I [thought] 'if I had one of those, I could sleep in an extra five minutes!'" She hasn't looked back since.

When it comes to winter cycling, the pair see it as largely the same as summer cycling. The activity is often viewed as extreme or daunting but Hanson explains that "with slight modifications to your regular cycling habits, [such as] a few extra layers, maybe some goggles, [and] if the weather gets much colder, mitts and



Saskatoon Cycles members bike along the Meewasin trail in snowy conditions | Saskatoon Cycles

studded tires, your experience riding a bike in the winter is very similar to in the summer." Like other winter activities and sports, winter cycling can be very enjoyable—as long as you prepare properly.

You also don't need a shiny new fat tire bike to start winter cycling. Studded tires, which provide more grip on snow and ice, can be swapped with regular tires on most bikes and purchased at any bike shop in the city such as Bike

Doctor, Bruce's Cycle Works, Doug's Spoke 'N Sport, and Outtabounds.

Block, who cycles to school daily, concurs and highlights its practicality. "It's not having to warm up a car in the morning, or figure out where I'm going to park it, or then have to run halfway across campus from the parking lot."

For both of them, winter cycling isn't just about transportation—it's about the experience. "Those early morning rides on Meewasin, you're basically by yourself. Maybe there's the odd person out walking or another cyclist, but it's dead quiet. Then you just get that crunching of the snow under your tires," Hanson says. "It's hard to describe, but I wish more people could experience that feeling."

But while winter cycling can be rewarding, the two bike enthusiasts understand why many hesitate to take up the habit. Bike theft remains one of the biggest deterrents. In fact, Block had her rear wheel stolen just this fall.

Hanson hopes for better infrastructure to protect cyclists on campus, such as improved lighting and security cameras. Still, he reminds cyclists that "there's never any guarantee that your bike's not going to get stolen. Criminals have pretty sophisticated tools now that they can cut through a U-Lock. If they're dedicated to a theft, they can make it happen." However, using high-quality and additional locks for wheels can lower the risk significantly.

Still, Hanson encourages people to try and cycle as often as they can:

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A snapshot into what your USSU Execs have been

Didn't have time to keep up with student governance on campus last semester? Not to worry, your Sheaf team has your back!



2024/25 Exec members Upkar Singh, Elisabeth Bauman, Moses Ahiabu and Krupal Chavda | USSU

Darshana Lanke

This article solely reflects the opinion of the USSU Executives based on an interview where the executives were asked to provide information on their work since September, obstacles faced, and future plans. The Sheaf is interested in hearing students' opinions regarding the work done by the USSU Executives so far. If you are interested in sharing your voice, contact us at editor@thesheaf.com. Depending on the volume of answers, an article reflecting students' opinions might be written. Respondents will remain anonymous by request.

The USSU Executive Committee consists of the President, Krupal Chavda; Vice-President Academic Affairs, Elisabeth Bauman; Vice-President Student Affairs, Upkar Singh; and Vice-President Operations and Finance, Moses Ahiabu.

Chavda describes the year's progress so far as "[being] full of meaningful wins for us as a student union." One such win, he explains, is that the USSU has secured \$50,000 in funding to support the uFood Emergency Hamper program, which provides students facing food insecurity with hampers

each term.

Chavda highlights another moment that stands out to him: joining the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations and getting the opportunity to advocate for students on a national level. USSU Executives attended Advocacy Week, a conference held annually in Ottawa in the fall to advocate for improving post-secondary education in Canada. Chavda says they pushed "for important changes, like more funding for Indigenous students, better immigration policies for graduates, and financial aid that keeps up with inflation."

Bauman has spent the past few months writing and presenting the USSU Academic Advocacy Office Report. This 47-page report includes recommendations made from Bauman's first-hand experience in being involved in 140 student academic cases which range from a variety of topics including academic misconduct, conflicts, and academic appeals, from May 2023 to August 2024. The full report can be read by visiting the link: USSU's Academic Advocacy Office Brief & Report Bauman says, "This report has had a significant impact on the way our university is currently thinking about the gaps in student supports, and steps

are being taken to address some of the concerns raised in the report."

Singh says since September he is most proud of "enhancing the students' perspective with respect to their involvement in the politics at the Municipal and the Provincial level and making them realize the importance of them getting their voices heard."

One of Ahiabu's proudest accomplishments has been his "collaboration with Saskatoon Transit to extend transit services to neighbourhoods such as Brighton, Aspen Ridge, and Rosewood. This initiative has greatly enhanced accessibility for students in these areas, reducing barriers to attending classes, accessing campus resources, and participating in extracurricular activities."

Ahiabu is committed to "empowering students and ensuring that Campus Groups thrive in a supportive and inclusive environment." This is why he and Chavda "introduced Campus Groups GPT, a cutting-edge tool designed to support Campus Groups by providing instant access to resources, streamlining administrative processes, and offering guidance for student leaders instantly." Ahiabu believes that "tools like Campus Groups GPT and the Discord channel have been pivotal in addressing [communication] issues."

Chavda recaps the work done by the USSU since September saying, "Each of these steps represents real progress for students, and it's been humbling to play a part in that."

However, no position comes without its share of obstacles. Chavda comments on the frustration of "navigating the maze of student support systems and the layers of bureaucracy that come with trying to make meaningful change." Singh adds, "Undertaking an initiative which caters to the involvement of various departments or resources on campus, it becomes a hurdle to carry out a smooth logistical execution as many factors tend to come in the way of the smooth functioning of the different partners because of their own unique reasons."

Bauman agrees that the "systems are complicated for everyone to navigate" and that she and her colleagues work to help students navigate the system by gathering information, and learning about each college's specific requirements. She says, "It is fulfilling work, but time-consuming, and sometimes we are not able to help students in the way they would like. This makes me feel sad and frustrated at times, so something I am trying to implement is channelling these feelings into productive avenues and learning to forgive myself and others for mistakes—we are all human and fallible, and I want to extend grace just as so many people have given me the grace and opportunity to learn."

Currently, the USSU Executives are working on USSU Plan – 2030, a roadmap that aims to help future USSU Executives with continuity while still allowing flexibility to achieve these objectives. Chavda says, "Right now, we're consulting with students and colleges to shape this plan together, ensuring it reflects the needs and aspirations of our community."

Ahiabu says in the coming months he is focused on improving the funding system for Campus Groups to be more transparent and user-friendly. He says "This update will ensure that all groups, regardless of size or reach, have equitable access to the financial resources they need to thrive." He also is working with the IT team to improve the Student Groups page on the USSU website to be user-friendly and informative. Ahiabu says, "By making these platforms more intuitive and accessible, we aim to reduce the time and effort required for students to navigate our systems, freeing them up to focus on what matters most: their growth, events, and initiatives."

Bauman, in collaboration with the Academic Governance Assistant and the USSU's Academic Relations Committee, is preparing for the USSU's Undergraduate Symposium which takes place on February 26. She welcomes all undergraduate students to submit a project to present at the symposium.

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The Year of 1.5°C

2025 marks a crucial tipping point in the world's fight against climate change.

Dori Sutherland

At the 2015 United Nations (UN) Climate Change Conference in Paris, 196 countries entered a legally binding treaty known as the Paris Agreement.

The treaty calls on its signatories to take climate action in their respective nations to prevent the average global temperature from rising to catastrophic levels before 2050. The Paris Agreement defines this as an increase in global temperature of 2°C above pre-industrial levels (the period between 1850 and 1900). This is the maximum allowable threshold — ideally, to mitigate the most damage, the average global temperature should not rise higher than 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.

As 2025 begins, a crucial global turning point for climate action is at hand. In the Paris Agreement, 2025 is outlined as the year in which greenhouse gas emissions must peak for the world to have a chance at the 1.5°C threshold for climate change. Continuing increases in global emissions after this year would mean diminished chances of reaching this goal.

What's in Half a Degree?

If 2°C is supposed to be the maximum threshold the global average temperature can increase to, why should it matter that 2025 might be the last chance to reduce emissions enough to stay below 1.5°C?

The half-degree difference between these temperatures might seem insignificant — it would be difficult to notice a half-degree change in the weather during our daily lives. However, this change is far from trivial.

A 2024 study in the journal *Nature* found that each 0.1°C increase in global average temperature above 1.5°C increases the likelihood of triggering climate tipping elements. Climate tipping elements (also known as climate tipping points) are thresholds that, when exceeded, can cause exponential changes in environmental systems.

Examples of tipping elements that can profoundly affect the Earth include

large ice sheets, oceanic and atmospheric circulation patterns, and large biosphere features such as the Amazon Rainforest and Boreal Permafrost. These elements are deeply interconnected with global ecological processes. While they can have stabilizing effects, they can also trigger cascading changes in a variety of systems when disturbed. The melting of the Greenland ice sheet, for example, could cause changes in Atlantic circulation, affecting precipitation levels in the Amazon.

A few of Earth's crucial tipping elements, such as coral reef die-off, are at risk of being pushed over the edge even around 1.5°C. However, keeping warming to this level still greatly mitigates damage. Two degrees is considered the upper limit of warming beyond which many more tipping points will be set off, creating a cascade effect that threatens ecological and human health at a much larger scale.

In 2018, the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change released its Global Warming of 1.5°C special report, outlining the consequences of climate change at 1.5°C versus 2°C of warming.

Some Notable Predictions?

On a human level, two degrees of warming is projected to result in 37% of the global population being exposed to severe heat at least once every five years, compared with 14% at 1.5°C of warming. Additionally, yields in fisheries and certain crops could experience a reduction in their harvests twice as severe as they would've experienced at a 1.5°C of warming.

In our ecosystems, a 2°C increase in global average temperature could result in double the amount of vertebrate and plant species and triple the number of insect species seeing at least a 50% reduction in their range, compared with projected numbers at the 1.5°C threshold.

What Are We on Track for Now?

The global average temperature hit a record high this year, and was the first year on record to hit an average temperature that exceeded the 1.5°C



Climate change | Roschetzky Istock photo from Getty Images | Canva Pro

threshold compared with pre-industrial levels. It is important to note that this was bolstered by a strong El Niño event last year, which had a warming effect.

An October 2024 report from the UN predicts that, with current policies and pledges from member nations, the world is still on track for warming between 2.6°C and 3.1°C by the end of the century. The report indicated that emissions must be cut by 42% globally by 2030 to remain on track to limit warming to just 1.5°C.

On the Positive Side...

Climate tipping elements don't just have to be negative. There are also positive tipping points that, when triggered, create a positive feedback loop, reinforcing effective climate action. Investments in green energy, for example, might initially be hefty and have little yield, but overcoming the initial barriers allows development to accelerate rapidly and become cheaper until it reaches a tipping point where it is adopted at scale.

Around 14% of the world's primary energy (raw energy sources not yet converted by humans) comes from renewable technologies. While this number is still low compared to the amount of primary energy sourced from fossil fuels, new investments in green energy projects globally are estimated to be around 2 trillion USD annually, which is double the amount spent on all new fossil fuel projects. This investment, combined with the

decreasing costs of renewables, is expected to lead to immense growth in global renewable capacity, projected to grow to 2.7 times its current capacity by 2030.

Other examples of positive climate tipping points include the increasing production of green ammonia (ammonia made through a carbon-free process) and the growing adoption of electric vehicles. In 2024, Norway became the first nation to have more electric vehicles on the road than standard gasoline-powered vehicles. In 2025, the country aims to limit the market to zero-emission vehicles, meaning all new car sales will be electric or hydrogen-powered.

While it might not appear that countries and their policies are on track in certain areas right now, slow changes in many spaces can suddenly lead to tipping points of exponential change. It is important to cause these positive tipping elements to tip sooner rather than later.

One of the most effective ways to trigger positive climate tipping elements is through public policy, whether by subsidies, restrictions, or other measures. The Canadian federal election will take place on or before October 20 this year, meaning that all eligible voters have the opportunity to make their voices heard about preventing the global average temperature from rising above 2°C at some point during this critical year.

USask alumna Kennedy Marley receives the 2025 Rhodes Scholarship

Law graduate Kennedy Marley received the prestigious scholarship and is headed to the University of Oxford for graduate studies.



Rhodes Scholarship recipient Kennedy Marley on the USask campus | Kennedy Marley

Francisca Lopez Molina

For the second year in a row, two fellow members of the USask community were among the 11 Canadian students that received the esteemed Rhodes Scholarship. Kennedy Marley, a USask Law graduate, and Colin Dyck, a fourth-year engineering physics student graduating in the Spring, will begin graduate studies at the University of Oxford in Oxford, England, in September 2025.

The Rhodes Scholarship, organized by the Rhodes Trust, is an international postgraduate scholarship awarded to exceptional individuals that provides recipients with the opportunity to complete a fully-funded postgraduate degree at the University of Oxford.

The Rhodes Trust awards a certain number of scholarships to each constituency (a country, group of countries, or territory) with only 11 scholarships awarded across Canada.

“It’s quite literally life-changing news,” said Marley about receiving the call that she’d been selected. “It was an overwhelming moment.”

Marley, who works at the Court of Appeal for Saskatchewan in Regina, heard about the scholarship through a previous clerk. “[The previous clerk] had visited the court to catch up with the judges and she swung by my office to introduce herself to my sister, Caydence, who is also a law clerk, and I, and she pitched the idea of doing a Master’s program and asked if either of us had considered it,” said Marley.

While she explains that she had considered a Master’s degree before, she was unsure about many aspects of the process, including when and where she would complete it.

Marley explained that “[The previous clerk] mentioned the Rhodes Scholarship, and I’d heard about it before but I hadn’t looked too far into

it.” At first, Marley believed that the application process was very intense. “I still had a couple months before the deadline came up, and I [thought] ‘Well, you know what? I think I could tackle this. Why not throw my hat in the ring and see what comes of this?’”

Marley has her Juris Doctor degree from the USask College of Law and is hoping to pursue Master of Philosophy and Doctor of Philosophy degrees in Law, focusing on the comparison in criminal sentencing regimens between Canada and other nations, particularly about how they deal with Indigenous youth involved in gang culture.

“I started university in the sciences. I really was steadfast that I would be a doctor. Long story short, I simply wasn’t finding I was building relationships and meeting people with necessarily the same interests as myself in the sciences, so I swapped to the humanities in my second semester of university, and it immediately clicked that this is where I’m supposed to be. These are my people. These are the conversations I want to be included in and contributing to,” said Marley. “I took one class specifically that solidified my love of the humanities. It was just the intro course of Women’s and Gender Studies, and at the time, it was taught by Dr. Josh Morrison. I’d never seen someone so enthusiastic about their area of interest (...) There was such lively conversation in every class, and I just thought, ‘I would like to be like him. I would like to be someone who was so excited about my work that it doesn’t feel like a job,’” she explained.

After Marley applied to USask Law and was accepted in 2021, she expressed that “it felt like the right place. I never questioned whether I was too young or whether this was too big a task to take on.”

Undoubtedly, Marley has an extensive track record of experiences and accomplishments that earned her the well-deserved scholarship. But her

passion and drive is what truly stands out.

Even though a big component of being selected to receive the scholarship is academic excellence, Marley expressed that an equally important component is reflecting the Rhodes Qualities, which include truth, devotion to duty, and unselfishness. She explained that while her strong academic performance throughout her undergraduate career and law school definitely played a role in being selected as a finalist, she hopes that she was selected because of her passion for the area of research.

“A very big component of my application was focused on being very authentic and honest in my interests. I didn’t try to put any sort of filter on my application and I didn’t try to tailor it to anyone else’s interests except my own,” she explained.

In early 2024, Marley and her twin sister Caydence were awarded the Order of Gabriel Dumont Bronze Medal from the Gabriel Dumont Institute. “Receiving the Order of Gabriel Dumont Medal was not solely a reflection of my academic ability. It was a reflection of my contributions to the Métis community. And that was really meaningful to me, to know that other people were seeing my passion and my commitment to the community,” explained Marley, who recognized being nominated for this award as an achievement she is very proud of.

In addition to receiving the Bronze Medal, Marley expressed that what she’s most proud of is being true to her passions and interests.

“I would describe myself as someone who is very ambitious and resolute. I am confident that I know what my interests are and the type of career that I want to pursue.

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USask Student Colin Dyck Receives the 2025 Rhodes Scholarship

Fourth-year engineering physics student Colin Dyck has been selected as a recipient of the prestigious Rhodes Scholarship.

Dori Sutherland

The Rhodes Scholarship, organized by the Rhodes Trust, is an international scholarship that provides exceptional students with the opportunity to pursue fully funded graduate studies for two years at the University of Oxford in Oxford, England.

The scholarship has been awarded since 1902, making it the oldest international graduate scholarship program in the world — as well as one of the most prestigious.

Past winners have gone on to become Nobel and Pulitzer prize winners, hold powerful positions at the helm of governments and major organizations, and change the world in a variety of other ways.

The Rhodes Trust awards 100 scholarships per year, with each of its recognized constituencies (a country, group of countries, or territory) receiving a dedicated number of scholarships. Only 11 scholarships are awarded across Canada each year.

In addition to Dyck, recent USask Law graduate Kennedy Marley was awarded the same scholarship, marking the second year in a row that two members of the USask community have received this award. This year’s recipients will begin graduate studies at the University of Oxford in September 2025.

Dyck heard about the scholarship from Rachel Andres, a fellow member of the Greystone Singers who obtained the Rhodes Scholarship last year.

“That first piqued my interest and I looked into it, and then I just decided I might as well take a shot. There are lots of interesting programs at Oxford, and it felt like a natural fit where I wanted to study at Oxford, they have good atmospheric science there, and this was an opportunity to get funding for that,” said Dyck.

The Rhodes Scholarship intends to seek

out and provide opportunities to a diverse range of promising young students, bringing them together to change the world. Rhodes scholars must not only excel academically—they must exhibit the “energy to use one’s talents to the full.”

Dyck embodies this quality, having undertaken multiple research projects and hands-on experiences related to atmospheric science throughout his undergraduate studies.

He was involved in the design of RADSAT-SK1 and RADSAT-SK2, a unique collaborative project between USask, Saskatchewan Polytechnic, the Canadian Space Agency, and the USask Space Design team, which would allow undergraduate students to create Saskatchewan’s first and second ever homegrown satellites.

He also worked with the Institute of Space and Atmospheric Studies to design satellite prototypes which monitor ozone and aerosols in the atmosphere.

“I think I’m most proud of the satellite prototype. I went to Sweden and got to launch a high-altitude balloon, and I was able to bring together what I had learned in my undergraduate degree into something that’s really, really solid and really present. It’s the closest feeling I’ve had to creating something that will actually help the climate challenge,” he commented.

After he graduates with his B.E. in Engineering Physics from USask this June, Dyck is planning on pursuing a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Atmospheric, Oceanic and Planetary physics. He is passionate about climate change and wants to use his research to help protect the planet.

“Currently, I’m looking specifically into research projects involving aerosols, which are suspended liquid or solid particles in the air. There’s a lot of unknowns about how much of an effect they have on the atmosphere and

human health. I think that’s a niche that I can really get into and hopefully make some progress in the field,” he explained.

Rhodes Scholars are also expected to exhibit the Rhodes Qualities, which include devotion to duty, unselfishness, and kindness.

Despite the demands of his academics, research, and performing with the Greystone Singers and the USask Wind

Dyck. “I definitely wasn’t expecting it. At the social, there were so many amazing people, and I [thought], ‘Wow, it’s a pretty low chance.’ I’d convinced myself that I wasn’t going to get it as a sort of coping mechanism, but then I was just shocked when I got the news,” he explained. “It was just super stunning, and I’m just so honored.”

“I am really appreciative that I can be a Rhodes Scholar, because the whole



Rhodes Scholarship recipient Colin Dyck | Colin Dyck

Orchestra, Dyck still found the time throughout his undergraduate studies to volunteer in the community.

He spent over five years leading a youth group and more recently became involved with the Library of Things, an organization which provides community members with the opportunity to borrow items they might not have around their home, ranging from power tools to cotton candy makers. Dyck helps out by repairing and doing maintenance work on the library’s items.

The prestige of the award isn’t lost on

[Rhodes] Trust has been so focused on trying to create change and I feel that is something that really aligns with my goals. I think that the Rhodes community will really equip me in a good way to create connections with people who have different ideas and empower me so that I can get to places where I can hopefully make impactful changes in climate,” said Dyck.

The Sheaf team extends its congratulations to Dyck on receiving this prestigious scholarship and wishes him all the best in his future studies at Oxford.

Food For Thought

Breaking down online food misinformation.

Cameron Budd

Everywhere you look online, everyone has something to say about food. Maybe someone is telling you that all our food is being poisoned by the government, or you're scrolling on TikTok and seeing yet another video about how aspartame is giving you cancer. Perhaps an article you read on Google is telling you about the benefits of raw milk. The reality is that most of these claims are misrepresentations of scientific data, fear-mongering using small bits of truth, or outright myths. Generally speaking, these claims are rarely supported by scientific evidence.

Food misinformation and disinformation are prevalent across many social media platforms, and it's dangerously easy to fall subject to. When discussing the subject with Melanie Rozwadowski, M.Sc., P.Dt., B.Ed., a nutrition professor and professional dietician at USask, she stressed the difference between misinformation and disinformation. "Misinformation is just the blind leading the blind. Disinformation is more insidious; there's usually motives like profit or selling a product," she explained.

These claims are not easy to avoid but it's important to think twice about each one you see. Most importantly, it's imperative to research the statements and compare them to reputable and reliable scientific data from high-quality, peer-reviewed journals. However, there are often dead giveaways when it comes to food misinformation such as the overemphasis on a single ingredient, dramatic statements such as "cancer-causing" or "toxic", and the vilification of entire food groups such as carbohydrates.

Human health and nutrition are all about balance—you don't want to be cutting out anything completely. Generally, it's best to avoid extreme advice. Rozwadowski commented on the common red flags when it comes to food misinformation saying "Extremes. The carnivore diet, the raw food diet. Anything trying to promote advice that is outside of public health recommendations and common sense."

The source of claims should always be considered. For example, you want to avoid claims coming from nutritionists, which is not a regulated term; chiropractors, who generally have no training or education in food or medicine; and individuals attempting to sell you a product, as they might have a motive to spread misinformation. Reliable sources include government agencies such as Health Canada, the Food and Drug Administration, most educational institutions such as universities, and dietetics associations such as Dietitians of Canada.

Additionally, it's important to consider the motives for spreading information. It's always best practice to ask yourself: are they benefiting in any way by spreading this information?

"No source should make money from the information they're spreading. The litmus test is if they are selling something," Rozwadowski says. It's one of the most common signs that one is spreading misinformation. She emphasized that when you search for a nutrition topic online or on social media, the top results are likely paid placements.

Food misinformation is constantly evolving, and it seems as though every month there's a new trend popping up. First, it was keto and carbs, then it was



Young Boy Reading Fake News from Newspaper | Rich Vintage Getty Signature Images | Canva Pro

aspartame, and more recently, seed oils. When asked about current fads driven by food misinformation that are of concern, Rozwadowski stated, "Overall, I would say the trend of obtaining and sharing information online. Subscribing to feeds from influencers rather than reliable sources." Another driving force of food misinformation, she emphasized, is the distrust of medical institutions and doctors. This is part of a larger trend that has worsened greatly since the COVID-19 pandemic.

The most fundamental concept to keep in mind when examining food claims is that the dose makes the poison. For example, water is needed every day to survive. But if we drink too much water over a short time, it becomes toxic to the body and one can die from water poisoning. Granted this is extremely rare, but it goes to prove the point that anything is toxic in a large enough dose.

Another important concept to keep in mind when examining food claims is

hazard versus risk. A hazard is something that has the potential to cause harm, whereas risk is the likelihood of a hazard causing harm to you. According to the European Food Safety Authority, risk takes into account dosage whereas hazard does not.

One of the most common food myths on the internet today is surrounding aspartame. Aspartame is a peptide that's often used as an artificial sweetener in products such as zero-sugar sodas and gum. On July 14, 2023, the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) and the World Health Organization classified aspartame as potentially carcinogenic to humans based on limited evidence, placing aspartame in Group 2B.

There are many food and non-food items in the same category. For instance, IARC includes aloe vera, pickled vegetables, and the electromagnetic fields surrounding our phones in Group 2B as well. The reality is that IARC and their classifications



Eating Healthy | Billion Photos | Canva Pro

assess hazard, not risk. The Joint Expert Committee on Food Additives, which considers both risk and dose, has reviewed aspartame for the third time and stated it is safe for human consumption between 0 to 40 mg/kg of body weight per day. Put in simpler terms, you would have to consume between 9 to 14 cans of Diet Coke a day to reach this limit. Understanding the difference between risk and hazard is important in identifying potential misinformation. After all, many food myths begin by ignoring dosage and risk.

Another common way in which food myths are born is by misrepresenting realities. One of the greatest examples of this is the “Banned in Europe” myth. You’ve probably seen videos online claiming that Canada and America allow much more additives in our foods that are banned in Europe. When examining these ingredients, the most important thing to understand is that the European Union (EU) and the United States of America (USA) use different metrics and regulatory frameworks for ingredient safety and toxicity. Both metrics are based on science and neither one is superior. Another important aspect to understand is food labelling. Many ingredients have different names in Europe. For example, Red 40 goes under the name Allura Red in Europe and Canada. So, no, Red 40 is not banned in Europe.

One of the most challenging issues surrounding online food misinformation is that fear spreads faster than facts. This is especially true online with social media. According to a University of Southern California study, this is due to the reward-based structure of social media sites themselves. Food misinformation is generally more engaging and exciting to social media users while the truth when it comes to food and healthy eating—balanced meals, fruits and veggies, and have everything in moderation—tends to be

less exciting. Due to the nature of online misinformation and its tendency to spread so fast and reach so far, the solution isn’t as simple as combating misinformation with scientific facts. Many try to do so online, and their work is admirable. Unfortunately, food misinformation continues to spread at alarming rates and tends to have an incredibly far reach.

We all must take steps where we can to avoid falling prey to online food misinformation. Among her insights about strategies and recommendations to avoid food misinformation, Rozwadowski recommends that one should “First make sure [to] seek [information], [and] do not respond to anything that comes to you. When something comes to you, be suspicious. I want to see people learning to get information from government and educational institutions.”

There are real consequences to the spread of online food misinformation and disinformation. Rozwadowski explained that, in her opinion, one of the most damaging implications of online food misinformation is ‘clean food’ and the obsession over it, stating “That’s nonsense!” In fact, according to Eating Disorders Victoria, an over-obsession with clean eating is an eating disorder known as orthorexia. Another dangerous implication, according to Rozwadowski, is “Body image issues, definitely. With girls, it’s social comparisons [and] eating disorders, and with men, it’s dysmorphia and muscles. Also worrying about macros, calories, etc. These words should not be in the average lingo of a normal person.”

Rozwadowski finished off by saying “Enjoy nourishing yourself. Forget the food rules.” This really stuck with me. These days, there are a million things

you’re told to worry about when it comes to your food. People lose sight of the purpose of food, which is of course to nourish ourselves.

Online food misinformation is a concerning threat to public health. It’s currently being called an “infodemic” by many researchers and public health officials, and there is no clear solution.

Luckily, there are strategies and initiatives that could be helpful such as improving scientific literacy in the classroom, learning to recognize misinformation, and communicating the importance of fact-checking with the general public. According to a report from the Conference Board of Canada and the University of Guelph’s Food Institute, Canada has one of the safest food systems in the world. There is no reason you should have to fear the foods on your grocery store shelf.



Gen Z holding smart phones using social media | Johnny Greig Getty Images Signature | Canva Pro

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Winter Cycling, Bike Theft, and Safer Streets: Saskatoon Cycling Advocates Weigh In

Continued from the front cover



Saskatoon Cycles members bike along the Meewasin trail in snowy conditions | Saskatoon Cycles

“If I don’t bike to my work or school because I’m afraid of the bike getting stolen, the thieves have already won. I’ve lost before I’ve even fought.”

In addition to bike theft, the main priority for Saskatoon Cycles is safer roads for cyclists.

“A lot of people get involved because what we do is largely advocacy with [the] City Council and the city administration. So no matter what your background is with cycling, most people are at least interested in making

it as safe as possible within the city,” Hanson says.

Block realized the organization could really make a difference after pushing for specific improvements to the College and Wiggins intersection. The intersection now has a dedicated zone that situates cyclists in front of motorists, increasing visibility and allowing them to control the lane. This change was made in response to the passing of cyclist Natasha Fox in 2023, a turning point for Saskatoon’s cycling community.

Hanson explained that tragic situations like Natasha Fox’s passing give us the knowledge to learn and adapt so that they can be avoided in the future. He shares, “After Natasha Fox’s death, we had between 70 and 100 letters written into the City Council about motions that had to do with fixing up that intersection.” After analyzing the intersection, the road audit revealed that it was one of the busiest in the city.

If you’re interested in getting involved with Saskatoon’s cycling community, there are many upcoming events to check out. Every month, Saskatoon Cycles hosts a “Slow Roll” on the Meewasin Trail. It’s an opportunity for people of all ages and cycling abilities to get together and ride in a fun, laid-back setting.

Also, February 15 to 23 is Winter

“Those early morning rides on Meewasin, you’re basically by yourself. Maybe there’s the odd person out walking or another cyclist, but it’s dead quiet. Then you just get that crunching of the snow under your tires”

He adds, “People like Arika, other people on the board, and just regular membership writing in, makes a huge difference in how seriously Council takes these things.”

Despite the challenges, Hanson and Block believe Saskatoon has the potential to become a more bike-friendly city. With better infrastructure, increased awareness, and more students willing to give cycling a try—even in winter—the future of biking in Saskatoon looks promising.

BYXE week, an initiative in collaboration with the City of Saskatoon to celebrate cycling. There will be a specific Slow Roll to launch the event, Bike to Work Day commuter stations, a week-long scavenger hunt, and prizes.

You can keep up with Saskatoon Cycles by following their Instagram page @saskatooncycles or visiting their website, saskatooncycles.org, where you can also sign up to become a member.

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Reflections on Black History in Canada

Reflecting on the resilience of Black people and exploring Black history in Canada through the eyes of a Black immigrant woman.

Audrey Ajose

“No man can know where he is going unless he knows exactly where he has been and exactly how he arrived at his present place.”—Dr. Maya Angelou

I’ve never been able to relate to people saying, “I was born in the wrong decade/century.”

As a Black woman from Nigeria living in Canada, if I were to go back in Canadian history to 1619 in Jamestown, British North America, I would have been a part of the first enslaved people to arrive there.

If I went back to 1812, I would have been among the many Black people who fought alongside the British in the War of 1812.

If I went back to 1865, I would have been a part of the thousands of African Americans who sought refuge in Upper and Lower Canada via the Underground Railroad.

If I were born in 1909 in Winnipeg, I would have encountered anti-Black sentiments and newspapers predicting a move to exclude “Negro Immigrants.”

If I had been born between 1914 and 1918, although I would have been free, I would have been among the many Black people who participated in World War I efforts. If I sat in the white-only section in New Glasgow, Nova Scotia, with Viola Desmond, perhaps we would have both been convicted of defrauding the government and only pardoned in 2010.

If I went back to any time before 1962, I wouldn’t have even been able to immigrate to Canada because it was in 1962 that the “White Canada Immigration Policy” was reformed.

If I went to 1964 to Africville, a community with predominantly African Nova Scotians, I would have been relocated with its inhabitants and witnessed the community being razed.

But it’s not all sad. The history of Black

people in Canada is one of resilience and defying the odds. For instance, if I had a time machine, I would visit Mathieu Da Costa, the first Black interpreter in Canada. I would love to tell him about the many Black interpreters and translators worldwide who came after him.

I would love to attend the anti-slavery conference that Frederick Douglass spoke at in Toronto in 1851. I would love to tell Viola Desmond what an absolute icon she was in her fight against segregation. I would have loved to attend the first Caribana Festival in Toronto with many Black Caribbean immigrants. I would have loved to celebrate with Dr. Jean Augustine and former Senator Donald Oliver in 2008 when the Senate moved to declare February as Black History Month.

I am very grateful to live in a century when I, as an African woman, could immigrate to Canada and attend university. I am glad to live in a time when over 30 higher education institutions, including the University of Saskatchewan, have signed the Scarborough Charter—a charter that focuses on addressing anti-Black racism and promoting Black inclusion in Canadian higher education institutions. I am glad to live in a time where I can participate in Black History Month celebrations at my university and publish a piece like this with freedom.

All of these historical events are significant to me because they are part of the journey that explains why Black people have freedom and agency today in Canada. Reflecting on the experiences of various Black trailblazers gives me the confidence to be in leadership positions at the university. As the cultural wellness facilitator at Peer Health, I focus on promoting equity, inclusion, and diversity at Peer Health and in the larger university. Last year I created the Social Insights series, which dives into different aspects of the Black experience. This year I am continuing the series along with other events for Black History Month.

Black Canadians have been here for centuries, and the history of Black people immigrating here from all over the world is a long and important one that should be remembered and taught. In the words of the iconic Dr. Maya Angelou, celebrating Black History Month is important because “no man can know where he is going unless he knows exactly where he has been and exactly how he arrived at his present place.”

Some of the events for Black History Month at the USask Community Centre are listed below. Other organizations, such as the Black Students’ Mentorship Association, the Pan-African Student Association, and the Black Faculty and Staff Caucus will also host events to celebrate the month. Remember, reflect, and learn with us during Black History Month at USask.

Continued on page 16.



Minimalist Black History Month Celebration Instagram Post - 1 | Unique Design | Canva Pro

Keeping Traditions Alive: How Saskatoon's Vietnamese Community Celebrates Lunar New Year

How one family's dedication helped turn a small gathering into a thriving community event.

Nammi Nguyen

Lunar New Year is celebrated by millions of Asian Canadians each year. With traditions varying from small family gatherings to large community events, celebrants recognize the holiday in their own special ways.

For over 3,000 years, Lunar New Year has marked the start of a new year in the Chinese calendar. This traditional calendar follows a lunisolar system, meaning it is based on both the cycles of the moon and the sun. Each month begins with a new moon, and the new year is determined by the new moon closest to the midpoint between the

winter solstice and the spring equinox, typically between January 21 and February 20. This year, the date falls on January 29.

The term Lunar New Year encompasses multiple cultural celebrations. Many countries that historically followed the Chinese calendar, such as Vietnam and Korea, have their own names for the holiday.

The Chinese celebration is referred to as Chinese New Year or the Spring Festival. In Korea, it is called Seollal, and in Vietnam, it is known as Tết.

While the holiday shares similar

themes of family, renewal, and luck, each culture has distinct traditions and customs.

For Hannah Ha, a second-year political science major, the Lunar New Year is a time of both celebration and responsibility. Her family has been organizing Saskatoon's annual Vietnamese Tết celebration for 14 years, helping to bring the community together.

It all started in the common room at Souris Hall, a campus residence part of McEown Park. This residence is designated for students with young children, and Ha's family lived there while her father was completing his PhD. Ha's family was one of a few young Vietnamese families living there at the time. Ha's mother, Elise Dang, who has become a pillar in the Vietnamese community, started the celebration with a few of her friends.

"The [common] room was free to rent, so it was very cheap. And it's always been a potluck. So every family brings food, and you get to see all of your found family [and] fake cousins," she says with a chuckle.

Moving from their homeland to Canada to pursue higher education was a sacrifice many Vietnamese families made for a new life and opportunities. Starting over in a foreign country can be difficult, and Ha emphasizes the importance these events have had in building community.

"We don't have family here, so to get to make a community and spend the holidays with people that you genuinely love being around kind of fills that void. But also, I think keeping in touch with your culture is something that's just invaluable."

From a few families gathering in a small common room, the event has now evolved into a celebration for over 300 people. As Ha's family ramps up to plan for the event, community members gather in what Ha jokingly refers to as a council meeting.

"The parents would just get together and discuss. 'Okay, budget, who's gonna do this and what?' And we're signing up for food, and we're allocating roles to everyone. But it is definitely a team effort, and people are putting their own money into it most of the time."

Attendees are also required to purchase tickets in advance to help cover costs. Organizers don't take any cut, so any extra funds go towards next year's event.

Ha adds: "It also has turned into a thing that supports businesses of other Vietnamese people like the caterers that my mom will buy from and book from."

On the day, tables filled with traditional food such as bánh chưng (sticky rice mung bean cake), nem (spring rolls), and xôi gấc (red sticky rice) stretch across the room. Attendees dress in traditional Vietnamese attire such as the áo dài or áo gấm, and lì xì ("lucky money," usually a few dollars) is handed out in red envelopes to children.

Although the event is growing every year, Ha noticed that some parents are leaving their kids at home. To keep these traditions alive and involve younger generations, Ha says it's helped "giving [the kids] a role to do in setting up. My [little] sister and all her friends have many 'exec' roles. I think that makes you value it a lot more when you realize how much work goes into it."

Karaoke, face painting, crafts, and games are other activities available to draw children to the event, and all ages look forward to the dragon dancing performance, one of the most exciting parts of the night.

Ha's mother also reaches out to Vietnamese international students.



Ha and her mother at this year's Tết celebration | Hannah Ha

Continued on page 17.

The 525: Bridging Creativity and Community in Saskatoon

How a small gathering in a one-bedroom apartment has grown into a thriving hub for local art.

Sean Erhardt

Colourful spotlights illuminated the concrete walls adorned with photographs, sculptures, and mixed media, while a playlist of female artists ranging from Etta James to PinkPantheress reverberated throughout the venue on 3rd Avenue South.

Projected onto the walls, Selfie featured Leo Lauren Conquergood spinning in slow motion, her body overlaid with home videos of childhood memories, while Molly Schikosky's Mirror, Mirror showcased generations of women reflecting on their experiences, weaving together a powerful narrative of hopes, dreams, and shared histories, drawing visitors into the heart of the gallery.

In a cozy corner with a zebra print rug and fluffy pillows, an old box TV sat on a stand adorned with eclectic personal items, creating a welcoming, private space—a world apart within the gallery. Seated on the pillows, visitors donned headphones to watch Emma Zuck's experimental documentary Stubble. For a few minutes, they were immersed in Zuck's world, sharing a quiet connection with the person beside them.

A murmur of voices swirled together as guests moved from piece to piece, pausing to reflect and share their thoughts. This wasn't just a pop-up gallery—it was a celebration of the potential hidden within Saskatoon's streets, classrooms, and studios.

An Origin Story Rooted in Community. After leaving a stagnant sales job, founder Shawn Setyo wondered how he could showcase the creative and talented people he was surrounded by in Saskatoon. The concept of The 525 took root during moments of reflection in art galleries and afternoons spent by the river.

"Life almost gives you the answers when you are living freely," Setyo shares in the origin story on their website. In 2018, he transformed his single-bedroom apartment—number 525—into a makeshift gallery to bring together local artists. What began as an

intimate gathering of art enthusiasts marked the start of a movement that continues to evolve and shape Saskatoon's vibrant art scene.

Fast forward to today, and the torch has passed to a new generation of leaders, including Principal Director Kehan Fu and Creative Director Rowen Dinsmore, who continue to push the boundaries of what local art can achieve. After Setyo's initial apartment shows, The 525 evolved under new leadership in 2021, when Fu and Isabel Bacalao revived the organization with DONDA, an exhibition featuring local artists like Dinsmore, a then-BFA student at USask.

Until February 2024, the team consisted of three members, but as Dinsmore noted, it seems to triple with each new show. The shift from apartment shows to larger venues reflects not only growth but also the community's increasing support for local art. Despite this rapid expansion, The 525 remains, as their website states, "forever rooted in an idea between friends to make art accessible and central to Saskatchewan."

The Vision: Art as Saskatoon's Cultural Heartbeat. During our conversation, Fu highlighted the three core values driving The 525's philosophy. The first value is the intentionality of creating space for art and culture, which he sees as key to the group's success. He pointed out that The 525 has never relied on traditional advertising, reflecting the community's strong appetite for grassroots art events. The second is a dedication to hard work and continuous improvement, which leads naturally to their third value: iteration. For The 525 team, iteration is more than a process—it's a philosophy of continuous learning and adaptation.

Fu discussed both the opportunities and challenges of hosting pop-up events in new spaces for each exhibition. "Experimentation is the key to growth," he explained, emphasizing the importance of understanding what can be improved and accepting the limitations of certain spaces. For Fu, The 525's process of iteration is about



Attendees at The 525 | Carter Reece

"making people rethink and reimagine what's possible in a city," embracing each exhibition as a chance to push boundaries.

The 525's Most Recent Exhibition: Unbecoming. The sold-out "Unbecoming" explored themes such as matriarchal lineage, identity, and the evolution of womanhood through the eyes of ten female-identifying artists. The works ranged from photography and sculpture to mixed media and film, each piece contributing to an intricate tapestry of perspectives.

The exhibition's curatorial statement explained: "*Unbecoming* challenges and reclaims a phrase historically weaponized against women. It simultaneously references the unpacking and unraveling of the generational impact left on women by women."

Curated by Dinsmore and guest curator Schikosky, and supported by grants from organizations such as the Multicultural Council of Saskatchewan and the Aerie Real Foundation, "Unbecoming" created a space where diverse expressions of femininity converged. Each piece provided a window into the artist's personal journey, weaving together an intricate and multifaceted portrayal of womanhood.

A Platform For Connection and Competition. Fu spoke of creating spaces where artists feel supported and where audiences can engage deeply

with the work: "It's my job to help keep this machine going. It's my passion to build things that bring people together." He believes that this process thrives when the next generation is "given the opportunity, the capacity, the infrastructure, and the ecosystem to take that on."

Fu envisions The 525 as a platform for fostering connections—between artists, between art and audience, and between the past and the future of the local art scene. "For us, perhaps the greatest measure of success is other organizations watching what we do with bated breath, aspiring to achieve more."

He emphasized the importance of fostering a collaborative and competitive community: "We don't want to be the only one in the game. We want to be one of many in a place of healthy community, but also healthy competition."

Kehan also reflected on The 525's legacy: "Hopefully... Everyone that's volunteered, everyone who has been with us, or just experienced us for a short stay [feels] that we passed on something for them—that our torch, our spirit is defined and exemplified through the success of everyone else."

Opportunities to Get Involved. For those eager to engage with the Saskatoon art scene, The 525 is looking for dedicated individuals passionate about art and community-building to join their team.

Continued on page 17.

Bring your dancing shoes and bling to *Parichay* 2025

The Indian Students' Association is hosting *Parichay On Red Carpet*, a night of dancing, singing, food, and awards on March 1, 2025.

Darshana Lanke

The Indian Students' Association (ISA) is a non-profit organization run by Indian students at the University of Saskatchewan. They aim to foster a sense of community and belonging among their members. The association hosts many events throughout the year, including cultural, academic, and career networking events. Diya Khamar, the President of the ISA, says the student association strives to “bridge the gap between the whole community and students and [to] make them feel at home.”

Khamar is a fourth-year Cellular, Physiological and Pharmacological Sciences student. She is the first female president of the ISA and joined the student association last year as the Director of Marketing. There are nine executive positions with ISA, including the Director of Communications, currently held by Shakthi Mahendran who is a second-year health studies major.

Last summer, the ISA went on a picnic as a group, which Mahendran says is one of her favourite memories with the

student association. “We went on a picnic, all packed on a school bus. I was at the back of the bus and [we] had music blasting on the speakers. We were dancing and having fun on our way. There [were] lots of games and good food. It was just really nice!”

The ISA holds monthly meetings for its executives and hosts events for members and all students to attend. One of the biggest and most anticipated events the ISA hosts is *Parichay*.

Khamar says that *Parichay* is an opportunity “to bring the culture together [through] performances, awards, student showcases, and raffles.” USask students and alumni who are interested in showcasing their talents, such as dancing, singing, or stand-up comedy, are invited to register to perform by messaging ISA on Instagram (@isa.uofs). Khamar encourages students to volunteer as performers or even help set up the event to “get a free ticket to the event, a certificate of appreciation and exclusive surprises and perks.”

Mahendran adds that the event is beneficial not only as a celebratory,

performance-filled night but also as a great way to connect with members of USask and the greater Saskatoon community who hold shared interests. She says, “I would also describe the event as a really good networking opportunity, because up until now, throughout the year [it has been] more student events. I don't think we've had any faculty or staff at USask or outside of the community coming in. It's all just students and alumni, usually, and that's awesome. It's really fun. However, the point of us as a group is to bring together the entire Indian community, especially here at USask. So, we use this as a way to bridge more faculty and researchers who are present at USask with the students, and this is a good way for them to connect and just celebrate Indian culture.”

Khamar agrees with Mahendran, saying “We also try to bring sponsors for the event, just so that we can showcase the Indian community as a whole in Saskatoon.”

No event is complete without great food. Khamar says *Parichay* will also “have a grand Indian feast, so that would be in the lounge and at the open dance floor after the whole event.”

In addition to the feast and performances, *Parichay* will also include an awards section. Each year, five different award categories are chosen by ISA's executive committee. Students are encouraged to self-nominate once the award categories are

announced. Khamar says “It'll be a good blend of fun ones and also more serious ones to showcase the talent in our community.” She mentions that in the past, awards have been given based on research and performances.

Khamar says this year's *Parichay* theme is Filmfare edition, hence the name *Parichay On Red Carpet*. Mahendran explains that “Filmfare is an Indian Bollywood awards ceremony — [comparable] to the Oscars night.” She goes on to say “I know about [*Parichay*] because I've lived here almost all my life, and I've been involved [around the] university throughout my life, so I know about the community here. However, a lot of Indian students who started last year or this year have no clue what it is. That's why we thought this is our chance to revamp it and bring a new twist to it, because we've done the same thing quite a few times. It's time to change it up a bit!”

Khamar encourages attendees to dress up in their favourite Bollywood or glam traditional attire. She mentions that she is “going all out” with her outfit, getting it straight from India just for this event.

Parichay is going to be held on March 1 in Quance Theatre in the Education Building. Early bird tickets are \$20. Mahendran says, “There's a limited amount of those, so get your tickets when you can.”



Parichay promotional poster | Indian Students' Association



Performers from last years event | Indian Students' Association

A snapshot into what your USSU Execs have been

Continued from page 2.

Additionally, Bauman is excited about her social media series of awareness campaigns that include topics such as AI, library resources, and open educational resources. To access these campaigns, follow the USSU on social media. She says that these campaigns “help students know their rights and become familiar with resources available to them.”

Singh says “The foremost thing from the professional point of view that I am currently working on implementing is promoting the importance of sustainability in our everyday lives and providing a boost to the various sustainability-related initiatives by means of the resources vested with us and our strong relation with the USask Office of Sustainability.” Singh also says that he wants to “highlight the position that I cater to, which is the Vice-President of Student Affairs role and the immense opportunities it brings with it regarding providing the

necessary support to our fellow students in non-academic matters. It is a tremendous opportunity to work towards creating a welcoming campus-wide community and to increase student engagement through social, cultural, and professional initiatives... being able to achieve this and witnessing an atmosphere of contentment and happiness fills all those boxes of accomplishment for the person in this role.”

Chavda asks readers to let the USSU be the bridge between the challenges students face, from academics to housing, and the solutions to those challenges. He says “Together, we can turn obstacles into opportunities and challenges into triumphs.”

Bauman agrees with this sentiment, encouraging students to “seek support when you start feeling stressed and overwhelmed. There are better solutions than cheating when you do

not think you can complete an assessment and there are people on campus who would be happy to help you.”

Ahiabu has a message for leaders of campus groups saying, “You are the heart of our campus community.” He goes on to say, “Your passion, creativity, and dedication drive student life and make our university a more vibrant and inclusive place. Through your hard work and dedication, you create opportunities for connection, growth, and transformation that enrich the lives of every student. Without your contributions, the thriving community we all cherish would not exist.” He encourages campus groups to “leverage the tools, resources, and support systems the USSU has to offer.”

Chavda wants readers to know that “you are the driving force behind everything we do at the USSU... This is your union. This is your community.



Upkar Singh, VP of Student Affairs | USSU

Let’s shape it together. Because when we listen, when we act, and when we stand united, there’s nothing we cannot achieve. Your voice matters. Your story matters. You matter.”

WINTER IS FOR BYXE!



- COMMUNITY RIDE
- WINTER CYCLING INFO
- SCAVENGER HUNT
- BIKE TO WORK DAY
- PRIZES



WINTER BYXE WEEK
FEBRUARY 15 - 23
SASKATOONCYCLES.ORG/BYXE



Surviving Student Life One Bite at a Time

Where to grab a bite around campus when time isn't on your side.

Hajra Ghuman

As a full-time student, I understand that it isn't always easy to juggle both your academics and your meals. Being caught up in the whirlwind that post-secondary schooling causes, you don't always have time to carefully plan and prepare homemade food — which is why it is important to know how to get by when you don't have time to pack a lunch. Here's a list of places I like to check out when I don't have the luxury of time.

Anyone who knows me knows I love sushi. Honestly, that might be an understatement—I adore sushi. If I could eat it constantly I would. Sushi is a nice, exquisite meal choice to take with you on the go because it isn't super time-consuming to eat, and it is not messy at all, especially when you are in a time crunch. I like to check out the sushi from Superstore, as they offer pre-made family packs that are priced decently. Some family packs have up to 3-6 servings, which can last for multiple meals.

Although I definitely would never get sick of sushi, pizza is also way too delicious to pass by. I don't often make homemade pizza since there isn't enough time these days to make a proper one. However, when I do have the occasional pizza, it is often when I am on campus and have neglected to figure out what I should have brought with me the night before. Right across campus, Wow Pizza offers all kinds of pizzas with many toppings to choose from. They also have other kinds of food you can check out if you're not feeling a pizza. My go-to is the small 'Veggie Delight' pizza for about \$10, which is one of the many discounts they have to offer.

On the same street, we have Dairy

Queen. This is another place I like to check out from time to time, because come on, who doesn't love a nice little treat from DQ? This establishment also has a lot to offer, despite their ice cream-based focus. Recently, I tasted their poutine and was pleasantly surprised about how much I liked it. However, the reason I specifically go to the DQ across campus is for their drinks. I love their 'MooLatte' drink, which is a caffeinated milkshake. I order it without the whipped cream to keep it lighter, but it sure does the trick with rejuvenating my brain power when I need to keep working on my tasks. DQ offers a happy hour period for all their drinks, where the prices are slashed in half. Be sure to download the app as well so you can build those points and use them for discount purposes or free items!

If you turn right around that corner on that exact street, you'll eventually come across a Subway establishment. Let me tell you how wonderful Subway can be for a student who is trying to manage

everything at once. I go there sometimes to order a footlong tuna sandwich, with pretty much every vegetable available. I can't eat an entire footlong all at once, so I always eat half of it for one meal and save the other half for my next meal. That way I am covering for two meals that I need to have during the day with one purchase. This specific Subway is also a nice place to sit down and get some work done while you have a scrumptious sub. While they offer a bunch of other options, I stick to getting a sub because it is easier for me to eat faster and get back to what I was doing.

Next to Subway, we have a little restaurant called Filosphi, if you're feeling fancy. This restaurant is known for its authentic cuisine and a wide variety of options for customers to choose from. I really enjoy coming here because it is a much more formal place near campus where I can suggest meeting with people. The convenience of it being nearby has allowed me to go in whenever I can and have a

productive study session as well, while enjoying some of their delicious food. I like to order the 'Prawn Pomodoro,' which consists of a flavourful pasta dish with shrimp and a garlic piece of bread. The food and overall environment make it a great place to relax and stay productive.

I'm not promoting or encouraging eating out constantly, as that is not a healthy way of living on a long-term basis. It is important to try to plan how to manage what meals will be prepped for the week. However, if there are times when you just can't seem to figure that out, it is okay to check out these options to save time you already barely have.

There is no need to put too much pressure on yourself for having to eat out instead. Finding a balance between meal planning and the occasional convenience of eating out is key — after all, nourishment should be about sustaining both your body and your peace of mind.



Empty cafeteria | JazzIRT Getty Images Signature | Canva Pro



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The year of becoming: 2024's gifts for a stronger 2025

How triumphs and challenges shaped a year of self-awareness and resilience for me.

Hajra Ghuman

As we move through 2025, I find myself reflecting on the lessons I've learned in the past year — a year of growth, self-awareness, and resilience. These insights, born from both triumphs and challenges, are not only reflections of the past but also tools to navigate the future.

It's Okay to Take Extra Time. This past year taught me the value of patience — with others, but more importantly with myself. In a world that glorifies speed and efficiency, taking extra time to complete something can feel like failure. However, I've learned that it's not the end of the world and it doesn't diminish my capabilities. Whether navigating difficult emotions or tackling academic work, giving myself the grace to take my time often results in better outcomes and a healthier mindset. Rushing rarely leads to excellence but instead causes me to feel burnt out. Even though it is crucial to meet deadlines, there are ways to manage meeting them by being proactive.

Trust What You're Capable Of. Self-doubt was a recurring theme in 2024, but so was learning to overcome it. I've come to understand that trusting my abilities does not make me conceited, but that it is a form of self-respect. When I stopped second-guessing myself frequently, I achieved things I once thought were impossible for me.

Pause Before Reacting in Anger. When it comes to feeling anger, I've learned that it is often a fleeting emotion that demands the utmost patience. Something I have implemented is giving myself 24 hours, or, at least until I've calmed down, before responding to situations that may irritate me. This pause allows me to think more rationally, reducing the risk of saying or doing something I'd later regret. It's a habit that has allowed me to feel a greater sense of self-control, thus giving me a more positive perspective of myself. I plan to continue embracing this strategy to ensure my actions align with my values, rather than my impulses.

Try Something New When You're in a Good Mood. Trying new things is exhilarating, but I've found that the best time to explore uncharted territory is when I'm in a positive mindset. When I am feeling down, I have learned that trying something that I do not care for can significantly dampen my mood. However, in a good mood, I'm more open to new ideas and more likely to enjoy the experience. Entering it with enthusiasm rather than desperation makes all the difference.

To Be Loved Is to Be Known. Love isn't just about constant adoration or affection, it's also about showcasing



Woman in thought | Dean Drobot | Canva Pro

understanding. I've come to appreciate that to be loved deeply and properly is to be truly known — both the positive and negative traits about me. It's a vulnerable yet freeing realization, which has allowed me to feel less like an imposter within my own skin. In my relationships with family and friends, allowing myself to be seen for who I am has deepened our connections in ways I haven't experienced before.

Conversations Are Not Meant to Be Won. One of my classes in law school emphasized the importance of conversations. Particularly, that conversations don't always feel

productive because, instead of talking *to* each other, people tend to talk *at* each other. The goal of a conversation isn't to emerge victorious; it's to connect, learn and understand those around me. Although I once viewed conversations this way, as opportunities to "win," this concrete mindset shifted my perspective by transforming me to be more mindful and aware of how I communicate. By focusing attentively on listening, I've built stronger relationships and avoided unnecessary conflicts. This approach will undoubtedly continue to serve me well in the year ahead, as I embark on a new set of challenges.

Questioning Your Path Is Okay. Doubt can feel destabilizing, but it's not inherently bad. Questioning my path this year led me to re-evaluate my goals and realign with what truly matters. Although doubt is not bad, it is important for me to not let it completely consume my head. Finding a good balance with this has been key for me, and it is still something I am actively working on. It's okay to ask questions and explore, as long as one remains humble and open to growth without losing who they are completely.

Stay True to Yourself. If there's one

non-negotiable lesson from 2024, it's the importance of staying true to my morals and values. Who would I be if I did not have morals? As I have embarked on new unfamiliar challenges, there have been moments where I have been tested. However, no matter how difficult it was, standing firm in what I believe in gave me strength and clarity in moving forward when dealing with similar situations. As I navigate the uncertainties of 2025, I'll hold onto this anchor, knowing that authenticity is one of the best ways to live life with peace and ease.

Boundaries Can Evolve. I have always been super firm with my boundaries, especially after high school. However, I have learned that they are not always static. Boundaries can be dynamic and should reflect who we are in the present. I realized that adjusting my boundaries doesn't mean I'm compromising — it means I'm showcasing growth. This is something that I still am working on coming to terms with, but I feel like I have made significant progress since I am not sacrificing the boundaries that make me who I am at my core. Allowing flexibility in my boundaries has made me more compassionate towards myself, a mindset I'm eager to carry forward.

You Miss All the Shots You Don't Take. I have always pushed myself to take more chances or ask for things, but I believe this happened in a more meaningful way in 2024 than ever before. Not every shot landed, but the ones that did made all the risks worthwhile. Going further into this new year, I'll keep reminding myself that courage is rewarded, even if the reward isn't immediate or isn't in the form you thought it would be.

Last year was truly an unforgettable year for me, as I faced many highs and lows throughout those 12 months. However, at the end of the day, I am grateful for every single moment as I feel it has been a year of me becoming who I want to be. I look forward to what 2025 has in store and I hope that this year is filled with all kinds of happiness for every single one of you!

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USask alumna Kennedy Marley receives the 2025 Rhodes Scholarship

Continued from page 6.

Marley will be starting her Master's program in September 2025. She expressed that she's mostly excited and thankful for the opportunity to study at Oxford — not because of how prestigious the scholarship is, but because of the learning opportunities that come with being able to continue her education, moving abroad, and meeting new people. Sharing her experience with her family and the Métis community, and using what she'll learn to support and uplift her community, is among what Marley said

she cherishes most about the opportunity.

"That's the most meaningful part of the scholarship for me, not the labels that come with it or the line that it will add to my CV," she said.

The Sheaf team extends its congratulations to Marley on receiving this prestigious scholarship and wishes her all the best in her future studies at Oxford.



Rhodes Scholarship recipient Kennedy Marley | Kennedy Marley

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Reflections on Black History in Canada

Continued from page 9.

Social Insights: A series that dives into different aspects of the Black experience.

Part I: Racism and Mental Health

Date: Feb. 3

Time: 1 p.m. to 2 p.m.

Location: USask Community Centre, Marquis 104 (Across from the USask Bookstore)

Part II: Black Cinema: Going Beyond Trauma

Date: Feb. 10.

Time: 1 p.m. to 2 p.m.

Location: USask Community Centre, Marquis 104 (Across from the USask Bookstore)

Scene Society Movie Nights - Movie showcases from across the Black diaspora

Movie Showing: *City of God*

Age rating: Rated R, Viewer discretion is advised.

Date: Feb. 6

Time: 4:30 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Location: USask Community Centre, Marquis 104 (Across from the USask Bookstore)

Scene Society Valentine's Movie

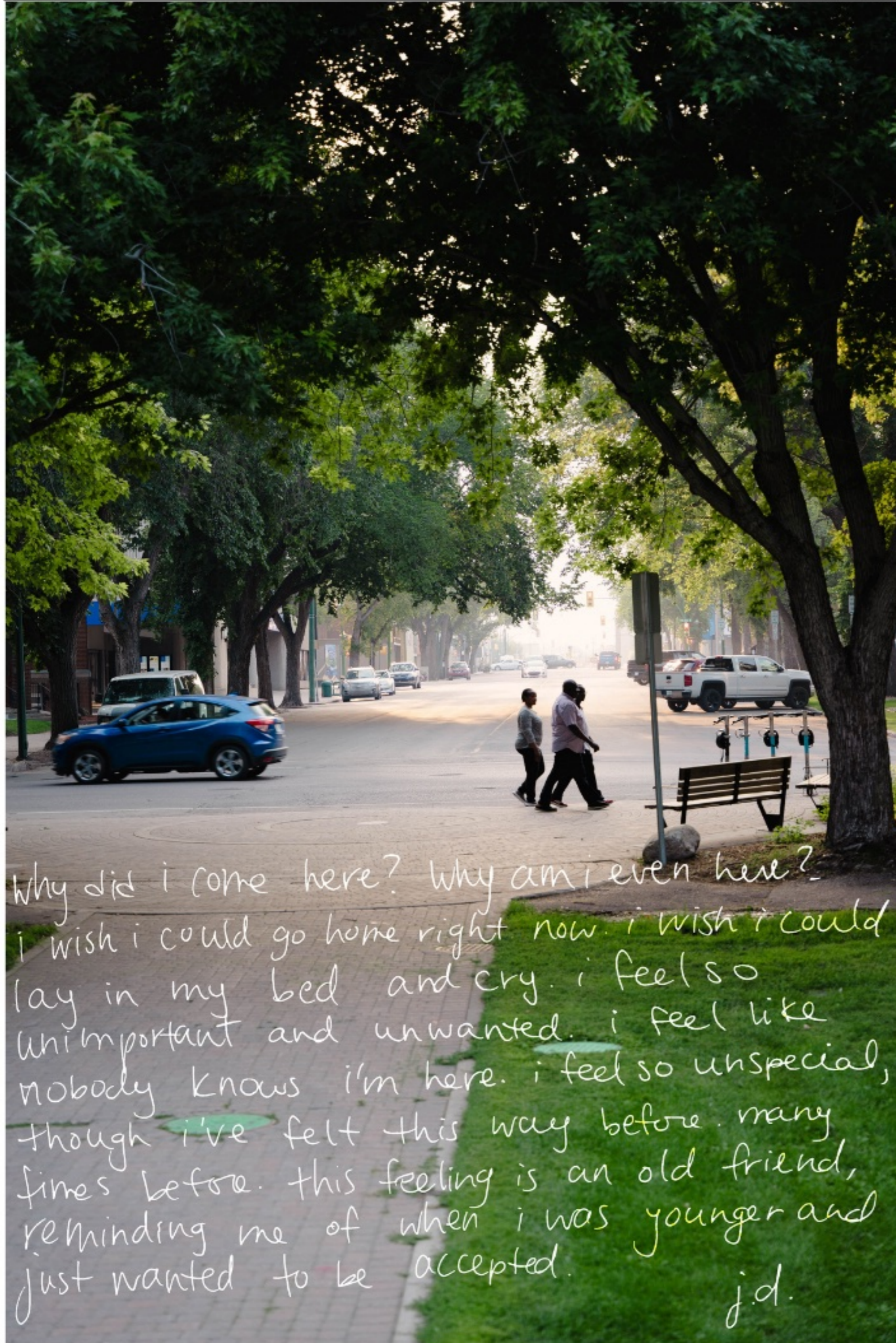
Movie showing: *Nappily Ever After*

Age Rating: PG-13

Date: Feb. 14

Time: 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Location: USask Community Centre, Marquis 104 (Across from the USask Bookstore)



Why did i come here? why am i even here?
 i wish i could go home right now. i wish i could
 lay in my bed and cry. i feel so
 unimportant and unwanted. i feel like
 nobody knows i'm here. i feel so unspecial,
 though i've felt this way before. many
 times before. this feeling is an old friend,
 reminding me of when i was younger and
 just wanted to be accepted. j.d.

Poetry by Jayde DesRoches | @JadedExposure

The 525 Continued from page 11.

Whether as a volunteer, artist, or supporter, there's a place for everyone. Beyond The 525, Saskatoon art scene is filled with opportunities to connect and create.

A Future Rooted in Collaboration. As The 525 continues to grow, their vision extends beyond individual events. They hope to inspire others to dream bigger, to see art not as a luxury but as a necessity—a part of Saskatoon's DNA. Their work reminds us that art thrives in the spaces where creativity and community intersect.

As the night wound down, I couldn't help but reflect on Kehan's words and the energy that filled the gallery. Events like "Unbecoming" demonstrate how art can serve as both a mirror and a window: a way to reflect on our shared experiences and envision new possibilities. The 525's success is a testament to what can happen when individuals come together with a shared purpose. It's proof that Saskatoon's creative heart beats strong—if you take the time to look for it, you'll find it thriving in every corner of the city.

The 525's story is a challenge to all of

of us—students, young professionals, and art enthusiasts alike—to take part in shaping the cultural identity of our city. Whether that means attending exhibitions, volunteering, or even creating your own space for art, the opportunity is there for the taking.



Artist Hannah Alex | 'Children and Art' | the525art instagram

Lunar New Year Continued from page 10.

"It is really nice for the newer Vietnamese people that have just come here to have something like that. You make a lot of friends out of the new immigrants that are coming. And then they have community and they have some people that they get to know," Ha says.

There is an official Vietnamese Association of Saskatoon that also puts on a Têt celebration open to the public. Ha's family went to their event this year where they met the newly appointed Mayor, Cynthia Block, who was in attendance. Ha's family's version, however, remains at its core a gathering for friends and the tight-knit Vietnamese community.

About her mother, Ha says, "She'll never say this herself, but she definitely puts a lot of herself into keeping this up."

As Saskatoon's Vietnamese Têt celebration continues to grow, its role in fostering community remains strong. What began as a small gathering among friends has expanded into a key cultural event for local Vietnamese families, students, and newcomers. While the scale of the celebration has changed, its purpose remains the same—bringing people together, preserving traditions, and passing them on to the next generation.

Happy Lunar New Year! Chúc mừng năm mới!



Performers at this year's Têt celebration | Hannah Ha



SUDOKU

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3				1	9	6		
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WORDLE CROSSWORD

Across

- 1. Finders _____
- 8. Animals with green, box and painted types
- 15. Like middle children, some say
- 16. Unpleasant person
- 17. Rachel of "Mean Girls"
- 18. Not a laptop
- 19. Popular scrabble word
- 20. Mineral suffix
- 21. Standard measurement
- 23. Spanish troop
- 28. Just _____
- 29. Your in Paris
- 30. Spiral
- 31. _____ upon a time
- 32. What a whale weights
- 33. A single oxygen atom bonded to two separate carbon atoms
- 34. Like Alexander III
- 35. Cheese Dip
- 36. Agreement
- 40. Bets
- 41. Formerly
- 45. Mine in Paris
- 46. The answer to this "Wordle"
- 47. Star Wars enemy
- 48. Do _____ others ...
- 49. Width x length
- 50. Allow
- 51. Time zone of Winnipeg
- 54. Texter's "I love animals"
- 57. Fitting
- 58. Atoms with different number of neurons
- 60. "Guernica" artist
- 62. Type of bowling
- 63. Loud applause
- 64. Like Sutherland in Saskatoon
- 65. Get off the Jet

Down

- 1. Olive-sized citrus
- 2. 2021 Disney animated movie
- 3. Joy
- 4. What peas are in
- 5. Actress Longoria
- 6. "Losing My Religion" band
- 7. Sheets used in WHMIS
- 8. Not yet decided
- 9. Abu Dhabi's nation
- 10. Sts.
- 11. Sounds of disapproval
- 12. Creams
- 13. Type of intense fan fiction

1	2	3	4	5	6	7		8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
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62									63						
64									65						

Wordle Crossword | Greta Mader Stevens

Down continued

- 14. One of the apostles
- 22. Old contraction
- 23. "A Soup for _____": old Asian dietary guide
- 24. Put in the correct key, again
- 25. Hotels anagram
- 26. Like a collection of tarts
- 27. This clue is not one
- 28. Period
- 36. Timothee Chalamet's sister
- 37. Memory loss
- 38. Not polyesters
- 39. Mexican uncle
- 41. Clip among the ads
- 42. Company you might use to fly to Tokyo
- 43. Blended family member
- 44. Something said when pointing
- 51. Deal with
- 52. Twirl
- 53. Care for
- 54. Old music player
- 55. Like a concert
- 56. A limit
- 59. Vietnamese New Year
- 61. Atlanta airport

USSU BACKPAGE

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