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NORTHEASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY'S INDEPENDENT

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IN CHICAGO

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AN OVERLY CAUTIOUS RETURN?

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Chicago has one of the worst recycling rates in the country. In fact, the percentage has dropped 1.5 percent in the last five years and now sits at a dismal 8.83 percent. In a time where everyone is becoming more aware of the changing climate, one would expect that rate to go in the other direction.

Last month, Mayor Lightfoot released a report detailing ways the city can reduce the amount of waste sent to landfills and steps it can take to improve its recycling rates.

NEW STUDY SUGGESTS STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE RECYCLING AND REDUCE WASTE IN CHICAGO

BY RYLAND PIETRAS
ARTS & LIFE EDITOR

The Delta Institute, the report's author, highlighted 63 "strategic recommendations" that aim to reduce waste, including increasing diversion through the other two R's -- reducing and reusing -- and composting organic matter, and increasing economic and environmental justice opportunities.

According to the Department of Streets and Sanitation, paper and organic waste accounts for nearly 60 percent of our waste stream. Part of the report suggests implementing a composting program that would combine household food scraps with yard waste.

Another suggestion the report makes is to move away from single-stream recycling to multi-stream, as even though it is convenient for residents and haulers and can increase the tonnage of material collected for recycling, processing costs and contamination rates are often higher in stream recycling.

One strategy aimed at reusing old materials is implementing "repair cafes" where individuals can fix bulk appliances and e-waste. This would keep these materials out of the curbside recycling and offer new opportunities for skilled workers.

The report goes on to detail many more strategies, but they are merely suggestions. It is up to City Hall to implement them.

As the third largest metropolis in the country, Chicago must lead by example and show the rest of the nation what it is capable of.



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OPINION | AN OVERLY CAUTIOUS RETURN?

**BY MONTY STITES,
OPINION EDITOR**

The NEIU campus is reopening for in-person learning with a host of both useful and theatrical precautions against further transmission of the delta variant of Sars-CoV-2. The administration's covid task force created a "Return to Campus" web page for incoming students and has been providing regular updates via email listing the requirements for students to be able to return to campus.

One excellent precaution against the spread of infection is the vaccines, therefore the administration requires that all on-campus students and faculty must show proof of vaccination, and if they cannot, they must submit to weekly covid testing. Add to this the updated HVAC system and filters—in compliance with EPA and CDC guidelines—and there are multiple steps being taken to reduce the likelihood of covid transmission.

About staying home if sick, all that is mentioned on the "Return to Campus" page is, "please stay home if you are experiencing upper respiratory symptoms." However, upper respiratory symptoms are not the only symptoms associated with Sars-CoV-2; they are not even the telltale signs of contracting covid, whereas the loss of taste and smell is. Meanwhile, the common cold—the common cold is a coronavirus—can also cause respiratory symptoms.

In a theatrical bit of safetyism, the administration also mandates all faculty and students, regardless of vaccination status, wear a mask indoors at all times, excepting "when alone in a private office, personal residence hall room or when dining in a designated eating area." With this mask mandate, the university unfortunately recommends people not wear the highly effective N95 masks, saying they are "intended for healthcare workers," citing the CDC on these being critical supplies.

How does the university intend to enforce such a mask mandate? Will they enforce a standardization of masking, i.e. masks that cover the mouth and nose snugly? Or will any old face covering do? On the "Return to Campus" web page they specifically say not to get the N95 mask—the one mask most likely to prevent viral spread—a mask with a breathing valve or a mask that is too difficult to breathe through. Leaving all other masking options open as possibilities for students and staff, from cloth and surgical masks to bandanas, this mandate is security theater that does almost nothing to prevent spread but merely gives the appearance of safety.

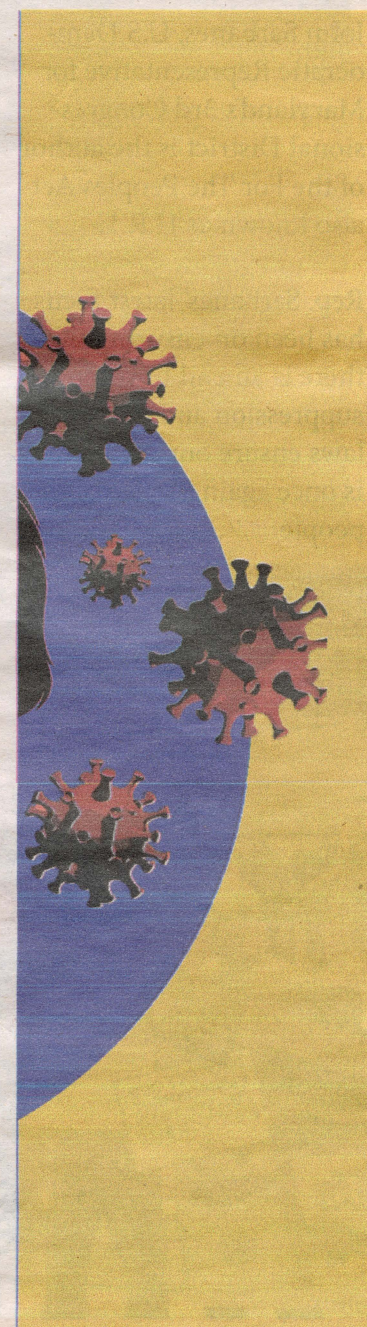
It is also concerning that nowhere is there any mention of contact tracing. What practices will there be for identifying and contacting those who may have been exposed to someone who tested positive? A practice that would likely do more to prevent and contain transmission is not at all visited, yet the school-

mandates wearing the kinds of masks that are poor in preventing the virus from aerosolizing.

Overly cautious safetyism, instead of effective action, will do little more than provide greater doubt to the effectiveness of the available vaccines—and they are very effective at preventing both overall infection and severe disease.

The administration should not require faculty and students to wear masks on campus unless they are experiencing upper respiratory symptoms and still wish to attend class or use campus facilities. And if one does want to come to campus because they think it might only be a cold, N95 masks should be available for them because, as mentioned before, they are the most effective at preventing respiratory viral spread. Combine all this above with the required proof of vaccination—if not vaccinated then tested weekly—and implement a contact tracing program for those who may be sick or who later

test positive, and we will not need to continue this charade of face covering.



OPINION | FOR THE PEOPLE ACT: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

BY ANGELA YBARRA,
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

John Sarbanes, U.S Democratic Representative for Maryland's 3rd Congressional District is the author of the For The Peoples Act also known as H.R.1.

Rep. Sarbanes' latest focus has been on ensuring that there is an end to voter suppression and that our laws ensure our democracy is once again a voice of the people.

H.R.1 was passed by congress's House of Representatives back in 2019, however, it was blocked by the Senate. Regardless of party affiliation, a clear understanding of what the bill seeks to do is the only way one can utilize their vote during elections, as well as have their voices represented by the political leaders they put in power.

If passed, the For The People Act would be the most comprehensive change to the voting system since the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

The act would challenge the laws recently passed in various state legislatures that some say limit voter's rights by making it harder to vote.

In short, here are some of the key items addressed in-

-the For the People Act: same-day voter registration, automatic voter registration, change in time length of early voting, expanded time for mail-in voting, and making Election Day a federal holiday.

Regarding election security, changes to the paper ballots would be made. The act also calls for campaign finance to be addressed and the measures a business can take with regard to a candidate's campaign. This addresses how much billionaires/corporations can donate on behalf of their special interest.

The act would also require the President and Vice President to share their federal income taxes for the last ten years; this would be the new standard and hiding behind legal proceedings taken before a person's presidency would no longer be possible.

The bill attempts to thwart gerrymandering by requiring states to use independent commissions to draw congressional district lines, except in states with only one congressional district, and D.C. statehood would be supported, finally making it the 51st in the United States.

We should strive to have a Democracy that is truly "for the people" showing the world that even a country as young as ours that is having continued growing pains, we stand united in the basics.

As students of Northeastern Illinois University and citizens of the United States, we must continue to educate ourselves about H.R.1 and other workings of the government, formulate choices based on facts, exercise our civic duties, and help make voter's rights fair for all, securing the legacy of this democracy for future generations.



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OPINION | SUICIDE: THE ULTIMATE INTENTIONAL LAST ACTION

ANGELA YBARRA
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

We can only speculate why someone commits suicide. They seemed so happy, they seemed to have it all, and it was so selfish of them to do this. In some shape or form, we have our opinion on why someone would think suicide is the only way out. The pain is real. The feeling of sadness is overwhelming. The sense of despair and dread can be too much for some people to handle. There seems like no other way out. This is what survivors of attempted suicide have commented on.

The pandemic the world is experiencing has many horrible consequences; such as lost jobs, major life events have been postponed or just canceled altogether, businesses have had to close—some of them permanently, lives have been lost to Covid-19, social distancing is now a thing, washing hands, mask-wearing, and increased domestic violence and child abuse. Many see suicide as the only way out.

On campuses across the United States, suicide amongst students is above the national average.

According to the CDC, “Younger adults, racial/ethnic minorities, essential workers, and unpaid adult caregivers reported having experienced disproportionately worse mental health outcomes, increased substance use, and elevated suicidal ideation”. Young adults are aged between 18 and 24 years; which refers to many of those that are college-aged.

Many people that are left behind by those that have taken their lives often say that they are able to pinpoint certain interactions or recall situations that they now see as “calls for help” which went unnoticed or acknowledged.

Many people that are left behind by those that have taken their lives often say that they are able to pinpoint certain interactions or recall situations that they

now see as “calls for help” which went unnoticed or acknowledged.

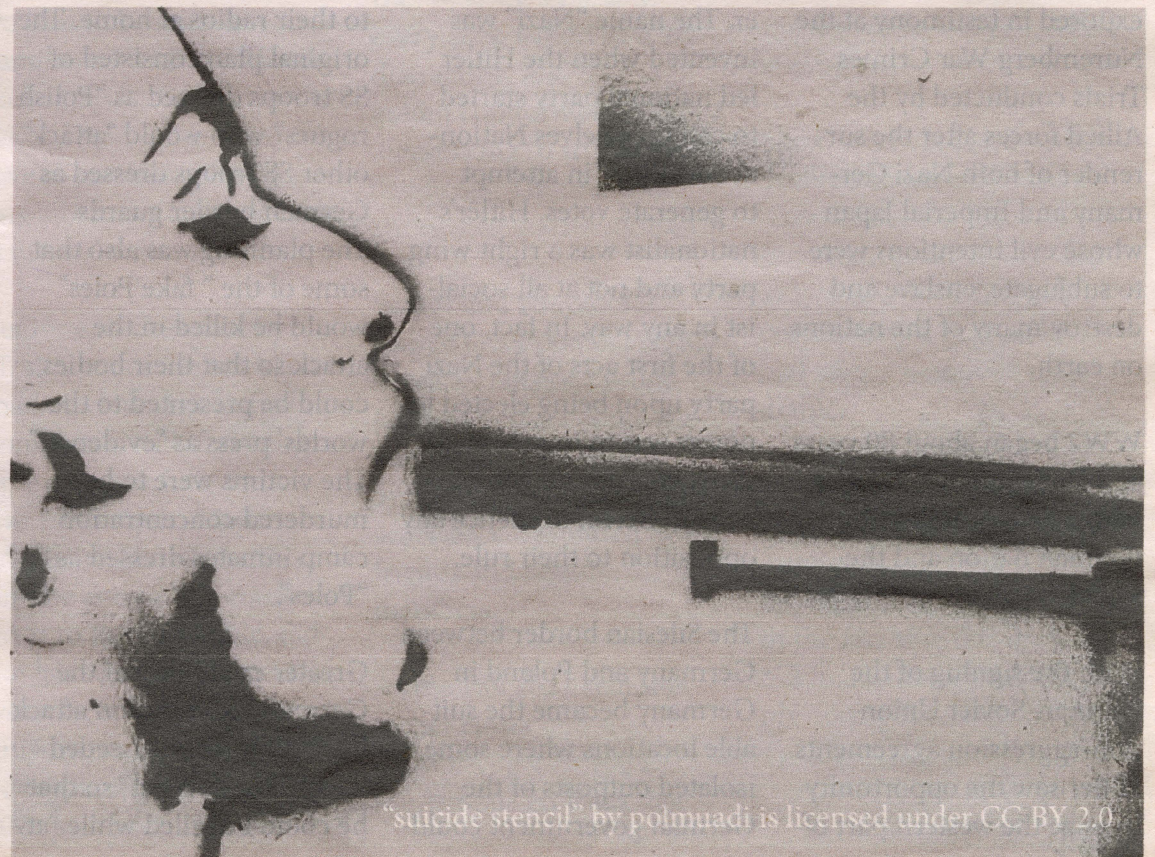
Often those that commit suicide do so with little planning and act on the spur of the moment; however, there are others that plan out this act to the minute detail, leaving nothing to chance.

What I have gleaned from my research is that no one can foresee the “Why” behind suicide.

There is help out there and it is not only for those contemplating suicide but for those that wish to try and understand and help those in need. A great resource is the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255.

The World Health Organization recognizes the issue of well-being, or the lack of, that contributes to suicide and suicide attempts.

Offer an ear to listen but please also keep in mind your own mental health. You will not be able to provide assistance if you yourself are not practicing self-care during these times.



“suicide stencil” by polmuadi is licensed under CC BY 2.0

A LETTER TO THE EDITOR AND NEIU COMMUNITY FROM ALUMNI

STEWART E. BREKKE PHD.

RETIRED CPS PHYSICS, CHEMISTRY AND MATHEMATICS TEACHER.

The anniversary of the atomic bombing of the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki resulting in the surrender of Japan in August 1945 ending WW2 has just passed. The public should know the origin of that terrible conflict resulting in the deaths of about 50 million lives. It was exposed in testimony at the Nuremberg War Crimes Trials conducted by the Allied forces after the surrender of both Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan whose evil intentions were to subjugate, enslave and destroy many of the nations on earth.

WW2 began about 80 years ago on September 1, 1939 with a Nazi scam on the German nation and the world.

With the signing of the German-Soviet Union non-aggression agreements Hitler saw the opportunity to seize the western part of

-Poland. In order to generate German popular support for invading Poland Nazi leaders generated fake "border incidents" in which Germany would apparently be the victim of attacks by Poles. The "scamming" of the German people by the Nazis was done even before they were elected into power. The name "Nazi" was invented when the Hitler led national party started to call themselves National Socialists" in attempt to generate votes. Hitler's nationalist was a right wing party and not at all socialist in any way. In fact, one of the first acts of the Nazi party upon being elected to power was to imprison all the socialists and communists in Berlin to silence any opposition to their rule.

The Silesian border between Germany and Poland in Germany became the suitable locations where some isolated outposts of the German government could-

-be attacked by "Polish aggressors." An isolated radio station was found where the "fake Poles" would take over a German radio broadcast and make nationalistic statements in Polish. They believed that this "imaginary takeover" would have a dramatic impact on ordinary Germans listening to their radios at home. The original plan consisted of SS troops dressed as "Polish rogues" who would "attack" other SS troops dressed as German border guards. The planning was also that some of the "fake Poles" would be killed in the attack so that their bodies could be presented to the worlds' press as "evidence." The victims were to be murdered concentration camp inmates dressed as "Poles".

Greater credibility of the German radio station attack by "Polish rebels" needed a real "Polish rebel" so that he could be killed while "at-

-tacking" the German radio station. Selected was Franz Honiok, a well-known Polish sympathizer and German national. He was shot in the head and placed near the entrance of the radio station. Also a bucket of ox blood was spread around at the forestry station and customs house. The "takeover of a German broadcast by Poles" was reported by German radio, the BBC and the New York Times. Hitler declared "serious border incidents" have caused the invasion of Poland by Germany.

France and the United Kingdom then declared war on Germany starting WW2 with about 70 million fatalities. About 6 million Jews and about 10 million Poles, about 26 million Russians and about 5 million Germans casualties at least. About 20 million Chinese and about 6 million Japanese are some of the

estimated Asian casualties. Mainly American military intervention against Germany, Japan and their allies caused their ultimate defeat saving much of the world from the Axis evil intentions of slavery and extermination.



HOW DO NEIU STUDENTS FEEL ABOUT RETURNING TO CAMPUS?

BY JACK POSKUS
CAMPUS LIFE EDITOR



During the Spring 2020 semester, Northeastern Illinois University (NEIU) students were tasked with a tall order as a means of mitigation against COVID-19. Whether it was seniors on the doorstep of graduation or freshmen embarking on a newfound academic journey, NEIU students at large shared a similar fate: having to attend their beloved university from the comfort (or discomfort) of their own homes for the unforeseeable future.

Although NEIU was able to seamlessly transition to virtual instruction, with students and professors alike having had to proceed with education remotely, not being able to revisit NEIU's campus in over a year has seemed to weakened student morale. A distracting work environment, a

desire for social interaction and many other impeding factors have contributed to these incredibly taxing semesters since the start of COVID-19.

Earlier this year, however, as many NEIU students and faculty members were growing impatient with the accumulating pandemic-riddled semesters, on March 11, NEIU's President Gloria J. Gibson announced that in-person classroom instruction would recommence for the Fall 2021 semester. Although updates have been made to this statement following its release (e.g. mandating proof of vaccination when on campus), this news meant a monumental change to the university's future going forward nonetheless, and NEIU students could not be more elated about returning to campus.

Senior and Communication, Media and Theatre major Diamante Hare was over the moon when he learned that in-person instruction would resume again in the Fall. "To be quite honest, I am very thrilled to be back on campus with all my friends and enjoying my last year at NEIU," said Hare. "I would love to just be back on campus where the atmosphere is just so exciting."

Senior and Community Health major Mazan Masiti made it clear that he had no complaints with finishing up his degree fully online and off campus. Masiti, who has taken numerous remote and online courses prior to the pandemic, did not have much of a reaction when he learned that the university's campus would be reopening for the Fall 2021 semester.

"The thought of being around people again does sound nice, but I would just like to play it safe seeing as how COVID-19 hasn't completely gone away yet," Masiti said. "I'd imagine that wearing a mask to every class would be a bit distracting, and since I've gotten comfortable with not commuting to school every single day, I'm fine with sticking to online courses."

Senior and Human Resource Development (HRD hereafter) major Evelina Jaje was ecstatic when she learned that she would be able to spend her final semester surrounded by her friends and favorite faculty members.

As the Fall 2021 semester inches closer and students prepare to flood the campus grounds that

they have been longing for throughout the pandemic, it is important for each individual within NEIU's tightly woven community to recognize the sacrifices and battles with adversity that have been made in order to stifle COVID-19's hindrance.

The entire NEIU family has devoted countless hours toward maintaining a fully functioning university, and as a result, the doors will reopen only a year and a half after a worldwide pandemic.

Regardless of whether students decide to return to campus for the Fall semester, NEIU can take pride in the fact that this day has finally come and that a promising future awaits.



NEIU Campus Events



AUGUST

Tuesday, August 24

Paint & Sip (w/ Mocktails) 3pm - 4pm
"We supply the drinks, paint, brushes and canvas... you supply the creativity!"

NEST Scholarships & Snacks TIME is
TBD

Wednesday, August 25

Tye Dye 12pm - 4pm

Healthy Minds Healthy Lives
(5PM @ The Nest)

Thursday, August 26

Freshmen Meet-Up 3pm

Dusk NPB Movie in the Quad

Inclusion Mural 6PM (The Nest)

Friday, August 27

Level Up Your
Resume
(6pm @ The Nest)

Saturday, August 28

Beach Clean Up
(10am)

Monday, August 30

NPB I Love Monday -
Take And Make

Tuesday, August 31

Org. Fair (11am - 4pm)

Pedroso/SLD Open House
(3pm - 4pm)

SEPTEMBER

Wednesday, September 1

Org. Fair (11am - 4pm)

Sex signals (5pm)

Thursday, September 2

El Centro Freshmen Meet Up
(11:30am - 1pm)

Meet the Greeks (2pm - 4pm)

Tuesday, September 7

NPB - Cubs vs Reds
(6:30pm)

Saturday, September 11

CCICS Picnic

Tuesday, September 14

Water Balloon Fight (blue
and yellow sweater)
(3pm)

Wednesday September 15

Ice Cream Social
(12pm - 2pm)

Thursday, September 16

Free T-shirt & Picture (2pm - 4pm)

Meet the Media

Friday, September 17

Black Caucus Dance Party

Saturday, September 18

Fall Fest

ARTS & LIFE | UPCOMING: "THE CITY THAT RECYCLES"

BY RYLAND PIETRAS
ARTS & LIFE EDITOR



RYLAND PIETRAS

While in grade school, most of us learned about the concept of the Three R's: reduce, reuse, and recycle. Of these three, recycling is the One R that is probably remembered most.

In this series, we aim to look at recycling in Chicago. Although it is the third largest city in the country, it has one of the worst recycling rates at around 9 percent.

We want to find out why this seemingly progressive city's program is so abysmal.

We'll speak with folks up and down the recycling ladder. This includes the people that pick up the bins in the alleys, department heads, workers at processing facilities, green committees at universities, and people that are just passionate about recycling.

We'll also examine what can and cannot be recycled, what other cities throughout the country are doing, and strategies to increase recycling and reduce waste in the city.

Finally, we'll discuss the other two R's -- reducing and reusing.

Chicago has many nicknames: the Windy City, the Second City and the City

of Big Shoulders. Join us in this new series as we try to add one more to that list ... the City that Recycles.

To listen to the podcast visit: soundcloud.com/nei-uindypodcast.

NEIU LEAVES INTRAMURAL SPORTS IN LIMBO

BY ERWIN LOPEZ RADA
SPORTS EDITOR

As we prepare for another semester, the NEIU community acknowledges that there are great risks associated with coming to the different campuses to take classes in person. We are still fighting a pandemic that looked defeated less than three weeks ago but is resurging for a variety of reasons all over the country.

This situation pressed NEIU's COVID-19 Task Force to propose an updated Return to Campus Plan that establishes comprehensive COVID-19 mitigating measures, but it fails to address how the school will protect its students who want to engage in intramural sports activities.

A May 28 email from the Task Force to the NEIU community only mentioned that "more information is to follow" regarding what spaces will be open for students in the coming months and that the Campus Recreation team was working on it.

In July, the Campus Recreation team issued two emails offering openings for job positions in various areas that included game officers, trainers and referees. Less than a week before the beginning of classes, we do not know anything else about intramural sports or the COVID-19 rules that we will need to follow on the field or court.

Among the actions taken to promote sports activities, Campus Recreation wrote a Facebook post in January where they identified some COVID-19 policies that they were following inside the gym like contact tracing. They also opened the courts this summer to play racquetball and basketball.

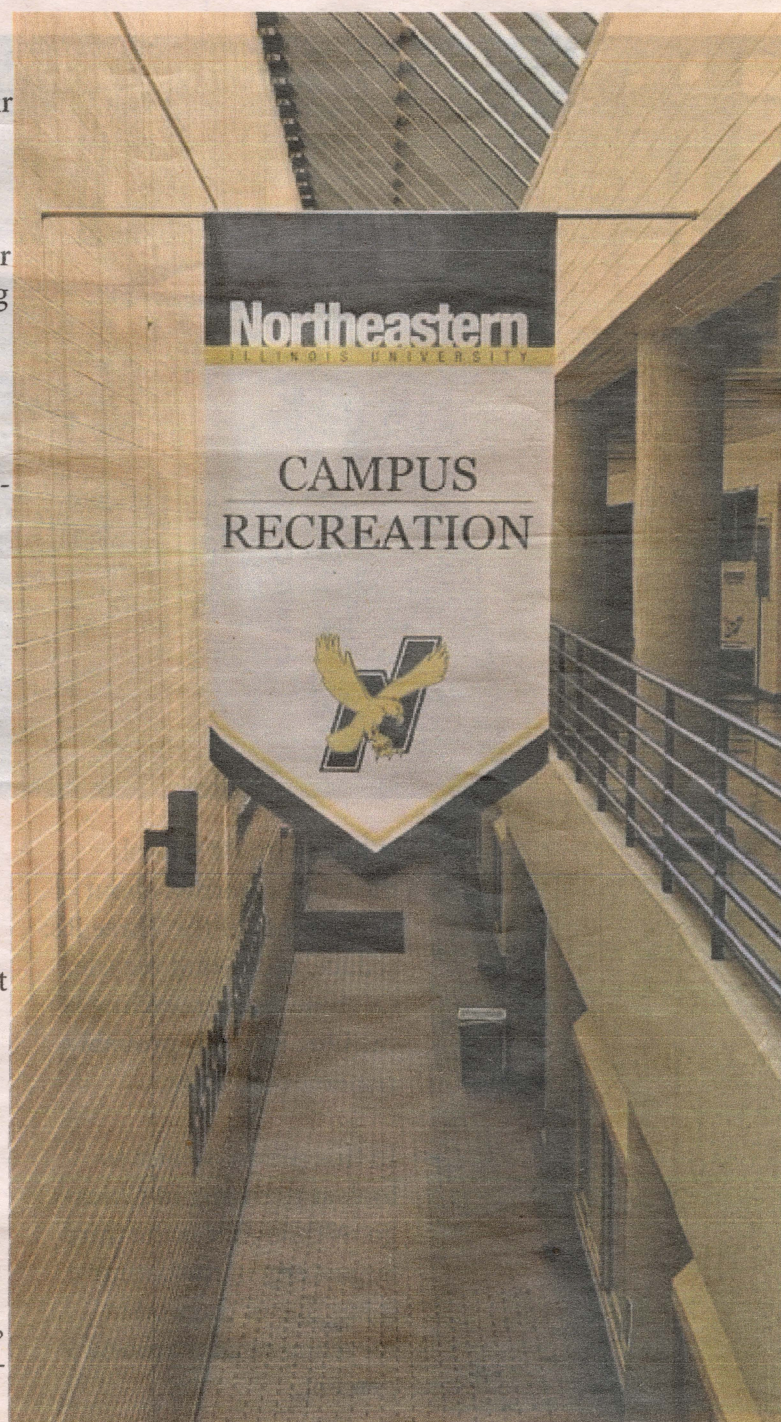
But, who is to say if these vague rules are the same that govern the events at school, as per the updated Return to Campus Plan, or if Campus Recreation created a different set of rules that would keep everyone safe while doing sport activities.

Other educational and sport-related institutions have already presented their plans for in-person sport leagues. For example, the NCAA has a page where it updates COVID policies for all the athletes participating in its competitions.

Likewise, the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) is constantly updating its rules to protect high school athletes and their families from the disease.

As a testimony to the disruptions originated by the COVID-19 pandemic, the last sport piece written in The Independent about intramural sports was signed in November 2019 by Jose Moreno and featured the attempts by a senior student to revitalize the school's soccer club.

We expect from school leadership to come back to NEIU with a revitalized intramural sports calendar and with clear policies, like other institutions are doing, so students can engage safely in sport activities.



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!

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

Interested in Radio or DJ-ing?
Are you passionate about music?

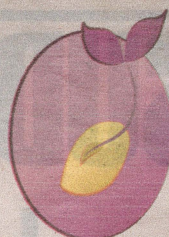


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Equipment Manager • Video Editor(s) • Assistant Music Director(s) • Audio Editor(s)
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Que Ondee Sola (QOS) is the oldest Puerto Rican and Latinx student published magazine established in 1972 at NEIU.

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