

The Ferris State Torch

NINETY YEARS OF ILLUMINATING THE TRUTH

Big Rapids, Michigan

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Williams auditorium to be used for jury trials

Mecosta County hopes to get through case backlog with 200-person capacity auditorium

Rebecca VanderKooi
News Reporter

The 77th District courts recently received approval to use Ferris' Williams Auditorium for jury trials this summer.

Since March of 2020, the Mecosta and Osceola county courts have seen a backlog of cases due to the pandemic.

This past fall, the university was contacted by the courts regarding the potential of using the auditorium for jury trials, explained Ferris' News Services and Social Media Manager Sandy Gholston.

Recently, the Michigan State Court Administrative Office (SCAO) approved courts to begin jury trials again under strict social distancing guidelines and limiting the number of individuals in the court room.

"The problem is the court facilities are not big enough because of the social distancing rules," Mecosta County 77th District Judge Peter Jaklevic told the Pioneer.

Williams Auditorium seats over 1,000 people, with social distancing the court hopes to still have up to 200 individuals in the auditorium at a time.

"In your average capital case, you are bringing in around 100 prospective jurors and you have to put all those people somewhere," Jaklevic said.

With the larger auditorium it will be much safer for jurors to attend the trial and safely distance from each other.

"The judges and their staff toured Williams Auditorium to see if this would work for their purposes. It does," Gholston said.

The court plans to use Williams Auditorium from May-August with the hope that this temporary solution will help catch up on the backlog of cases until it's safe enough to go back to the traditional court room.

"We are currently working with the courts on the details and what they will need for their use [of the auditorium]," Gholston said.

However, even with the facility available the courts still need to wait for the COVID-19 case numbers to go down, as they've recently begun increasing. Additionally, they will need to get final approval from the health department and the SCAO.



Photo by: Dylan Boden | Torch Photographer

Mecosta County's 77th District Court will be using the auditorium from May to August.

Rock at Hemlock | Music and entertainment business students hosting live concert



Photo by: Cassidy Jessup | Multimedia Editor

Ferris students will be hosting a concert at Hemlock Park on April 15.

Jerry Gaytan
News Reporter

The Ferris Music and Entertainment Business Association is presenting "Rock at Hemlock", a live outdoor concert at Hemlock Park on April 15, at 6:00 p.m.

The show will feature performances by Konundrum, Paper Lanterns, Small Foreign Faction and Ives. Audience members will begin being admitted at 5:30 p.m. and the concert will end at 9:00 p.m. The cost for admission is \$5.00 and all proceeds will go towards the funding of the concert.

"With "Rock at Hemlock", people can bring lawn chairs and blankets and spread them out on the grass and just enjoy live music," Nicole Hollinsky Vice President of MEBA said.

According to an April 2020 study conducted by the Statista research department, 15% of adults said they would be comfortable going to a concert in the next six months. While 27% said they would rather wait longer than six months and many said they were undecided due to the fluctuating time of lockdowns.

Around Hemlock there will be signs posted that promote masks and social distancing, according to Hollinsky. Along with backup masks and hand sanitizer to accommodate all concertgoers.

"I think the COVID regulations are reasonable and I hope everyone takes them seriously so that

the show goes on safely and smoothly," Paper Lanterns and Ives band member Rocky Hutchins said. "It will certainly be different from shows back before all of this, but we have to start small if we're going to make this happen safely."

According to the State of Michigan's COVID-19 page, outdoor gatherings can only be permitted to have an overall capacity of 300 persons. Hollinsky stated that "Rock at Hemlock" will be limited to 100 attendees, due to the city having the final decision.

Hutchins, who is also a member of MEBA, explained how they have been preparing this show for over a year now. "Rock at Hemlock" was initially going to take place last spring, but with the rising severity of COVID-19 they had to delay and postpone the event until now.

"It's been in the works for quite a long time, then put on hold for COVID and then back in the works again," Hollinsky said. "We had to take all the plans we had pre-COVID and adapt them for COVID."

This event will aid the MEBA students, according to Hollinsky. It is giving them "the experience and knowledge they need." The goal is to have students go into the music industry with "knowledge and skill."

For more information on the event and ticket sales visit: tinyurl.com/rockathemlock

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NEWS

Noah Kurkjian | News Editor | kurkjin@ferris.edu

SNAP benefits expand for college students

Food assistance eligibility temporarily expands among Michigan college students

Jessica Oakes
News Reporter

Benefits from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program may now be collected by all Ferris students deemed eligible for a work study program or whose families are unable to contribute to college costs.

Under SNAP, eligible students will receive benefits in the form of Bridge Cards. These Electronic Benefit Transfer cards may be used like a credit or debit card at participating stores, farmers markets and food pantries. Select retailers, such as Amazon, Walmart and Aldi, will also accept these cards for online purchases.

To register for SNAP benefits students may fill out an online application through the MI Bridges website. Dawn Sweeney, SNAP administrator for the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, noted that the online format can help remove the stigma surrounding federal benefits from first time recipients.

"You don't have to actually go in and see anybody. You do an interview over the phone, so it does give a certain level of anonymity," Sweeney said.

Previously, students would have to meet specific requirements, such as working 20 hours per week, to qualify for SNAP benefits from the MDHHS. COVID-19's effect on the job market encouraged the state to change this.

"We know that our students aren't able to work because there's either no jobs to go to or they're still having to isolate. And we also know that work study has been very much impacted by the inability to be out in the work field," Sweeney said.

While there is no current due date for applications, this expansion of eligibility is still temporary. Its longevity depends on the duration of the pandemic.

"We know that once the national public emergency ends, we have 30 days to continue to ac-

cept clients. And after that point, we can't take any new applications," Sweeney said. "However, any individual that was approved under either of these two exemptions will remain eligible until their next recertification, which is every 12 months."

Sweeney believes that college students have been historically excluded from benefits from the Food and Nutrition Service. Despite this demographic's persistent need, there have been stringent rules in place blocking eligibility.

"The most recent literature review that we found showed that food insecurity among college students was ranging between 20% to more than 50%. So, here's a group that we know is being overlooked that we're trying to really bring attention to," Sweeney said.

Because of SNAP's ability to boost the local economy, Sweeney also believes that this expansion of funds may be profitable enough for indefinite continuation.

"The temporary exemption might be, once it's reviewed, determined to be more beneficial overall and maybe continued...We have found through research that every dollar in SNAP funds generates \$1.79 in local economic activity," Sweeney said.

The MDHHS understands that the application process may seem daunting during this time. Sweeney explained that the MI Bridges website has been made as straightforward as possible for this very reason. She also encourages students to speak to financial aid counselors or outreach partners in order to feel more comfortable.

"A lot of those food banks are also outreach partners for us... If someone's having a hard time completing the application or understanding it, they can reach out to one of those agencies for assistance," Sweeney said.

Single students who buy and prepare food on their own can receive up to \$234 per month in SNAP benefits. More information can be found at the MI Bridges and MDHHS websites.

What to know for tax day



Noah Kurkjian
News Editor

Tax day is Monday, May 17

If you worked in Big Rapids and made more than \$600, you need to obtain and file a BR-1040 form with your taxes.

Know your dependency status: This will tell you who can claim your tuition tax credit whether it be your parents or you. This also can make a difference when filing as if you were claimed as a dependent by a parent for the 2019 tax year, but you plan to file single and independent for 2020, you can receive the \$1,800 of stimulus payments that were issued during 2020 as part of your tax refund.

None of the CARES Act money received from Ferris is taxable, and neither are any of the three stimulus checks.

Check and see if you're eligible for the American opportunity tax credit or the lifetime learning tax credit. These will each allow you to write off education expenses. If you qualify for the American opportunity credit, you can get a credit of up to \$2,500 — that's 100% of the first \$2,000 you spend in qualifying education expenses, and 25% of the next \$2,000 or With the lifetime learning credit, you can claim up to \$2,000, or 20% of the first \$10,000 you spent during the year in qualified education expenses, although this will not refund to you if your credit amount exceeds what you owe in tax.

If you claimed unemployment in 2020 and had unemployment withhold taxes, the taxes withheld for the first \$10,200 will be returned to you. No additional steps need to be taken when filing, just report this as you normally would, and the IRS will take care of it.

Want to write for the Torch but don't have the time every week?

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Pitch your story idea to our Editor in Chief, Cora Hall. If we like your story, we'll send you out to report and write and if we publish it, you'll get paid.

Email hallc36@ferris.edu for more information or to pitch a story!



THIS WEEK IN MICHIGAN NEWS

Catch up on news around the state



Noah Kurkjian & Brendan Sanders
News Editor, Sports Editor

Michigan COVID-19 Update

On Sunday, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer vowed that she was pushing the White House for more COVID-19 vaccines as Michigan experiences serious COVID-19 case spikes.

The state reported 6,900 cases Saturday and 74 more deaths, including 57 compiled from a review of past records. The state's total has reached more than 738,000 cases, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Service reported.

Whitmer on Friday urged a two-week suspension of in-person high school classes, youth sports and indoor dining. She asked for voluntary compliance of mask wearing and social distancing according to the Detroit Free Press.

"We all know what works, and this has to be a team effort. We have to do this together — lives depend on it," Whitmer said Friday at a news conference.

"This is my ask to you, the people of Michigan. Please redouble your efforts on these fronts for the next couple of weeks."

As for the federal government, they said they will not change their COVID-19 vaccine distribution strategy, "playing whack-a-mole," by sending more doses to Michigan, said Andy Slavitt, White House senior adviser for COVID-19 response, during a Monday morning news briefing.

Whitmer has repeatedly said Michigan's third surge is "not a public policy problem," but rather one driven by more contagious variants of the virus, youth sports and activity among people who are not heeding public health recommendations of avoiding large gatherings, wearing masks and keeping a safe social distance.

Another young riser in April 12's game against the Astros is pitcher Casey Mize. He earned his first career win after pitching seven innings and allowing only four hits and no earned runs. So far this season he has an ERA of 0.82 in his two starts. He also pitched April 6 against the Minnesota Twins in which he allowed five hits and a run on five innings pitched.

The Tigers will continue their season by wrapping up their series against the Astros on April 14 before traveling to Oakland to play the A's from April 15 through April 18.

Sports

DETROIT — The Detroit Tigers opened the season 4 - 6 after playing in three series against the Cleveland Indians and Minnesota Twins. Their most recent game has come against the Houston Astros on April 12, in which they won 6 - 2.

While it hasn't been a really hot start for Detroit, there has been a few bright spots on the team. Center Fielder Akil Baddoo is off to a hot start in his debut season with the Tigers, seeing a batting average of .368 through the first ten games, including three homeruns and nine RBI's. At 22 years old, he has already proven to be a commodity for the young roster.

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- ON THE RECORD -

A roundup of this week's crime at Ferris State University

Too fast, too... unlicensed

Noah Kurkjian
News Editor

Too fast, too... unlicensed

April 10, 2:20 a.m., officers pulled over a student going 61 MPH on Ferris Drive. (25 MPH). The driver was driving on a suspended license. They were issued a citation for reckless driving and driving on a suspended license. The suspect was not arrested due to changes in police citation laws made on April 1.

Torch Corrections

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HOSTED BY: MARISSA RUSSELL,
BRENDAN SANDERS & NOAH KURKJIAN

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Updated August 13, 2020

FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY

In My Eyes: the importance of becoming aware

Anti-Violence Alliance hosting events to raise awareness and you should go

Alyssa Hubbard
Lifestyles Reporter

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM) and it's full of on-campus and virtual events to deepen people's understanding of the important issue this month highlights.

The Anti-Violence Alliance (AVA) is hosting multiple events throughout April for students to learn about sexual assault, consent, available resources regarding this subject and more.

"It's important that we take the time to focus on an issue that impacts so many people, both here at Ferris and in society at large," Violence Prevention coordinator Raven Hills said. "It doesn't mean that we forget about or ignore sexual assault for the rest of the year, but it does give us a chance to reflect on this important issue and continue our efforts to stop all forms of sexual violence."

I attended three of these events so far, and I'm going to share my experiences. My hope is to encourage others to go to the AVA's events this month as well, so that we all may become more aware that sexual assault is something that happens often and needs to be addressed appropriately.

"What Was I Wearing?" Exhibit

This event has been in the works for the past few months and I'm glad it was able to happen. The AVA hosted the "What Was I Wearing?" exhibit in the UC art gallery. This unique exhibit displayed about six or eight different outfits people were wearing when they were sexually assaulted.

The purpose of this event is to show that clothes aren't the real issue when it comes to being a victim of sexual violence and assault. Even today, some people believe that women who wear "inappropriate" clothing are "asking for it," when in reality, that's just not true. No one is ever asking to be sexually assaulted. The clothes you wear and how revealing or not they are do not give anyone permission to violate your body.

Before I entered the exhibit, the AVA members informed me that if I needed a place to decompress afterwards, there was a room available nearby. There I could play with some silly putty, color a picture and talk with a counselor if I needed to. I thanked them and headed into the exhibit.

Displayed before me were the individual outfits and anonymous stories of those who've been sexually assaulted in their life. Sweatpants, school uniforms and other casual clothing hung up on the wall. These people weren't asking for it.

Each story made my heart break more and more. It was so important to read these stories and to look at their outfits, because it proves that the source of the issue is completely different than what too many people believe.

The "What Was I Wearing?" exhibit was powerful and really made me think about my own perception of sexual assault.

"Is It Consent?" BINGO

I then attended the AVA's virtual "Consent Bingo" event on zoom. The purpose of this event was to educate and explain the various methods of giving or not giving consent, because it's not always a simple "yes" or "no."



Photo courtesy of Carrie Weis

The "What Was I Wearing?" Exhibit is being hosted in the University Center arts gallery and displays the clothes people were wearing when they were sexually assaulted. The purpose of the exhibit is to show that clothes are not the reason people are assaulted.

I picked my BINGO card, and an AVA member spun a virtual wheel with phrases on it. When the wheel landed on the phrase "Sure?", the players would each give their reasoning for why the phrase was or was not consent. The phrase "Sure?" is not consent because there is still uncertainty in the answer and doesn't appear to be a form of an enthusiastic "yes."

Here are some of the words we landed on during the round and whether or not they indicate consent:

- "Sure?" - not consent.
- "Totally" - consent.
- "Sure!" - consent.
- "Maybe" - not consent.
- "Not Right Now" - not consent.

The AVA members also explained that it's important to check in with the partner and if they're still comfortable with everything. Consent can be taken away at any point if someone begins to feel uncomfortable or changes their mind.

This virtual event helped me better understand the ways to give or not give consent. I think we all could learn a lot from some consent BINGO. I also won an AVA mug for getting a BINGO, so that was pretty cool too.

5-Star Event with Kalimah Johnson

Another virtual event I attended was a 5-Star event with speaker Kalimah Johnson, executive director and founder of the Sexual Assault Services for Holistic Healing and

Awareness (SASHA) Center in Detroit. Johnson is also a sexual assault survivor.

The SASHA Center is a non-profit organization and sexual assault service, prevention and educational agency that gives resources to sexual assault survivors.

Their mission is "to promote and increase healing for survivors of sexual assault by using alternative/non-traditional techniques for women of color with a special emphasis on African American women, thereby eradicating the fear, shame and guilt, as well as any barriers associated with being sexually assaulted through peer educational support groups and prevention strategies."

One of the first slides Johnson went through was a quote from Angela Davis is 1989: "Black women were and continue to be sorely in need of an anti-rape movement."

Johnson created the SASHA Center because she and many others wanted to "intentionally and unapologetically" help women in the Black community by providing support groups and non-traditional healing methods. She mentioned the center's important phrase "#healingispossible."

The SASHA Center uses culturally sensitive techniques when helping women heal, including story telling humor, irony, satire, prayer, and more.

The SASHA Center also uses the "Black Women's Triangulation of Rape" model in their practices. It shows how sexual assault impacts Black women specifically and all of the barriers they face when in need of sexual assault services.

Johnson is an intelligent, kind and determined woman. During her presentation, she would often check in with the viewers to see how we were feeling or if we had any questions or comments. Johnson wanted to inspire us to learn and do something with the knowledge and resources we have to help others.

For more information regarding the SASHA Center, please visit sashacenter.org.

Sexual Assault Awareness

"My hope is that the events give students more knowledge about sexual assault and sparks a culture change in the ways we talk about sexual assault, its causes and the roles each of us can play in eliminating it," Hills said.

The AVA and other groups discuss topics like these year-round and would love to continue the conversations outside the month of April. Talking about sexual assault, consent and providing resources and help to people affected by sexual assault is important to ending the unnecessary violence people all over the world face.

I have learned and will continue to do so. These events were inspiring for me, and I hope it was for others as well.

The AVA still has more events people can attend throughout the month of April. Educating and fighting to expunge sexual violence will keep on going after the month ends.

LIFESTYLES

Marissa Russell | Lifestyles Editor | russem22@ferris.edu

Embrace the gay

How Sarah Doherty learned to celebrate her sexuality

Alyssa Myers
Copy Editor

Currently, Sarah Doherty serves as the Ferris LGBTQ+ Resource Center coordinator, but for most of her adolescence her grasp of what queerness could be was faint and molded by the environment she grew up in. To get here, she's devoted years to learning and listening.

Doherty was raised in Weston, Massachusetts, a wealthy suburb near Boston. When she was growing up, the town had problems of its own with homophobia and sexual harassment. Her parents tried to protect her from that, but in the process they also kept her from knowing valuable information about sex, sexuality, world diversity and social justice movements.

"I didn't know that girls could be queer until I was fully 16 years old," Doherty said. "I grew up in a family that valued keeping our business private over almost anything else. So talking about sex and sexuality was really taboo. Speaking up too much, just in general, was kind of frowned upon."

Before discovering queerness for herself in a library book about two girls falling in love in the Boston area, queerness for her was primarily characterized by its portrayal in the media and homophobic jokes told by her peers.

When Doherty was a senior in high school she started a Gay Straight Alliance. GSAs are often present in middle schools and high schools. These groups are both organized and led by students, and they serve as safe spaces for LGBTQIA+ youth to discuss issues and establish a community.

"[After I started a GSA], I started going up at school assemblies to make announcements that it was happening at all, to raise the visibility and to also make people hear the word gay in a context other than Richard Gere jokes," Doherty said. "[I] connected with other people. There was certainly pushback and people who weren't allowed to hang out with me anymore, people who weren't allowed to talk to me in school, some catcalling, some of your standard high school posters being ripped down and slurs written on stuff."

Coming from a town that sees issues such as sexuality and diversity as taboo, Doherty has had to teach herself about the parts of the world that were not found in Weston.

She read books about activists who challenged corporations and societal expectations, she read the writings of LGBTQIA+ people of color, news groups and visited chat



Photo courtesy of Sarah Doherty

The librarians at Sarah Doherty's hometown library knew she was queer before she did.

rooms that housed discussions and threads written by queer and trans adults. She also learned about the privilege she had as a white person from a wealthy town who had access to well-funded public education.

"I took out every book and every movie that the public library in my town had to offer. The librarians knew that I was queer before I actually figured out that I was queer. I did all the research," Doherty said.

This learning continued when Doherty attended Cornell University as an undergrad. She lived in a multicultural living learning unit with other queer and trans people of color, in addition to cisgender and heterosexual people of color and a few other white students.

"We did regular share outs about our different cultures and heritages and [we spoke about] where we came from and what we were proud of. [We shared] what we had questions about and the histories of our ancestors," Doherty said.

When she finished undergrad with a double bachelors in women's studies and sociology, she worked at the LGBT Resource Center at Cornell for five years. Once she moved on from there she went to grad school, then she followed opportu-

nities to organize with various communities and work with students.

The LGBTQ+ Resource Center job at Ferris opened up at a time when Doherty was actively looking for a chance to get back into the field that she loves.

Leading up to this point, Doherty's work has focused on students. She contributes part of this trend to lived experience. She was a queer student who struggled with mental health issues and turbulent family relationships.

"My hope is that it's useful to have access to the kinds of resources that I can set up and that I'm good at," Doherty said.

Discovering her queerness has allowed Doherty to further understand her place in the world and to identify the things she doesn't like about it. Ever since she picked up that book about the two queer girls in love, she has been educating herself and others to make it so that other kids don't go years without exposure to sexuality, diversity and other issues that affect the people in this world.

Beautifying Big Rapids

How ASL projects can make a big difference

Meghan Hartley
Freelance Reporter

When going for a walk on hiking trails in the woods, you would expect to see trees and plants... Not a rusting sink.

Casey Conley, a junior majoring in political science, said when participating in his group's environmental care project, he had found a sink and toilet among piles of garbage found behind a cluster of houses on the north hillside of Clay Cliffs Nature Area.

"There was a bunch of really old stuff that, I would say, sat there for more than 20 or 30 years," Conley said. "I, myself, gathered at least six or seven trash bags full of broken glass, old metal and ceramics. There were a lot of old items and garbage in just one place."

Clay Cliffs Nature Area spans about a half of a mile in length with trails going in multiple directions, some leading up to neighborhoods. It was on these trails with pockets of litter and a hillside of garbage, emanating from the homes, that grabbed Conley and his group's attention when deciding where to hold their clean-up expedition.

Conley's group, six students in total, were the creators of the Environmental Care Project, an Academic Service Learning (ASL) project intended to benefit students and the community through volunteer service.

"ASL is just learning projects affiliated with the school. They give you a lot more hands-on experience and a lot of insight as to how working on projects would be like in a professional setting," Conley said.

This particular environment ASL project was prompted by the group's communications public advocacy class. Professor Stephanie Thomson, who teaches the course, said this experience was "part of the advocacy events that they are required to complete" for the course.

The group came up with the idea of a hands-on clean up in the city of Big Rapids since their original idea was spoiled due to the pandemic.

Getting in contact with the city, it was discussed what kind of contribution the students and other volunteers could do to best help beautify the area. After back-and-forth conversations with city recreation coordinator Josh Pyles, it was decided the group would host four days of cleanups at Clay Cliffs Nature Area and Northend Riverside Park.

Since both locations attract a lot of attention heading into the warmer weather, along with giving ample of opportunity for students to volunteer, these locations were the perfect spots for the project.

Pyles said the initiative the students had in this project and the extent of what they wanted to cover surprised him.

"[The city] just provided them some of the tools to help out, but, for the most part, they really knew where they wanted to go and what they wanted to do," Pyles said.

The initiative of the students was a great help in not only getting the parks clean but also for the city, as they have their own crew that goes out to clean up the sites as the seasons change. Pyles said that because this event took place it was a "huge help to have them on hand," as it made the process of reopening the parks faster for public use.

With a total of 16 volunteers over the course of four days, the group was able to make a great impact on the city and help individuals have a sense of a relationship with the environment. As they took part in getting rid of the litter, many were recognizing how their waste can begin to affect the small bits of nature

Environment | see page 7

It's not all downhill

Heather Peacock and her adventures on the slopes through a year of online classes

Kendall Rooks
Lifestyles Reporter

Having a year of fully online classes was a bummer for some students. But Business Administration junior Heather Peacock took full advantage of not having to be in class and hit the slopes any chance she got.

As the current President of the Ferris Snow Shredders ski club RSO Peacock has been traveling Michigan and the United States with the club and friends to ski at some of their favorite resorts.

"We try to go to the Friday college ski nights at Cabarfae Peaks and at Boyne Mountain when they have the six tickets for the price of one deal" said Peacock.

The club also traveled to Colorado this year and plans to go to Wyoming to ski Jackson Hole next school year. Before COVID-19 the team participated in the yearly 'Sardine Special' at Shanty Creek

Resort. Participants pack as many people as they can into a car and are charged for only one ticket per vehicle. Peacock said the team is excited for the deal to come back.

COVID-19 did however bring good new experiences for the ski club. Due to the lounges being closed for skiers the club had to improvise and started grilling out and bringing crockpots to eat for their ski breaks. Peacock said that staying outside and cooking for themselves has been one of her favorite things about skiing this year with the club.

During the winter break Peacock spent her time working in her hometown operating the ski lift at Nubs Nob in Harbor Springs. The Resort has also become one of her favorite to ski.

"I like the family atmosphere there as well as the good diversity in terrain," said Peacock, "My second favorite would be Mt Bohemia in the UP just because it

is really advanced, and you never really know what you're going to get yourself into. They have a lot of Outback skiing, so you get to ski in between tight trees."

Peacock did not learn to ski these big hills overnight. When she ten years old her dad enrolled her and her sister in ski lessons at Cabarfae Peaks. Peacock originally wanted to be a snowboarder but realized she was much better at skiing. The next Christmas she was gifted her first pair of skis and she has been going downhill ever since. Luckily, Peacock is yet to suffer any injuries on her ski adventures.

"I've never had any big falls but I'm really prone to accidents. I've fallen while getting off the chair lifts which can be really embarrassing. Never anything big, just funny moments that make all my friends laugh at me, it's great," said Peacock.

Peacock is very happy to have learned to ski and gotten involved while in college. During COVID-19 isolation it had especially helped Peacock to be active and get her heart rate up while social distancing. Whether skiing with friends or alone Peacock said that it has helped her escape from stress.

"All of the really important people in my life ski and that makes it a lot more enjoyable," Peacock said. "My little sister is a really

great skier and so is my boyfriend. I've met all of my closest friends skiing, I think that's kinda a flex."

Peacock is excited for her senior year of skiing. She will be running for president of the Snow Shredders for a second time.

If you're interested in getting in on the action contact the Ferris Snow Shredders on their Instagram @fsusnowshredders or their Facebook FSU SnowShredders.



Photo courtesy of Heather Peacock

Over winter break Peacock worked at Nubs Nob in Harbor Springs.

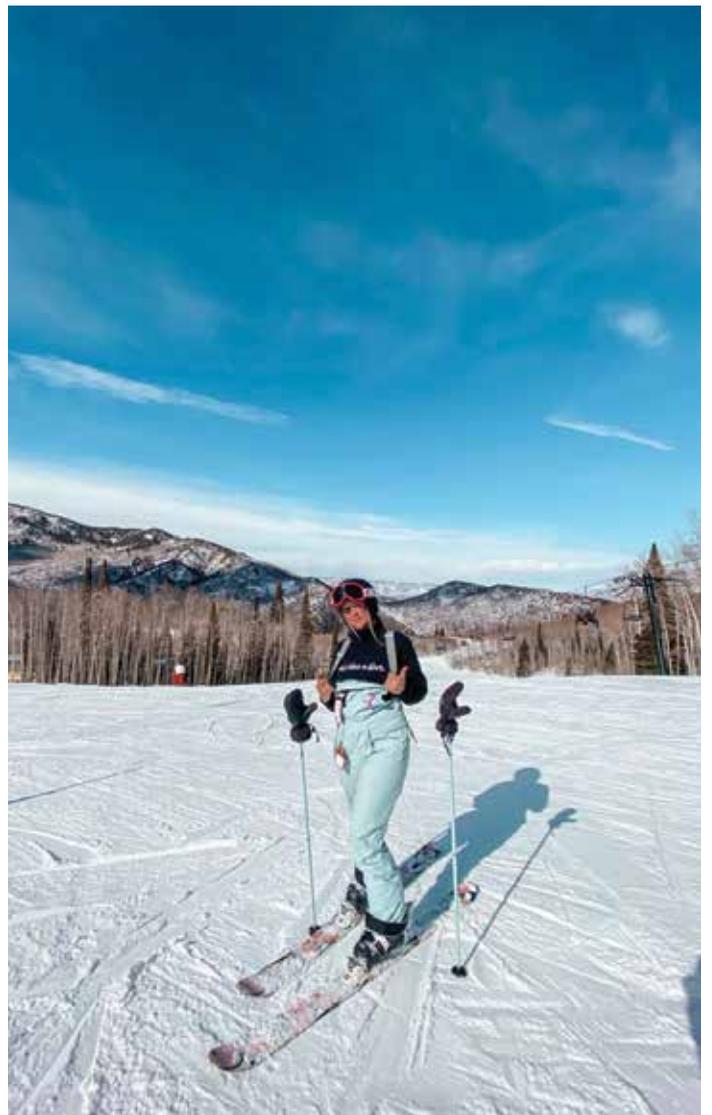


Photo courtesy of Heather Peacock

As the president of Ferris Ski Club she has traveled across the US.

2021 MAY COMMENCEMENT

Saturday, May 1, 2021

Virtual Commencement

| College | Contact | Phone # | Location |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|----------------|----------|
| Health Professions | Richelle Williams | (231) 591-2263 | VFS 210 |
| Arts, Sciences & Education | Gayle Driggers | (231) 591-3666 | ASC 3052 |
| Business (Undergrad Students) | Carri Griffis | (231) 591-2493 | BUS 200 |
| Business (Graduate Students) | Shannon Yost | (231) 591-2168 | BUS 200E |
| Engineering Technology | Joyce Mudel | (231) 591-3983 | JHN 200 |
| General Studies Graduates | Shelly VandePanne | (231) 591-2360 | ASC 1017 |
| Optometry | Michelle Balliet | (231) 591-3700 | MCO 231 |
| Pharmacy | Karen Ottobre | (231) 591-2252 | PHR 201 |
| DCCL | Megan Biller | (231) 591-2710 | ALU 113 |

Note: You must satisfy all of your degree requirements before you officially graduate and receive your diploma. **Caps and Gowns**, may be purchased at the Ferris State University Bookstore (located in the University Center, 805 Campus Drive, Big Rapids MI 49307) or online at <https://ferris.shopoakhalli.com> and have it shipped to you (a shipping fee will be charged). The deadline to order for Undergraduate and Graduate degrees shipping through the website is April 16th.

Commencement Electronic Program - Graduates must complete their online graduation application by **Friday, February 19, 2021 for their names to appear in the Spring 2021 Commencement Program** or their name will not appear in the Commencement Program.

Virtual Commencement Slide - To personalize your slide please visit Virtual Commencement at <https://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/current/Commencement/virtualcommencement.htm>. An Online Graduation Application must be completed in order for your name to appear in the virtual ceremony. Information for personalizing your slide must be submitted by the end of the day on **Wednesday, March 10th**.

Saturday, May 1, 2021 at 9:00am

| | |
|------------|---|
| Ceremony 1 | Michigan College of Optometry College of Health Professions |
| Ceremony 2 | College of Pharmacy Doctorate in Community College Leadership College of Arts, Sciences and Education University College |
| Ceremony 3 | College of Business |
| Ceremony 4 | College of Engineering Technology |

Diploma Cover & Alumni Pin Pick up - For those Graduate who selected yes to walk you may pick up your diploma cover and Alumni Pin during the following times in the University Center on main campus in Room 123.

| | | | |
|-----|--------------------|------|--------------------|
| 3/2 | 10:00 am - 4:00 pm | 3/9 | 10:00 am - 4:00 pm |
| 3/4 | 10:00 am - 4:00 pm | 3/11 | 10:00 am - 4:00 pm |

For special accommodations or for more information regarding the Commencement ceremony, please visit the Commencement website www.ferris.edu/commencement or call (231) 591-3803.



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Events calendar

WEDNESDAY

April 14

One Day for Dawgs - A Ferris Day of Giving

Contact: Megan Eppley
MeganEppley@ferris.edu
Time: 8 a.m. Wednesday April 14 -
8 a.m. Thursday April 15

First-Gen Wednesday Workshop - Financial Aid

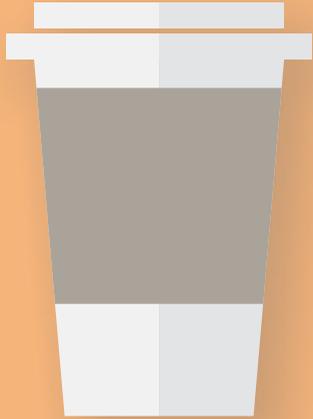
Contact: Dave McCall
davidmccall@ferris.edu
Location: Virtual
Time: 10- 10:30 a.m.

Workparent: The Secrets to Successful, Confi- dent Working Parenthood

Contact: Lynn Miller
lynnmiller@ferris.edu
Location: Virtual
Time: 12 - 1 p.m.

LGBTQ+ Resource Center Coffee House

Contact: Sarah Doherty
SarahDoherty@ferris.edu
Location: Virtual
Time: 4 - 6 p.m.



THURSDAY

April 15

Final Exams Prep

Contact: Karen Royster-James
(231) 591-3771
Location: Zoom
Time: 11 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Tune in with Teresa featuring Sandy Gholston

Contact: CLACS
Location: Zoom
Time: 1 - 1:30 p.m.

5 Star Event - The Leader- ship Conference, United as One

Contact: Christine Labby
labbyc@ferris.edu
Time: 7 - 9 p.m.



FRIDAY

April 16

Virtual Study Abroad Workshop

Contact: Megan Hauser-Tran
MeganHauserTran@ferris.edu
Location: Virtual
Time: 1 - 2 p.m.



TUESDAY

April 20

Self Care and Managing Stress

Contact: Karen Royster-James
(231) 591-3771
Location: Zoom
Time: 11 a.m. - 12 p.m.

FSU Student Government Associ- ation General Assembly Meeting

Contact: Allyson Faulkner
studentgovernment@ferris.edu
Location: Virtual
Time: 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.



For more events, check out calendar.ferris.edu

Graphics made by Production Manager Charlie Zitta



Photo provided by: Casey Conley

Casey Conley and other ASL members found a sink and toilet in Clay Cliffs Nature Area while hiking.

ENVIRONMENT

Continued from page 5

around them, especially after seeing the rusting sink and toilet set.

“With cleanups like this, it doesn’t take much to go out there for a couple of hours and make a differ-

ence,” Conley said. “You can make a really big difference quickly, and you can notice that in how the area looks after you’ve cleaned it and also by the smiles on peoples faces as they walk by.”

With Ferris’ ASL program, students are able to make a great impact on the community around them simply through a few hours of volunteering.

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OPINIONS

Cora Hall | Editor in Chief | hallc36@ferris.edu

The Ferris State Torch is published on 27 Wednesdays throughout the academic year. This student-run newspaper is printed by The Pioneer Group.

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Big Rapids, MI 49307
fsutorch.com/letter-to-the-editor/

The Ferris State Torch welcomes comments on topics of interest to the general readership. Letters should not exceed 300 words in length and The Torch reserves the right to edit for length. Letters will not be edited for grammar, punctuation or spelling. The Torch will not print letters deemed to be libelous or obscene. All letters must be signed by their authors and include his or her phone number.

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To advertise with the Torch, contact Danette Doyle at the Pioneer Group: (231) 592-8391 or didoyle@pioneergroup.com

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The Torch and fsutorch.com, the student newspaper and its accompanying online version focused on Ferris State University, are public forums for student expression. Student editors have the authority and responsibility to make all content decisions without censorship or advanced approval for both the print and online editions of the student newspapers.

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EDITOR'S COLUMN: Fall in love with your life

By Cora Hall

I think one of the saddest things in life is to see people who have never fallen in love with it.

Not with a person, but with life itself.

Whether it's the grander moments in life or the beauty in the everyday, there is so much in life to fall in love with. So often people get to an older age and regret not living the life they wanted, for a variety of reasons.

I'm not going to pretend that there aren't sometimes factors that hinder people from living the life they want or falling in love with life. That would be naïve, and there are some things in life that we would rather forget we ever had to live through.

But the "good" times, or the days that just feel normal - fall in love with that. Find the experiences that make you feel alive, the interactions that make you feel human, or the little things that make you laugh.

I would say I've fallen in love with my life, and just life itself in general. I think part of this came from traveling, and experiencing what the world has to offer. Part of what I love the most about life is the fact that I can go wherev-

er I want, or do whatever I want. My life is full of blank pages, waiting to be filled, and I get to decide what goes in them.

If I had to give any advice to people my age on how to fall in love with life, it's to move to another city by yourself, whether it's in the same state, across the country, or across the ocean. Part of why so many people go through life without falling in love with it, is because they grow accustomed to their routines and surroundings.

We get stuck in these routines and fall into patterns, which, on its face isn't a bad thing. Everyone needs some consistency in their lives. But when we begin to see routines as just that, we stop appreciating the little things in our lives. We begin to go through the motions and start living to survive the day.

When you move to a completely new place on your own, it forces you to create new routines and explore a new set of surroundings. It can be daunting or uncomfortable, but through that experience you will find the little things that you enjoy that will become part of your routine - the trick is to never stop appreciating

what you love about those little things. Your favorite coffee shop, a meal you love to cook, or a park you love to walk through.

There are other ways to fall in love with life and part of the beauty of it is, it's different for every person. The things that make you love your life won't be the same as the person next to you. Everyone's experience is different and that's what makes it meaningful.

The only way to do it the wrong way is to not do it. Don't go through life without looking for the little things that make it unique, or without doing the great things you dream of. One of the biggest things holding you back might just be your mindset, or belief that you have to conform to society's expectations of you.

So go fall in love with your life. Go look for the little details in your day or the interactions you have that make it worth it. Go do that big thing you've been waiting for the right time to do.

Change your perspective to one of appreciation of life and you'll never look back in regret.

Don't Doge this opportunity

We should take the Dogecoin meme more seriously



Jerry Gaytan
News Reporter

Have you ever invested in a meme? Me either, but here is why you should consider it.

Nothing says 2021 like Dogecoin, the Shiba Inu dog-themed cryptocurrency has soared in value since late January.

Dogecoin's initial purpose was just a joke by its creators and to mock all cryptocurrencies other than Bitcoin. For the logo they chose the Shiba Inu from a meme called Doge, which rose in popularity that same year. Since its creation in 2013 by co-founders Jackson Palmer and Billy Markus, Dogecoin has seen been flatlining until recent years in which brief sparks occurred at various intervals. Since late January Dogecoin is the new

get-rich-quick buy and the most talked-about cryptocurrency.

Cryptocurrency is deemed a risky investment because it can be very volatile. But Dogecoin has had a 600% increase in price since late January and it's still on a climb thanks to Tesla chief executive officer Elon Musk.

Similar to Bitcoin and all cryptocurrencies, Doge is decentralized, meaning it is not issued or backed by government or bank. Also, there is no limit on the quantity of coins according to Yahoo money.

According to Robinhood, Dogecoin was trading for \$0.083 per coin early February, and yet remains in that range after a slight drop. With a price of \$0.005 at the start of the year, it has increased ten times with a price of around \$0.070 per coin now.

Right now, with the global pandemic money must be tight especially for college students all around. This is your chance if you have not started to begin investing in something and Doge gives

you the opportunity with growth over time.

When it comes to investing there is an inherent risk, but there is reward when it comes to holding long term. Wallet Investor claims Doge is a healthy investment in the long run.

Ripple Coin News a source for relevant and needed information on crypto currencies stated they expect Doge to hit \$1.00 by May 2025.

You could buy 1000 shares priced at \$0.05 which would be a \$50 investment, and if shares move in price to \$1.00, you will not only double your profits, it would be 20 times the amount you've invested. You would have made all this money with no work needed from the time you invested.

According to Investor Place, Dallas Mavericks owner and business icon Mark Cuban is certain, and around 100% convinced of Dogecoin reaching \$1.00. He also announced that his NBA team will

accept Dogecoin as payment for merchandise and tickets.

If you missed out on the opportunity to buy Bitcoin when prices were lower in 2016, now is your chance to buy Dogecoin. Bitcoin which back in 2016 was priced around \$400 per coin is now around \$60,000 per coin.

Investors who turn the other way from the \$60,000 asking price of a single Bitcoin will be happy to see the good deal on a single Dogecoin. As of April 12, Dogecoin is at \$0.070 per coin according to Robinhood. One Bitcoin can buy you around 800,000 Dogecoins.

You could buy 50 coins for under \$4.00, which is less than the price of a Big Mac. This could be the investment that changes your financial status for life.

With Doge being Bitcoins rival, it has been getting talked up by internet-savvy entertainers in hopes to push the coin yet higher.

I can't tell you what to do with your money, but in my eyes, Dogecoin is worth investing in.

GOT AN OPINION?

HOW TO SUBMIT A LETTER TO THE EDITOR:

Deadline for submissions every Friday by 5 p.m.
Cora Hall | Editor-in-Chief | Email: hallc36@ferris.edu

1. Think of a topic that you feel strongly about.
2. Write out your thoughts in a coherent and respectful manner.
3. include some information about yourself (location, age, etc.).
4. Email your opinion to the editor for a chance to have your work published in our next issue!

How many and how long?

America needs gun legislation reform and it's time to stop waiting around to do it

My name is Jared Ebels, and I am a junior in the Digital Animation and Game Design major here at Ferris. I chose the DAGD major because of my love of stories and storytelling, and I hope to someday work at a game development company, creating stories to share with the world.

Jared Ebels
Guest Contributor

For the self-proclaimed "greatest country in the world," America has... a lot of issues.

Most of these issues don't affect me, personally, but for many in our nation they are a stark reality that comes up daily. Take, for example, gun control. According to the Gun Violence Archive, as of April 10, 2021, there have been a total of 138 mass shootings in 2021.

The GVA defines a mass shooting as four or more people being injured or killed by a shooter, not including the shooter themselves. That averages to around 1.3 mass shootings a day, and it's a much higher number than every other first-world country in the world.

It's devastating.

Every time another one shows up in our newsfeed, the same debate arises: should we reform gun control here in America? And every time there are people fighting back, putting the blame of the shootings on other sources like mental health, or saying that this isn't the time to discuss it while people are in mourning, or bringing up their Second Amendment rights to own a firearm. The cycle repeats every time, and as more people are being injured or killed in these mass shootings, nothing is changing.

Recently, President Joe Biden made a bold move on gun control to finally try and get something going. In a series of executive actions, the President started to regulate the sales or classifications of particular firearms. "Ghost guns," or guns sold in parts that don't have a serial number and thus can't be tracked, will be more heavily regulated, as will pistol-stabilizing braces. The Justice Department will be drafting up laws to prevent people deemed "a danger to themselves or others," either by their family or by law enforcement, from owning guns, and the Justice Department will also begin issuing annual reports on gun trafficking.

Naturally, this has had some push-back from those that oppose gun reform. I've seen several Facebook posts from my more gun-enthusiast friends calling it treason, or calling President Biden a liar, or saying that these regulations are imposing on people's rights. There's this idea that the government is trying to take everyone's guns away, or that if they start regulating guns the country's going to become a police state. And I just... don't quite get it.

I understand the want to keep guns, the idea that it's your right and the want to protect yourself, that much I understand. But also, I think the unshakable will of some people to keep their guns at any cost is incredibly selfish. Clearly there's a gun issue in America, because no other country has anywhere near the level of gun violence, and the majority of those other countries have more comprehensive gun laws. Thousands of people have died from the issue, senselessly and needlessly, and there are people that think that the system that allows it isn't flawed and shouldn't be changed.

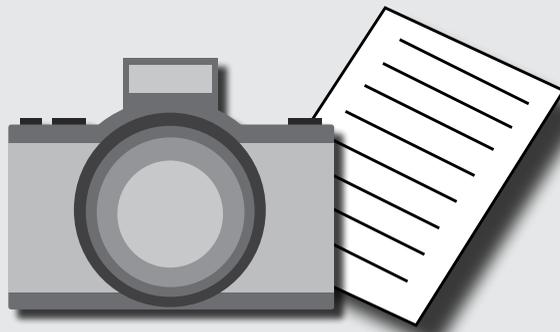
Why? At what point did people start to think that their right to a flawed gun system

outweighs the lives that have been taken? How many people are going to die from gun violence before these people concede to the idea that there are things greater than themselves? Requiring more comprehensive background checks or banning the sale of certain firearms is only going to prevent guns from going to the people who shouldn't have them, and if some gun enthusiasts are worried about losing their guns to that, maybe they also shouldn't have them to begin with.

I think the gun reform issue, as well as many other issues in America, are less about the topics themselves and much more about an inability to see outside yourself and your worldview. There's a place for caution and tradition, but there's also a need for more understanding and caring about other people that I think this country lacks. If we have to regulate the guns in order for that caring to start, so be it.

But the world is bigger than just me, or just you, or just one person, so we need to start caring more outside ourselves. People's lives depend on it.

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SPORTS

Brendan Sanders | Sports Editor | sandeb16@ferris.edu

Gracing the team with her skills

Grace VerHage describes how she rose to become soccer's next big star

Brandon Wirth
Sports Reporter

Life is a journey.

We all wonder how we have reached the point we are at today. Many times, we find ourselves in a place we did not expect. For Grace VerHage, the journey to collegiate soccer stardom was one she did not anticipate.

"I think if I went through this journey twice that it would not end the way that it did," VerHage said.

The journey began at a young age, when she found the sport of soccer thanks to her family.

"I started playing soccer when I was four years old," VerHage said. "My older sister did too and I always looked up to her."

Since kicking her first soccer ball, VerHage never turned back and continued to play the sport all the way into high school. While Otsego High School collected a number of successful seasons, head coach Levi Butcher knew VerHage was special.

"Oftentimes you see the high school star who has one elite skill; one way to beat you." Butcher said. "Grace could attack a defense in so many different ways, from so many areas on the field. If someone defended her right foot, she could shift and score with her left. If someone 'jammed' her dribble, she opened up others with her passing. If someone would mark her early in the game, she would run them 'ragged' and take over the match later in the game. She was very tough to contain."

While VerHage had so many talented skills and traits, her competitive nature and character are what coach Butcher appreciated the most.

"I appreciated Grace's maturity, desire to grow and perseverance," Butcher said. "She relished a challenge and never turned away from being tested. She was a leader in



Photo by: Cora Hall | Editor In Chief

VerHage has four goals and three assists through seven games on the season.

the program and set a great example for the younger players."

While VerHage continued her feet by breaking many school scoring records, she also found herself excelling rapidly in another sport.

"I was a big runner in high school. I loved the running atmosphere and it was so much different compared to other sports," VerHage said.

VerHage became a huge contributor during Otsego's incredible eight-year winning stretch, including three-team regional titles, two team state titles and an individual all-state finish her senior season.

When it came time to choose what sport to pursue at the next level, VerHage originally had her eyes set on wearing running shoes instead of cleats.

"I kind of banked on running for the longest time." VerHage said on her decision. "I also had a best friend who later on joined the Ferris State Cross Country team."

That best friend is current sophomore Sydney Kubiak, who knows VerHage is very determined.

"She was willing to put in extra work," Kubiak said. "I've always looked up to her and how hard she works in sports."

Ultimately, Grace felt she wanted to take a different journey and decided soccer was going to be the choice.

"After completing my goal of getting All-State and beating 19 minutes, I felt relieved closing that chapter the way I wanted to," VerHage said. "I knew with soccer something wasn't right. I didn't want it to be over."

With that decision made, VerHage began attending camps and getting exposure to college coaches. When she came across Ferris State as an option, she was all in for becoming a Bulldog.

"I had gone to some other schools and found some great opportunities, but they didn't feel right. When I got to tour Ferris and got a call from coach, I knew it was the place I wanted to be. I instantly said yes," VerHage said.

Throughout her first two seasons with former coach Andy McCaslin, VerHage thrived as both a starter and offensive substitute in 23 games. In her second contest,

VerHage scored her first collegiate goal thanks to an assisted entry pass from a teammate she looked up to most.

"It was an amazing feeling I could not even describe to you," VerHage said remembering the moment. "I remember at that time I had really dropped off in the pre-season, but I was taken back by Carley Dubbert. She gave me a lot of guidance and she was the first person I turned around to when I scored. There was so much happiness in a small moment of time."

VerHage finished her freshman season with four goals and four assists to help the Bulldogs reach the record for most single-season wins in school history. She added two more goals and three assists to her career stat line in her sophomore season but knew she wasn't playing her best.

"I think I had a little bit of a slump last year," VerHage said. "I just couldn't exactly figure it out."

After COVID-19 canceled the 2020 season, the former Otsego standout has seen herself finding the back of the net frequently here in 2021. Since registering two goals and an assist in the second game of the year against Wisconsin-Parkside, VerHage has continued her hot play by adding two more goals and two assists through the Bulldogs' six contests so far.

"Grace is playing with confidence this season." Ferris head

coach Greg Henson said. "She has the determination to be the impactful player she's capable of being game in and game out."

When asked about the impact VerHage has had as a Bulldog, coach Henson mentioned her ability to score and leadership.

"She's a natural leader both on and off the field. Grace provides quality service both in the run of play and from set plays. She has the ability to score whether it's finishing chances from teammates or creating it on her own."

As the postseason approaches, VerHage said the most important goal does not involve her stat line.

"I want to get a conference title so bad," VerHage said. "After making it to the national tournament my freshman year, I want to get there again and surpass the 'Sweet 16' mark. I believe we have the talent to do it."

At the end of the day, VerHage is happy to be out on the field playing for the people she loves.

"My family is everything to me. My little sisters have looked up to me and I try to be the best knowing they are watching me. I want to always be on my best game because they sacrificed their time getting me to where I am today."

To follow VerHage and the Women's soccer team, visit www.ferris-statebulldogs.com

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Softball starts GLIAC play with four losses

Brody Keiser
Sports Reporter

After wrapping up non-conference play with a strong 7 - 3 record, Ferris softball found that wins are tougher to come by in GLIAC play.

The Bulldogs now sit at 9 - 8 with a 2 - 5 record against GLIAC opponents. To begin conference play, they faced nationally ranked #17 Grand Valley and then Northwood in back-to-back doubleheaders and lost all four games.

In the Bulldogs' losses to Northwood on March 24, they were outscored 7 - 2 in the first game and 6 - 2 in the second game. Against Grand Valley on March 27, they lost 6 - 3 in the first game and 9 - 6 in the second game.

Head coach Kristin Janes spoke about the difficulty of the GLIAC conference and how her team views the challenge.

"I love playing in this conference because it's such high caliber softball," Janes said in an interview with Rob Bentley on Ferris Sports Update TV. "Every single ball game is going to be a battle. We expect to see a lot of splits with teams, and we go out to win but we know it's going to be a challenge. I love that and the girls love that. It makes for a very fun conference season."

Sophomore first baseman Kaitlyn Orme said the Bulldogs schedule their non-conference games against "tough teams" to prepare them for league play. She also spoke on her team's start to conference play.

"The GLIAC is a tough conference and at the beginning of our conference play season we have faced

a nationally ranked team in GVSU and another hot team with Northwood that was on a 9 - game winning streak," Orme said. "Those games were competitive games that we were just a couple of timely hits away from winning."

Since their 0 - 4 start to league play, the Bulldogs won two of their next three games, splitting a doubleheader with Wayne State University on April 3, and then routing Parkside 16 - 2 on April 7. Their second game with Parkside was tied 6 - 6 in the top of the seventh inning, but severe weather forced the game to be postponed. They will finish that game when Parkside visits Ferris on April 30.

On Saturday, April 10, the Bulldogs were scheduled to face Purdue Northwest in a doubleheader. However, the games were postponed due to expected weather and rescheduled for Monday, April 12.

The Bulldogs played a double header against Davenport Sunday, April 11. They lost both games against the Panthers, knocking their conference 2 - 7 and overall record to 9 - 10.

Going forward, Orme said her team must stay focused to get through the remainder of the regular season.

"As a team we need to believe in the process, put in the work, and stay focused on our goals as we approach the second half of conference play," Orme said. "We need to play one game at a time, stay in the present and play each opponent as tough as we can."

To close the regular season, the Bulldogs will play 20 games in 21 days, with their next scheduled games a rematch doubleheader against Grand Valley Wednesday, April 14.



Photo courtesy of Ferris State Athletics

Kodi Ramirez fields a ball against Davenport.

Down go the champs

Bulldogs lose to Michigan Tech 3 - 0, end six-year championship run



Photo by: Brendan Sanders | Sports Editor

Katie O'Connell would be named 1st Team All-GLIAC on the season.

Brendan Sanders
Sports Editor

For the first time in six years, Ferris volleyball will not be taking home the GLIAC tournament crown.

Ferris volleyball saw their season come to an end with a whimper as no. 1 seed Michigan Tech beat the Bulldogs 3 - 0 in the semi-finals of the GLIAC tournament.

Michigan Tech handled the Bulldogs throughout the contest, winning the first set 25 - 17 before winning the final two sets 25 - 18.

Freshman outside hitter Keona Salesman led the team in points during the contest, scoring 10 points off of eight kills, a service ace, and two block assists. Senior outside hitter Katie O'Connell was second on the team with nine points off of nine kills. Katie O'Connell talked about her reactions to the results of the past weekend.

"Obviously this past weekend wasn't the result we wanted, but the biggest takeaway was our growth over the past year," O'Connell said. "There was a lot of uncertainty about playing this year so we were just grateful for the opportunity to compete and to work to get better everyday. I think this weekend showed us what we need to work on to compete again in the fall."

Michigan Tech would score a kill percentage of 25.9%, meaning that over a quarter of their attacks resulted in a kill. Ferris tallied a kill percentage of 11.6%.

Before the loss to Michigan Tech, Ferris played against Northwood the day before in the GLIAC quarterfinals. They were able to score a tight victory 3 - 2.

They came back from being down two sets to one, and were in a close battle in the fourth set, only winning it 25 - 22.

Head coach Tia Brandel-Wilhelm talked about how impressive the comeback was after going down early.

"I was super pleased with that, I don't know if early in the game we were playing our best, we made a lot of errors we don't normally make." Brandel-Wilhelm said. "I was really happy with how the team just stuck together. Especially in that adversity."

The sets playing out 20 - 25, 25 - 18, 19 - 25, 25 - 22, 15 - 10.

O'Connell led the team with 18 points including 17 kills. Junior middle hitter Samantha Hermann was second with 15 points on the evening, tallying 14 kills to go along with two block assists.

O'Connell explained some of the biggest things they are looking to improve over the course of the offseason and into the fall.

"A big part of our offseason will be just getting lots of reps to improve all our skills. Our focus over the summer heading into the fall season is to improve our skill and fitness so we can come into preseason practice ready to work on our systems play."

With this quick season coming to a close, hopes are high for the next season. It is not nearly as far away as usual, with only four months separating seasons. O'Connell had high expectations going into the fall.

"Our goals for next season are to fight for the conference championship and we want to be one of the best teams in the nation. We want to compete towards the Elite Eight."

The Bulldogs finished 11 - 5 overall on the season, With as eligibility rules allowing for this season to not count against players much of their roster expected for the fall.

There are no current details on what the schedule will look like for the Bulldogs next season, so stay tuned for updates at ferrisstatebulldogs.com.

WEEKEND SCORECARD

Men's Tennis

April 10 - Ferris 7, Davenport 0
April 11 - Ferris 5, Purdue Northwest 0

Women's Tennis

April 10 - Ferris 7, Davenport 0
April 11 - Ferris 5, Purdue Northwest 0

Soccer

April 9 - Ferris 0, Northern Michigan
April 11 - Ferris 1, Michigan Tech 0

Sports Speculation: A Conclusion to the Madness

History made by both Baylor and Stanford in the NCAA Tournament

Austin Arquette
Sports Reporter

As the yellow and green confetti fell from the rafters, the Baylor Bears held up the NCAA men's basketball championship Monday night April 5.

The Bears were picked as champions in only 10.4% of brackets according to ESPN which is the third most behind runner-up Gonzaga (34.4%) and Illinois (15.2%).

Baylor reached the final four one time before but that was back in 1950. Their road to make it to the grand stage started back in November en route to a 28 - 2 season. Baylor's only loss in the regular season was to Kansas back in February and they didn't lose again until the Big 12 tournament. Baylor lost in the semifinals to Oklahoma State during the Big 12 tournament but set their focus to winning a national title.

Baylor and Gonzaga played each other five times and Gonzaga had never lost until there was a championship on the line. Baylor had previously lost the first four meetings with the Bulldogs and while history wasn't on their side the bears found a way to defeat history too. Baylor's head coach Scott Drew became their first head coach to bring Waco, Texas a championship in men's basketball.

In the championship game, Baylor made Gonzaga play to their strengths and forced the bulldogs to struggle right out of the gate.

Baylor hit their first four three-pointers and was electric from behind the arc. The Bears shot 43.5% from behind the arch while they held Gonzaga to only 29.4% three-point shooting. Gonzaga cut the lead to being only down 10 after the first half as they went on a 9 - 2 run in the last five minutes of the half as the halftime score was Baylor 47 and Gonzaga 37. However, Baylor came right back after the break and never let up. Between defensive stops and the creation of turnovers by the Bulldogs, Baylor jumped to as high as 20 points in the game. When it looked as if Gonzaga may fight back, they never could get close enough to take control.

Baylor handled Gonzaga from start to finish as they never trailed en route to its first men's basketball title with an 86-70 win as they took down the undefeated. Baylor guards Jared Butler, Davion Mitchell and Macio Teague led the way all-around. Butler had 20 points, three rebounds, and seven assists, while Mitchell collected 15 points, six rebounds, and five assists, and Teague added 19 points and one rebound as this trio's combined efforts hoisted the Ferris Mowers NABC National Championship Trophy.

The women's national championship Stanford rewrote the history books as well when they won their first title in 29 years. Stanford beat Arizona 54 - 53 on Sunday, April 4 in a thriller to end the madness of their seasons. Stanford and Arizona met twice during the regular season, as Stanford

rolled past Arizona both times, winning by double digits in each game. The third and final game came down to a wild back and forth effort from both teams that resulted in a last-second shot attempt by star Arizona guard Aari McDonald that missed to give Stanford the victory.

The final winner of the tournament was Torch Sports Reporter Brandon Wirth, who proved to have the best ESPN bracket challenge here at the Torch. His bracket would score 1,220 points after he correctly picked Baylor to beat Gonzaga to win the National Championship.

I would come in second in the challenge with 810 points after my pick, Gonzaga lost to Baylor in the championship.

Sports reporter Brody Keiser would come in third with 800 points. His bracket would be held back due to his championship pick, Iowa, losing to no. 7 seed Oregon in the second round of the tournament.

In last would be Sports Editor Brendan Sanders, who picked Ohio State to win the championship. They became the ninth team to lose to a no.15 seed team in the first round, losing to Oral Roberts 75 - 72. Thus, Sanders saw his bracket only score 690 points.

Overall, the return of March Madness brought magic back to the month of March after being snatched away last year. With magical moments such as Jalen Sugg's buzzer beater three in the Final Four against

UCLA to Aari McDonald's last second shot attempt raising the heart rates of millions around the world, it was refreshing to finally get to re-embrace the madness.

March Madness Torch Predictions Results

Brandon Wirth
1,220 points / 95.6 percentile
Pick: Baylor

Austin Arquette
810 points / 67.5 percentile
Pick: Gonzaga

Brody Keiser
800 points / 66.0 percentile
Pick: Iowa

Brendan Sanders
690 points / 47.5 percentile
Pick: Ohio State



Sue Glatz



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