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Remembering the 46th (South Saskatchewan) Battalion

Exploring USask's Connection to Saskatchewan's Suicide Battalion

Tyler Walker

Walk past the Physics and Peter Mackinnon Buildings near the Bowl, and you'll find a small metal plaque mounted to a large stone. If you're at all like me, you'll have wondered about the story behind this memorial. A quick glance at the inscription upon the plaque will reveal that it is dedicated to "all ranks of the 46th Battalion C.E.F." After reading this plaque, I still had questions. Who was the 46th Battalion? Where did they serve? What became of them? I set out to uncover the full story of the sacrifice of these brave young men.

The 46th (South Saskatchewan) Battalion was headquartered in Moose Jaw under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Herbert Snell during World War I and recruited primarily young Saskatchewan men, with many of them coming from USask. Over the course of the war, which lasted from 1914 to 1918, over half of USask's male student body and most of the male faculty enlisted.

Patriotic young students, many barely out of high school, enlisted for what they saw as a great adventure and their duty to their country. Thousands of students from campuses across the prairies and Canada set aside their school work to serve king and country.

It wasn't just a sense of duty and obligation that drove students to enlist. Walter Murray, USask's first president and vice-chancellor, and namesake of Murray Library, spoke of the war as "a fight for... the principles for which a university must stand." Under his leadership, the Board of Governors offered several incentives to encourage enlistment: students would receive credit for one academic year, and faculty would receive half-pay and would be able to resume their position once they returned.

The 46th Battalion formed part of the 10th Infantry Brigade of the 4th Division of the Canadian Expeditionary Force (C.E.F.)—Canada's contribution to overseas fighting during the First World War.

The South Saskatchewan received basic training at Camp Sewell, Manitoba, in May 1915, before continuing on to Halifax. They arrived in England in November 1915. After several months of further training, they were sent to France in 1916,

where they fought until the end of the war.

Throughout the battalion's existence, it required constant reinforcements from other units, as each battle took its toll on the 46th's strength. Over the course of the 46th's service, 5,374 men served in the battalion. Of that number, 4,917 men were either killed or wounded; a casualty rate of over 90%.

It was for this reason that the battalion earned the grim moniker "the suicide battalion." The Battle of Passchendaele at the Ypres Salient in Belgium was one of the battalion's bloodiest engagements, where they suffered 403 casualties from a strength of 600 men. The South Saskatchewan's sole recipient of the Victoria Cross (V.C.)—Canada's highest military medal—was Sergeant Hugh Cairns, a plumbing apprentice from Saskatoon. Private William Johnstone Milne and Sergeant Arthur Knight both received the V.C. posthumously for valour demonstrated in units they were transferred to after the 46th.

By 1918, the Allied forces won the war, and the need for such a large standing army was unnecessary. As the battalion prepared to return to Canada for demobilisation, which occurred in 1920, they were presented with a regimental colour—a ceremonial flag representing the unit—bearing sixteen battle honours. A battle honour is an award that grants a military ship or unit the privilege of displaying the name and date of a battle on their colours and uniforms.

The fact that the 46th earned 16 such honours in only 27 months of combat demonstrates their extensive service in every major campaign from their arrival in Europe to the signing of the armistice. Immortalised on their memorial plaque, the battalion's battle honour-worthy engagements include Ancre Heights, Somme, Vimy, Hill 70, Arras, Ypres, Passchendaele, Amiens, Scarpe, Drocourt-Queant, France and Flanders.

One young USask faculty member who enlisted with the South Saskatchewan was Reginald Bateman, a professor of English. Bateman championed the war as "the climax of human endeavour" and as a cause that advanced humankind and tested the manliness of those who enlisted.

Criticised by the editors of *The Sheaf* for



46th Canadian Infantry Battalion memorial in the northeast corner of the Bowl. | Tyler Walker

abandoning his students in pursuit of personal glory, Bateman proved an able soldier and found himself promoted to major. He would come to resent his post and requested a demotion to return to the fighting on the front lines alongside the 46th. On Sept. 3, 1918, Bateman died in the line of duty when an errant artillery shell fell on his regimental headquarters. In honour of his service to his country and to the University's soccer team as its captain before he enlisted, the Huskie men's soccer team established the Bateman Cup in 2016, on the 98th anniversary of his death. The Cup is competed for each time the University of Alberta Golden Bears play the Huskies at Griffiths Stadium.

As the 46th Battalion has now been disbanded and is no longer a unit of the Canadian Army, its battle honours are perpetuated by the Saskatchewan Dragoons, a Primary Reserve armoured regiment headquartered in Moose Jaw.

Upon their return to Canada, the ranks of the 46th were forced to return to civilian life. Many of the young veterans returned to their studies at USask. Others chose to enroll for the first time, having become exposed to university education in classes provided by the Army while serving on the Western Front.

The return of students to campus was a

welcome sight. It signalled that the war truly was over, and allowed the university to return to its normal operations. During the 1916-1917 school year, the College of Engineering was actually closed, since so many of its students and faculty enlisted.

In 1933, a memorial plaque was presented to USask in the presence of 70 veterans of the 46th. Once a suitable stone was found, the plaque was mounted and installed in the spot you can find it today.

Quoting Rudyard Kipling's 1916 poem, *The Verdicts*, the plaque honours the memory of the 46th, proclaiming that "they are too near to be great, but our children shall understand when and how our fate was changed, and by whose hand."

The next time you walk past this humble stone, remember that it is more than just another campus memorial. It is a testament to the bravery of young people just like you and me, and their willingness to fight for their country. Their sacrifice must not be forgotten.

This year on Nov. 11, take a moment of silence to remember the soldiers of the 46th Battalion and of all units in every conflict who fought in the defence of their homeland.



An Overview of Crime and Safety on Campus

Data over a five-year period on where and what type of crimes are committed on campus, and a discussion about improving campus safety with students and the USSU’s Vice-President of Student Affairs

Colton Danneberg

In Statistics Canada’s 2024 Crime Severity Index of metropolitan areas, Saskatoon retained its spot in the top 10 cities in Canada with the highest crime rate, coming in at number six out of 40 cities included in that list.

The Saskatoon Police Service (SPS) provides a daily overview of crimes within Saskatoon at map.saskatoonpolice.ca. In the map’s terms of use, the SPS advises that the locations identified on the map “indicate the general area in which the incident occurred and are not intended to identify the exact incident location,” and that “the data is susceptible to a degree of error due to the complexities involved in compiling and programming” it.

From Oct. 1, 2020, to Oct. 1, 2025, there have been approximately 2,624 Criminal Offences reported in the U of S Management Area, which stretches from College Drive to the Circle Drive North Bridge and includes the main campus, according to the crime map. 292 incidents were recorded in U of S Management Area South, which includes College Quarter residences, over the same five-year period.

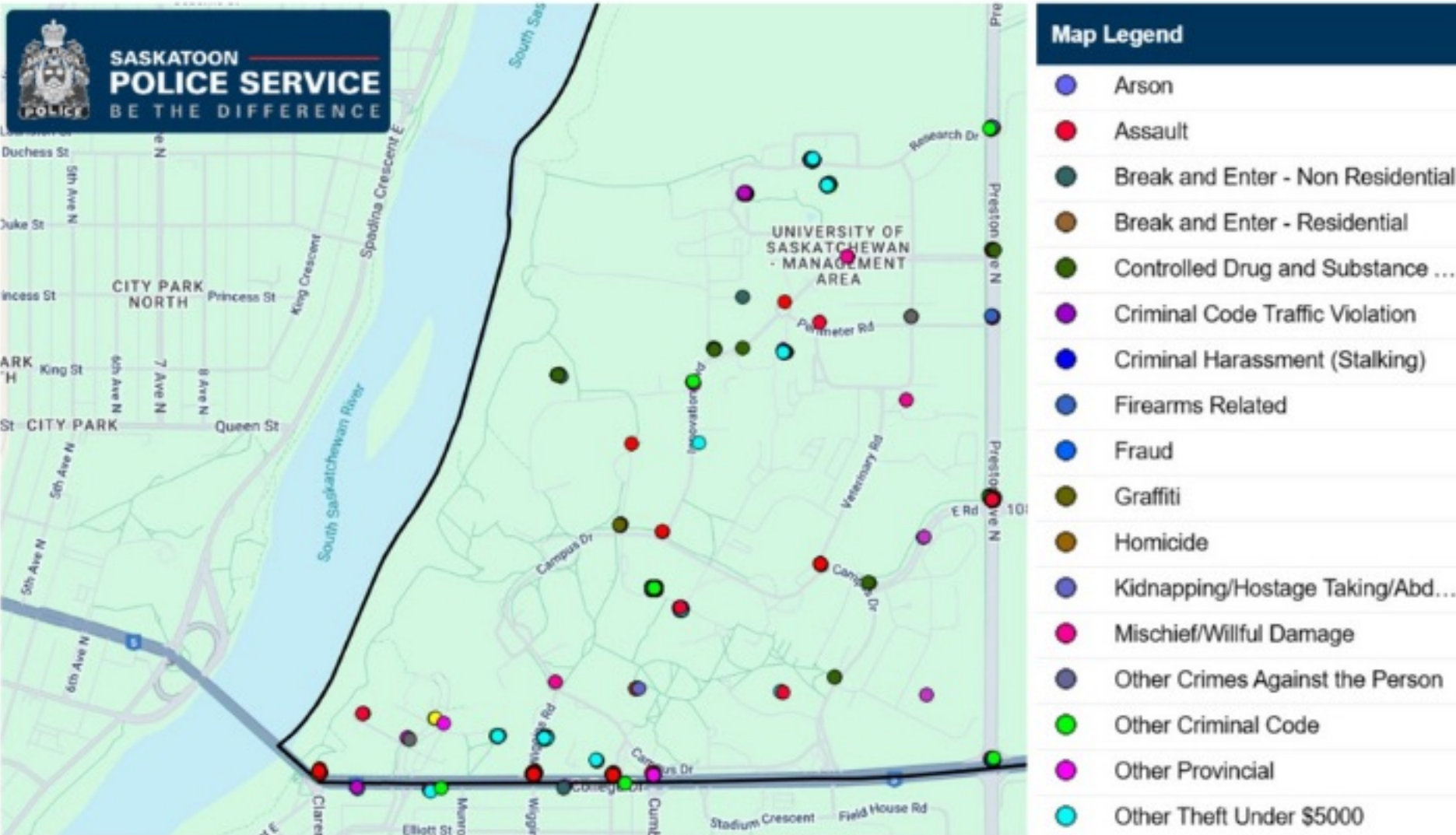
Because the U of S Management Area includes parts of Preston Crossing, a closer approximation of incidents on the main campus (excluding the 1,397 incidents that happened on Preston Avenue) is 1,227 in the past five years.

It’s also worth noting that about half of the total crimes on the main campus are attributed to the Royal University Hospital (RUH) area. The map shows that 651 incidents can be attributed to happening on the 100 block of Hospital Drive. There has been a single homicide in the past five years in the U of S Management Area, which happened inside RUH in 2022.

The most common incidents that occurred on the main campus were 948 incidents of Theft Under \$5,000, 334 Provincial Traffic Safety Act violations and 200 incidents of Assault.

A total of 324 incidents located on the main campus were considered Crimes Against the Person—crimes that cause harm directly to individuals that include offences such as Assault, Robbery and Sexual Violation. Only 45 instances of Crimes Against the Person were reported in Management Area South during the same time period.

Of these Crimes Against the Person, a total of 30 incidents of Sexual Violation were reported on the U of S Management Area. According to the University of Saskatchewan Sexual Assault Prevention Policy Procedures Document, “To increase



Crime map from Oct. 1 2020 to Oct. 1 2025: U of S Management Area - Main Campus View. | Saskatoon Police Service

awareness on campus, incidents of sexual assault or sexual misconduct that are reported to Protective Services will be logged and posted on the Protective Services website. This log will be updated on a regular basis.” However, there is no such log that exists anymore.

In a statement to *The Sheaf* on where this log is, the university responded that: “As part of our proactive approach, the USafe app has replaced traditional website data charts. This user-friendly tool delivers timely, location-specific safety alerts, helping students stay informed and make decisions that support their personal safety. By focusing on relevant, real-time information, USafe avoids unnecessary alarm while enhancing awareness.”

USask states that the misleading information in the procedures document is because the Sexual Assault procedures document has not been updated in over 10 years, but it plans to update the Sexual Assault procedures document this academic year. It also states that it used to have the practice of posting all criminal activity on campus, but has abandoned this approach in favour of only posting real-time alerts.

While the city’s overall crime rate has remained in the top 10 list of Statistics Canada Crime Severity Index for a number of years, *The Sheaf* sought out what USask students are saying about crime and safety on campus.

10 students who answered a poll were randomly selected for an interview, and each indicated that they generally felt safe on campus and that Protective Services does a good job of addressing crime and safety. The following answers are to the

question of: “Do you have any ideas or recommendations on how the university could improve safety on campus?”

Loa, an Anthropology major, suggested that the university ought to “address the stigma when it comes to homeless folks outside.” She says that increasing awareness around addressing stigma in vulnerable and unhoused populations will help people think in a more caring and respectful manner, “instead of operating in a way where you’re on guard and afraid [which] can be disrespectful.”

Multiple students interviewed said that improving lighting in dark areas outside and having an increased security presence in the tunnels at night would improve safety, such as increased patrols or more cameras. Some students interviewed noted that the tunnels connecting the Administration Building are particularly quiet and there aren’t normally many people around, especially at night.

Nadia, a Political Studies major, recommended that the university have more clarity on what constitutes the need to ask for help on campus. “Since it’s a public space, it can be hard to know when you should ask for help, or when it might be good to call Protective Services.”

John, a Master’s Student in Public Health, says that when his friend’s bicycle was stolen on campus, the cameras surveilling the area were not working. “Some [cameras] might be faulty, so I think that [the university should have more] regular maintenance to check if everything is functional.”

Out of 10 students interviewed, two had said that either themselves or someone

they know have been victims of a crime on campus. Both said that they were incidents of theft.

Emily Hubick, the Vice-President for Student Affairs for the University of Saskatchewan Students’ Union (USSU), handles safety and security for students on campus. Hubick meets with Protective Services on a regular basis to talk about any prominent or current issues regarding safety that students have concerns about.

When asked about what safety issues are the most prominent on campus, Hubick points to sexual violence remaining a recurring concern. “The ‘Red Zone’ is the six to eight weeks following the start of the fall semester where a staggering amount of sexual violence occurrences happen [compared to] the full school year,” Hubrick says.

To address the Red Zone, Hubrick says that: “The Women’s Center does a lot with that, [like] the fantastic programming when we have Sexual Violence Awareness Week, but we’re looking this year to promote a more proactive approach from the university [such as] increasing some of the supports and educational tools that they have regarding sexual violence, and some of the more environmental barriers to crimes on campus [like] lighting in certain areas.”

Alongside programming from the USSU and the Women’s Centre, Hubrick says that students may also use the USafe App to request a SafeWalk.



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Robotics Club: The Students Building the Future of Robotics at USask

More than machines, the USask Robotics club constructs a community of creators.

Abdullah Amin

In a quiet corner of the Hardy Lab, tucked among 3D printers, tangled wires and a faint buzz of soldering irons, the University of Saskatchewan Robotics Club is bringing machines to life. What started as a few students’ shared fascination with automation has quickly morphed into one of USask’s most hands-on, collaborative and forward-thinking clubs.

For founders Evan Digney and Dawson Puderak, both engineering students, the club’s story began not with wanting to boost their resume, but with a simple shared curiosity. “It really started out of Project club,” explained Puderak, now in his fourth year of electrical engineering, referring to a project club, a defunct, informal student-run space where students could experiment with hands-on engineering projects. “We wanted to give students the chance to develop real engineering skills in a fun, flexible way before their capstone projects, and to create a space where people could build things they normally wouldn’t have the tools for.”

That vision resonated immediately with Digney, a third-year Mechanical engineering student, who has long been fascinated by robotics and automation. “I’ve always been obsessed with the idea of robots doing the dirty, dangerous and dull work, all the stuff humans don’t want to do,” he said. “That way, people can focus on the things that make us human: art, creativity, culture.”

Though the Project Club had existed previously, its structure was an informal and open-ended place to tinker, but lacked a clear direction. “It was hard to get people to commit to long-term projects without a real goal or deadline,” Puderak admitted. “The Robotics Club gave us that structure... It still has the same spirit, curiosity, creativity and collaboration, but now there’s a purpose driving it.”

The official kickoff came in November 2024, after a conversation between Digney and Dr. Scott Noble, a professor in Mechanical Engineering who had previously advised several successful student design teams, including the USask Aeronautics Club and Tractor Design Team.

“Dr. Noble mentioned the American Society of Agriculture and Biological Engineers (ASABE) Robotics Student Design Competition, the same organization that hosts the annual tractor design challenge, (...) and it clicked,” Digney recalled. “We realized this was exactly what we were looking for: a defined project, a national competition and a reason to start building.” With Noble’s encouragement and guidance, the newly

formed Robotics Club spent the rest of the academic year designing and constructing their first competition robot.

The ASABE Robotics Competition, held each summer, is no small challenge. Each year, student teams from across North America are tasked with designing autonomous agricultural robots to solve real-world problems.

“Last year’s competition was all about eggs,” Puderak laughed. “We had to build a robot that could collect, sort and transport wooden eggs across an eight-by-eight-foot grid.”

The robot’s job: detect which eggs were “good” or “bad” using colour sensors, pick them up, and move them into designated bins, all autonomously. The competition was hosted in Toronto. Each year’s challenge is inspired by its location and agricultural context.

“It’s a uniquely Canadian type of robotics challenge,” Digney explained. “A lot of our students come from agricultural backgrounds, so it’s practical and familiar, (...) and it’s also just really fun to see something mechanical come to life.”

Despite being a brand-new team with limited time, the group performed admirably. “We did really well in the colour-detection section, but we just didn’t have as much time to perfect every other section,” said Puderak. “Still, we scored high on our written design report, and that process taught us a ton about documentation, teamwork and iteration.”

The club now boasts about 20 members, though Puderak estimates around half form the consistent “core” team. “We expect a little attrition each year; it’s normal,” he said. “But the people who stay are really dedicated.”

Leadership is fluid, with Digney and Puderak serving as co-directors and others taking on multiple roles. “We don’t box people into one role. If you’re interested in administration, technical work or outreach, you can do a mix,” Digney said

Currently, the team meets every Saturday from 3–5 p.m., a schedule designed to work around busy lab times and multi-disciplinary class schedules.

“Anyone at USask can join; you don’t need any prior experience or to be in engineering,” Puderak emphasized. “We’ve got a QR code posted around the Engineering Building and a Discord server where anyone can join.” The club is also listed on the USask Clubs Discord directory, which helps connect new students with campus-based clubs and engineering teams.

From a technical standpoint, the Robotics Club’s projects “follow the engineering design cycle, identifying a problem, defining constraints, conceptualizing functions, prototyping and testing.” “We start with theoretical discussions, what the robot needs to do, how it should move, what sensors we might need,” Digney explained. “Then we split up tasks: one group might focus on 3D modelling and printing components, another on colour sensing, another on movement and controls.”

The process is deeply iterative. “We’re constantly revising and learning,” said Puderak. “Everyone brings feedback, and we host workshops on things like soldering, 3D printing and circuit design, so people can build skills as they go.”

Beyond the technical work, members gain experience in administration, communication and project management, skills that are often overlooked in class. “Even just picking components or managing deadlines teaches you a lot about

how real engineering projects work,” Digney noted.

Much of the club’s success so far has been made possible by partnerships and institutional support. Through the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, the team has access to a 3D printer, soldering equipment and workspace in the Hardy Lab. The University of Saskatchewan Engineering Students’ Fund also provided funding for competition expenses and materials.

“Without that support, it would’ve been impossible to get off the ground,” Puderak said. “We had to cover some of the costs ourselves because the funding wasn’t enough to cover everything, but we’re really grateful for what we did receive.” Evan credits Dr. Noble as another cornerstone of their success. “He’s been an incredible mentor, helping us navigate logistics, connect with the right people and stay focused,” he said.

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“I’ve always been obsessed with the idea of robots doing the dirty, dangerous and dull work, all the stuff humans don’t want to do”

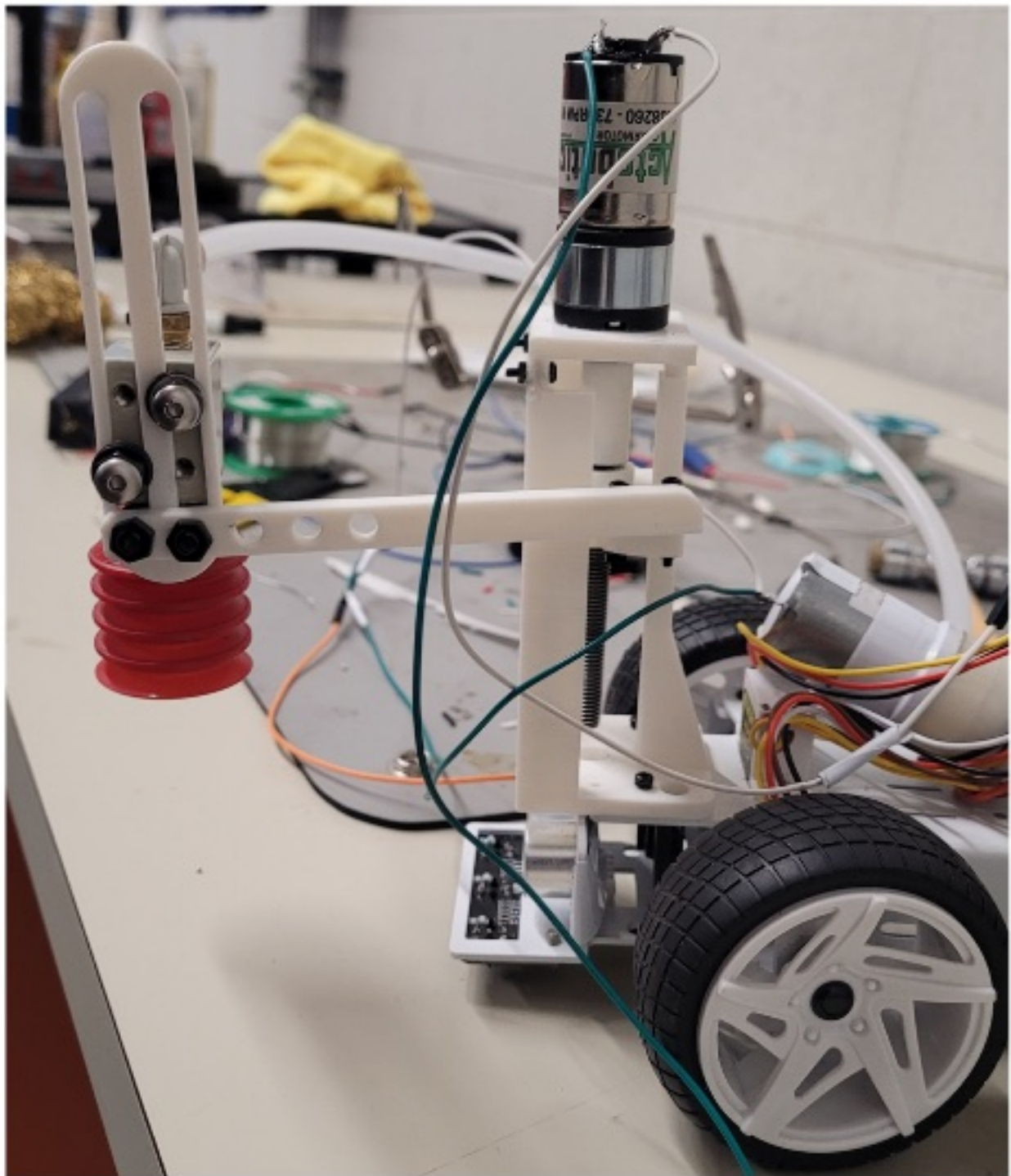


Image submitted by Robotics Club members Evan Digney and Dawson Puderak

Down in the Pit: An Evening with New Jacobin Club

The longest-running theatrical rock group in Canada rides again.

Nicolas Rock

It's Friday, Oct. 10, 8:30 p.m. at Amigos Cantina. I am dressed head to toe in a monochromatic striped dress, belt, pointy shoes, a jester's headpiece and white makeup—a businesswoman complimented my outfit on the way in. I'm sitting stageside waiting for the last of the evening dinner crowd to clear while the show crowd files in.

It's an eclectic bunch, many dressed in plain street clothes showing up after a long workday, some sporting various band t-shirts and tattoos (the Misfits skull being the most common logo), and others who are dressed in elaborate costumes. Most of the latter contain some nod to goth or "punk" culture—fishnets, safety pins, even mohawks. The variety is jarring if you don't know who (or what) is taking the stage at Amigos tonight.

I am dressed as a jester because, for the second year in a row, I am acting as a stagehand for Canada's longest-running theatrical rock group, *New Jacobin Club*, for their annual October show at Amigos Cantina. Last year, I didn't dress up, and I left the show feeling as though I was not committed enough to the ensemble without some kind of costume, especially if I was

going to be seen on stage amongst the band.

In their current iteration, they are a six-piece group comprised of The Horde (guitar and lead vocals), Poison Candi (theremin and vocals), The Ruin (bass), The Luminous (electric cello), The Rat King (drums) and Mistress Nagini (keyboards and backing vocals). In a 2016 interview with London-based magazine *Rockshot*, Poison Candi revealed that the group once comprised eleven members. The Horde tells me emphatically about their time touring with an accompanying freakshow. Each current member is adorned in what are now signature garments befitting their character—robes, belts, boots of imposing size, face paint and a hell of a lot of leather.

Regina's Nox Umbra take the stage first at around 10 p.m. and they get the crowd nicely warmed up with their take on melodic death metal. The audio mix of the opener is impressively clear given there are six people on stage, two of whom are guitarists. I watch Nox Umbra from the crowd and enjoy myself. They say goodnight after 40 minutes, and I mill about from the green room to the side of the stage, trying my best to help get things prepared. Before I know it, New Jacobin

Club are patting each other on the back, walking onstage and ripping into their first tune "Empire of Dis".

One of the most immediately compelling things about a New Jacobin Club performance is the elaborate theatrics which are fundamental to the band's existence. Even when they began as a three-piece, there was always an element of shock-and-awe to their stage presence. Mistress Nagini is the main attraction tonight, and my role as stagehand is principally to assist her and make sure that nothing goes horribly wrong. Luckily for me, she knows exactly what she is doing and has done it all (and much more) before.

Tonight, she will balance a cutlass on her head, swallow fire, lick a mousetrap, use an angle-grinder on a steel corset affixed to her own body and stab a large heart covered in blood to gory effect. The crowd is amazed at every turn and yell louder and louder for more—the band doesn't miss so much as a beat while Nagini twirls and tantalizes.

To speak on the beats themselves, New Jacobin Club are at their sonic core a rock and heavy metal crossover band. They sound like the best of Glenn Danzig and Iron Maiden, coupled with the bizarre soundscapes of *Giallo* and Golden-Age horror films. They are clearly not afraid to dabble in other sonic territory, either. "Like Dogs", an NJC setlist staple, has an intro that calls to mind Frank Beard's drumming on ZZ Top's "La Grange". "Feeder of Sorrows" is practically a distorted and impossibly heavy doo-wop number. Whatever the style, their songs are explosive, incredibly catchy and for lack of a better word, rocking.

Another thing worth mentioning about New Jacobin Club's music is their lyrical subject matter. On the night of Oct. 10, concertgoers are treated to a wealth of subjects including but not limited to: evil priests, doomed love, plagues, executioners, the living dead, night terrors, urban legends and a myriad of other horrors. All of this is delivered with a song-first sensibility—they are the perfect

lyrics for the instrumentals. It goes over incredibly well, and not just for the costumed members of the audience. Everybody in the crowd is loving it, even those who look like they've never seen a horror movie, much less read *Faust* or *The Fall of the House of Usher*.

The show concludes after just over an hour, ending with a feverish encore that comprises two Misfits tunes—"Dig Up Her Bones" and "Where Eagles Dare". This encore and its accompanying fan reaction (as The Horde puts it, "They just won't leave") cements what I have known to be true since I first saw them perform at Amigos four years ago—there is something transcendent about New Jacobin Club that elevates them beyond a "horror-rock" novelty reserved for only the most cultish fans.

At the end of the day, that's why I love this band. They can hardly be considered 'local' due to having had an American record deal in the 90s, international distribution in the aughts, and U.K. tours in the 2010s, but they are really unlike anything else spawned in the Canadian Prairies.

Every member is represented through their own unique visual aesthetic, but the group comes off as a cohesive unit. The unit is too genuine to be considered kitsch shock-rock, and too shocking to be labelled as simply a rock band. The music has an undeniable pop-appeal married with incredibly niche subject matter and somehow—through hard work, dedication and an unfaltering belief in the merit of a good show—it really, really works.

I look forward to next October when I hope to reprise my role as the group's stagehand and honorary fool. In the meantime, I encourage you to listen to New Jacobin Club's latest album, *Empire Of Dis*, which is only available from their website since they didn't get this far by selling out.

If you choose to embark on this journey, however, be warned: nobody knows what horrors lie down in the pit.



New Jacobin Club on stage | Kathryn Trembach

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Dawit L. Petros’s From The Edge of the Horizon, and the World Beyond University Walls

A reflection on Dawit L. Petros’s return to the University of Saskatchewan and the expansive horizons of his art

Laila Haider

Don’t say nothing good has ever come out of this city. Dawit L. Petros, an artist born in Eritrea and raised in Canada, has returned to Saskatoon with one of his best installations yet.

From the Edge of the Horizon, his newest project, is being displayed across two venues: *From the Edge of the Horizon I* is open for viewing at the Remai Modern, and *From the Edge of the Horizon II* at the University of Saskatchewan’s College Art Galleries.

The pair of exhibits on display act as a reflection upon his career and the evolution of his practice. Together, the two displays offer a vast survey of his work spanning over 20 years, and his ongoing investigation and commentary on migration, identity and the shifting politics of place.

Petros was born in Eritrea in 1972 and lived in Ethiopia and Kenya until his family moved to Canada when he was a young child. He grew up in Saskatoon, where he attended elementary and high school before earning his Bachelor of Arts in History from the University of Saskatchewan.

Eager to grow further as an academic, Petros continued his studies at the University of Concordia, where he earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Photography, and the School of the Museum of Fine Arts at Tufts University, where he earned a Master of Fine Arts in Visual Art. Today, he lives and works between Montréal and New Hampshire, where he teaches studio art at Dartmouth College.

Over the course of his career, Petros’ work has been exhibited around the world at various major institutions, such as the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, Kunsthalle Wien and the Smithsonian National Museum of African Art. This year, he received the Scotiabank Photography Award, one of the most significant honours an artist can receive in Canada.

Like most people that come into contact with Saskatoon, Petros has held a special place in his heart for this city—a facet often reflected in his practice. Although he’s had his work on display internationally, he has often spoken about the influence of the Prairie landscape and how the sense of openness in Saskatchewan has shaped his way of seeing the world.

Curated by Leah Taylor, *From the Edge of the Horizon II* features works from four of Petros’s major series: “The Stranger’s



Dawit L. Petros, Untitled (Prologue II), Nouakchott, Mauritania, 2016. | Courtesy of the artist, Bradley Ertaskiran, Montreal and Tiwani Contemporary, London

Notebook”, “Spazio Disponibile”, “Reinscriptions and As the Nile Flows and the Camel Walks”. It connects locations from around the world—the East African coast all the way to the Canadian Prairies—showing the audience the intersections between humanity, history and the landscapes we inhabit.

Each series in the exhibition approaches these ideas from a different perspective. “The Stranger’s Notebook” came to be over the course of a journey Petros once took from Nigeria to Sicily by road. It focuses on patterns of migration within Africa and to Europe, challenging perceptions of what diaspora truly is.

“Spazio Disponibile”, on the other hand, combines archival material and visual compositions to pose an inquiry into how power and absence are represented in modernism. “Reinscriptions” uses archival material and historical imagery to examine how histories can be rewritten and reinterpreted.

“As the Nile Flows and the Camel Walks”—Petros’s most recent and ongoing project—examines trade routes, geography and ecology as intertwined narrations of human migration and adaptation. He began his research for it during his residency here at the University back in 2023.

The exhibition also includes some early portraits from the mid-2000s, made while Petros was moving between Montréal and Boston. The portraits are of family and community members in domestic suburban settings across North America, reflecting his interest in how people establish a sense of belonging in unfamiliar environments.

Many of the images obscure the subjects’ faces, an approach that points to his concerns with representation and the ethics of visibility. Instead of offering clear identities, the works highlight the quiet gestures and shared spaces that connect people across diasporas.

Petros’s practice extends beyond photography to include video, sculpture and sound. His installations are unique environments, the physical arrangements of each piece within them mirroring the themes of movement, adaptation and transition that much of his career has revolved around.

His focus on the influence of colonialism and modernity upon diaspora groups underlies much of his work. He approaches colonialism not as a distant historical event but as a continuing dynamic that shapes migration, mobility and identity in the present. His use of archival works and attention to geography reveal how political and cultural histories intersect and overlap, persisting in contemporary life.

Petros’s work is both incredibly universal and personal at the same time—every piece meticulously chosen so that the audience can resonate with his message. *From the Edge of the Horizon II*, the portion of his work on display at the university, acts as a return to the institution where Petros’s intellectual path began and an acknowledgement of his own family’s ties to the campus, where several relatives have worked.

These different layers of his experience as a student, son and an artist give his work

intellectual rigour and vast emotional depth, capturing the journey of an individual who has lived across multiple continents and cultural contexts. It’s fitting that a vast display of his career work now occupies the same university walls that once represented his first steps into the broader world.

Both installations, *From the Edge of the Horizon I* and *From the Edge of the Horizon II*, reflect Petros’s ongoing investigation into how art can act as a space for both initial encounter and deeper reflection. His work invites the audience to consider how they see, what frames they use and the multitudes that lie beyond them. It encourages an awareness of how borders—both physical and perceptual—are constructed, and how they can be reimagined.

Together, the two exhibitions form a layered portrait of an artist whose practice is deeply informed by movement, study, observation and the context in which he exists, offering an example of how contemporary art can connect global histories to local settings. For audience members from Saskatoon and those soon to join him in the ranks of USask’s alumni, Petros’s work provides both a survey of an internationally recognized artist’s work and the opportunity to reflect on how their city played a role in shaping his outlook.

From the Edge of the Horizon I will be available for viewing at the Remai Modern until March 8, 2026. *From the Edge of the Horizon II* will be on display at the University of Saskatchewan’s College Art Galleries until Dec. 12, 2025.

What a Horrifying Year: Some of the Best Horror Movies of 2025

Spoiler-Free Reviews of Some Pretty Frightening Flicks.

Laila Haider

This year has been terrifying, to say the least. From global politics to new pop albums, everywhere we turn, we are faced with unfathomable horrors of all scales. With Halloween having just passed, we can now come to appreciate the freakiness the world has offered us this year in the form of Hollywood’s best box office horror movies.

As someone who cries more than they should at movies but doesn’t get skeeved out by fake guts, I can guarantee you that the following productions are some of the most jarring, grotesque and gut-wrenching films I’ve seen in a long time. If you’re looking for a good thrill or a reason to stay in and watch some really great movies, look no further.

Also, in case you or members of your watch party are squeamish about particular movie elements, check out doesthedogdie.com for audience-verified, spoiler-free trigger warnings on everything from gore to grief. It’s a super useful tool

for people who enjoy horror movies but like to know if someone’s eye is gonna get gouged out.

Sinners

If you haven’t heard about or seen *Sinners* yet, I am impressed by your ability to evade popular culture. Written and directed by Oscar nominee Ryan Coogler and starring Michael B. Jordan as both main protagonists, *Sinners* is, without a doubt, the standout horror film of the year. Raking in more than \$360 million USD worldwide and scoring a staggering 97% on *Rotten Tomatoes*, *Sinners* is one of the most commercially successful horror movies of all time—with special thanks to me and my friends for watching it nearly five times each.

Set in 1930s Mississippi, *Sinners* follows twin brothers Smoke and Stack as they return to their hometown after doing a short stint up North in Chicago following their service in World War I. The brothers purchase a sawmill to start a new juke joint for their community, but are caught up in dark magic and the supernatural before

they can blink.

They enlist their little cousin Sammie, a young and talented musician, to help them open up the club. Sammie, hopeful and naive, joins the twins in search of freedom from his suffocating daily life and a place for him to play the blues. Together, the three cousins—along with a few other old friends and old flames—set out to open the club the very same night, unaware of the terror and tragedy that lies ahead.

The cast is stacked—no pun intended—introducing Miles Catton in his breakout role as Sammie, Hailee Steinfeld and Wunmi Mosaku playing the twins’ love interests and Jack O’Connell as the main antagonist. The soundtrack and cinematography are next-level, immersing you deeply into the story and its setting from the beginning all the way to the post-credit scene.

It’s a scary movie in two ways, with the threat of vampires and the supernatural looming beyond the protagonists’ horizon, and its reiteration of the undue horrors Black Americans faced before the civil rights movement in the United States. In the span of one day, the three cousins and their companions are forced to deal with the devil they know and the devil they don’t.

Whether you’re a sociology major digging for deeper nuance or just a fan of vampire movies, do yourself a favour: grab some friends and snacks, settle in and watch *Sinners*. You won’t regret it.

Companion

What’s scarier than ChatGPT? A world where dating robots is the norm.

Companion is Drew Hancock’s directorial debut, and it is wildly jarring and aesthetically pleasing at the same time. The soundtrack and visuals will have you totally immersed in this couple’s weekend getaway gone wrong.

In the movie, Iris—played by Sophie Thatcher—grapples with the fact that she is not human after her boyfriend frames her for murder. The audience follows Iris as she tries to escape a remote lakehouse in the woods, while being hunted by her (now) ex-boyfriend and his friends. With all the odds stacked against her, Iris must fight for her right to live autonomously, and must come to terms with who—or what—she really is.

Companion toys with complex and nuanced topics like sexism, the commercialization of companionship, objectification and what it means to be human, while still being lighthearted and engaging. With a star-studded cast including Jack Quaid, Lukas Gage, Megan

Suri and Harvey Guillén, this movie will have you gritting your teeth in frustration and laughing out loud at the dramatic irony.

While I will admit that *Companion* leans more towards being a thriller than a horror movie, it’s an incredibly good watch if you’re in the mood for a more classic slasher. The cast does a wonderful job of selling their parts, each one more frustrating than the next. If you liked *Bodies Bodies Bodies*, you’ll definitely enjoy this.

Weapons

It’s 2:17 a.m. Do you know where your children are?

From the Director of *Barbarian*, Zach Cregger, *Weapons* takes on a complex form of narration, following multiple characters’ points of view in a non-linear fashion. It’s a thrilling psychological horror, keeping the audience on the edge of their seats as it progresses through its three acts.

In the town of Maybrook, Pennsylvania, seventeen fifth-graders go missing in the middle of the night. With all but one student from the class gone, the worried townsfolk turn to their teacher, Justine Glandy, for answers.

Desperate to clear her name and find the children, Justine begins her own investigation into their disappearance. Erratic, reckless and obsessive, she pursues the only lead available: Alex Lilly, the only remaining student from her class. Against the well-meaning advice of her boss and the police, Justine pushes further, realizing that something much larger than child abduction is at play.

Each act or chapter follows a different character at a different point in the story, giving the audience insight into the community’s confusion and hysteria. It gives us the story of a troubled but well-meaning teacher, a grieving father, a police officer in recovery, a drug addict trying to get by, the school’s principal and an abused, traumatized child, all converging in the final act, where the true evil is confronted.

Like Cregger’s previous work, *Weapons* is constantly surprising, sadistically funny and unabashedly brutal. Each actor’s performance brings the writing to life in an electric and emotionally destructive way. It confronts childhood trauma authentically and unrepentantly, while giving a master class on how to make an original horror movie work.



Continued on page 19.



The Companion | Warner Bros. Pictures

Past Meets Present: Museum of Antiquities turns 50 with dazzling new exhibit reveal

Celebrating 50 years of growth and the volunteers who made it happen with a little look into its history until to now

Katherine Walcer

There's something quite magical about stepping into the Museum of Antiquities. One moment you're walking through the familiar halls of the University of Saskatchewan, the next you're standing face to face with the ancient world, surrounded by sphinxes, kings and gods who've outlived entire civilizations.

This fall, the museum celebrated its 50th anniversary, marking half a century of preserving history and sparking imagination. But this golden milestone wasn't just about looking back. It was about celebrating the museum's vibrant role in student life today as a space for learning, volunteering and bringing history to life right here on campus.

The Museum of Antiquities began in 1974 as a bold idea shared by two professors, Michael Swan and Nicholas Gyenes. Their vision was simple but powerful. If students couldn't travel to Europe to see the world's greatest works of art, those works could come to them and inspire students and others right here in the prairies.

What started with a dozen plaster casts from the Louvre soon grew into a collection that demanded a home of its own. By 1981, the museum had officially opened in the Murray Building. Showcasing classical masterpieces from ancient Greece, Rome, Egypt and the Near East. Decades later, it found its permanent residence in the Peter MacKinnon Building, where sunlight and stone now mingle across a gallery filled with artifacts and replicas that astonishingly bring the past back to life.

Over the decades, the Museum of Antiquities has become a cornerstone of cultural and academic life at the university. It's a classroom, a community hub and a place where art, archaeology and storytelling collide. University students wander in between classes to admire artifacts or unwind after lectures, while school tours and community groups fill the halls with curiosity.

Beyond being a place of quiet study, the museum has hosted countless events that connect ancient history with modern audiences, from ghost tours, ancient and medieval adventure camps to heritage festivals and collaborations with the Diefenbaker Canada Centre. This year's 50th anniversary celebration brought all of that energy together, commemorating not only the museum's founding but the people, student volunteers and staff who have kept it thriving for five decades.

To mark the occasion, the museum's director, Dr. Tracene Harvey, unveiled



Dr. Tracene Harvey, unveils three new replicas for the museum's 50th anniversary | Cambry Charbonneau

three new stunning replicas that expand its storytelling power: the Code of Hammurabi, the Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III and the Sphinxes of the Palace of Darius. Each new addition represents a piece of humanity's long conversation about power, justice and identity.

The Code of Hammurabi, a massive black basalt stele dating to 1750 BCE, records one of the world's earliest sets of written laws. At its top, the king of Babylon stands before Shamash, the sun god. This is a symbol of divine authority and justice. The inscription below outlines nearly 300 laws written in Akkadian cuneiform, setting the foundation for legal systems that would echo through history.

The original Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III was carved around 825 BCE to celebrate the Assyrian king's military victories and political alliances; its replica stands proud in the gallery. Its reliefs depict processions of tribute and scenes of conquest, including one of the earliest known images of the biblical figure Jehu, King of Israel. The obelisk captures a moment when myth and history intertwine, connecting cultures that shaped the ancient Near East.

Completing the trio, the Sphinxes from the Palace of Darius add a touch of Persian grandeur. Created during the reign of Darius I in the 6th century BCE, these human-headed, lion-bodied guardians once adorned the royal palace at Susa, watching over the heart of the Achaemenid Empire. Their glazed brick bodies, rich in yellows, greens and browns, shimmered under ancient light and now their replicas do the same in the museum's gallery.

While the exhibits may steal the spotlight, much of the museum's magic happens

behind the scenes and that's where volunteers can shine. The Museum of Antiquities volunteer program has become one of the most rewarding and accessible ways for undergraduate students to gain hands-on experience in museum work. Students assist in a wide range of tasks, helping curate exhibits, managing visitor tours, updating artifact records, preparing educational materials and organizing community events.

For many volunteers, including myself, the experience transforms the way we see history. Cataloguing artifacts becomes an exercise in attention to detail, guiding visitors turns into storytelling and helping with events such as the 50th anniversary becomes a chance to connect people with cultures that existed thousands of years ago.

During the anniversary celebration, student volunteers played a central role. They helped coordinate the unveiling, managed guest check-ins and assisted with everything from offering food and drinks to social media outreach. I personally felt extremely lucky to be a volunteer, to meet such wonderful fellow students and to have such a wonderful director who truly loves the passion these students bring into this museum. Their enthusiasm brought warmth and energy to an event steeped in ancient themes, proof that history is most alive when students are a part of it.

Volunteering at the museum isn't just about helping out; it's about learning practical skills and discovering new academic pathways. Students from History, Archaeology, Art History, Education and even Engineering bring unique perspectives to the work. By contributing to research, exhibit design and visitor engagement, volunteers develop communication, organization, and

problem-solving skills that apply far beyond the museum's walls.

Some go on to careers in museums, cultural heritage, education or research, while others carry a lifelong appreciation of art and history into whatever they do next. This program also fosters an interdisciplinary collaboration. A classics student might partner with an art major to interpret an artifact, while a computer science student helps digitize records or improve the museum's online presence. It's a rare space on campus where academic fields intersect, united by curiosity.

As the museum looks ahead to the next 50 years, it remains committed to accessibility and engagement. Its mission has always been to make art and history available to all, not just scholars or experts. The museum regularly hosts tours for local schools, workshops for families and events for the wider community. It's a space where the public can stand before a statue of Aphrodite, admire a fragment of ancient pottery or explore the vast coin collection, and feel the same wonder that students felt fifty years ago when the first replicas arrived on campus.

That accessibility extends to its volunteering opportunities as well. Anyone interested in helping, whether for a semester, a summer or a single event, can apply through the museum's website or stop by the museum office to learn more. Experience is welcomed, but enthusiasm and curiosity for the museum are enough.

50 years is a long time for any institution, but for the Museum of Antiquities, it's just the beginning. Its golden anniversary serves as both a reflection and a promise, a reminder of what has been achieved and what's still to come.

In a world that moves faster every year, the museum offers something increasingly rare. A place to slow down, look closely and connect with the shared story of humanity. It invites everyone to see that the ancient world isn't gone. It's right here, waiting in plaster and stone, ready to teach, inspire and remind us that the past still has plenty to say.

So next time you're wandering between classes in the Peter MacKinnon Building, pause for a moment and step inside the museum. Meet the new artifacts and say hello to the friendly familiars. Fifty years in, the Museum of Antiquities is still Saskatoon's most unexpected time machine, driven by curiosity.



Over 60 Years of Perfect Pitch

The enduring legacy of the Greystone Singers

Emily Mainprize

For more than six decades, the Greystone Singers have filled the halls of the University of Saskatchewan with music, artistry and community spirit.

Founded in 1958, the ensemble has become one of the university's most cherished cultural institutions, uniting students from across disciplines through a shared love of choral music. Today, the Greystone Singers continue to bring together voices from across the campus, from engineering to education, in pursuit of musical excellence and community spirit.

Unlike many university choirs that draw primarily from music majors, the Greystone Singers are open to students from all colleges and disciplines, creating a space that allows for all kinds of students to join together to create a collective musical voice.

Membership is determined through audition, ensuring a high musical standard and understanding of music theory while still maintaining an inclusive and diverse spirit. Rehearsing twice a week, the ensemble performs a wide range of repertoire, from classical to contemporary and multicultural pieces.

Participation in the choir can also be taken for academic credit, which is notable on a student's academic record, especially for those who want to go into music professionally in the future. However, there is also an option to not take it for credit. This option provides an accommodating space for students where they can all come together to create beautiful music regardless of their prior experience and education plans.

From its earliest years to today, the Greystone Singers earned a reputation for precision and artistic ambition. Their performances have consistently drawn audiences from the university and the surrounding community. They have been featured on numerous radio broadcasts and recordings. While the songs that the students learn may be intense, it's clear that their efforts pay off with the quality of their performances, as well as the emotions that their voices can invoke from their audiences.

They placed second in the CBC National Radio Competition for Amateur Choirs in 2006 and later won the Mixed-Voice Collegiate Choir category at the Association of Canadian Choral Communities National Competition in 2013. Even Bob Florence at the StarPhoenix has called the Greystone Singers one of "the Seven Wonders of Saskatoon." In 2024 they even performed in Carnegie Hall all the way in New York City, making for an unforgettable

experience for many of the members of the Greystone Singers.

The Greystone Singers have been around for a long time, persevering through the years and keeping the tradition alive. Even during the COVID pandemic they still found a way to share music with the community. While complying with social distancing restrictions, they still managed to create beautiful music together by recording videos of themselves singing songs individually and compiling them together to form a full choir, all from their homes. In a time when people were so isolated from each other, the Greystone Singers came together to show unity and strength not only to the University of Saskatchewan, but the entire world.

United Church at 3: p.m. There will also be a choral concert on March 15, 2026 and a performance with the Saskatoon Symphony Orchestra at TCU Place on March 28, 2026. More information on these events can be found on the USask website.

The choir's continued success represents more than just musical achievement. It reflects the enduring values of the University of Saskatchewan: collaboration, curiosity and creativity. By drawing together students from across the disciplines to make something harmonious, the Greystone Singers embody the very spirit of higher education.

Being part of a choral ensemble can be a

to singing or speaking. Singing without correct posture and vocal maintenance can damage you. By singing in a choir setting, you can get training on how to avoid hurting yourself while you sing, which is an important lesson in a singer's life and a skill you can take into any future work you do with your voice. From acting to giving scientific talks, having correct posture while singing or projecting your voice is important.

If you are interested in being a part of the Greystone Singers and continuing the legacy of the choir, auditions typically take place at the beginning of the fall semester in September. If you're a singer who wants to hone their skills and be a part of a community full of talented singers, check



The Greystone Singers perform at Carnegie Hall in New York City in 2024 | USask College of Arts and Science.

Beyond competitions, the Greystone Singers have long been known for their collaborative spirit. The ensemble frequently joins forces with the Saskatoon Symphony Orchestra, performing major choral-orchestral works. They also appear regularly at university ceremonies, public concerts and community events.

Each concert season typically includes a fall and spring performance. These events showcase the choir's versatility, from complex classical repertoire to new and experimental works. If you are interested in attending any of these performances, there are a few coming up.

The next show is on Nov. 23 at Knox

very beneficial experience. On top of being able to be in a space full of diverse people coming together to create music, you have the opportunity to make lifelong friendships.

On top of this, by being part of a choir, you get to learn beautiful songs in a space that isn't as high-pressure as if you were singing alone. By having this space and consistent rehearsal times, you can hone your skills and expand your musical knowledge in ways that you might not be able to by singing alone or only getting individual vocal training.

Choral training also teaches physical wellbeing practices, especially in relation

the website before classes start in the fall for more information on how to audition.

In every note they sing, the Greystone Singers carry forward a legacy built on passion and tradition. From their beginnings in 1958 to their digital performances in 2020, they have remained a vital part of the university's cultural identity, regardless of whatever obstacles they have faced.



Cool Girls Don’t Gatekeep

It is my truth that there is no better feeling than finding your dream pair of boots in a five-dollar bin, and no worse feeling than Shein after one wash.

Hannah Ha

At its best, clothing speaks to individuality and personal taste; at its worst, it is overconsumption, pollution, exploitation and just plain boring.

Threadlocked Exclusivity

Since its inception, fashion was designed to be exclusive. Access and prices ensure that pieces speak to an in-group and paint a picture of individuality. Historically, price informs luxury, and limited quantities from designers generate rarity to synthesize consumer demand: think of Hermes’ Birkin bags, which require a waitlist and credit check.

On the high end, fashion houses have the innate prerogative to maintain an elevated and aspirational image, suggesting their product will grant access to a certain lifestyle or status. They want loyal customers to be distinguishable from the masses, especially distinguishable from other fashion houses. Brands like Chanel have a historic reputation on their side, where they are able to leverage a longstanding image of luxury and exclusivity to justify prices in the tens of thousands.

More modern brands like Acne Studios similarly seek to provide exclusivity through innovation and unique designs with small-scale inventory. Prices are steep with limited supply; resale prices are expected to double the retail amount. Once again, the ethos of exclusivity in design and pricing is in practice, but rather than on runways and red carpets, \$1000 jeans are being marketed as elevated casual fashion for the average consumer. But whatever the occasion, fashion should be able to set you apart without being inaccessible in both price and quantity.

Mall-ed to Death

For the average consumer, your favourite brands at the mall likely deliver either affordability, quality or uniqueness. We tend to rationalize price by assuming quality: think Aritzia or Lululemon. Vice versa, we tend to rationalize poor quality by assuming that “you get what you pay for”: think Forever 21 or Ardene.

Often, once that loyalty and trusted consumer base is locked in, brands leverage these factors and betray the values that consumer trust was built upon. A Statista survey in 2022 showed 70% of Canadian consumers were willing to pay more in support of products or services from companies and brands they trusted. Knowing they can rely on trust, a brand known for quality and high price points will begin to sacrifice quality, while maintaining or even increasing their prices. Similarly, a brand known for accessible prices will begin to slowly raise prices while maintaining or even worsening

quality. According to Statista, 56% of Canadian consumers credit a decrease in the quality of their products or services as the main reason they stopped buying from a specific brand. There rests an inaccurate assumption from brands that consumers are not evaluating where their money is going, and oblivious to the rug being pulled out from under them. Not a cool girl move.

Another trend: everything looks the same. Brand distinction almost no longer exists, especially not among outlet stores for the average consumer. Many major brands have sacrificed customer loyalty to instead hop on the same trends and styles circulating on Pinterest and TikTok, in an attempt to anticipate broader consumer demand. Consumers can no longer expect unique brand identity or innovation from the same brands anymore.

Abercrombie & Fitch had a distinct preppy, Americana vision in the 2000s. This meant that as a consumer, you knew which outlet in the mall would be able to get you the specific look you wanted. This distinct and unique brand identity also paved the way for fashion trends, allowing the brand itself to be the trend setter. In contrast, Abercrombie & Fitch today is indistinguishable from Oak + Fort or Artizia; multiple brands are delivering the same product with minute variation, usually by stealing the designs from smaller designers and undercutting their price points. Not a cool girl move!

Ultra Fast Fashion

More than ever, we as consumers are in high demand for affordable, accessible fashion that is caught up with the ever-changing tide of microtrends. Fashion has been a popularized form of self-expression for the average consumer over the last five years, where an interest and appreciation

for fashion has become more mainstream. Increased consumption of fast fashion is likely a symptom of craving accessibility; there is a buzzing desire for a quick closet flip at an affordable price.

Uncoincidentally, Shein, Temu, Fashionova and Value Village have become some of the biggest beneficiaries of this uptick. Clothing “hauls” cost \$40 for the entire cart and are shipped across the world to end up on your doorstep in an unmarked bag: wrinkled and reeking of rubber. Fast fashion comes to your door in no time, and is on its way out of your rotation just as fast. Cheap materials and stolen designs lead to see-through leggings and a maximum of three wears.

It’s ironic that we have turned to unethical consumption to prove our individuality. Aside from the environmental impact of this direct-to-consumer business model, it’s a boring route to self-discovery.

Value Pillage

Buying second-hand is not new—I have childhood memories of second-hand winter jackets and embroidered jeans, back when it was downright shameful to be wearing hand-me-downs. As thrifting shed its stigma, less consumers thrifted out of necessity and more consumers went thrifting with a ten dollar matcha in hand.

Value Village caught on. While their inventory remains donation-based, their prices climbed alongside consumer demand. I remember graphic tees for two dollars; now you’ll be hard-pressed to find good quality items under \$10. Instead, expect a \$30 jacket, only to flip it over and read a Shein or Forever 21 tag—higher than the original item ever sold for. Mark-ups are getting out of hand while quality worsens. It is clear that Value Village is no

longer delivering any “value”. With its prices surpassing most local second-hand stores, it has failed in its lane of affordability and access for its customers who relied on it. Not a cool girl move.

Obviously, it’s just not worth it anymore to put our money towards exploitative business practices that deliver poor quality and unreasonable prices. Rather, put your money toward consignment and vintage stores, with quality controlled pre-loved pieces that you can continue loving for a long time. Being mindful of consumption will lead you to understanding your taste, what you like or dislike. The easy road to your dream closet is also usually the most boring, so revel in the struggle to find the perfect pair of jeans or the perfect leather jacket and hold out.

As per my word, I will not gatekeep: below are some of my holy grail local second-hand stores, in no particular order, that you’ll hopefully consider as your first stop! You’ll see that your personal style and taste emerges during this hunt for your dream closet, in the face of desperation and dusty clothing racks.



1. Plato’s Closet

331A 105 Street East, Saskatoon

My best find: \$80 North Face puffer
2. Underground Trends

2325 Preston Ave, Saskatoon

My best find: \$15 Banana Republic slip dress
4. Salvation Army

339 Avenue C South, Saskatoon

My best find: \$8 Cargo satchel bag
5. Better Off Duds

510A 33rd St W, Saskatoon

My best find: \$55 Leather moto boots
6. Warman Thrift Shop

115 Klassen St, Warman

My best find: \$10 Fitted leather jacket
7. Replacing You

Unit #14, 115B 3rd Ave S
(in the Drinkle Mall)

My best find: \$20 Handcrafted leather shoulder bag
8. Village Green MCC Thrift

60 33rd St E, Saskatoon

My best find: \$7 Knitted polo sweater
9. Opportunity YXE

4 - 511 1 St Ave N, Saskatoon

My best find: \$5 True Religion hooded zip up
10. ARMCYE Studios

157 2nd Ave N #1, Saskatoon

My best find: \$40 Chiffon maxi skirt



Women's clothes on hangers in a shop | Rachel Claire from Pexels | Carva Pro

Cold Case on Campus: The Death of Shawn Reineke

A look back at a suspicious death in Seager Wheeler with former journalist David Scharf, 41 years later



Shawn Reineke | Reddit user r/saskatoon | Reddit

Dori Sutherland

On Sept. 28, 1984, the Seager Wheeler Hall residence was host to a raucous dance in its 14th-floor lounge. Wine and beer were \$3.75 and \$1.25 a bottle, respectively, and with little security, alcohol and people flowed freely in and out of the function.

Big, drunken parties at Seager Wheeler were characteristic of the time—the residence, which housed single students in units of six on co-ed floors, had a much rowdier reputation than the neighbouring highrises, which housed upper-year and graduate students and those with families.

What should have been just another night of unruly partying at Seager Wheeler would turn tragic when Shawn Reineke was found morbidly injured in a steel garbage bin on the residence’s ground floor around 4 a.m. on Sept. 29.

Less than half an hour before, at some point between 3:30 a.m. and 3:45 a.m., Reineke had plummeted feet-first through the residence’s garbage bin from the 9th floor.

His right leg was visibly in a grisly condition; his ankle, thigh, heel and pelvis had been fractured. There were cuts all over his body. Internally, he suffered skull fractures as well as bleeding and bruising of the brain. By 10:33 p.m. the next day, Reineke would be declared dead after being taken off life support.

While no charges were ever laid in Reineke’s death, evidence seems to suggest that Shawn did not enter the garbage chute unassisted that night at Seager Wheeler.

It is widely believed that there was some sort of foul play involved in Reineke’s death, and one proponent of this theory is lawyer and former radio host David Scharf.

Scharf, who is a USask alumnus, documented the circumstances of Reineke’s death in 2016 as part of the requirements of a Master’s of Journalism thesis at Carleton University entitled *Students still mum about Shawn Reineke’s death: An unsolved homicide from 1984 at the University of Saskatchewan*. Scharf’s work, a 191-page volume, comprehensively reviewed archived material from the time, including photographs, articles, and the 727-page transcript of the coroner’s inquest. I read Scharf’s thesis and spoke with him to learn more about that night at Seager Wheeler.

Who was Shawn?

Friends and family remember him as being an incredibly active young man, always finding something to keep him busy. He could be stubborn, but he was also highly extroverted and thought highly of by everyone in his community. He was known for his kindness.

The 18-year-old Reineke was not a student at the University of Saskatchewan. Hailing from Hodgeville, a small town in Southern Saskatchewan, he had moved to Saskatoon to try to find a direction after graduating. He planned to work while he figured out what he would like to do with his life—perhaps attend USask or Saskatchewan Polytechnic. Reineke ended up at the university party via an invite from a mutual friend from his hometown.

Foul play and eerie coincidences

At 2:25 a.m., around an hour before he would plummet down the garbage chute,

Shawn had been “pranked” by fellow Seager Wheeler partygoers.

Passed out drunk, Reineke was covered with mustard and shaving cream, his boot was removed so that a toe tag could be attached to his bare foot with his “time of death,” and, most tragically, one partier even performed a mock “last rites” for him.

None of the students responsible for the prank would come under police suspicion for involvement in Reineke’s death, as they were accounted for at the time of Shawn’s fall. The mock funeral, held just about an hour before Reineke would fall through the chute, was likely just a tragic, bone-chilling coincidence.

“It’s so crazy and compelling [that] there’s this ceremony, completely unrelated to him going down the chute. What a crazy coincidence that is, to hold the funeral for him and then later he’s dead, and I don’t think the guys who did that had anything to do with it,” Scharf remarked.

The presence of mustard and shaving cream on his body and the trail it left around Seager Wheeler is also important to help understand Reineke’s last moments.

After being pranked, Reineke was carried onto the elevator and left there around 3 a.m. Shortly after, between 3:15 and 3:30 a.m., the same students who had left him began to search the building for Reineke to check on him, but he was no longer in the elevator. They reported seeing mustard and shaving cream spread across the elevator buttons and the 8th-floor lobby. From there, it made a trail up the 9th-floor stairwell in a manner which made it appear like Reineke had been crawling.

They followed this trail to the alcove that contains the garbage chute, arriving there at some point around 3:40 a.m. Here, the students testified, there was shaving cream and mustard on the floor, on the handle to the chute and the inside and outside of the chute door. Notably, they indicated that there was nothing on the walls of the alcove—interesting, because eyewitnesses who had seen Reineke in his intoxicated state noted that when he wasn’t passed out, he had to support himself to stand up.

They thought that perhaps Reineke had just paused to vomit in the chute—the opening was relatively small, and it seemed unreasonable to the students that he would have gone down there.

Based on the testimonies of people there that night, Reineke’s fall is placed between 3:30 and 3:45 a.m., and he was found around 4 a.m. When police arrived, they photographed a clean 9th-floor garbage chute around 4:40 a.m. This conflicts with the multiple eyewitness testimonies that stated there had been a trail of mustard and foam on and inside the chute.

Reineke had left a trail everywhere he went—eyewitness testimony and police photographs of other locations show this—and yet, the chute was clean. Between 3:40 and 4:40 a.m., it appeared that someone had possibly cleaned the chute door, where there might have been incriminating fingerprints, and nowhere else.

The investigating officers determined that the 12-by-15-inch opening could physically fit a person of Reineke’s stature, and that one could get in by themselves, but it would require a lot of maneuvering and coordination to step the considerable height into the chute, open it and enter feet first. It also required the chute door to be broken to be able to fit someone (and it was indeed found this way), denoting a certain level of effort required to get a person into it.

During our discussion, Scharf mentions another tragic element of this case: “There was evidence his mom worked at a hotel, and he had talked about going down the garbage chute at the hotel. This was really troubling to the police because he has said, ‘This is the fast way to get downstairs,’ or words to that effect. That’s pretty uncomfortable evidence, but also, I’ve seen the ridiculous photos of the people trying to fit themselves down the garbage chute to see if that would have been possible, and [the police] concluded it’s not very likely that he could have [got in himself].”

Is it possible that Reineke somehow got himself in there? Given Reineke’s extremely high level of intoxication, it’s improbable that he could enter it himself. He could barely walk that night. Furthermore, why would someone wipe down the chute? Although it certainly adds an element of doubt to the case, this revelation is most likely another instance of eerie foreshadowing, much like the mock funeral.

The Suspects

On the night of Reineke’s death, two men who had been acting rowdy throughout the night, Kelly Ham and Ervin Reekie, were the last people seen with Reineke in the 9th-floor hallway moments before his fall. After officers arrived, they claimed that they heard Ham’s girlfriend, Shannon Freeman, crying outside of a suite and telling a friend that Ham “didn’t know what he was doing. He made a mistake.”

Upon hearing these words uttered, police suspicion was placed on Reekie and Ham, as well as Ham’s girlfriend, who they believed to be aiding them by obscuring information. They were placed under intense scrutiny at the coroner’s inquest into Shawn Reineke’s death, where they would deliver conflicting testimony.

The men had never met before that night of the party, and yet, the next day, they arranged to meet each other in Assiniboine Hall with their girlfriends. Ham called a

mutual friend to get Reekie’s number. On the stand at the coroner’s inquest, Reekie would recount that they met to go to a movie. Ham said that they had met to discuss what had happened the night before. Police believed that there was an ulterior motive to this meeting—at this point, Ham had been questioned. Reekie had not. Police believed that they met so they could get their story straight.

Most compellingly, the men would deliver conflicting testimony on the coroner’s stand regarding what they had seen on the 9th floor shortly before Reineke’s fall. They had been placed there with certainty around 3:30 a.m. by a separate witness, who saw them interact with Reineke. Reekie recalled seeing Reineke leaning against the wall for support. When asked, he said that Ham certainly would have seen him, too. Ham, however, testified that he had never seen Reineke on the 9th floor.

“The evidence is certainly pretty compelling that those guys had something to do with something, and their own testimony between the two of them is completely different. One of them testified, ‘Shawn was there’, the other guy goes, ‘No, he wasn’t.’ There’s a drunk man covered in mustard, shaving cream, [lying] here that another witness has corroborated, and these two guys have totally different stories. That’s pretty fishy, that’s got a credibility issue,” explained Scharf.

There was never enough evidence to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that anyone was involved in Reineke’s death. While Reekie, Ham and Freeman had pressure applied to them on the stand at the coroner’s inquest, there was never enough evidence to even criminally charge them. Reekie and Ham had a valid reason to be on the 9th floor—their friend was in one of the suites. No one ever heard any sounds of a struggle. Their friends and girlfriends claimed they had been in a suite around the time Reineke would have fallen.

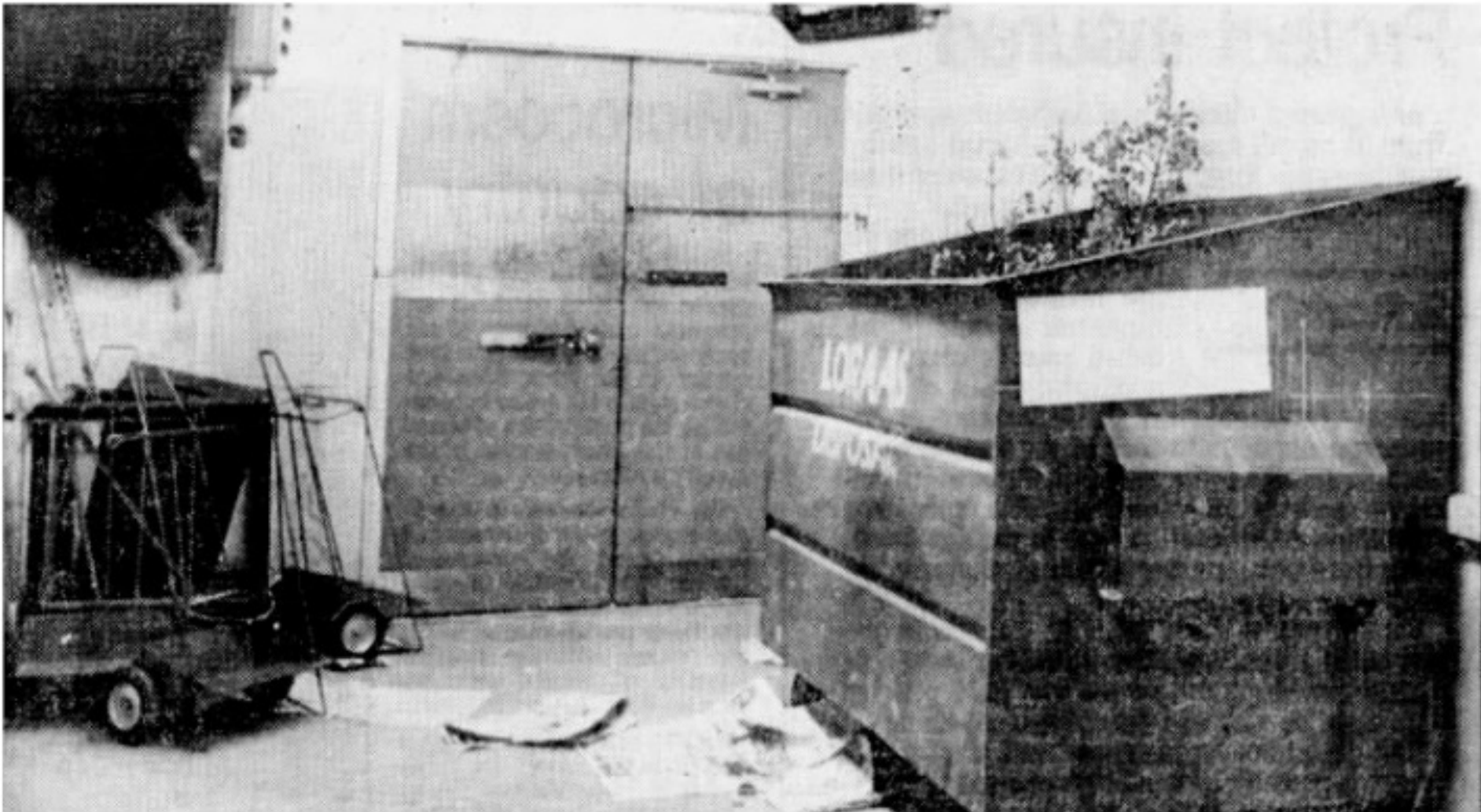
Police deemed it almost certain that Reineke didn’t go down the chute himself. It would have been incredibly difficult at his level of intoxication, and it is still unclear why the chute seemed to be wiped down. It remains unknown to this day which of the Seager Wheeler partygoers—if anyone—was involved in Reineke’s fall.

Scharf’s Discoveries

When Scharf began writing his thesis, he intended to unveil new information and hopefully find a new break in Reineke’s case. Knowing the potential impact of bringing such revelations to light years later, Scharf chose to visit Reineke’s parents first to get their blessing to write the thesis.

“I went there to ask, ‘Do I have your blessing to do this? If I were to, quote, solve this case, there will be consequences to people.’ His dad was a ‘yes’; he would want those consequences to happen. [Reineke’s mom] said, ‘It’s been 20 years. I don’t want to ruin someone’s life.’ She thought of the people who committed that and thought, ‘What’s the point now?’ I thought that was pretty interesting and really kind of her.”

Ultimately, Scharf received the blessing of the family to write his thesis, but he didn’t find any new breaks in Reineke’s case that would lead to justice. However, he does believe that through his work, he proved that Ham’s girlfriend was certainly innocent.



Saskatoon Star Phoenix file photo, October 1, 1984.

“I mostly summarized [what was known]. The only thing that [I] truly revealed was I think I vindicated a young woman who got really hard pressed by the police at the time,” Scharf says.

As previously mentioned, after police heard Freeman crying around 5 a.m. that Ham had not known what he had done, she was placed under intense scrutiny. There was no reason for her to know what had happened at that point in the morning, so shortly after Reineke’s fall, even though her words seemed to directly imply Ham’s guilt. Her statements to the police revealed little, only adding fuel to the fire, and she was directly accused on the coroner’s stand of being dishonest.

“What the police never got in their own investigation was [that] there was a police officer at the scene who wasn’t supposed to be there, and he went upstairs and he spoke to her. When the police officers who [were supposed to be] there show up on the floor,

they heard her talking about what had happened and thought, ‘Well, my god, she knows what’s happened, [she must be guilty].’ But the only reason she knew that was because the police had already talked to her. Typical of the police work of that era, people were pretty sloppy.”

As it turned out, she had a very innocent reason to have some idea of what had happened. When police were called, two uniformed officers responded and woke her to question her about Ham.

Scharf notes in our discussion that the 80s were an era of sloppy police work, such as this case of the uniformed officers failing to note that they had already talked to her. It was reasonable that she was hysterically

crying half an hour later, when detectives arrived and heard her. She had just been roused from her sleep to be questioned about her boyfriend’s involvement in the mortal injury of another man.

Scharf’s discovery of her innocence came when he appealed to the public for evidence while he was writing his thesis back in 2016, and a former Seager Wheeler resident sent him an essay she had written just a day after Reineke’s death.

“The young woman who got really under police scrutiny, her roommate wrote an essay the next day [after Reineke’s death], because her assignment was to describe some real-life crisis. [She writes that the] police officer came to the door and knocked, waking them up, and asked to speak to this girl. It’s eyewitness testimony,” Scharf revealed.

The woman who wrote the essay was never questioned on the coroner’s stand, despite

her recollection of events perfectly corroborating Freeman’s story. As a result, Freeman was accused on the stand of being dishonest by the prosecutor.

“My gut instinct is the narrative [that Reineke was murdered] is correct, but some people got really crushed in that, who shouldn’t have. That woman in particular was really just an innocent person in this and wound up getting pretty harsh treatment, just ripped to shreds on the stand at the coroner’s inquest erroneously.”

To this day

The case remains open to this day. Notably, in 1989, Chief of Police Sergeant Dave Scott stated that he had spent 4

months in 1987 investigating the case and had come to the conclusion that it was certainly an accident.

He never closed the file, however. Scharf notes in his thesis that in a major crime, such as a homicide investigation, this requires a sign-off from superiors to confirm that they were satisfied with the findings. Scott never received this sign-off. It is also worth noting that he stated that he completed this investigation with the collaboration of none other than Ervin Reekie.

This case is filled with intricacies that can’t be fully explored in this article. I highly recommend reading Scharf’s thesis if you are interested in getting a comprehensive picture of what happened that night:
<https://carleton.scholaris.ca/server/api/content/bitstreams/42823e53-1d2e-4dc1-951c-23b233a80c27/content>

An Open Letter to my Math Professor

I’ve always hated math. But will it always be that way?

Graeme Hopkins

Last week in lecture, my algebra professor asked all of us students to raise our hands if we liked math. A handful of us did. Then he asked us to raise our hands if we didn’t like math. A larger group raised their hands. But I didn’t raise my hand in response to either question.

It stayed suspended in the air, ratcheting upwards and downwards occasionally in confusion. I giggled in that mad kind of way I always do when I’m unsure how to proceed in a social situation. What would be the honest way to respond? Almost certainly, it would be raising my hand with the “I don’t like math” cohort. Why did I hesitate then? Why didn’t I raise my hand? I asked myself these questions over and over again the following afternoon.

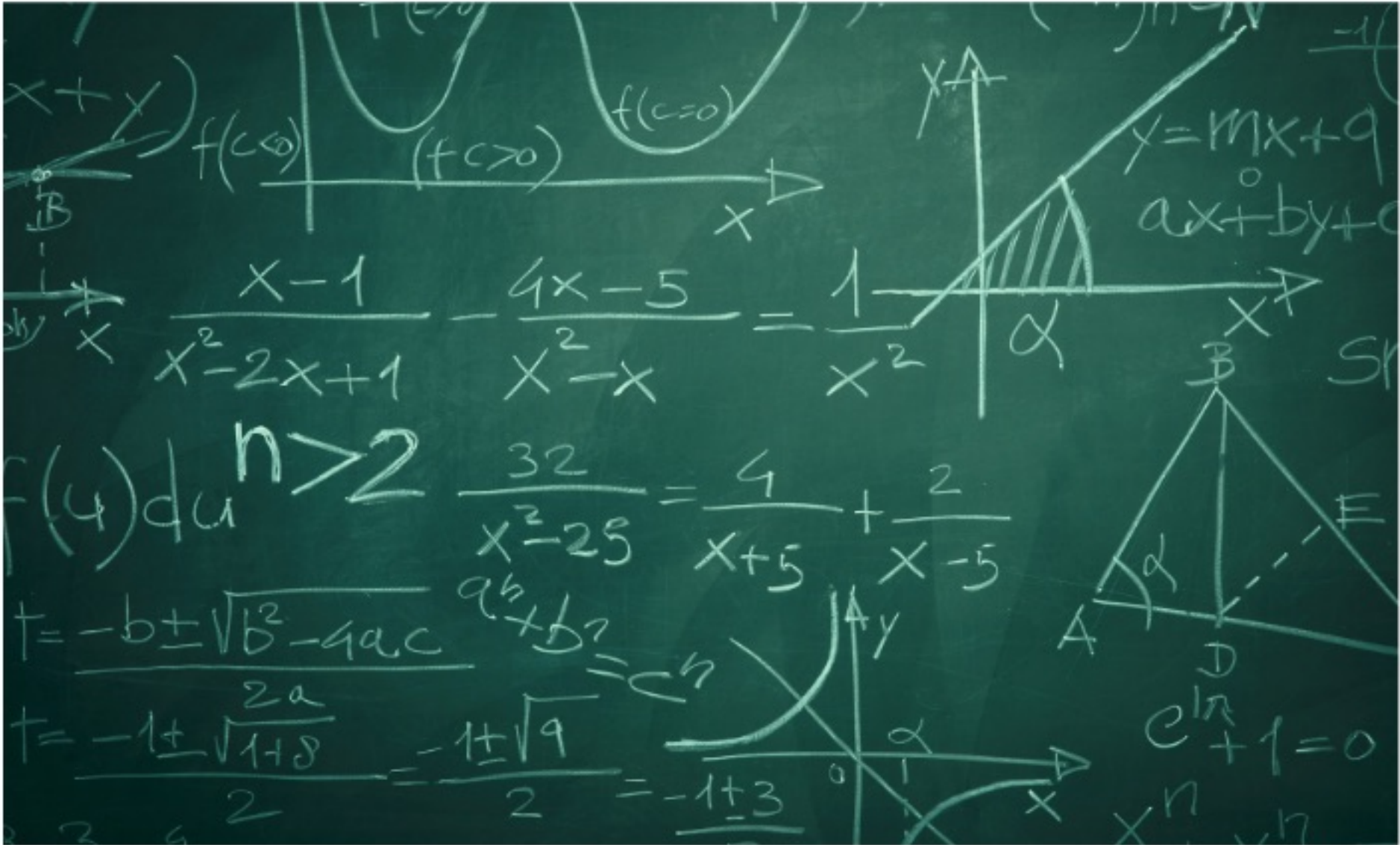
In grade 1, my elementary school recommended that I have a psychological assessment done, which included a lot of blocks, cards and puzzles. While I don’t recall this moment, during one of these tests I slammed a puzzle down angrily and shouted, “It’s impossible!” I did not finish the test.

I chuckled when I read that part of the assessment’s report because that moment seemed so foreign, so distant from me. But the more I thought of that moment, the more I realized I have lived my entire life with that attitude. That moment was a distillation of a timeless impulse that continues to live inside me. It was not distant at all, but intimately close. Like a kiss. Breathing down my neck. Drawing breath from my own mouth.

When I face failure with something over and over and over and over and over again, I eventually give up. The rejection and failure begin to feel like a ritual punishment, a confirmation that I am worthless and undeserving. My pride does not allow me to accept that.

In grade 9, I had my first math tutor. She was an elderly woman named Linda who was the go-to for all families who sent their kids to my high school. She lived in a house downhill from the school. Worms would coat her driveway when it rained. Then, two years later, came the next tutor: Jack, my mother’s friend’s father. He owned and operated a small airport and lost two fingers in a farming accident. Lunchtime meetings with both tutors went by, and it became clear that what needed to be sticking simply was not.

I vividly remember the particular, trademarked horror I would feel before math exams. That feeling is so wonderfully, terribly unique that it feels like there are fingerprints all over me. Handprints and bruises from the fear and shame, which only compounded as I grew older. The stakes were raised incrementally, and the weight of this felt



Math on blackboard | Tiero | Canva Pro

like more stones being added to the press, more weight. It was a time of the gnashing of teeth.

There are few feelings more frustrating than investing the entirety of your being into something and walking away with no results. It is a blight and pestilence of your own soul. The crop dies, and there is nothing you can do, even though you watered it and gave it soil. Even though you so desperately wanted it to thrive. You feel ashamed. You feel angry.

You are too afraid and too angry and too young and too strong and too weak and too special and too ordinary to admit that the one you are truly angry with is yourself.

Once, before my very last high school math exam, I stared at a practice sheet blankly. I didn’t move. I didn’t reach for my pencil. I just stared. I looked for so long, hoping that eventually my patience and refusal to act would end this moment I was living in. It didn’t.

My field of study and passion is paleontology. In science, something either is or is not. It can’t be both. A specimen belongs to one species, not two or three or 57 all at once. Something is a certain age. It is not no-age-at-all or as old as the entire universe or all ages at once. Things are classified and fit neatly together. They are real. You can see them in front of you.

When I describe aspects of my studies to others, they find it all terribly complicated and complex. But to me it is so fundamentally simple, as real and present as my own hands. I can pick up a fossil tooth, twirl it in my hand or run my finger down its serrated ridge. I can imagine it drawing blood. I can look at a fossil leaf and imagine it green and lush, etched with vessels pumping chlorophyll, growing

from a branch and swaying in a gentle tree-top breeze. I can look at a fossil trail in sandstone and imagine the animal that made it thrashing and slithering itself forward.

In math, nothing is real. Nothing is simple. Nothing is merely what it is. Everything is imaginary and theoretical—governed by rules that are simultaneously fundamentally intangible, fantastical and without mercy or flexibility. Everything is untethered from observable reality. The line is cut, and it floats upwards into imagination like a lost balloon.

It is like a language. I see people speaking it fluently every day. Yet I open my mouth and only unintelligible gibberish comes out. In those moments, it seems ridiculous to try. Yet I have no option but to try. Algebra and other math courses are required elements of my degree. So, in effect, I am in a predicament that is both forced on me without my approval and entirely of my own making. That’s life, I guess.

I have a new tutor now: Jason. He’s a math student at USask. We meet in one of the former dorm rooms in the mathematics building across from Place Riel, which looks like an old dormitory because that’s what it used to be. Each office is a little cubicle where young students once lived. Now, one of them is the scene of my weekly battle with algebra.

Oftentimes, I’ll get confused. Sometimes, while Jason is attempting to explain a new intangible and fantastical rule, I’ll cry out in exasperation, “But why?” Once, Jason responded: “Why not!” At that moment, I suddenly understood something; I just couldn’t put my finger on what it was. Now I think I know.

September has gone by in a flash. It feels like no time has passed. However, I feel that something profound is different. I’m still confused. I’m still learning. I’m still no one’s definition of a natural talent in math. But I’m getting there.

I blurt out the wrong answer, but I shout it loudly and confidently. I go back and trace my steps. I ask questions. And, eventually, I understand my mistake and how to correctly solve the question. I get it, and everything is right again. I get it, and anything is possible.

I have already learned many things from algebra. It is hard and easy, impossible and effortless, terrible and beautiful. When I end an equation or finally understand the latest theorem, it feels as though a monumental journey has closed and ended. And then the loop opens again. Time for another round. Would I be here, doing this, if it were not required? No. Am I likely to truly, practically use any of this information in my career? No. Am I glad I’m here? No. But yes.

That is what I thought of when my algebra professor asked that question. When I hear “Do you like math or not?” an answer asserts itself loudly. It yells and screams, “No!” But there is another answer. A quiet one that sits further back, but it is just as true. So, for now, that is the answer I am more interested in. That is the answer I want to listen to. That is the answer I want to focus on.

Do I like math? Yes.

If this kind of change is possible, then anything is possible. I can be anything, say anything, do anything. I wonder what other impossible things I’ll say or do tomorrow. I wonder what other impossible things I’ll be.

A Month in California, A Lesson in Slowing Down

A month away reminded me that growing up is not just about doing more, but learning when to pause.

Hajra Ghuman

I had not travelled outside the country since before COVID. That would make it about five years, which feels both impossibly long and somehow exactly how growing up happens. There is a kind of time warp that comes with being enrolled in university. You spend your late teens sprinting from classes to deadlines to part-time jobs, and suddenly, you are in your twenties, wondering when you last exhaled.

That pause for me finally came this summer, when I spent a month in California. At first, a month felt like too much. I worried it would throw me off rhythm, that I would lose my momentum. However, it turned out to be exactly the pleasant break I did not know I needed.

Like a lot of us, I went from finishing high school and went straight into higher education, all within the peak of quarantine lockdown. When quarantine ended, life did not just “go back to normal,” it became busier. I started my bachelor’s, then went right into law school. The idea of free time felt like something you could only earn in theory. Even when I was not working, I was still thinking about the next thing to do, the next box to tick on my list. Which was why when I finally booked a flight I did not yet realize how badly I needed the distance.

California is not just a vacation spot for me, but it is where most of my family lives. I had not seen them since before the pandemic days. Every time there was a wedding or some chance to visit, school or work commitments always came in the way. However, this time, I was able to prepare to travel, instead of preparing a paper or project.

When I landed, I could feel my pace shift immediately. The days were slower, but not in a way that made me restless. It was the first time I experienced quiet without guilt. Mornings started with coffee and watching the fish in the lake behind my aunt’s house, instead of looking at my to-do list. Evenings meant dinners with cousins I had not seen since high school and retelling stories we were finally old enough to find funny. Being surrounded by family reminded me how grounding it is to be known by people who have watched

you grow, not the version of yourself you curate in a student environment, but the one who existed before all the pressure.

It is strange how being older changes how you see family. At twenty-two, everything feels more fragile and precious, and I am sure I will feel this more so the older I get. You start realizing how much time has passed since your last visit, how quickly people age, how the little cousins are suddenly almost your height. Time does not slow down, but being there helped me notice it again.

This trip also marked my first time travelling alone. I was very nervous, but everything went smoothly. I know that flying alone is not a big deal to many people my age, but when one is doing it alone for the first time, it feels like a confirmation that you can handle yourself.

That independence followed me throughout the trip. I realized that so much of adulthood is learning how to take care of yourself without constantly needing reassurance. You start trusting your own judgment in small ways that add up by navigating, making plans and deciding when to rest. Those things sound simple, but they are the building blocks of confidence.

Spending a month away gave me space to feel my life instead of just moving through it. I went to places I had seen as a teenager, but appreciated them differently now. Doing this was more enjoyable while reconnecting with my cousins, which allowed me to reconnect with myself. There is something about being with family that recenters your sense of perspective. They care if you have eaten, if you are sleeping and if you are happy. That kind of care is grounding in a way grades can never replace.

Coming back was harder than I expected. The post-trip blues hit me like jet lag for the soul. I missed the routine of rest, especially the unhurried mornings. For a while, everything in my day-to-day life felt too fast again. However, now that the semester has started, I find myself carrying small parts of California with me. Whenever I start feeling overwhelmed, I think about that month and what it taught me about balance. Rest does not erase stress, but it makes it manageable.

I have realized that finding balance is not about escaping work but about remembering who you are outside of it. We often talk about burnout like it is an inevitable stage of success, but it does not have to be. Taking time away does not make you less ambitious. You cannot pour from an empty cup, and sometimes, you do not even notice it is empty until you step away.

That month reminded me that time does not slow down just because you are busy. The semesters blur together, and before you know it, the people you love have grown older, and so have you. The best thing you can do is pause long enough to appreciate it and to live in moments that are not measured by productivity.

When I look back, I am grateful not just

for the trip but for what it represented. It taught me that growing up is not just about taking on more responsibilities, but also about learning when to step back. Travelling alone made me more self-assured. Spending time with family made me more grounded. These things reminded me that life outside of school still matters.

I am glad that my first real return to travel happened this way, surrounded by people who reminded me of where I come from and what really matters. Every time I start to feel buried in deadlines or pressure, I remind myself that I have been here before, but I also know how to breathe again.

My month in California was a reset button, which not only allowed me to feel rested, but ready to keep on pushing forward.



California state capitol building | Hajra Ghuman

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Brewing Authenticity: Growing up with Emma Chamberlain

Why one creator’s evolution feels like watching one of us make it big.

Hajra Ghuman

I still remember watching Emma Chamberlain laughing at her own awkwardness. Her editing was chaotic, and her self-deprecating tone felt like it came straight from our own group chats. She did not need glossy lighting or a perfect aesthetic because her charm was enough. For Gen Z, Chamberlain was not like other YouTubers because she was the blueprint for relatability.

Fast-forward a few years, and that same girl is now at the Met Gala, interviewing celebrities for Vogue and running a coffee empire. Watching her transformation feels like watching someone from your dorm suddenly rise to massive stardom. It is both astonishing and unbelievable because how did someone who once made vlogs about procrastinating end up becoming a regular at Louis Vuitton's fashion week events?

When Chamberlain started posting in 2017, YouTube was still dominated by polished lifestyle creators. However, Chamberlain stood out because she would showcase an "unedited" and "unfiltered" aspect, this lifestyle being most accurately deeply human. She drove around aimlessly in her car with coffee as her co-star. Her editing style, with various jump cuts, zooms and random stock footage, felt like an inside look at her diary. She never really tried so hard to be relatable; she just naturally was. She captured what it felt like to be young and feeling lost while figuring it out (whatever "it" is).

Her rise was fast, but it was not just because of pure luck. Behind the effortless vibe was someone working relentlessly by consistent uploads, nonstop editing and the kind of self-discipline that turns chaos into a brand. When she stopped posting vlogs regularly and reappeared in high-fashion campaigns, a lot of fans did not know how to feel. Some admired her evolution, while others missed the "old Emma" who wore hoodies and filmed Trader Joe's hauls.

The criticism was not about her, but about how uneasy we feel when someone escapes the box we built for them. There is something uniquely Gen Z about this paradox, because we celebrate authenticity, but get uncomfortable when it evolves. Chamberlain's growth made people realize that being "relatable" is not always a permanent state.

Her move into fashion, entrepreneurship and podcasting was a continuation of her roots. She built her brand on experimentation, and her career now reflects the same thing. Chamberlain



Emma Chamberlain | YouTube



Emma Chamberlain shared this image on Instagram with the caption "I @Courrèges by @Nicolas.Difelice." Emma Chamberlain | Instagram

Coffee, the coffee company she started, was the logical next step for someone who made caffeine a personality trait. Her Vogue interviews have awkward and funny elements, which are representative of how Chamberlain is as a person.

For university students like me who grew up watching her, her trajectory is inspiring. We are all trying to figure out how to stay authentic while chasing our ambitions. There is this fear that as soon as we start "succeeding," we will lose our relatability or our sense of self. However, as important as it is to stay grounded, growth does not mean inauthenticity.

Chamberlain had the courage to reinvent herself before someone else did, which can often happen in the influencer world. This is also something every university student can relate to in their own fields. We start programs thinking we know exactly who we are, with one person deep in their classes composed of heavy literature and the other is swamped in their major composed of mathematical formulas. Then halfway through, everything shifts. They discover new interests, burn out on old ones and feel guilty for changing. Chamberlain's career showcases that it is okay to try multiple new things.

Her coffee brand is a prime example of how she has evolved. As someone who

grew up drinking coffee but now grinds their own beans, it bridges her past and her present. Is this not exactly what university students are striving for? To blend their passions with their professions.

For example, I grew up loving learning—there was never a subject I disliked. Most of my bachelor's, which I have yet to complete, is in Health Studies and yet I decided to change my path and go to law school. Now that I am in my second year of law, I am taking classes to advance my understanding of health within the law. This field allows me to constantly learn, and I enjoy learning about health topics much more now with a newfound appreciation from a different perspective.

Chamberlain is also transparent about how hard it is to balance it all. In her podcast, she has talked openly about burnout, imposter syndrome and redefining what "success" means. That honesty keeps her grounded, even as she navigates worlds that used to feel unattainable.

The real takeaway from Chamberlain's entire career journey for students should be that persistence does not always look glamorous. Sometimes that means editing at 2 a.m. or rewriting the same paper three times. Staying consistent when no one is watching is what it takes. Chamberlain's rise serves as a reminder that you do not

need to be perfect to make progress; you just need to keep showing up, even when you are unsure where it is leading.

What I love most about her story is that she did not shrink her personality. She did not cling to the version of herself that made people comfortable. Instead, she leaned into the discomfort of being misunderstood. As students, we often feel pressure to not seem too ambitious, too different or too confident. However, Chamberlain's evolution is evidence that you are allowed to take up space in new ways.

When I see her walking red carpets or releasing new podcast episodes now, it does not feel like she left her viewers behind, but instead is showing us what is possible. She is proof that the same messy energy we once saw in her vlogs can grow into something polished without losing its heart. We might not all end up at the Met Gala, but that is not the point. The point is that hard work, persistence and self-belief can take you to places you never expected.

Emma Chamberlain's story is more than just about her internet fame and growing up publicly, but how she can succeed on her own terms.

Levels Rewritten: The Journey of Changing Paths

An update on my journey starting with my first article

Katherine Walcer

Since our paths are not set in stone, as young adults, we go through changes. From writing my first volunteer piece for *The Sheaf* in my first year of university to becoming a staff writer, a lot has happened. I am in my second year with a new major and wanted to give an update in hopes that those of you who read my first piece back in that fateful January can get some insight into how that decision affected me. Those who are new to reading this can take a step back to listen to my story, and if so inclined, find my past piece online following this link:
<https://thesheaf.com/2025/01/15/levels-of-life-discovering-new-passions-within-your-studies/>

When I wrote the last piece, I was on a winding road in making a decision to change my major and acknowledging that I had a different passion. It was a tough transition, but one of the best choices I could have made for myself. Going from a Mathematics major to a Classical, Medieval and Renaissance studies major was a drastic change and even a shock for me. I went from working with numbers and symbols to reading Latin and studying history and religion.

I did doubt myself more than I expected to when I switched majors. I felt like I was stepping away from something I had worked so hard to understand, and part of me wondered if I was giving up too easily. However over time, I realized that changing paths didn't mean I was abandoning my discipline, but redirecting it. My motivation came back slowly as I started to connect what I was learning with the world around me. It was refreshing to feel curiosity again within my studies, rather than it feel like a chore.

While for some that can be a huge jump, for me it was one that not only made learning easier but my willpower stronger.

Last year, I came to university with an ambition to study the sciences of the

universe and learn how to tackle my love-hate relationship with math. I wanted to challenge myself to excel and grow.. I thought my passion was to study these topics and to learn how to reprogram my brain to look at patterns, but I discovered this was more of a hobby than a full-time passion.

With this transition came many challenges, but each proved worthwhile. One was the copious amounts of reading assigned in all my classes. As an avid reader myself, this was a bit much. Given that I am a slow reader as it is, it was a lot to read in a short period of time. So I had to get into the groove of reading at a faster and more efficient pace.

Another big transition that I thought would be stressful but turned out to be wonderful, was learning a new language. Out of all the languages that one can learn, I picked Latin. I was worried it would be something I would struggle with, but it turned out to be one of my favourite classes.

When I reflect back on that first year, I wish I could tell my past self a few things I only learned once I was deeper into my new major. For one, it's okay to not have everything worked out. I spent so much time worrying about having such a perfect plan, like the right major and future, that I didn't give myself permission to explore.

I also wish I had known that connection matters as much as coursework. In my new classes, I began finding friendships through shared discussions and curiosity rather than just group problem sets. I also started to see that university isn't simply about learning content, but about learning how to learn.

One of the hardest parts of changing my major was learning to let go of the expectations I had set for myself in high school. I had always pictured my university experience going a certain way, like staying in the same field from the start,



AI-generated image via ChatGPT

following the same structure and coming out with a perfect linear story to tell.

The truth is that growth doesn't happen in straight lines. Letting go of that image was freeing, and it allowed me to see my education not as a checklist to complete, but as a process of discovering what truly resonates with me.

Of course, change doesn't come without moments of doubt. I often compared myself to friends who stayed in their original programs, watching them move through familiar courses while I was starting fresh. However over time, I realized that progress looks different for everyone. There's no race, no universal timeline that defines success. Some of us take detours, and that's okay. Those detours often lead us to places we never would've discovered if we haven't had the courage to pivot and test the waters.

I used to think that changing majors meant "starting over," but I have come to see that

learning builds on itself. The problem-solving mindset I gained in math still helps me in my research and writing. Critical thinking, structure and attention to detail aren't limited to one discipline because they evolve with you. Realizing I hadn't lost my foundation, but instead expanded it, made the transition feel less like a restart and more like a continuation of growth in a new direction.

If I could give advice to anyone standing at the edge of change, I'd tell them this: You don't have to have every answer before you take the first step. The fear of making the "wrong" choice can be paralyzing, but staying stuck out of fear is worse. Trust that you'll learn what you need to do along the way. You will probably make mistakes, yes, but you will also gain insight, resilience and a deeper understanding of yourself. Changing paths can open doors you didn't even know existed, and sometimes, the scariest decision turns out to be the one that brings you closest to who you're meant to become.

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In Defence of the Em Dash

Why one punctuation mark should not be punished for sounding too human.

Hajra Ghuman

I never used to touch the em dash. Through most of high school and even into university, it sat on my keyboard like an uninvited guest—familiar but unnecessary. Commas, semicolons and the occasional dramatic ellipsis felt like enough. Then I became the opinions editor for *The Sheaf*, and suddenly I was exposed to it repeatedly. The em dash is efficient, as it can pivot and emphasize—all in a single stroke. The more I wrote and edited, the more I realized the em dash did not just punctuate, it enhanced my creative writing.

However, these days, the em dash has found itself in a strange situation where its usage is accused not of bad grammar or misuse, but of being an “AI tell.” Some professors and editors now treat this punctuation choice as forbidden fruit, a stylistic red flag suggesting your work might not be fully human. The reasoning is not entirely baseless, as AI-generated text often leans on the usage of em dashes to simulate a conversational tone, but this conclusion is unfair.

There is an irony here. The same generation being told not to use the em dash is also being told to “find their voice.” For many writers, the dash is that voice that allows you to sound like yourself, to write the way you think. It is punctuation with personality. It conveys hesitation, surprise or afterthought without needing to over-explain myself. To call it an AI marker is to miss why it became so popular in the first place, because it mirrors how people speak and think in 2025.

The concern is understandable of course. Academia and journalism are struggling to separate human writing from machine-assisted work. The rules are shifting under everyone’s feet, and no one wants to be caught on the wrong side of a plagiarism detector. For now, maybe it is safer to avoid the em dash in formal essays, at least until detection tools stop confusing stylistic flair for algorithmic usage. However, that does not mean the dash deserves exile. We can acknowledge the current uncertainty without flattening our language.

(For creative writing—for opinion pieces like this one—the em dash belongs. The same way painters rely on brushstrokes or musicians on timing, writers rely on rhythm. The dash provides it. To censor it entirely is to ask writers to stop breathing mid-sentence.

My own relationship with it changed when I started writing publicly. As an editor, I noticed how writers used punctuation to

assume ChatGPT was utilized. The implication was clear that writing naturally might now be mistaken for writing artificially. This is not only inaccurate, but it is discouraging.

There is also a historical misunderstanding at play. The em dash is not new, but the difference now is the volume of it. More people write publicly than ever before; blogs, captions, essays and newsletters all

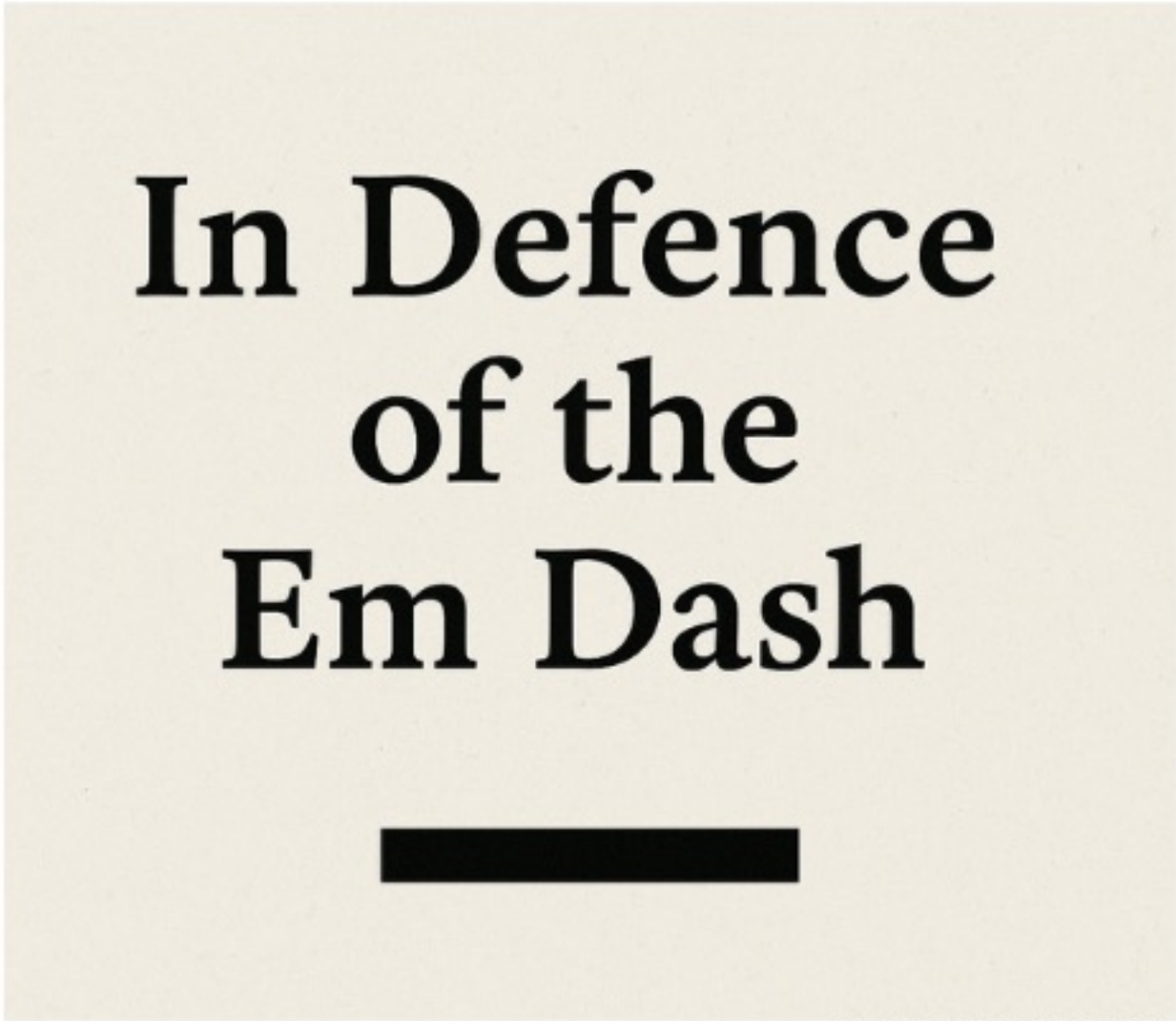
is practical. Keep the em dash out of essays where its presence could complicate authorship. However, outside the classroom, we should not have to police our punctuation to prove our humanity. Creative writing deserves to remain rhythmically free.

As detection tools evolve, the panic will fade. Soon, software will analyze vocabulary depth more effectively than counting punctuation marks. In the meantime, we should not let fear reshape how we write. The em dash did not ask to become a symbol of suspicion, but it just unfortunately became even more popular in the wrong way.

For me, the dash has never been about aesthetics, but about how it works with the flow of my writing. It captures the pauses we make when we are thinking out loud—the quiet interjections between ideas that commas cannot always showcase. To remove it would mean writing less like myself as an opinions editor. Removing the em dash would make us less like the generation that grew up online, learning to merge thought and tone in real time.

I am not giving up the em dash. It is part of how I write, how I edit and how I think when writing creatively. If AI happens to imitate that, so be it. I would rather risk resemblance than erase rhythm. The truth is, technology will always borrow from humanity, not the other way around.

The em dash deserves its place, but not as a suspect. It has endured editors who either praise it as elegant or condemn it as excessive. It remains unbothered and adaptable. For now, using it makes some people skeptical, and maybe that is fine too. That skepticism keeps us aware of how punctuation shapes rhythm and tone. The em dash expands and connects ideas in ways that commas or periods cannot at times. It means the em dash is doing what it has always done best—reminding us that language, like thought, does not always fit neatly within the lines, and that sometimes, the most meaningful pauses are the ones we invent ourselves.



AI-generated image via ChatGPT

pace emotion. Some rely on short sentences for precision. Others stretch ideas across commas like they are testing endurance (I can be one of these writers a lot of the time). The em dash sits between this, giving room for one’s thoughts without losing structure. Once I began experimenting with it two years ago, my sentences started feeling more like me.

With the panic of AI, every stylistic quirk was suddenly deemed suspicious. The em dash, which had quietly done its job for years, was now a scapegoat. I have heard the constant rhetoric that if one uses too many em dashes, their professor will

rely on tone, which relies on punctuation. The dash’s popularity reflects linguistic evolution, not machine presence.

If anything, AI copied the em dash from us. It noticed how we use it to sound conversational and vulnerable—then replicated it. That should be seen as a compliment to human expression, not a reason to abandon it. We created something worth imitating.

However, even writing this right now, I feel hesitant. The academic world is not ready to distinguish between “influence” and “assistance.” Maybe, for now, restraint

Crime and Safety on Campus

Continued from page 2.

SafeWalk has been moved under Protective Services and students can request either an in-person SafeWalk, where a member of Protective Services will walk with the student to their destination, a virtual SafeWalk, which provides live location monitoring by Protective Services until the student arrives at their destination or a Friend Walk, which sends a student’s location in real-time to one of their chosen contacts so they can track the student’s location until they

reach their destination.

Hubrick also says that on a yearly audit, she and the “Protective Services Manager and potentially another couple departments will go one evening to walk around campus to see what the different potential problem areas are [and] bring that forward to facilities and administration to see what we can do about making those areas a little bit safer.” Hubrick explains that part of this is also coordinating with the Women’s

Centre and Pride Centre coordinators and volunteers to locate these potential problem areas on campus.

Hubrick says that students with safety concerns can contact the USSU “because we do have regular meetings with protective services and with different departments that may be able to influence something there,” and suggests that concerned students also reach out to Protective Services.

Hubrick encourages any student who is a victim of a crime on campus to contact Protective Services. If the student would like to remain anonymous in reporting, they can visit the Safe Disclosure Reporting ConfidenceLine, which is available 24/7 and can be reached online at usask.confidenceline.com or by phone. This line is managed by a third party and is for university members to report good-faith concerns or allegations without fear of repercussions or retaliation.

Campus Parking or Campus Predation? USask’s Parking Services Need Reform

Parking Services has perfected the art of charging students for breathing too close to a yellow line, and it’s long past time someone hit the brakes.

Ethan Latimer

If you’ve ever tried parking on campus, you know the creeping dread that hits when you are walking back to your car and see that god forsaken slip tucked under your windshield wiper. At USask, parking isn’t just a headache; it’s a full-blown financial burden that keeps getting worse every year. Between sky-high permit prices, aggressive ticketing and a lack of transparency, it’s clear that USask’s Parking and Transportation Services is long overdue for reform.

Let’s start with the numbers. Currently, a student parking pass can cost anywhere between \$672 and \$800 yearly, depending on the lot. That’s almost the cost of an entire three-credit class. These passes are practically mandatory if you need to drive to campus regularly as many students and staff commuting from nearby towns do, yet they go up in price almost every year. There’s no competition, no real alternative and no reasonable explanation for these excessive increases. Once you buy in, you’re locked into a monopoly that treats parking not as a service, but as a privilege for those who can afford it.

Hourly pay-to-park lots aren’t much better. With rates hovering around \$3 an hour, short trips to class or the library can add up ridiculously fast. Some lots now advertise a “first hour for \$1” deal, but only in specific areas and at certain times. It’s a

small consolation for what’s otherwise a system that nickel-and-dimes students for trying to attend class.

To make things worse, the pricing structure isn’t even clear in many areas. Signage can be inconsistent or incomplete, and the university’s website buries rate details across multiple pages. For an institution that constantly emphasizes transparency and student service, Parking and Transportation Services seems to operate on mystery and fine print.

Then there’s enforcement, the vultures of the parking world. Students regularly report attendants circling lots, waiting for meters to expire before swooping in to issue tickets. The fines themselves are steep: \$50 to \$70 for minor infractions like straddling a painted line or being a few minutes over the meter. In some cases, the reduced fine only applies if you pay within 14 days, but the ticket doesn’t clearly list what the full amount will be afterward. It’s the kind of unclear, punitive system that would make a payday lender blush.

While Parking and Transportation Services argue that strict enforcement keeps order, it’s hard to see the fairness in punishing students who are already scraping by. The university isn’t a private lot downtown; it’s a public institution funded in part by the same people it’s ticketing. Yet every year, it collects hundreds of thousands of dollars in ticket revenue. It’s difficult not to see

this as a cash grab disguised as “policy.”

The problems go beyond cost and enforcement. Accessibility, for example, remains a recurring issue. Many handicap stalls on campus are poorly marked or inconsistently signed. If the university truly values inclusion and accessibility, proper signage should be the bare minimum, not some afterthought. Meanwhile, daily parking areas often lack clear hourly breakdowns or visible instructions, creating confusion for guests and new students alike.

So what’s the solution? Reform, and plenty of it.

For starters, price transparency needs to be non-negotiable. Every lot should have clear, readable signage that spells out hourly rates, time limits and ticket penalties. The university should publish an annual report detailing exactly where parking revenue goes and how much funds maintenance, how much supports enforcement and how much ends up in general operations. Students deserve to know what they’re paying for.

Next, ticketing policies need to be humanized. Grace periods for expired meters—say, ten to fifteen minutes—would prevent the “gotcha” culture that currently defines enforcement. Fines should scale with the severity of the violation, not act as blanket punishments

for minor mistakes. For accessible parking, signage must meet consistent visibility standards across campus. Accessibility shouldn’t be a guessing game.

Another obvious step is free parking during off-hours. After 5 p.m. and on Saturdays, when campus activity slows and lots sit mostly empty, there is no justification for charging anyone to park. The university already has free parking on Sundays; why not extend that? Continuing to charge during these hours feels less like management and more like profiteering.

If the university can afford to leave lecture halls dark after hours, it can afford to let students and community members park for free when classes aren’t in session. Allowing free evening and weekend parking would not only reduce financial pressure on students but also encourage campus life after hours, events, study sessions and community engagement that benefits everyone.

USask should also consider tiered pricing or subsidies for low-income students. Parking is not a luxury; for many, it’s a necessity to attend class, particularly for those commuting from rural areas or off-campus housing where public transit isn’t a viable solution. Offering reduced-cost permits to students in financial need or out of town would align with the university’s mission to foster equitable access to education.

Finally, the university must limit permit overselling. Students have long complained about paying hundreds for passes only to find lots completely full, suggesting that Parking and Transportation Services sell more permits than there are spots. If a student pays for a pass, they should be guaranteed a space. Anything less is misleading and unethical.

At its core, the parking issue is about respect. Students shouldn’t feel like they’re being squeezed for every dollar just to attend class. When parking costs nearly as much as tuition and enforcement feels predatory, the university’s priorities come into question. Parking and Transportation Services should exist to make student life easier, not to pad the institution’s wallet.


Until the university brings transparency, fairness and humanity back into the system, every meter, ticket and permit will stand as a symbol of how far USask’s parking policies have drifted from their purpose. Parking shouldn’t feel like a gamble or a luxury; it should be a basic service that supports the students who keep this university alive.



Parking violation ticket on car windshield | Pixelshot | Canva Pro



Comic | Marley Haywood



Sheaf Trivia Question

This alumna of USask, was associated with The Sheaf and later became a medical physicist and Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan.

Find the answer at the bottom of page 17.



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Robotics Club

Continued from 3.

While the team didn't win their first ASABE competition, they came back with something arguably more valuable: perspective.

"Seeing what other teams built was incredible," Digney reflected. "There were people who approached the same challenge in totally different ways, some made smaller, faster robots; others built elaborate storage systems. It was inspiring to see so many creative solutions."

The biggest challenge, both founders agreed, was time. "We really only started designing in January for a July competition," Puderak said. "We were rushing near the end, and a few components failed right before competition week. (...) But this year, we're already ahead, we've got plans to test earlier and iterate more."

For many members, the Robotics Club has become more than just an extracurricular, it's a community. "The best part is that everyone who's here really wants to be here," said Digney. "You're surrounded by people who care, who are curious, who believe in what they're building."

Puderak agreed. "In [my] first year, I was really academic; I didn't think extracurriculars were for me. But this club changed that. I've learned more practical skills here than in some classes, and it's helped me solidify what I want to do."

Both hope the club will continue on after they graduate. "Our long-term goal is longevity," said Puderak. "We want the Robotics Club to keep going, even after we graduate, to grow into an independent, ratified organization." Digney added, "The short-term goal is simple: do well in this year's competition. But the bigger goal is to keep learning and helping others learn."

Asked what advice they'd give to students considering joining a club or starting one, both founders had the same message: just start.

"You only go to university once," said Puderak. "You have access to labs, funding, equipment and people who want to help. Take advantage of that, you won't get these opportunities later." Digney agreed. "It's such a different experience from class, you're meeting deadlines, collaborating, solving real problems. It gives you a head start in the real world."

As they prepare for another season of design, iteration and the occasional all-nighter in Hardy Lab, the Robotics Club members remain grounded in the joy of creation. "It's about celebrating small wins," Digney said.

As their soldering irons cool and the hum of the lab fades into quiet conversation, it's clear that what's being built here, despite what the name might tell you, is a lot more than some robots, but rather a wonderful community of future engineers and tinkerers.



Image submitted by Robotics Club members Evan Digney and Dawson Puderak

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Contact editor@thesheaf.com for more details



CROSSWORD

- Across
1. Throat sound

5. Yaks

9. Part of an outfit for doctors, dentists, nurses etc.

14. Artist Emily from British Columbia

15. Part of the small intestine

16. Famous battle during the Texas Revolution

17. Some people offer them for free

18. Escaped

19. Pace

20. Theme of this crossword

23. They have the thickest fur of any animal

24. She was a bad nun in Salzburg, Austria

27. Squeezed (out)

29. Opera by Victorien Sardou (two words)

31. Worm or caterpillar

34. Locker used when your house isn't big enough (two words)

36. Genus that includes olives

38. Electricity sound

39. _____ - _____ list

40. 2000s drama starring Hilarie Burton and Chad Michael Murray (three words)

45. The equivalent of 5ml

46. They can be about public administration or business management

47. _____-chef

49. Ethnic group who also live in Kosovo, Croatia and Montenegro, to name a few

50. More plentiful

54. It may cause typos

58. Duck sound
61. Nickname for a famous reindeer

62. Elvis's middle name

63. Humans have five basic types of this

64. Lin-Manuel Miranda won one in 2015

65. Unit of loudness

66. Famous Dr. for children

67. Nostradamus or Tiresias

68. Snake sound
- Down
1. Sneeze sound

2. Appear, as ghost

3. It causes St. Anthony's fire

4. Captain Hook's mate (two words)

5. It might include a candle, socks and ribbon (two words)

6. _____ sexual: opposite of asexual

7. Car sound

8. Japanese tea ceremony

9. Fill up

10. Tidy up a drawer (two words)

11. Album by Paul and Linda McCartney

12. Strike caller

13. Ghost sound

21. They were filled with all the species of animals

22. Webzine

25. Part of a back and forth argument (two words)

26. Opposite to bases

28. Naps

29. _____ lazuli

30. On

31. Bomb sound

32. Arm bones

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66						67					68			

Crossword | Greta Mader Stevens

33. Types include the Greylag and Snow

35. Term of encouragement

37. Draws in

41. Expresses disapproval

42. Once, once

43. More fertile (per soil)

44. Bump or hump

48. Water sound

51. _____ Moore (Dave Matthews saxophonist, once)
52. Stiff collars

53. Descartes and Levesque

55. Golds in Valencia

56. Rubik's _____

57. Garfield's frenemy

58. Ice cream amts.

59. Burj Khalifa's home (abbrev.)

60. Univ. whose mascot is Sparky the Sun Devil

Answers will be posted at thesheaf.com next week

Best Horror Movies of 2025

Continued from page 6.

It's refreshing, disturbing, gory, strange and entirely new. You will honestly and truly never see what's around the corner—it's like a heat-seeking missile coming at you from behind.

The Long Walk

From the mind of the most prolific horror writer to ever live, The Long Walk is a testament to Stephen King's ability to write a really messed-up allegory for the despondent reality we live in.

The movie takes place in a totally distant, alternate universe, where the United States has become a totalitarian regime. In an effort to improve their economy and boost patriotism, the American government has implemented a yearly event for capable young men: The Long Walk.

Fifty boys from each state are chosen at random to participate and must walk hundreds of miles across the country without stopping. The event is broadcast across the country for all to watch. Any participant who falls below the designated speed of three miles per hour or stops walking will receive up to three warnings before they are executed by the armed soldiers escorting them. For the "winner" of the competition—also known as the sole survivor—is the promise of a large cash prize, and the fulfillment of one wish of

their choosing.

As the young men—boys, really—set out to conquer the Walk and have their greatest wish fulfilled, we watch as they face the government's brutality and inhumanity, mile by mile. Each participant is pushed to his limit as they trek across the country, victory beyond the horizon and death trailing after them. It's a physically excruciating journey for the participants and mentally torturous for the audience, full of suspense, anguish, grief and gore.

By the end of the film, your stomach will be a changed vessel, either from sheer disgust or horror.

Bring Her Back

From the makers of *Talk To Me*—viral YouTube sensations Danny and Michael Philippou—this movie delves into the complex nature of grief, ableism, child abuse and satanic cult rituals.

The film follows step-siblings Andy and Piper, who are sent to live in a foster home after the traumatic loss of their father. Their new foster mother, Laura, is an off-center former counsellor currently fostering another boy named Oliver, who suffers from mutism.

Andy is forced to come to terms with his



Weapons | Warner Bros. Pictures

own grief and trauma following his father's funeral, while Piper becomes the newest subject of Laura's affections, due to her similarities to Laura's deceased daughter, Cathy, who was also visually impaired. Laura is, to say the least, incredibly obsessed with Piper, projecting her grief as a bereaved mother onto a new and unsuspecting young girl, while Andy watches from the sidelines as his younger sister receives all of the affection from their guardian—again.



The two siblings must navigate their newfound home and their relationships to the occupants within it, no matter how strange it all is to them. As time wears on, their lives only grow more and more bizarre. While he attempts to gain guardianship over his little sister, Andy faces immense psychological torment and

buse at every turn. At the same time, he learns more about the strange circumstances and condition of his foster brother, which only brings up more questions. Their foster mother is not as docile or naive as she may seem, and it's up to Andy to protect them from the supernatural that is clawing at their doors.

The movie is filled to the brim with blood and viscera, so you might not want to watch it on a full stomach. It's grotesque, gory and heartbreaking—a bleak representation of complex grief, intergenerational trauma and cycles of abuse.


Be warned, this movie is not for the faint of heart, coming from someone who is faint of heart.

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