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Monty Stites

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NORTHEASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY'S INDEPENDENT

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INTERIM POLICY

Return to Campus Interim Policy Highlights
By: Monty Stites

As the campus re-populates with in-person classes, here are some highlights from the NEIU COVID-19 Return to Campus Interim Policy which was last updated on Jan. 18. The face mask requirement remains in force, with the notable emphasis on wearing either surgical, KN95 or N95 masks. These masks will be available in all classrooms and offices across campus. If any room is out of masks or other personal protective equipment, the Welcome Desk will have available supplies.

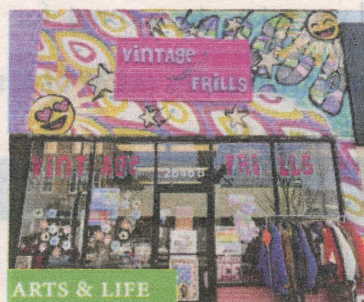
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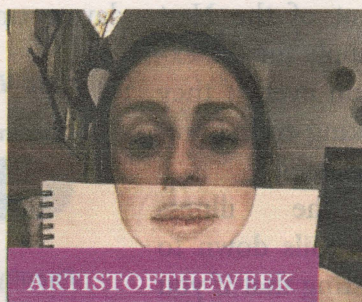
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Return to Campus Interim Policy Highlights

By: Monty Stites, Editor-in-Chief

Masks are still not required in “designated eating area(s),” private offices or shared offices with room for distancing.

Those who are eligible, according to CDC guidelines, for a COVID-19 booster and have not already gotten one are required to.

Additionally, “All students and employees are required to disclose their COVID-19 vaccination status to NEIU by uploading a photograph or scan of their vaccine documents to the NEIU Health Portal.” The CDC guidelines may be found by visiting the CDC website.

Unboosted employees and students will now also have to submit to weekly testing until they provide proof of a vaccination booster. The testing requirement remains in effect for those who have not been vaccinated.

To enforce this, the Interim Policy states “Individuals who violate this policy and jeopardize the safety of the community shall be subject to discipline in accordance with procedures outlined in the relevant collective bargaining agreements, handbooks, policies, Student Code of Conduct, procedures, practices, or contracts.”

There are three grounds for booster or vaccination exemptions: religious grounds, for those that are entirely remote faculty or students and “will not be physically on campus for any reason,” or for whom the vaccine may be harmful. No resident of the Nest may apply for the exemption even if they are taking entirely remote classes.

The illness policy boils down to suggesting that if you have the symptoms of a respiratory disease –

a runny nose, cough, fever, body aches, etc. – to stay home, and if you are on campus, to leave immediately.

Students should report any positive test results to Student Health Services, and employees or faculty should report to Human Resources.

If you receive a positive test, isolate for five days, and if your symptoms are gone and you have a negative rapid or PCR test result, you need not continue isolation.

However, if your symptoms remain or your rapid PCR returns a positive result, you are required to remain isolated for another five days or until you get a

negative test. NEIU community members identified as exposed through contact tracing and do not have any symptoms are still required to self-isolate for five days if they are either eligible and unboosted or unvaccinated.

It is also recommended that those people exposed to the virus should wear a mask when around anyone else for the following ten days.

Only those who have been vaccinated and boosted are not required to quarantine after an exposure.

The meeting and events policy encourages online events. Campus event sizes will be limited to account for social

distance capacity. Events will include a registration list, and meetings will record attendance for contact tracing purposes in case any of the attendees has a positive Covid-19 test.

Lastly, the Interim Policy recommends when the weather eventually permits it that events should be held outdoors.

Scan for current Interim Policy:



Infographic Credits: www.neiu.edu

NEIU VACCINATION RATES (AS OF DEC. 15, 2021)

Currently Enrolled Students

90%

Faculty and Staff

99%

POLICE BLOTTER

These incidents occurred on NEIU campus property between the dates of 01/01/2021 and 01/28/2022.

01/04/22 - THE NEST

NEIU Officers assisted the Cook County Sheriff Police with a curfew check on Nest resident.

01/06/22 - P.E. BUILDING

Staff received call accusing former employee of sexual assault. This incident occurred four years ago. Police is attempting to reach complainant.

01/07/22 - NEIU

Police notified of on-going work related rift between faculty/staff thru emails. Departmental issue- no Police service required at this time.

01/13/22 - THE NEST

While writing citations on suspicious car parked on campus, it was determined occupants were @ Nest. Banned for not signing in as guests.

01/13/22 - OFF-CAMPUS

Suburban Police Department assisted on well-being check of faculty that hadn't been heard from. Faculty was located at home safe.

01/14/22 - THE NEST

Resident asked to go to Hospital to seek assistance with personal issues. Ambulance responded & transported subject.

01/16/22 - C- BUILDING

Staff member received harrasing email from subject not related to University.

01/17/22 - THE NEST

Officers responded to loud noise/possible Domestic complaint at the Nest. Guest complied when asked to leave, peace restored.

01/21/22 - EL CENTRO

Officer called to check door found ajar on premise. Building was empty, but it had appeared someone had been inside. Locksmith secured building.

01/26/22 - BERNARD BROMMEL HALL

Hot air coming from ceiling vent set off fire alarm. Engineers and Fire Department responded to reset alarm.

01/26/22 - EL CENTRO

Unkown offender spray painted windows on upper floor of The Granite Gallery at the El Centro Campus. Pictures taken and inventoried.

01/28/22 - PARKING LOT- L

While patrolling parking lots, Officer located a box cutter where several vehicles had been parked at entrance of Parking Lot.

The NEIU police blotter is requested from our campus police for every issue of NEIU Independent because this publication exercises its right to do so, courtesy of the Clery Act. The Clery Act is a federal statute requiring all higher education establishments that participate in federal financial aid programs to maintain records of campus crime and campus security information. Any case that is considered ongoing may not be listed in the blotter. For this reason, there may be updated reports published retroactively once those cases are closed. For more information about the Clery Act, visit the NEIU police department's webpage.



Chicago Climate Action Plan

2022 Town Hall

By: Ryland Pietras, Managing Editor

On Jan. 22, the City of Chicago held a virtual town hall meeting on its 2022 climate action plan. It was the first of its kind and the first on a climate action plan since 2008.

A representative of the Mayor's Office moderated the event which featured plenty of climate-concerned citizens, the City's chief sustainability officer and a representative of the Mayor's Youth Commission.

"As Chicago's future leaders, we've already begun to inherit a world without clean air, with neighborhoods covered with pollution," said Charlotte, a member of the Mayor's Youth Commission. "And a city where people are disproportionately affected by climate change just based on where they live, work, or go to school."

The goals of the meeting, laid out by Kyra Woods of the Mayor's Office, were to share the climate action plan framework with all of the attendees, explain ways Chicagoans can inform the planning committee and hear what folks had to say in that regard.

According to Woods, the foremost principle of the plan was for it to be equitable and to be built around those who are the most vulnerable. Doing this would involve implementing solutions that are both technologically centered and nature based.

"When [technical solutions] are paired with processes or investments around land restoration and conservation, or better land use practices, we can actually have a very robust set of strategies to reduce our carbon emissions and our greater greenhouse gas emissions overall," said Woods.

These strategies would be put in place to save money for both the city as well as its residents to advance environmental justice and to improve community health.

"Together with reducing carbon emissions, you see these as the four pillars to help guide our work [and] are the principles that we kept in mind, as we identified strategies to help meet certain goals," Woods explained.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Chicago has on average paid more for electricity than the rest of the United States but less for utility gas over the last four years.

Part of the plan's strategies to achieve its goals is to retrofit many of the existing buildings within Chicago. This means, rather than tear everything down and start from scratch, renovate the building to make it more energy efficient.

Coincidentally, this also happened to be the first strategy of the climate action plan laid out in 2008 under then-Mayor Richard M. Daley. The goal then was for Chicago

to "achieve an 80 percent reduction below its 1990 Greenhouse gas emissions levels by the year 2050."

However, it set a goal of achieving 25 percent below the 1990 levels by 2020, and according to the most recent data, it cut emissions by 15 percent between 2005 and 2017.

The second strategy is to improve waste processing which includes three channels: commercial and industrial, construction and demolition and residential. Although it was not explained how that waste was going to be diverted.

"Gratefully, as part of the 2022 budget, there are already line items put aside to invest in the staffing on our side at the city, as well

as the systems to get some of these newer programs up and running, and to further invest in existing systems that we have, such as recycling," Woods said.

This happened to be an issue that many citizens in attendance took the most interest in. Anne Holcomb of the South Shore neighborhood was concerned about a combined disposal facility in her community.

"It's a waste receptacle for Calumet River and Chicago River sledge that has a lot of toxic heavy metals," said Holcomb. "It was supposed to be kept and turned over to the park district ... and now they're going back on that saying they're going to actually expand it."



"Chicago Climate Action Plan" by Metro Chicago Information Center

Cont. to page 5

Cont. from page 4

Because it is right on the shores of Lake Michigan, it can become a major polluter, explained Holcomb. “Especially if we have rising lake levels like we did a couple years ago.”

As stated before, equitable planning is paramount in this planning process and makes up the third strategy. This would be done by collecting data using new or existing technologies and gathering community feedback to ensure that decisions are made with communities in mind.

“Given the impacts of the pandemic and how that all happened to all of us, we recognize more than ever that it is important to think critically about how we plan and invest across our city,” said Woods.

The last two strategies involve preparing for the future by shifting to 100 percent clean and renewable energy and decommissioning fossil fuels, as well as supporting clean and affordable transportation options. Since the ‘L’ is already electric, this speaks to the public bus system.

For those who wish to remain active, Chicago wants to increase the walking and biking networks.

Though this was just a draft of the 2022 climate action plan, a representative from the Mayor’s office said we should have a tentative release of the final plan in April.

Interview with Stella Kuwonu, Author of “30 ans: When Everything Fails at 30”

By: Ryland Pietras, Managing Editor

Toward the end of Fall 2021 semester Stella Kuwonu, a 28-year-old political science major at Northeastern Illinois University (NEIU), self-published her first novel, “30 Ans: When Everything Fails at 30.”

“30 Ans” tells the story of Adwoa, a young attorney in Chicago, who is playing all the right cards and making a name for herself at the firm she works at. The love of her life, Jack, adores her and would do anything to make sure their relationship flourishes.

Even though Adwoa seems to be doing everything “right,” she doesn’t get the respect that she deserves at the firm, nor from her overprotective Aunt Jennifer who comes to town to visit for a month to see that the niece she raised gets married before she turns 30.

Kuwonu, who was born in Togo, said that women there are expected to study traditional subjects like law or medicine. Rarely would she see women on television. “30 Ans” is a testament to the fact that a woman shouldn’t have to appeal to any one person’s, let alone a culture’s, expectations.

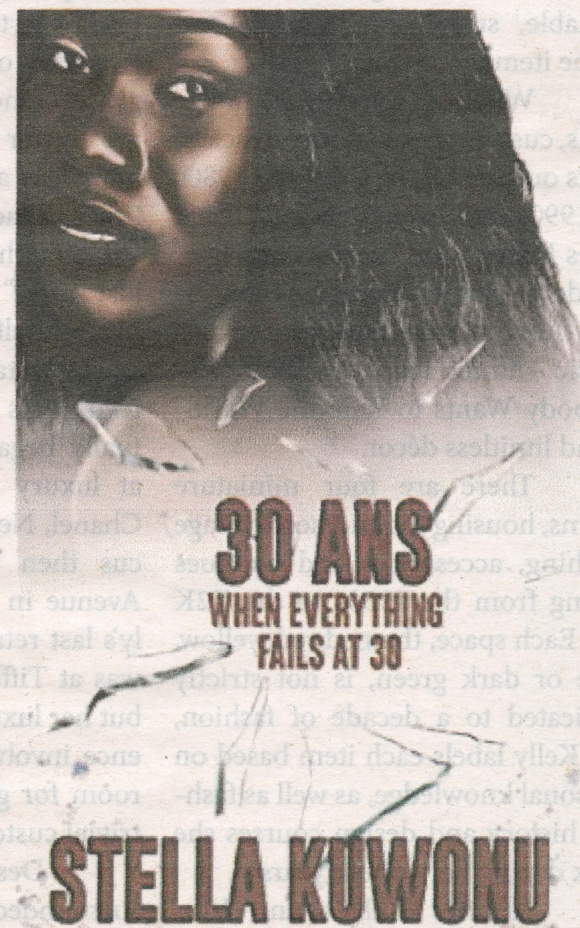
Growing up in both Togolese and American culture, Kuwonu creatively weaves the generational gap into the storyline by contrast-

ing Aunt Jennifer, who is very much old-school in her ways – a reference to the Togolese culture – and Adwoa, who has adopted much of the American lifestyle.

Kuwonu also blends the two cultures by making references to traditional dishes she grew up with like tapioca Zogbon – a classic breakfast dish which she describes as being the equivalent of scrambled eggs in America.

I sat down to discuss “30 Ans” with Kuwonu who says that the book is about 87 percent fiction and “the rest is bits and pieces from my life and things I’ve gone through growing up in both cultures, or even stories I’ve heard from friends of what had happened to them.”

Scan the QR code or go to our website to listen to the story in full.



Book Cover for Stella Kuwonu’s first novel, “30ANS When Everything Fails at 30”. Photo Credits: Amazon.com

Feature: Jennifer's Thrill for Vintage Frills

By: Alisa Scott, Writer

Lifelong Chicagoan and millennial, Jennifer Kelly, owns Vintage Frills, a resale boutique located on 2846 N. Milwaukee Avenue.

Kelly soft launched her boutique on June 1, 2021 and has since been interviewed for media outlets including Block Club Chicago and WTTW for offering consumers affordable, sustainable fashion and home items.

When approaching Vintage Frills, customers will notice a rack of coats outside dating from the 1980s to 1990s and signs labeled 'Black Lives Matter' and 'Stop Asian Hate.' Inside are jewelry items by The Vintage Royalty, furniture pieces, 80s music – think Tears for Fears' "Everybody Wants to Rule the World" – and limitless décor.

There are four miniature rooms, housing his and hers vintage clothing, accessories and antiques dating from the 1950s to the Y2K era. Each space, themed red, yellow, blue or dark green, is not strictly dedicated to a decade of fashion, but Kelly labels each item based on personal knowledge, as well as fashion history and design courses she took during her college years.

Jennifer Kelly runs Vintage Frills full-time, but her love for second-hand fashion began as a teenager. "My family, sisters and

I always thrifted, and it became a normal part of my life. It was always exciting, because you never know what you [will] come across and the items have more value than what you end up paying."

Kelly continued thrifting as a college student at Columbia College Chicago, the Illinois Institute of Art, and the International Academy of Design and Technology. "I bounced around schools a lot, mostly for financial reasons, but I never got a degree," she added. "At times, I had one credit or one class left and thought, 'I'll just work.'"

Kelly has worked retail since her teen years and eventually began working at luxury stores like Chanel, Neiman Marcus then Saks Fifth Avenue in 2019. Kelly's last retail position was at Tiffany & Co., but her luxury experience involved limited room for growth and trivial customers.

Despite being surrounded by luxurious products, she continued thrifting on Sundays with her sis-

ter. When 2020's coronavirus lockdown began, Kelly had an office job at Uber Corporate and considered opening Vintage Frills.

"I was not intending to return to retail," Kelly said. "Most people locked down and I worked on my business plan. Working in luxury can be abusive, [but] my past retail positions helped give me the experience needed to run my own shop."

Behind the scenes, Kelly hunts vintage merchandise for her boutique at weekly estate sales with her husband, James.

"James works a full-time job, but he finds a way to help me," said Kelly. "He also assists with business financing, uses Excel spreadsheets and helps me figure out where I am." The Kellys also have a young son and apart from Vintage Frills, Kelly owns Style Rivals, a business endeavor "for fashion stylists who have difficulty getting into fashion shows," Kelly said.

"Starting this endeavor was a way to help people who were like me, a student with fewer resources."



Jennifer Kelly posing with two vintage pieces in the yellow room, taken 01/21/2022 by Alisa Scott on iPhone 11

Cont. on page 7

Cont. from page 6

A small business challenge Kelly has navigated is pricing. By attending estate sales, Kelly is providing a service. “Thrifting is a lot of work. Some people will spend hours in a thrift store; you have to find your diamond in the rough.”

For example, Vintage Frill’s current best-selling items are hand-knit vintage sweaters, which can range anywhere from \$15-\$36. For comparison, she adds, “Today, if you went into a Neiman’s looking for a handknit sweater, it could cost anywhere from \$300-\$400.”

Jennifer Kelly also acknowledges another business obstacle – COVID-19 regulations. She asks that customers wear a facemask and offers curbside pickup via Instagram direct messaging @vintagefrills.

Currently, Vintage Frills does not have an official website and has been open for less than a year, so Kelly utilizes bootstrapping. “Bootstrapping is when you take every dime you get and feed it back into your business,” Kelly explained. “That is my biggest struggle, but it is worth the investment.”

Despite the challenges of business ownership, Kelly says her favorite career aspects are being her own boss, flexible scheduling and her customers’ openness to second-hand fashion. Kelly explains, “now more than ever, people are not ashamed of thrifting.” Stigma surrounding thrifting involves a lower perception of value.

In a 2020 report, Kimberly Santos of UC-Berkeley said, “Before becoming trendy, walking into thrift stores [was] highly stigmatized and ... seen to be for people who could [not] afford new clothes.”

However, online platforms like Instagram and Tik-Tok have recently helped popularize second-hand fashion while highlighting concerns of fast fashion like pollution and questionable workers’ rights; fast fashion refers to a quick, cheap manufacturing practice used by retailers like Shein and Forever 21, as examples.

Kelly said, “I would say do more thrifting. If you have to buy new [items], like underwear and plus or petite-sized items that can be difficult to thrift, just educate yourself on where [they are] coming from.”

For context, a 2021 Vox report by Terry Nguyen on fast fashion reveals since the 1990s, “Retailers migrated most of their manufacturing process overseas to countries with lax labor laws, where wages can be low and working overtime (without additional pay) is common.”

While providing alternatives to fast fashion cons, Kelly hopes to open more Vintage Frills boutiques in the Hyde Park, Lincoln Park and Wicker Park neighborhoods and maintain the ethical entrepreneurship that has become custom in her family.

Despite current hardships, she continues pushing through fear. For aspiring entrepreneurs and students discovering their purpose, Kelly ad-

vised, “Be prepared to invest blood, sweat and tears if you have a dream. Do not feel chained down. Get experience and work in the area you want to own. Do what is going to make you happy, one step at a time.”



Kelly’s colorful Vintage Frills storefront” taken 01/21/2022 by Alisa Scott on iPhone 11

“Peril” Book Review

By: Angie Ybarra,
Writer

During one of the most contentious presidencies in the history of our democracy, “Peril” allows you to be a proverbial fly on the wall. The reader is skillfully led through the timeline of what had been transpiring behind the doors of the White House from this unconventional president.

As key events unfold, we are given a behind-the-scenes look at the players and how some of the most precarious situations our country had been in played out.

The position of the leader of the free world was now in place. The man who had never held political office was our leader. The authors muse about what could and had set this world leader off, what would capture his attention, and, finally, what misstep could thrust America into the center of a war.

This president is described in the book as a narcissist, someone who was ill-prepared to handle a crisis, and how the onset of Covid-19 showed just how unprepared he was.

The White House seemed to have a revolving door in place, and anyone who dared to question the president would be shown to that door. America, at this time, did not resemble any other time in our country’s short history.

Yes, riots were taking place, people were speaking up for themselves and the resolve of the president was called into question. It

is hard to believe that the events replayed in this book seem like a dream—or nightmare—that had taken place, no matter the fact that this all happened during one man’s presidency.

This president felt that domination, fear, and control were the ways to handle many situations that were taking place. This president spewed out such reprehensible things, yet he was allowed to keep doing just that. This president stated he loved people who were poorly educated because he knew how easily they can be swayed and controlled.

Good press and acting as if he was strong were parts of the persona that his president wished to embody.

It may be hard to revisit these situations, some incidents can trigger you and cause anxiety, but I feel that it is of great importance to recall these events. The right to vote is being questioned. Trying to enter the voting booth and that the booth’s accessibility is in question.

America needs to bring back a sense of togetherness, kindness, and, of course, awareness that actions do have consequences. As a president, the people of this great country’s welfare need to know that for four years we had to endure a man who caused a true insurrection. We must educate ourselves, be aware that those in public offices were elected by the people, for the people, and serve the people. Edu-

cation truly is the key.

Bob Woodward is a one-time investigative journalist of the Washington Post who is now an associate editor and is not unfamiliar with a presidency marred by controversy.

During the Nixon administration, Woodward and Carl Bernstein covered the 1972 break-in of the Watergate Hotel—the headquarters of the Democratic National Convention. The entire incident was covered in their book “All The President’s Men,” which was later turned into a movie.

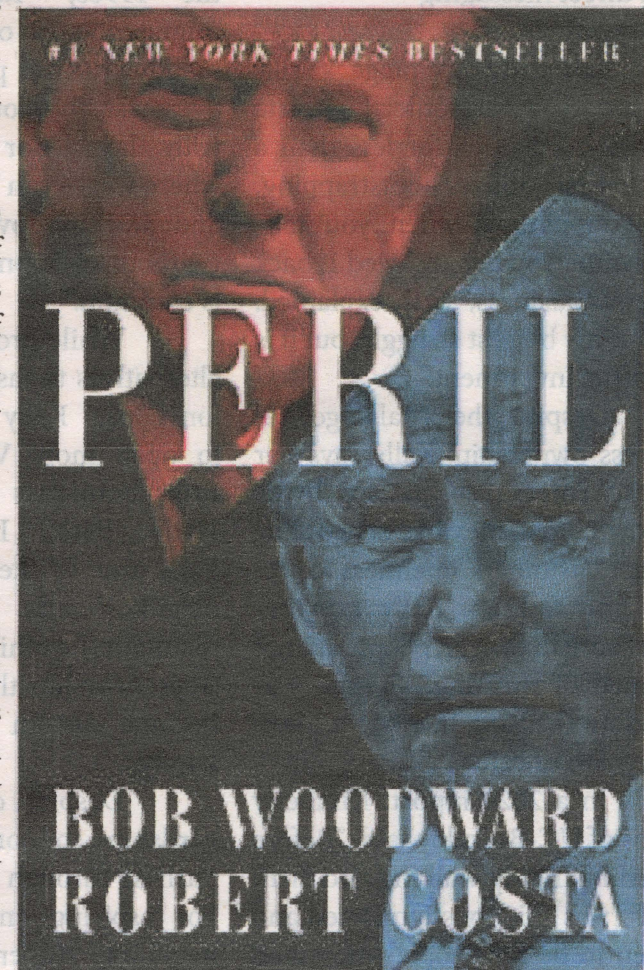
The biggest reaction to their coverage of this incident was the resignation of President Nixon before he could face impeachment.

Nowadays, Woodward is given unfettered access to the Oval Office. Woodward is a man that holds no punches and conveys the story in a way that can be understood by all.

Again, I highly recom-

end reading this book. It will allow you unique access to the daily events of a president, our country, and those who seek to control it all in the name of democracy.

Take the time to read this book and other recent books by Woodward. Woodward is the sole author of “Fear” and “Rage” which offer the unusual, uncensored, and unvarnished truth of a presidency.



"Violeta" Book Review

By: Angie Ybarra, Writer

As the saying goes, history tends to repeat itself. Isabel Allende artfully tells the tale of Violeta del Valle and the life she lived during the time of the Spanish Flu. Reading this novel was truly a recounting of what we are living through now – almost, that is.

The common becomes extraordinary: travel, finding food, health-care, mask-wearing, mandates, and general living was seen as hard to do.

The reader traverses through times of a world war, the birth of a child, the traditions of Hispanic families rich in traditions, the failing of a stock market, and course the pandemic that would claim over one-third of the world's population.

The art of the written word is lost. Taking time to write a love letter or any letter at all is also a dying format. An all-encompassing goodbye letter from a grandmother to a grandson captivates the reader. Violeta tells her century in the making life story, a story that begins during one worldwide pandemic and is coming to an end during another. Violeta gives us a front-roll seat to her life.

Within the pages of "Violeta," one finds the pages dripping with the traditions that existed within her life. Violeta's father is paid tribute to through the author's words that are given life with the

flowing words of Violeta.

Her father was a man of vision, who ensured the influenza was kept away from his home. Larger than life, the father contributes to this tale via traditions and forcefulness. She fills the pages with power and weakness.

The characters such as Ms. Taylor leap from the pages. The taming of Violeta was an artful task taken on by Ms. Taylor and one she achieved quickly. Violeta, a once overbearing child spoiled rotten by her botting aunts, went through a metamorphosis giving way to a well-bred young lady.

Ms. Taylor became a part of this foreign family and was valuable to achieving a sense of humanity within the pages of this novel. Ms. Taylor is also able to challenge a young man's life by teaching him the value of living a life of value. Ms. Taylor drew out of this young man a love forbidden because of differences in heritage.

Friendship, love, intimacy, attention, sensuality, and innocence fill this story. Hurt than happiness. Fear and love. Transitions and taboos. Life and death.

This book is full of flowery imagery that somehow is still able to show the gruffness and reality of life. Living during these times is hard and challenging, but full of traditions, historical events, and is

told in the voice of someone who is able to capture and hold the reader's attention until the last word is read.

It seems that many other topics are also covered in this tale. homophobia, thrifting, education, women's suffrage, and urbanization are but a few.

It is an amazing weaving of life into the words that flow on these well-written pages. Find yourself lost within the chapters of this novel and find yourself seeing the similarities between then and now. "Violeta" is well written – a tale rich and consuming of one's imagination. Get it. Read it. Cherish it. This tale will captivate you from start to finish as it's

part history lesson, part romance story, full of passion, regret, and the plight of so many different types of people. I highly recommend "Violeta".

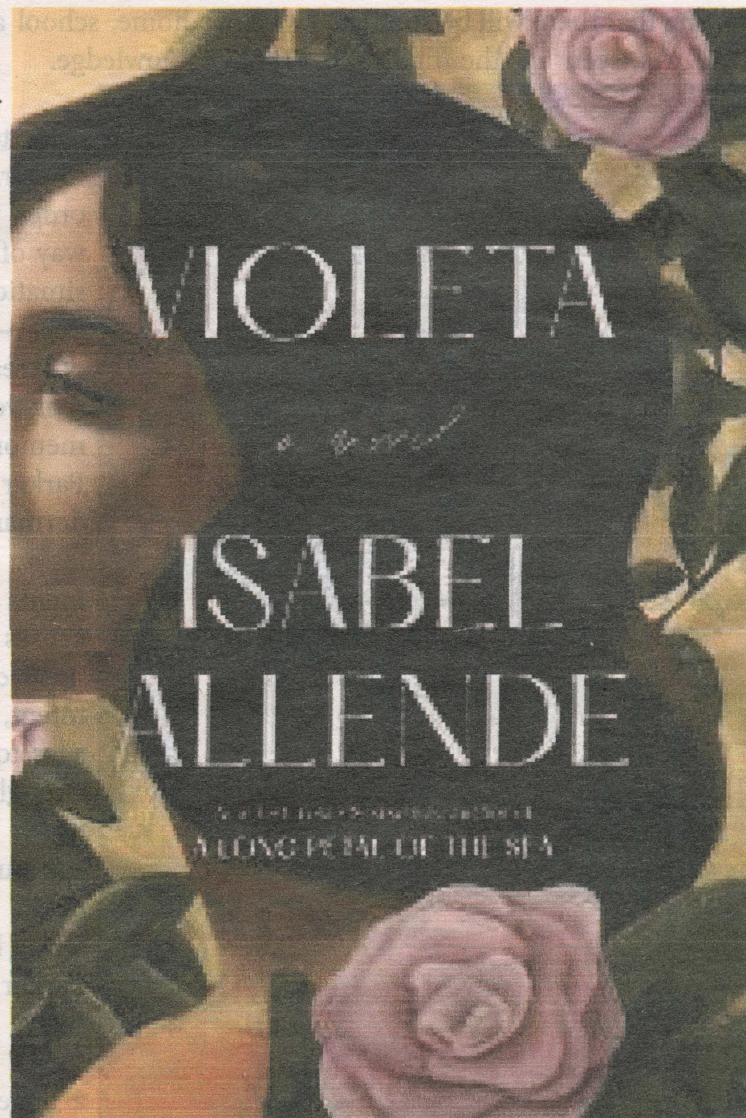


Photo Credits: www.amazon.com

"Spiderman: No Way Home" Movie Review

By: Leslie Lozada, Writer

"Spiderman: No Way Home," the latest film in the Marvel Cinematic Universe, appeared on the silver screen in late December 2021 and is still a highly popular movie one month on. For those that have not seen the movie yet, this is a warning that there will be spoilers.

As seen in the final mo-

ments from "Spiderman: Far From Home," Mysterio exposed Peter Parker as being Spiderman to the world. Throughout the first half of the film, this causes several stressful situations in which Peter, MJ and Ned have to deal with the fallout of Peter's home, school and life being public knowledge.

All of this leads to Peter going to Dr. Strange in order to find some way of resolving his situation. Which he does – in the form of creating a spell that would erase the memory of Peter Parker being Spiderman.

A few adjustments later by Peter causes the spell to be unsuccessful in its intent, but it manages to be powerful enough to break down the walls of the universe and draw in everyone who knows Peter Parker as Spiderman.

This film was a huge crossover of all those who have

appeared in past Spiderman films, spanning 20 years and three different film franchises. Not only that, a large part of the film centers on several of the past major villains from the prior film franchises, with the main focus of turning them to the side of good.

The film allows time for most of the villains to have their moment before and after they have been cured. Of note is the fact that Norman Osborn, unlike the last time he appeared in "Spiderman" (2002), is just a man who is frightened by the Green Goblin entity – a terrifying force that brings out the worst in our Spiderman.

The film also gives considerable character focus to those who have previously played Spiderman.

In the case of Andrew Garfield's Spiderman, there is a sense of closure from his two-film series, when it comes to the death of Gwen Stacy. With Tobey Maguire's Spiderman, while he does not have that much of an emotional arc throughout the film, he does have a sense of maturity that he had not reached when his three-film series ended.

As for this film's Spiderman, as played by Tom Holland, what this film ends up being is the start of Spiderman, rather than the end of one.

Throughout the past three

films, we have seen our version of Spiderman grow into the role of being a hero; from the first film where he had to navigate being a student in high school and his role being Spiderman, the second film where he grew more confidence in handling responsibilities and this film where he truly grows up and becomes an adult on his own, taking ownership of his actions.

Over the course of this film, we can see how much he leans on his support system, his family, which is eventually torn apart by the end of the film, as he wanted an easy fix to his problems and was unwilling at that time to do the hard work himself.

Now, he must face the consequences as a lonely friendly neighborhood Spiderman.

"Spiderman: No Way Home" is still in theaters, and will eventually be released on DVD, Blu Ray and other streaming services.



Photo Credits: Wikipedia

Intro to Artist of the Week Section

By: Savannah Owens, Production Editor

For the first time ever Northeastern Illinois University (NEIU) newspaper, The Independent, will be featuring work from NEIU's artists on a biweekly basis in conjunction with our print and digital releases.

It's important to recognize and show appreciation for local artists in your community. Showcasing art from different artists will allow readers to experience new perspectives, and types of art they may have never seen before.

Work will also be posted on our Instagram:

@neiuartistsoftheweek

If you'd like to be a published artist in upcoming issues of The Independent's new "Artist of the Week" section, please follow the QR Code to find the link of interview questions, then copy and paste the questions into an email along with photos of your work to pindpnews@neiu.edu

Submissions must be a high-resolution JPEG, TIFF, or PNG. Video/GIF artwork will be published through a QR Code that will lead viewers to our website. Other than that, all paintings, drawings, photos of sculptures, photography, digital work, printing or mixed media will be published.

There are so many ways you can support your local NEIU artists, as local artists are waiting to be

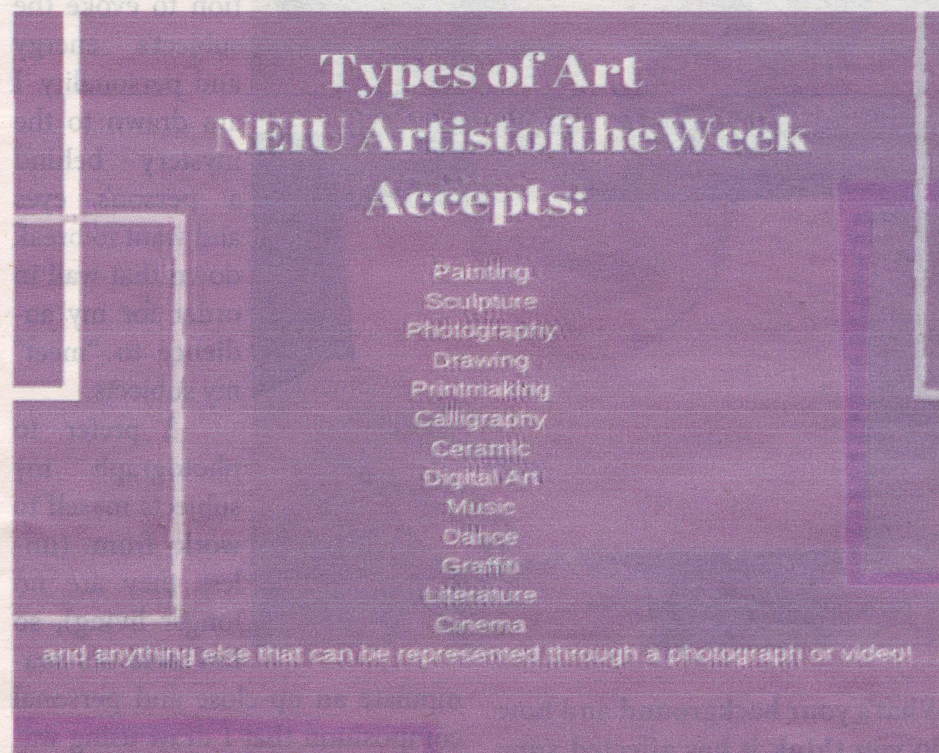
seen. They want their work to reach their target audience and the only way they can do that is if their work gets shared.

The best thing about local artists is that they typically have a social media account for their artwork and are consistently posting new photos of their work.

Another way you can support artists is by going to local events that feature NEIU artists. Typically, they are held in galleries nearby or at Northeastern itself. Perhaps the best way is by purchasing from them.

Oftentimes, if the artist is currently choosing to sell their work, they should have a link which will lead you to their shop, or the artist may have a spot for donations as well!

Scan here for more information!



NEIU'S
ARTIST
OF
THE
WEEK

THE INDEPENDENT

Taken from the @neiuartistsoftheweek Instagram Page.

NEIU Artist Interview, Lauren Kelley

Interview by Savannah Owens



What's your background and how do you think it has affected your work?

I'm a very empathetic person at heart, and I've always cherished my relationships with people. I've always been able to read a person very well, and my art shows my audience how I perceive that person through color, linework, and pattern.

Whether it's art, clothing, or interior decorating, I love mixing patterns. I would describe my style as very eclectic.

I think the music I listen to and the movies I watch have also affected the style of my work.

What type of art do you create and what motivates you to make it?

Through my expressive

use of line work, color and pattern, I create portraits with the intention to evoke the subject's energy and personality. I am drawn to the mystery behind a person's eyes and want to break down that wall in order for my audience to "meet" my subjects.

I prefer to photograph my subjects myself to work from (unless they are no longer living), so I'm able to ma-

nipulate an up-close and personal composition that I draw using watercolor pencils and colored pencils.

I build on top of the drawing with collage using pieces from magazines, children's books, wrapping paper, contact paper, recycled found objects, glitter, etc.

The mixture of chaotic patterns, eccentric colors, and the busyness of line work all channel different components that make up one interesting individual.

What's the purpose or goal of your work?

For my audience to "meet" my subjects and view them how I perceive them. I want my portraits to tell a story through my eyes.

I try to focus on the posi-

tive attributes of my subjects when making my work, and I'd like for my audience to pick up on that. Instead of looking at a stranger and finding something to be annoyed with, I want beauty and intrigue to be the first things my audience feels.

I want the positive energy that my subjects evoke to radiate off the paper onto the person holding/viewing it.

Who are your biggest influences?

Bisa Butler is a big influence of mine. Her use of collage work and mixing patterns is so impressive and beautiful. I also appreciate how she "takes care" of her subjects. For example, she will add shoes on her subjects if they don't have any in the picture she's working off of.

Jim Carrey [yes, the actor!] is another influence of mine. He's an overall amazingly talented and intelligent individual, who creates beautiful and meaningful art. I appreciate the political messages a lot of them have.

Other influences of mine are Chuck Close and Andy Warhol.

Where do you find inspiration?

People! Personalities. The vibes people give off. Humans are the most beautiful pieces of art, and I just attempt to portray on paper how I perceive them.

I am attracted to the 1960's and 70's aesthetic and like to use colors that remind me of such; it brings me warmth and comfort, like my subjects do.

I focus on what I view as their positive attributes, and the bright warm colors and funky pat-

terns from that time help illustrate the disposition of each person. The film "Yellow Submarine" is a good example of where I find my inspiration.

I also like to recycle and go garbage picking! The whole style of a piece can be formed from a retro piece of cardboard I found in the garbage that I liked the pattern of, or a vintage shirt that I found at Goodwill.

I draw my portraits, and then I build on top of the drawing with collage using pieces from magazines, children's books, wrapping paper, contact paper, fabric, recycled found objects, glitter, etc.

How do you define success as an artist?

Oh boy. I want to say just being satisfied with your own work, but as artists, we are our own harshest critic. I would say knowing that you made a difference? Whether it be to a large audience or just one person, knowing you made a difference with something your hands created is pretty amazing.

I personally love when I ask someone what vibe they get when they look at one of my portraits, and every characteristic they name is spot on to who that person really is. I know that I accomplished exactly what I wanted to.

How do you market yourself and your work?

Just Instagram for now, as I work on building my Portfolio. I like to give my pieces away as gifts, because a lot of the portraits I've

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done have been of people in my life who have passed away. So I want a loved one of that person to have my portrait.

What do you believe is the role of an artist in society?

To change a person's way of thinking. Even if it's just for a second. Even if it just makes someone stop and think, "that's cool." Because with that, there are so many possibilities that could unravel.

I would love for someone to view my portraits and feel the positive energy that they encapsulate, and carry that out into their lives when meeting someone new, rather than having that natural instinct of human competition. Society, blegh! **If you could give one piece of advice to another artist trying to navigate their way in the artworld, what would it be?**

You don't need to have a reason or deep meaning for everything you make. Just create what you want to create. That right there is meaning.

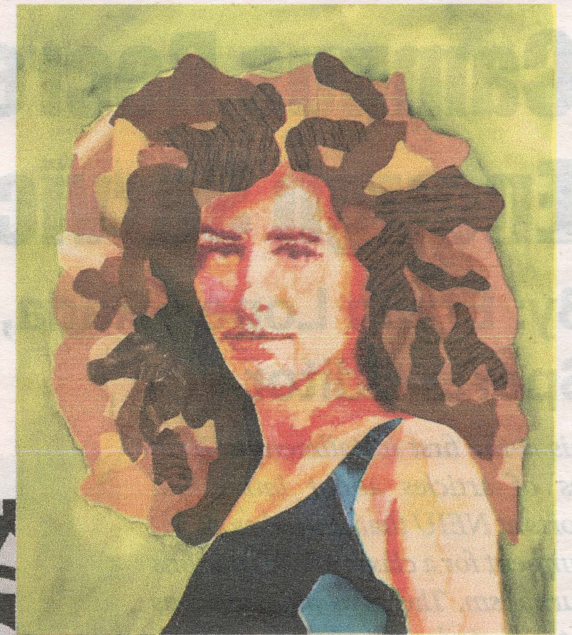
What are your handles, or contact information so people can check out your work?

I don't really have anything yet, but @KaurenLelley is my Instagram that I occasionally share my art on. I'll make an Instagram page specific to my art once I grow my portfolio.

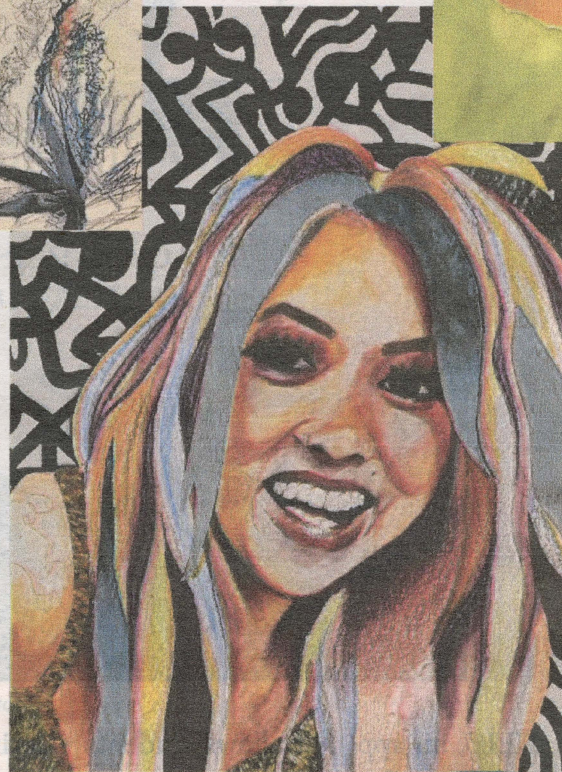
Scan here to gain access to Laurens Portfolio.



"Uncle Rich" 2021, Mixed Media, 12"x9"



"Mrs Weber (Eileen Costello)" 2021, Mixed Media, 12"x9"



"Jenna" 2021, Mixed Media, 12"x9"



"Max (Pelican Boy)" 2021, Mixed Media, 12"x9"



"Grandpa Reeves" 2021, Mixed Media, 9"x12"

Campus Recreation is Not Providing Enough Services to NEIU's Sports Community

By: Erwin Lopez Rada,
Sports Editor

This is the first installment of a series of articles about intramural sports at NEIU that started as an assignment for a class called Solutions Journalism. The class objective was to teach students a kind of journalism that does not only talk about how bad things are, but instead, presents a problem and the varied responses that people elsewhere had developed to solve it.

After a year and a half-long hiatus from in-person classes, Northeastern Illinois University (NEIU) students came back for the Fall 2021 semester with the hope of being able to enjoy college life to the fullest within the restrictions and rules driven by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Department teams had more than a year to prepare events and to plan for contingencies so students could enjoy the NEIU sport facilities as usual. But the reality was different.

As classes started and schedules for the P.E Complex were available, Campus Recreation did not yet have a COVID-19 protocol for athletes using the facilities and also failed to organize and promote any sport activities throughout the fall semester.

The IM League page for



Photo Credits: www.neiuiindependent.org

NEIU, an app that allows students to sign up for their preferred sport within the university and the ability to create teams and schedules for leagues, was populated with events for Fall 2021 but nobody seemed to be managing the website.

This writer created a profile and a team for the soccer tournament, but nobody processed the submissions, and there were only two other students registered for events during Fall 2021, but their registrations went unprocessed as well.

As the second week of

Spring 2022 finishes, the information on NEIU's IM League website has not changed from past semester. Campus Recreation had only sent out correspondence at the end of the semester regarding their change of schedule, holiday break and on Jan. 24, 2022 informing the NEIU community about the reopening of the facilities on Monday, Jan. 31, 2022. NEIU will resume operations at the Fitness Center starting on Jan. 31, 2022.

Campus Recreation also communicated to students in their last email to "be on the lookout" for

Scan this QR Code to go NEIU's IMLeague website.



more information and presented a "Nest Night Volleyball" event to be held on an undetermined date.

This void of opportunities to create a sports community and enjoy NEIU spaces is taking a toll on the student body.

Nico Olszanski, a 21-year-old CMT major, told The Independent that he "would like to be able to play soccer on a weekly basis," but since NEIU's promotion and offer of intramural sports is subpar, that desire was not met last semester.

He also commented that intramural sports were a feature at

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NEIU prior to the pandemic: 3-on-3 basketball, flag football, soccer, volleyball, and many others intramural sports were offered up to Fall 2019.

To fill the void of opportunities of engagement, international student and CMT major from the Netherlands, Wessel t' Hoen, created a Whatsapp group called "Soccer NEIU" where NEIU students that love soccer planned to play together. They met almost every week of the Fall 2021 semester.

But even though these students are organized to play soccer, NEIU presented a limited schedule for the enjoyment of sports facilities.

NEIU sports buildings close at noon on Saturdays and they are permanently closed on Sundays. The space is not open after 5:00 pm on Fridays. These are the days that most people in a commuter-based school like NEIU have available for engaging in sports activities.

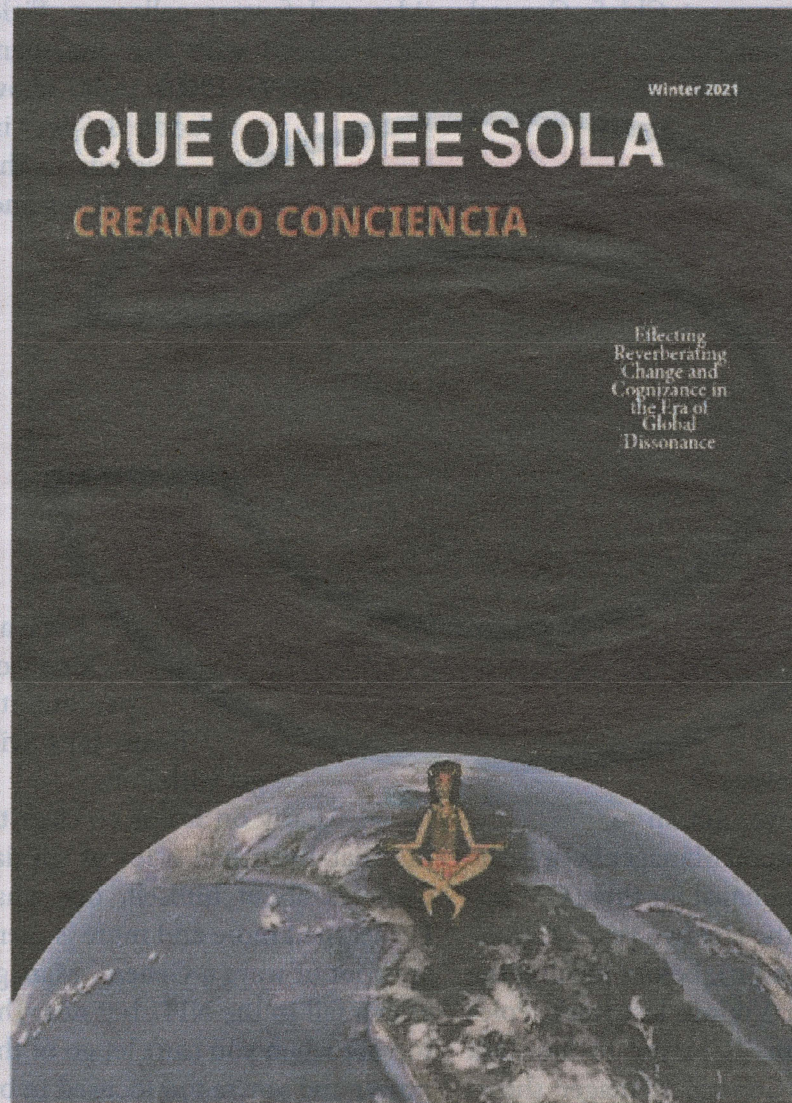
This situation forced students to pay for spaces to play sports elsewhere, or to meet out of school, commonly at Stephen T. Mathers highschool while NEIU facilities sat silent.

The Independent made efforts to reach to school authorities from Campus Recreation for a comment on their plans and challenges regarding intramural sports during Fall 2021. Talli Shepherd, who oversees NEIU's IM League page, initially agreed to an interview but has since not responded to our requests for comment.

Dr. Terry Mena, NEIU Dean of Students and Vice President of Student Affairs, agreed to an interview for the next installment of

this series in which we will present NEIU's official response to the issue of not having intramural sports for a whole semester as well as the responses of other schools to the issue of accommodating sport activities on Campus during a pandemic, and their organization of intramural sports per se.

Alumni Jack Poskus, Matthew Davila and Sergio Sanchez collaborated in the reporting for this article.



Physical Copies will be available within the next few weeks, be on the watch for any announcements on the Que Ondee Sola Instagram Page:

@queondeesola

The QOS Winter 2021 Issue

is here!

Here's a sneak peak
at the cover!



Ryan and Matt are "still" Our Football Guys

By: David Redmond, Writer

Will this Matt & Ryan get the Bears over the hump?

Here we go again Bears fans! Tell me if I heard this before but the Chicago Bears hired a new General Manager and head coach, and their names are Ryan and Matt. Not the Ryan (Pace) and Matt (Nagy) that guided the Bears into the throws of mediocrity in the past four seasons, but the former executive director of player personnel for the Kansas City Chiefs, Ryan Poles, and now former Indianapolis Colts defensive coordinator, Matt Eberflus.

There's a New Ryan in Town

The first domino to fall in the efforts to revitalize the Bears back to prominence was the hiring of Ryan Poles. The former Boston College standout, spent 13 seasons in the Kansas City Chiefs organization working his way up from scouting assistant to executive director of player personnel.

During Poles's tenure with the Chiefs, he had a hand in drafting some important pieces of the Chiefs organization: Patrick Mahomes, Travis Kelce, Tyreke Hill, Creed Humphrey, Chris Jones, Trey Smith, and Rodney Hudson.

Poles has an eye for All-Pro talent and during his tenure with the Chiefs has learned from some of the most highly regarded current

and former General Managers in football such as former Chief General Managers John Dorsey, Scott Pioli, and current Chiefs General Manager Brett Veach. Most Pro-football aficionados

believe that Poles should have gotten a shot at General Manager because he has been a finalist for three GM positions in the last two years, Carolina (last season), before picking the Bears over Vikings last week. Poles grind from ex-player to assistant and now General Manager shows that he has what it takes to guide a team to relevancy, even if that means surrounding the front office

with guys that he trusts enough to delegate responsibility.

ESPN Fantasy football insider and former colleague, Field Yates, agreed with this statement on ESPN 1000's radio show "Waddle & Silvy" in regards to the hiring and



what kind of personality Bears fans will get with Pole.

"Early on it was so clear to me that Ryan had a lot of special qualities about himself, but what I've learned more and more is there are a lot of ways a General Manager can fail in the NFL, but near the top are when you can't let go of the power and you're too focused in on being the person responsible for the entire operation.

That you are not willing to

delegate, you're not willing to surround yourself with smart people that aren't going to be yes men. You have to have sincere humility and I've always felt that was one of Ryan's greatest qualities."

Pole's willingness to delegate and consider different opinions is a far cry from the way the previous regime handled such matters. Former General Manager Ryan Pace was known for being non-confrontational and making decisions that impacted the organizations he worked for.

Proof of that is back in the 2017 NFL draft when Pace drafted Mitch Trubisky with the number 3 pick of 1st round. He was told by many members of his staff and even former head coach John Fox not to draft Trubisky.

Not only did Pace draft Trubisky but he traded 3rd, 67th, and 111th overall picks to the San Francisco 49ers instead of selecting Patrick Mahomes.

Fast Forward four seasons later, Pace along with his hand-picked head coaching hire Matt Nagy were fired during black Monday while Mahomes led the Chiefs to yet again another AFC title game by beating the Buffalo Bills, the

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team Mitchell Trubisky currently plays for as a backup quarterback (the irony).

Let's hope our new Ryan doesn't go rogue and make a hasty decision like his predecessor that will set this franchise back.

Matt Eber who?

Eberflus is the name and defense is his game. The 17th Chicago Bears head coach was one of the most respected assistants in the NFL, leading an Indianapolis Colts defense that was top 10 in points allowed and takeaways in three of the four seasons.

The stat that should get old-school Bears fans hot and bothered is Eberflus defenses have been one of the least penalized units in the NFL. Eberflus is lauded for his motivational and teaching skills while anchoring a defense that plays with energy, effort, discipline. If those qualities sound familiar to Bears fans, it is because Eberflus comes from the same coaching tree that former Bears coach Lovie Smith comes from.

As a protégé of former defensive coordinator Rod Marinelli, Eberflus runs a 4-3 style defense similar to Lovie's Tampa 2 defense that took the Bears to the Super Bowl in the 2007-2008 season, but Eberflus puts his spin to this once-successful defense.

In a conversation with defensive back Richard Sherman and current Titans defensive back Kenny Byard, while going through the nuances of offensive schemes they made a statement about Eberflus's defense that will surely raise eyebrows.

"We do a lot of stuff," Byard said. "I wouldn't say we're like Indi-

anapolis..."

"They do some crazy, wild stuff," Sherman said. "Stuff I'd never seen before I saw them do it."

Hearing two All-pro caliber defensive backs give this type of endorsement on the innovative scheme that an Eberflus defense presents, Bear fans can sleep knowing that at least the defense is in good hands.

As for the offense, today Eberflus has scheduled interviews for the offensive coordinator position with Packers QB coach/Passing game coordinator, Luke Gesty, as a favorite to land the job.

Plucking a coach from the rival Green Bay Packers may be a

good idea, if it works for Aaron Rodgers then it should work for Justin Fields.

The Verdict

The hires of Poles and Eberflus have divided the fan base, half the fans love the idea of pairing a young general manager with organizational experience with a defensive-minded coach that knows how to teach and motivate players.

Others question the hires for the lack of experience at the positions along with the reluctance to hire an offensive-minded coach Jerry Angelo/Lovie Smith era Bears which was the last time this fan base that could develop the Bear's most

prized asset, Justin Fields. The pairing seems to be a throwback to the tasted consistent success.

One thing is for sure that at least for the next couple of seasons, barring any unpredictable chain of events, to quote Chairman George McCaskey "Ryan and Matt are (still) our football guys".



Bears management expects defense will benefit from coach Eberflus leadership. ("Military service members honored during Chicago bears game" by 416thTEC is licensed under CC PDM 1.0)



NORTHEASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY'S

INDEPENDENT

Current News

Spring 2022

Interested in working for the Independent?

NEIU Independent is a complete student-run newspaper who are always looking to find new students who are interested in:

writing, photography, editing.

We also need some new Section Editors:

News Director, Opinions Editor,

Arts & Life Editor

Several stipend paid positions open.



SUDOKU

Sudoku is a puzzle game that begins with a grid in which some of the numbers are already in place, depending on the game difficulty level.

A completed puzzle is one where each number from 1 to 9 appears only once in each of the rows, columns and blocks.

Study the grid to find the numbers that might fit into each cell.

Solution will be posted in the next issue. All the best!

	6			1				3
		3	7					6
1						2		
					5	9		
	1						6	
4		7	2				5	
8			4			1		
							8	4
				2		3		





NEIU Campus Events



February 1-12

Wednesday, February 2

Virtual Black History Month
Pedroso Center
Zoom (6:30PM-9PM)

Thursday, February 3

2022 APIDA Heritage Month Virtual
Brainstorming session
Zoom (3-4PM)

**Contact: v-gamboa-
turner@neiu.edu for more info**

Elyse J. Mach Concerto
Competition-
Recital Hall
(7PM)

Wednesday, February 9

Chicago Film Society
Presents "Rich Kids"
Auditorium
(7:30PM)

Thursday, February 10

Faculty Recital: Kathy Cowan,
Mezzo-Soprano
Recital Hall
(7:30 p.m)