

## Faculty await future in Center for Virtual Learning



Photo by: Brendan Sanders | Editor-in-Chief

The Center for Virtual Learning is set to open in the spring of 2023. Once completed, it will host a slew of majors, from education to television and digital media production.

### From layout to color scheme, faculty is getting their say

**Jessica Oakes**  
Special Editions Editor

As the excavation wraps up and the foundation is laid for the new Center for Virtual Learning, the Ferris community is catching a glimpse of the future of online education.

The CVL is on schedule to complete construction in the spring of 2023. This will begin a new era for programs in education, digital media and intelligence.

Liza Ing, professor of education, sees the CVL as an exciting asset for aspiring teachers.

"I'm hoping that it will entice more people to come to Ferris specifically to become teachers and to be involved in this wonderful new way of learning and of teaching," Ing said.

Ing explained that the School of Education is moving from Bishop Hall to the CVL to prepare students for their increasingly technologically advanced careers.

"With the pandemic, the need to learn how to teach with technology has increased tenfold," Ing said. "We will actually be able to have students teaching each other using technology that [already exists in some schools.]"

The move will also benefit both professors and students by placing faculty offices in the same building as classrooms. While

Ing, as well as other education instructors, currently have their offices in the Arts and Sciences Commons, she believes that this will be a "fantastic" improvement.

Ing hopes that the CVL will reflect a bright future for learning in other schools as well.

"The need for technology, and for us to be able to prepare future teachers to use technology, is really important. So, I would hope that we will see more of these kinds of buildings, or at least this type of technology, in other universities," Ing said.

Ing's voice has been heard throughout the entirety of the CVL's planning. She gave her input on classroom layouts, offices and color schemes.

"[Faculty] are [a part] of the conversation and [are providing] input into what our new classrooms are going to look like," Ing said. "It has been very fascinating to see all the processes and [to] know that we're going to be getting things that are going to benefit us. The School of Ed. is not going to just be retrofit into something that already exists."

School of Digital Media Coordinator Glen Okonoski also appreciates the open communication.

"I think there has been really good communication and conversation. I do think the faculty's desires, as it relates to what these classrooms look like and how they are equipped, are reflected in the plans for

the building," Okonoski said.

Okonoski is also a professor of television and digital media production. With the CVL completing construction during the TDMP program's 50th year of existence, he is excited to see students learning with state-of-the-art technology.

"In the new building, we will have dedicated labs and spaces that are relevant to the future technology that we'll be teaching, such as an augmented reality VR lab and a motion capture space," Okonoski said.

All throughout the planning of the CVL, Okonoski tried to focus on the wants and needs of both his fellow faculty members and his students.

"Our goal is always to prepare students for careers, of course. So, the more we can provide them [with] a learning experience that reflects or resembles what their professional experiences are going to be, the better. And I think that this space will allow us to do that," Okonoski said.

Chad Stirrett, the associate vice president of facilities management, joined the CVL project eight months ago. He believes that all the included academic programs have a kind of "synergy."

"[The CVL] brings a lot of different programs together that actually have kind of a connectivity, a connection to them, and [the CVL will put] them under one roof," Stir-

rett said. "It really gives them a new state of environment to work in."

A "unique mix" of career-oriented educational programs is something Stirrett appreciates about Ferris.

"Many of them are the only programs of their kind in the Midwest...They're also highly desirable for people looking for changes in careers, or maybe to accelerate their existing career and to make them available from a virtual learning standpoint," Stirrett said.

Stirrett believes that Ferris is offering students a valuable asset with the construction of the new building.

"The reason that universities build buildings is really to further the academic programs and the need for them," Stirrett said.

After months of excavation, Stirrett explained that the construction team will be making real visual progress on the CVL in the coming months.

"What you're going to see coming up here in the next month is us receiving steel on site. Then you'll really start to see progress because you'll see the steel start to come up out of the ground," Stirrett said.

For more information on the construction and layout of the CVL, visit Ferris' facilities webpage.

## Movements on the Mehler case

### Judge denies temporary restraining order, injunction results pending trial

**Rebecca VanderKooi**  
Opinions Editor

Ferris lawyers responded to history professor Dr. Barry Mehler's emergency motion for a temporary restraining order and temporary injunction regarding his spring semester introduction video.

Mehler filed this request in hopes of being reinstated back to his position at the university with full privileges. He also re-

quested that the court restrain the university from prohibiting him to come to campus and have contact with students both former and current.

Judge Jane Beckering reviewed and denied the request for the temporary restraining order, but the temporary injunction is pending trial.

"Having considered the record before it, the Court, in its discretion, finds that the immediate issuance of a temporary restrain-

ing order without notice to all Defendants is not justified," Beckering wrote in her ruling.

The university responded to Mehler's requests by claiming that the viral class introduction video is not considered free speech.

"Speech is not protected, public speech when made only to a 'captive audience of students' enrolled in a university class who cannot 'effectively avoid further bombardment of their sensibilities' by simply

averting their ears. See *Bonnell v. Lorenzo*," University lawyers, Robert M. Vercruysse and Anne-Marie Vercruysse Welch wrote.

Mehler and his lawyers reaffirmed their position on his video that it was information-dense and not profanity-dense.

"As far as the profanity is concerned, there's the first Amendment of the Constitution that gives us the right to speak free-

**Mehler** | see page 4

Got news? Let us know.

Email: [fsutorcheditor@gmail.com](mailto:fsutorcheditor@gmail.com)  
Phone: 231.591.5978



LIKE US ON FACEBOOK  
FERRIS STATE TORCH



FOLLOW US ON TWITTER  
@FSUTORCH



ADD US ON INSTAGRAM  
FSUTORCH



WATCH US ON TIKTOK  
FSUTORCH

Connect with us on social media - Read articles online at [www.fsutorch.com](http://www.fsutorch.com)

# NEWS

Noah Kurkjian | News Editor | kurkjin@ferris.edu

## “Workaholics” star works the crowd



Photo by: Bradley Moore | Torch Photographer

Erik Griffin took the stage on Wednesday Feb. 23 in lieu of the yearly Entertainment Unlimited “Music Takes Action” event, which hasn’t been put on since 2019, due to COVID-19.

### Comedian Erik Griffin traveled to Big Rapids for Comedy Night

**Jessica Oakes**  
News Reporter

Donning a shirt that read “hero mode,” actor-comedian Erik Griffin saved the partially filled Williams Auditorium from a dull Wednesday evening at last week’s Comedy Night.

Known for his appearances in “Workaholics,” “Mike and Dave Need Wedding Dates” and “Blunt Talk,” Griffin used his decades of comedy experience to make the most of the small crowd.

Griffin was able to use the room to his advantage, poking fun at the slow Big Rapids night life.

“I almost want the lights on so I can see people, then it really feels like I’m in an empty room,” Griffin said. “Where are your friends, m———s? What’s going on in this b——t town?”

The jokes were bold, considering how sensitive or “woke” Griffin believes college students to be. Fortunately for him, the audience in Williams Auditorium laughed and jeered at his vulgar comedy. The crowd even applauded as Griffin asked if people were ready for the “inappropriate” material.

The set was a mixture of sexual jokes,

discourse against the body positivity movement and efforts to stay current in both pop culture and politics.

“I want Biden to pull out of COVID like he did Afghanistan,” Griffin said.

To connect with the young adult demographic, Griffin shared his comical hot takes through references to popular movies and television shows. This included his thoughts on gratuitous nudity with HBO’s “Euphoria” and inexplicable diversity through Marvel’s “Eternals.”

“I’m a nerd first, I need things to make sense. I’m not for diversity for diversity’s sake.” Griffin said.

The largest reactions and loudest laughs were prompted by Griffin’s tendency to turn the spotlight on to the audience members. One of which was senior Madison MacDowell, the president of Entertainment Unlimited, who led the planning for Comedy Night.

“Do you guys know Madison?” Griffin said. “Madison’s so cool. She’s not a nerd like the people who usually run these things.”

MacDowell thought the crowd work was a great addition to the show. The jokes landed so well, [and] she believed that the smaller, more intimate crowd was an asset

for Griffin.

“I got called out a little bit, but I was practically in tears laughing. People were good sports about it,” MacDowell said.

Born and raised in Los Angeles, Griffin had some qualms about how things work in Big Rapids. Harsh weather aside, Griffin was blown away by the existence of Ferris’ plastics engineering technology program.

Two PET students who sat close to the stage were dubbed “the plastics” by Griffin. They became the punchline to many jokes.

“What, do you guys just go to a landfill and say, ‘yep, this is my job,’” Griffin said.

The plastics were later asked to make an engagement ring as Griffin asked couples big questions like, “Do you think they’re the one?” and, “If he proposed right now, would you say yes?”

Dental hygiene senior Michelle Meiste and film junior Tanner Menghini confessed their love for one another during Griffin’s questionnaire. Both were amused by the audience participation, explaining that it made the set feel more personal.

Putting jokes aside, Griffin gave some earnest advice to an audience he grew to know quite well.

“I like that you guys have dreams. Follow

them. I didn’t until way later,” Griffin said.

Griffin quit pursuing his career as a young comedian and did not return until his 30s. He decided to follow his dream once again to avoid wondering what might have been. He hoped to use his story as a confidence booster for his audience of “young minds in a place of learning, [who are] trying to get [their lives] together.”

Before the show, MacDowell reflected on the planning of Comedy Night. COVID-19 took away EU’s chance to put on the annual Music Takes Action show, prompting them to arrange a stand-up comedy show instead.

Planning a comedy show was somewhat of a relief to MacDowell and the rest of EU.

“I really like stuff with music, but sometimes planning a large-scale music event can get kind of stressful. I like comedy because it’s pretty easy to set up, while still being fun,” MacDowell said.

The Music Takes Action shows have previously drawn crowds of over 3,000 students, with headliners such as blackbear, Jesse McCartney and Lupe Fiasco.

Future EU events include Marvel Trivia and the Spring Fling. For more information, visit the EU page on Bulldog Connect.

# MICHIGAN NEWS UPDATE

# GLOBAL NEWS UPDATE

**Noah Kurkjian**  
News Editor

**LANSING** - The Michigan House approved an expansion to the "Right to Try" law that would allow Michigan physicians to prescribe FDA-unapproved treatments for COVID-19.

The measure passed on a vote of 56-48, largely following party lines.

This change now allows doctors to prescribe drugs like ivermectin or other similar medications to patients dying of COVID-19.

Patients interested in pursuing these courses of treatment will have to sign a form acknowledging the risks and side effects, acknowledging that insurance won't cover the drug or the treatment if there are adverse reactions and that the use of these drugs may disqualify patients from hospice services.

Supporters of the bill, sponsor Rep. Mary Whiteford R-Casco Township, say that these drugs offer hope to a patient out of options and

on the verge of death.

"Shouldn't a doctor have the ability to make a decision for his or her patient?" Whiteford, who is also a nurse, said.

"A doctor is specifically trained to take all research into consideration and decide the best course of action for their patients. Today we can ensure that every one of us and our loved ones ... with the diagnosis of COVID has every opportunity to live."

Those against the measure claim it to be redundant because it's just offering protections to doctors already offering these drugs.

"Intentionally or not, this legislation plays into conspiracy theories and misinformation propagated by foreign governments, snake oil salesmen and random men with podcasts, none of whom are better situated to determine a patient's treatment than a medical professional," Rep. Laurie Pohutsky, Livonia-D, who is also a microbiologist, said.

**Noah Kurkjian**  
News Editor

President Joe Biden announced Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson as his nomination to replace retiring Justice Stephen Breyer.

"Today, as we watch freedom and liberty under attack abroad, I'm here to fulfill my responsibilities under the Constitution to preserve freedom and liberty here in the United States of America," Biden said at the White House as he introduced Jackson.

"For too long, our government [and] our courts haven't looked like America. I believe it's time that we have a court that reflects the full talents and greatness of our nation with a nominee of extraordinary qualifications, and that we inspire all young people to believe that they can one day serve their country at the highest level."

Judge Jackson was born in Washington DC and grew up in Miami Florida. She graduated magna cum laude from Harvard University, then attended Harvard Law School, where she graduated cum laude

and was an editor of the Harvard Law Review.

Of the 115 Supreme Court Justices to have served, 108 of them have been white men, two have been Black men and five have been women.

If appointed, Jackson would be the first Black woman to serve on the court and the fourth woman currently seated on the bench.

Jackson's addition to the court would not alter the ideological split, leaving it at a 6-3 conservative majority.

Critics of the nomination are calling Judge Jackson a pawn of the "radical left." Sen. Lindsay Graham, R-South Carolina tweeted, "the radical Left has won President Biden over yet again."



## - ON THE RECORD -

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

### Faded Friday

**Noah Kurkjian**  
News Editor

#### Faded Friday

Feb. 11, 9:48 p.m. - Officers were dispatched to Puterbaugh Hall when an RA smelled marijuana coming from one of the rooms. Officers discovered students were smoking in their room and confiscated their supply and paraphernalia and referred them to student conduct.

#### You gotta stop, silly

Feb. 14, 12:00 p.m. - Officers stopped a driver for running a stop sign in front of the pharmacy building on Ferris Drive. The student was cited for failure to stop.

#### Slick situation

Feb. 18, 12:16 a.m. - Officers caught a driver doing donuts in their vehicle in lot 28. When they attempted to make contact, the driver fled out of the parking lot, disregarding the officers trying to stop him. The driver proceeded out of town and was giving police chase until he landed in a dead end road. The driver was arrested for evading police and cited for reckless driving.

#### Halfway there

Feb. 20, 11:05 p.m. - An officer saw a vehicle with a headlight and taillight out. The officer make contact with the driver and discovered he did not have insurance. The driver was cited for lacking insurance and warned for vehicle maintenance items.

#### Bad game of telephone

Feb. 22, 8:48 p.m. - Officers were called to the student rec center when a visitor believed that staff were making comments about him. When officers arrived, the visitor left.

#### Crash and dash

Feb. 26, 2:19 p.m. - A student reported a hit-and-run accident that may have taken place in parking lot nine. The case was closed with no leads.

#### Catching Z's in Lot 28

Feb. 27, 5:35 a.m. - While patrolling, officers found an underage student partially conscious in their vehicle with an open container of alcohol. Officers did a preliminary field sobriety test and cited the student with a minor in possession ticket.

# Come see us and save.

## All We're Offering

### Our products and services.

### LIMITED TIME OFFER! EXPIRES SOON!



**BRING IN OR  
MENTION THIS AD!**  
**Expires  
03/31/2022**  
**Appreciation  
Card**

- 4¢ black & white copies
- 15¢ color copies
- 10% off UPS® shipping

Offers valid at participating locations. Restrictions apply. See center for details. Copyright © 2022 The UPS Store, Inc. All rights reserved MS410\_23641218



## THE UPS STORE

**1260 Perry Ave  
BIG RAPIDS, MI 49307  
231-262-9600**

Hours: Mon-Fri 8:00 AM-06:30 PM  
Sat 8:00 AM-01:50 PM  
Sun 10:00 AM-03:00 PM

store7502@theupsstore.com  
theupsstore.com/7502

# Planning for Pride Big Rapids



Graphic by: Sienna Parmelee | Production Assistant

## Community members have been planning since last June for Pride Big Rapids

**Rebecca Witkowski**  
Freelance Reporter

Big Rapids' first LGBTQ+ pride event is scheduled for this June, and it is set to feature activities for all ages.

The festival is being organized by a group of Big Rapids residents led by Foster Neill. It will be held at Northend Riverside Park on Sunday, June 26. The event will be free to attend, with assorted items available for purchase.

"We plan on having a stage with a lineup of local live musicians and a drag show finale," Neill said. "We also plan on having a beer tent, which we hope to use to raise money for next year's Pride."

In addition to the stage and the beer tent, organizers are planning to have food and craft vendors, a booth to make buttons and, possibly, a bounce house. There will

also be booths providing educational resources and support for individuals who may need it, as well as a booth giving out "Mom Hugs," according to Neill.

Planning for the event began in June 2021, when Neill created the Facebook page that would be the basis for event planning. Neill decided to make the page after a conversation with a friend.

"One of my friends said to me, 'There should be a Pride in Big Rapids,'" Neill said. "I agreed and told him he should start a Facebook group just to get the ball rolling, but he didn't want to take it on. A few weeks went by, and I decided I'd just start the Facebook page myself."

Neill created the page and opened it to the public. He took suggestions on what sort of vendors and activities people would like to see at the festival. The group decided to name the festival "Pride Big Rapids."

So far the public's reaction to the festival has been mostly positive. According to Neill, the community has been supportive of and excited for the event. He explained that different Big Rapids entities have shown their support for the event.

"The City of Big Rapids, Big Rapids Department of Public Safety, ArtWorks and the United Church of Big Rapids have all been supportive from the beginning," Neill said.

However, after the Big Rapids Pioneer posted an article discussing the festival to Facebook, there were some negative reactions from community members. Scott Triemstra commented "Disgusting" under the post, while William Horton left a comment expressing his beliefs surrounding LGBTQ+ individuals.

"All homosexuals, lesbians and those who promote those lifestyles must be athe-

ists," commented Horton. "They have to be. God's word is very plain.... on the rewards for such sins. I hope you like the afterlife party that will be waiting for you."

This is not Neill's first time organizing and launching something new. In 2010 he founded The Michigan Poet, a website featuring poetry written by individuals across the state. Individuals can submit their poetry for the chance to be published on the website.

Individuals looking to get involved with planning for the festival are encouraged to attend the group's weekly meetings. The meetings take place on Zoom and at P&J's Plantiques in Roger's Heights, which is about six minutes south of Big Rapids. The meetings occur at 6 p.m., and the Zoom link can be accessed from the Pride Big Rapids Facebook page.

### Mehler

Continued from front page

ly. And the Supreme Court and every other court of the years over and over and over again rule that profanity is just a form of speech," Mehler said.

Further, they argue that Mehler has not suffered adverse action because he is receiving full pay and benefits while he is suspended pending the investigation.

The university claims that Mehler would not suffer irreparable harm without the injunction.

"Plaintiff has also not alleged any specific damage or material loss he has suffered as a result of the requirement that he remain away from campus while the investigation is ongoing," Robert M. and Anne-Marie wrote.

Mehler alleged he is facing harm in a previous comment to the Torch.

"People don't seem to understand at all, I've been defamed, I've been treated like a criminal, I've been publicly humiliated, they took down my bio from the university as if I never worked there, they stripped my canvas pages of all the content," Mehler said.

Mehler's lawyer, Matthew Hoffer replied to the university's response supporting the motion for the temporary restraining order and temporary injunction.

One of the biggest issues addressed in the document is the claim that the university failed to address Mehler's prior restraining argument.

Hoffer references The Letter that Mehler received from the university that reportedly forbids him to speak to current or former students about his case or access the Ferris campus.

"Defendants' purported justifications

for their actions fall far short of what is required to sustain a presumptively unconstitutional prior restraint," Hoffer wrote.

Hoffer also argues that Mehler's speech is a matter of public concern, and the fact it was spoken in a classroom setting doesn't change that. Hoffer also argues that Mehler's speech was protected by academic freedom.

Mehler is taking Ferris State University to court on March 7 at 10 a.m.

# LIFESTYLES

Marissa Russell | Lifestyles Editor | russem22@ferris.edu

## Handpicked For Diversity

Ferris Outfitters is bringing in new stock for students to feel more included

Meghan Hartley  
Lifestyles Reporter

Highlighting unique RSO products is a new aspect to Ferris Outfitters that students can look forward to.

Ferris Outfitters has become interested in giving back to students and bringing some excitement into the store by showcasing handpicked items from student organizations around campus.

The store kicked off the start of Black History Month by showcasing items picked by the Office of Multicultural Student Services. The OMSS is a resource that supports, mentors and advocates for students of color and other underrepresented students. Products they chose included t-shirts, jackets, book bags, masks, water bottles and any miscellaneous beauty items to help promote diversity within the store.

**“When we unveiled them, the students who had appeared for the event, some had tears in their eyes.”**

**-Gheretta Harris**

According to Danyelle Gregory, the director of the OMSS, she assembled a small group of students to make a list of items they wanted to see in the store, which the store was able to make happen.

“A lot of these things are items students utilize on a day to day basis that they’re not necessarily able to access in Big Rapids,” Gregory said. “We have a Walmart and Meijer, but they have a very limited supply, and when they sell out sometimes it takes a while before they restock.”

Gregory says having these items readily available on campus gives students the opportunity to get the necessities they need in order to take care of their hair, skin and other things of that nature.

Showcasing unique products is an initiative Ferris Outfitters is taking to create a shop-to-support opportunity for departments and RSOs on campus to make the store feel more oriented towards students.

Donald Kozakowski, the merchandiser for Ferris Outfitters, says the initiative has been great and there has been real excitement from students.

“I think as more people see it, they

get really excited about seeing the products,” Kozakowski said. “I think it’s given us an opportunity to really get out there and look for the products [and] see what’s available.”

An aspect Kozakowski has been excited about has been the involvement of students when it comes to bringing new products into the store; one of the t-shirts being sold was designed by a student. Kozakowski says they encourage students to get involved and get designs going so the store can have unique products made for them.

“From an inclusion perspective, it’s really huge,” Kozakowski said. “Also, this is the students’ bookstore, and it’s the sense that it’s outfitted for them. We really want them to come in and really feel like this is speaking to them.”

Turning Ferris Outfitters into a full merchandise store and stocking it with items students would actually like to see and purchase makes the space a store for the whole community.

According to Gheretta Harris, Associate Vice President of Auxiliary Enterprises, the whole point of the reconfiguration of the bookstore into a merchandise store is so that the university can decide what they would like to sell with input from students.

Harris’ idea of bringing in university organizations to recommend products to sell in the store amplifies Ferris Outfitters’ main moto, it is a store for students with products picked by students.

“It tells students that you belong,” Harris said. “It was really heartfelt, and I guess I didn’t expect it when we unveiled the OMSS products. When we unveiled them, the students who had appeared for the event, some had tears in their eyes. They had asked for products to be put in, and we want to include everyone in the store.”

Harris says that while Black History Month is ending, the handpicked products from the OMSS will remain available for students to purchase in the future.

“We want to be a part of the campus community [and] sell more than just campus items,” Harris said. [This is] a new program we hope will become second nature. Please stop in to support these organizations.”

Ferris Outfitters is planning to highlight different campus organizations and RSOs throughout the school year. Each month will highlight a new organization with new products picked out by members of the organization.

Next month is women’s history month, and new handpicked items to soon appear on shelves.



Photo by: Cassie Jessup | Multimedia Editor

Ferris Outfitters plans to continue bringing in special items for different monthly themes.



Photo by: Cassie Jessup | Multimedia Editor

Donald Kozakowski poses with the student designed t-shirt.

# Et Tu, Brutus? | Emma Franklin reflects on her time as Brutus



Photo by: Hannah Crouch

Emma Franklin waves goodbye to crowd at her last time wearing the Brutus head.

**Dylan Rider**  
Sports Reporter

On Friday, Feb. 18, Brutus' identity was revealed.

Ferris hospitality senior Emma Franklin has played Brutus since 2020. She attended over 50 events as Brutus and logged over 100 hours in the suit.

Franklin spoke about her Brutus tryout, which included the rarely worn Rufus suit.

"Pretty much for the tryout process you jump into the Rufus suit and you go around at some form of an event... Mine was a basketball game. So, I got like 20 minutes in the Rufus suit, where I kinda just walked around and interacted with the crowd, and there were judges throughout the crowds from the Gold Club," Franklin said.

Franklin started her portrayal of Brutus in March of 2020, meaning she started during the pandemic. At the time, Ferris was virtual and no fans were allowed to physically attend any games. Fast forward to now, where Franklin has been Brutus for just about two years, and fans have returned to the stands.

Franklin spoke about the feeling she gets whenever fans go crazy over Brutus at events.

"Honestly, it's a real interesting feeling. It's really cool," Franklin said. "Especially the pep-band, for example. Every time Brutus walked by they were always cheering, 'Brutus! We love you!' Like, it's a super fun feeling. It almost makes you feel like you're famous, but

at the same time you don't know who I am, so it's more comfortable."

Franklin also discussed anonymity. She explained that those who portray Brutus receive a scholarship for doing so. However, exposing your identity runs the risk of losing that scholarship. Franklin went on to say that besides bosses, the only people who know of Brutus' identity are those who are in the Student Alumni Gold Club.

The Student Alumni Gold Club is an RSO and a chapter of Ferris' Alumni Association, which Franklin joined before her time as Brutus. The RSO handles mascot coordination, which is a role Franklin held before donning the Brutus suit.

Assistant Director of Alumni Relations Ben Withey gave his thoughts on what it takes to play Brutus.

"I think it does take a certain type of individual to be able to... keep it a secret, and... the most important and challenging thing for really any mascot is to find a way to be animated without using your voice...," Withey said.

Withey went on to laud Franklin as "phenomenal" in her portrayal. He also added how she "hit the ground running" after being hired.

Alongside her positive aspects, Franklin shared the hardships of being Brutus.

"It wasn't all that easy," Franklin said. "I also work on campus here, [so] there were times I was balancing class, RSOs, being Brutus and work. I was lucky I had

a boss that knew, [so] I was able to talk to her, and I had a program director who was extremely flexible. I was lucky that I had a lot of people to work with me, but there were definitely days that I was just exhausted. Going from thing to thing, especially [on] the football game weekends. I was the dog for almost every single football game. You can imagine working and going to class all week, then jumping in the suit for the entire day on Saturday. It's a lot."

Franklin went on to expand on how hard the football games could be, especially when students and alumni were drinking. Franklin has been hit, inappropriately grabbed and pushed. She also noted that, even with handlers, she felt "defenseless."

Despite this, Franklin recommends being Brutus if you can keep up with the physical demands. Franklin used the word "fun" when describing the job, adding that the scholarship is also amazing.

Withey gave credit to Franklin's work throughout the 100+ events she has worked.

"Her professionalism in handling a lot of these events and her portrayal of Brutus have all been really good. It's fair to say she set the bar, or has at least maintained it" Withey said.

With Franklin graduating in the spring, she passed the golden bone to the next Bulldog to play Brutus. Ferris will have to wait to see who the new Brutus is until they graduate.

## Faces of Ferris

### A spotlight on Laurel Humphreys and her achievements at Ferris

**Giuliana Denicolo**  
Lifestyles Reporter

This fall, Laurel Humphreys will begin her tenth year teaching communications and women and gender studies at Ferris.

"I was majoring in business and public relations when I was in my senior year of college, and as I got to the end of it, I realized I didn't really like it or believe in it," Humphreys said.

Towards the end of her college career, she realized she was interested in theory and wanted to pursue something in that field.

She never considered being a professor as a career option, but there were two professors that made her question if she could teach. After talking to them about

it, she went to graduate school to become a professor.

"In 2011, I was kind of transitioning and living in both the Detroit area and here. This was the only university [near] where I lived, so I submitted my credentials," Humphreys said.

She started out at Ferris teaching strictly communications classes. At the time, they did not have anyone to teach women and gender studies 105. The head of the humanities department saw Humphreys' background and asked her to teach it. She accepted and has been teaching it ever since.

There is buzz on campus about Ferris potentially adding a women's studies minor, and Humphreys is hoping to teach some of those classes.

She initially said yes to teaching women and gender

studies because of her strong belief in what that class is about.

"Especially because it's radical, and that makes it fun, it's controversial, and so it's a more exciting class to teach," Humphreys said. "And it's an elective, people [choose] to take it. So, your audience is more eager than in the required classes."

Humphreys is a very straightforward, bold person, and she brings that into her teaching.

"If you read enough feminist writers, you don't sugar-coat things," Humphreys said. "It's my personality, my attitude, my genetics."

**Humphery** | see page 7

# Boundaries on campus

## Why they're important and how to talk about them

**Jeremy Wolfe**  
Freelance Reporter

Boundaries are an important skill to learn, and the Anti-Violence Alliance is set on teaching students their value with new workshops.

The AVA is a coalition of both faculty and students designed to talk about tough topics like assault, boundaries and communication. The aim of the project is to help people navigate complicated relationship issues with peers and with those in positions of power. Workshops, like the one hosted this week about boundaries, are used to educate.

Darby Dean, a peer educator for the AVA and student at Ferris, was first interested in the organization after hearing Raven Hills, the project director for the Office of Violence Against Women, speak on topics related to healthy relationships and the importance of concepts like consent, trust and boundaries.

With people being in such close contact in college and really coming into their own, she felt it was important to help spread the message and educate on these topics.

"I think one of the biggest misconceptions of boundaries is that people are feeling anxious about bringing up a boundary so early," Dean said. "They're afraid of someone's judgment, and if we can break down that barrier, the earlier we do that, the healthier and more long-term the relationship is."

The boundaries workshop was in large part focused on talking about the ways people engage with setting up barriers for themselves physically, mentally and digitally.

In regards to navigating these properly, Dean said the most important aspect of any of these three categories is continuing to communicate about them, as they do not end when the subject is done and dropped. They must constantly be talked about in order for both people in a relationship to feel comfortable and safe. This extends to not just romantic partners, but to any kind of peer-to-peer relationship.

"That's the whole idea of college; it's to develop relationships, and we're all jumping into new friendships," Dean said. "It's really crucial to educate yourself on boundaries and where they lie, so

that when you go out into the real world, you have those resources already..."

In addition to Dean, Hills was also present at the workshop. She contributed additional information about what she felt was important, both about boundaries and the impact of college and people's backgrounds on learning about these concepts.

"You are learning so much as a college student, and [you] tend to be more open-minded and willing to engage with information that might run counter to the ways you were raised or what you've always taken to be true," Hills said. "I have found college students are more willing to rethink what they have taken for granted and to think critically about how they draw conclusions."

Hills' role as director puts her at the forefront of the prevention of crimes like assault, stalking and other harmful actions taken within a domestic or dating setting on campus.

Her passion for the role came from her time as an undergraduate student. Ever since she has wanted to help create spaces for survivors of interpersonal violence and provide support to make sure

others don't experience the same trauma in the future.

For Hills, she hopes both herself and the AVA are a good place to start with helping students and giving them a place to talk about these important topics.

"These issues are so complicated, and there is always room for improvement, but the fact that the AVA has support from the administration at Ferris is a huge leap forward," Hills said.

Hills hopes that these workshops and other resources will be helpful for Ferris students looking to learn more about these subjects and unlearn toxic and harmful ideas that can be present in TV shows, cartoons and other media. With greater access to resources, she hopes that others will work to include better ideas of communication and establish standards for their relationships that will help them in the future.

"My hope is that they think about ways to incorporate the information in their own lives and develop healthier relationship dynamics and continue to engage with the work of the AVA," Hills said.



Photo by: Angie Rosenthal | Freelance Photographer

Laurel Humphrey was asked to become the women's study professor even though she wanted to only teach communications.

### HUMPHREY

Continued from page 6

The fear of offending someone sometimes comes up, but what keeps her teaching style going is the validation she gets from most of her students.

"Sometimes I might filter a little bit more if I see a [certain] facial expression in the class," Humphreys said. "I don't want to offend people, but I also don't want to censor the message."

On the first day of her class, Humphreys made sure to tell her students that this class was going to be controversial, and the point of it is to educate students, not to convert anyone's beliefs.

"My objective isn't to force anybody into feminism, but my hope is that by becoming aware of the perspectives of feminism, students will walk away with a greater understanding that is almost inevitably going to lead them to believe and act," Humphreys said.

When Humphreys was younger, she was aware that her parents, who started their careers at the same time, had the same education, degree and career; they were considered equals, but they had a drastic difference in pay.

"My whole life I've been aware of inequality between the sexes... and male chauvinism," Humphreys said.

It wasn't until a professor of hers gave a speech about sexism and language that her interest in the topic of inequality was sparked.

Humphreys was fascinated with what was being brought up, and she believes that is what really launched her into feminist theory.

In her introduction to her women's gender studies class, she told students to call her by her first name because she believes that there's a divide in student and professor relationships otherwise.

With this being mentioned, one of her students, Jeffra Dittmar, really likes Humphreys'

teaching style and personality.

"I feel like she's very laid back, so it allows her to connect more with the students in that aspect," Dittmar said. "She's fine with saying a swear word here or there, and she's not afraid to talk about things that might be uncomfortable."

To Dittmar, the class is educational, and she feels like she has learned a lot.

"It's very eye-opening, I would say. It definitely makes you have an open mind and think about what your previous knowledge of something was," Dittmar said.

Humphreys' lectures on what it means to be a feminist and feminism in general were Dittmar's favorite part because of how much she learned about herself.

Like many other students before taking this class, Dittmar didn't know much about feminism or that there were different kinds.

"Having [Humphreys] as a professor [has] been nice [because I've] been able to be an advocate for that stuff now, because, like, I know a lot more."

Humphreys assigned an ISPY to her students in which they had to find an example of anything covered in the lectures in their everyday life and share it with the class.

"Everybody had a different story to tell. You don't realize how much sexism or discrimination of any kind is still out there," Dittmar said. "We [had] 40 kids in that class all give different examples."

Because of Humphreys, Dittmar has applied this class to everything in her life.

"I have a friend who says, 'Oh, I'm not a feminist. I don't want equal rights,' and I just told her a lot of things that we've talked about in the class," Dittmar said.

To Dittmar, out of all the topics covered in class, the most important thing is the worth of a woman.

"We are just as powerful. We can do anything that men can do," Dittmar said. "You're not lesser just because you're different than any male in general."

# OPINIONS

Rebecca VanderKooi | Opinions Editor | vandr122@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.

OUR LOCATION  
Alumni Building 013  
410 Oak Street  
Ferris State University  
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.

Unsigned editorials appearing on this page are the opinion of The Torch and do not necessarily represent the opinion of the university's administration, faculty or staff. Signed columns represent the opinion of the writer. Inquiries regarding editorial content should be directed to the Editor in Chief at (231) 591-5978.

To advertise with the Torch, contact Julie Wiersma at the Pioneer Group: (231) 592-8373 or Julie.Wiersma@hearst.com

Student media retain the same rights, responsibilities, privileges and protections afforded by the First and Fourteenth Amendments of the U.S. Constitution and under applicable state laws.

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.

## - TORCH STAFF -

- Editor in Chief**  
Brendan Sanders
- Production Manager**  
Dylan Bowden
- Production Assistant**  
Sienna Parmelee
- News Editor**  
Noah Kurkjian
- Lifestyles Editor**  
Marissa Russell
- Sports Editor**  
Brody Keiser
- Opinions Editor**  
Rebecca VanderKooi
- Multimedia Editor**  
Cassidy Jessup
- Social Media Manager**
- Podcast Manager**  
Marissa Russell
- Visual Content**  
Bradley Moore  
Angelica Rosenthal  
Mariana Searl
- Special Editions Editor**  
Jessica Oakes
- Reporters**  
Brandon Wirth  
Jessica Oakes  
Meghan Hartley  
Charlie Buckel  
Giuliana Denicolo  
Dylan Rider  
Rebecca VanderKooi
- Freelance Reporters**  
Jeffery Walker  
Joe Nagy  
Rebecca Witkowski  
Jerry Gaytan  
Jeremy Wolfe
- Managing Copy Editor**  
Alyssa Myers
- Copy Editors**  
Jared Cron  
Natasha Waldfoegel
- Distributor**  
Ready For Life
- Adviser**  
Garrett Stack  
(231) 591 - 5869

## EDITOR'S COLUMN: Putin's Pointless Plan

By Brendan Sanders

The word "pointless" is a dangerous word for me.

I tell myself how pointless it is for me to fight with people and get them angry at me over pointless projects or suggestions. It is pointless for me to argue with people about why I make some of the decisions I make.

When I have rough days, my mind tells me it is pointless to get up.

I try my best to avoid the word pointless, instead, I try to give meaning to everything that I do.

So, it amazes me when an entire nation engages in a pointless war. A war that gives them no benefit other than land, which comes at the cost of thousands or even millions of lives.

There have been a few pointless wars in the last 100+ years. World War I, where countries decided to test new military technology by using Franz Ferdinand's death as a springboard, was pointless. Vietnam was pointless, with very little to gain.

You would think nations would try to avoid conflicts that outsiders would deem to be "pointless".

Insert Vladimir Putin and Russia.

Once again, Russia decided to start a war. Why? No one really knows. Some say it was because Ukraine wanted to join NATO. Others say Russia wants Ukrainian resources.

Russia says it's because they are cleansing Ukraine of Nazis, which is ironic considering Ukraine's President, Volodymyr Zelensky, is Jewish, with family members that died in the Holocaust.

With very little real reasoning and very little to gain, Putin ordered a full-scale invasion of Ukraine at 5 a.m Eastern European time on Thursday morning.

On paper, one would think that this invasion should have been over with Russia as victors. Russia has the world's 5th largest standing army in the world at 900,000 soldiers, while Ukraine has 196,000. Yet, because everyone knows just how pointless this war is, Ukraine is defending twice as hard, and much of the world is on Ukraine's side, giving aid, weapons and opening its borders to refugees.

Instead of getting a roaring victory in four days, it appears everything has gone wrong for the Russian offense.

Putin has killed thousands of his own men, alongside thousands of Ukrainians, for nothing.

He has embarrassed himself and Russia as a whole, in front of the world for nothing.

His own citizens went out to protest Russia's invasion, with thousands of protesters being arrested for being against Putin's pointless war.

At the time of writing, his country's economy is crashing, with the Russian Ruble trading at 40% lower than before the war. And if this war continues, he will need a lot of outside help to get it to recover.

He severely underestimated Ukraine's resolve, and put his entire regime at risk for no reason other than to try to inflate his nation's ego.

You would be foolish if you thought Putin would not eventually choose to put everything at risk in a desperate attempt to bring back his country's glory days as the Soviet Union.

His country was becoming irrelevant; the world only used the nation for its many natural resources. So, he chose to start a pointless war.

Except, it is not pointless. Not to the people defending their homes. Not to President Zelensky, who is showing the world what a real leader looks like when a war comes to their country's front lawn. And it is for sure not pointless to the thousands of refugees who left their homes this week to get away from the Russian army and the war that is being forced upon them.

It was pointless for Putin, but it brought meaning to the rest of the world.



## GOT AN OPINION?

### HOW TO SUBMIT A LETTER TO THE EDITOR:

Deadline for submissions every Friday by 5 p.m.  
Brendan Sanders | Editor-in-Chief | Email: sandeb16@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 a headshot and 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!

# DIVIDED

# OPINIONS

## YES

**Q:**

Should Ferris's mask mandate be lifted?

## NO

**62.3%**

OF VOTERS  
SAY YES

**37.7%**

OF VOTERS  
SAY NO

183 votes cast amongst polls ran on the Torch's Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram

## Yes

**Bradley Moore**  
Torch Photographer

Due to recent changes in the CDC mask guidelines, many local organizations have removed their mask mandates and Ferris State University may soon be following suit. This would be a positive step towards returning to the sense of normalcy that we had before the pandemic.

According to a CDC map that shows COVID-19 infection ratings by county, Mecosta County is considered to have a medium level of COVID-19 infection. This means that Ferris could decide to end their mask mandate because they are not located in a high-risk area.

Ferris students have been facing mandated COVID-19 restrictions since the disease started making headlines in the spring semester of 2020. These restrictions have not only limited personal freedoms but have also hindered learning and academic performance.

When a student arrives at their class only to realize they forgot their mask they miss out on learning because they are not allowed to enter a building without one. This has caused students to either show up late after searching for one or go home because they can't find one.

In public speaking classes students struggle to get their message across behind a mask that muffles their voices and hides their expressions. This also applies to classes that are lecture-heavy where students cannot understand a soft-spoken instructor talking through their mask.

In programs like criminal justice and ROTC where physical training at the rec center is required and students are tested on their physical fitness masks have hindered their performance by restricting airflow.

After two years and several vaccines, the question that many people are still asking is "when will it end?" Will it be two more weeks to flatten the curve? Two years? Ten? Or will we spend the rest of our lives living in fear of a disease that 76% of the U.S. population has been at least partially vaccinated against?

Giving students the right to choose whether they want to wear a mask will remove the distraction that is caused to those who are bothered by the mandate. To those who are not bothered and wish to continue wearing masks, ending the mandate doesn't mean that they cannot wear one anymore.

If a student feels that it is absolutely necessary to wear a mask nothing is stopping them from doing so, mandate or not. Giving others the right to choose does not change that.

The fear that people are poisoning the air just by drawing breath, with no indication that they may even be sick should be considered irrational. Especially when this fear is only limited to indoor spaces that aren't restaurants or bars.

Hopefully, with the removal of the mask mandate, people will begin to understand that and we can move on without the distractions that they have caused.

## No

**Rebecca Vanderkooi**  
Opinions Editor

At the beginning of the fall 2021 semester, Ferris instituted a mask mandate on campus due to the continued COVID-19 pandemic.

Grand Rapids Public Schools recently removed their mask mandate. Starting on Monday, Feb. 28, students, faculty and staff will no longer be required to wear masks when at school. This comes after the CDC changed its mask guidelines.

These updates have caused speculation over whether Ferris will make similar changes to their mask-wearing policy.

A color-coded map released by the CDC shows the COVID-19 status of every county in the country. Green means low levels of COVID-19, yellow means a medium level and red means a high level. The vast majority of Michigan is in the yellow zone, including Mecosta County.

Because Ferris is currently about halfway through the semester, I think it makes more sense to maintain mask-wearing protocols through the end of the semester and then re-evaluate before the fall semester begins.

The CDC outlined that in the yellow zone, those who are immunocompromised or at a high risk of getting severe infections should talk to their healthcare provider about precautions, such as wearing masks or respirators in public.

While many college students, faculty and staff don't fall into this group, it's safe to assume that in a university of almost 15,000 students, some are going to be immunocompromised.

For these people, requiring in-person classes may already be unnerving. If things were changed and they had to attend class in person with unmasked

peers, it would not be a safe learning environment for them.

According to News in Health, a monthly newsletter from the National Institutes of Health, masks are effective in stopping the spread of COVID-19. This happens through the mask trapping fluid droplets that exit the mouth while a person speaks. If someone has COVID-19 and is not wearing a mask, those droplets would be inhaled by others. Also, masks block aerosols from entering the airway. Different masks have different abilities to do this, but all do to some degree.

The best way to utilize masks in stopping the spread of COVID-19 is if all people in a given indoor area wear them.

Everyone deserves equal access to education. At Ferris, it's important to create an environment that is safe and supportive for all students. I believe that changing the mask mandate at this juncture would be harmful to some students, faculty and staff.

After almost two years of this pandemic, it makes sense why people want to give up mask-wearing and begin to "get back to normal." With the new CDC recommendations, people should have the choice about whether they want to wear a mask in many settings.

However, in an educational institution, such as Ferris where students who are immunocompromised often have no choice but to come to campus, masks should continue to be a requirement. This pandemic has been about protecting those that are the most vulnerable, and a small way Ferris can continue to do that is by maintaining a mask requirement.

Regardless of if the policy changes or not, I will be wearing my mask any time that I am on campus to help protect my peers.

# SPORTS

Brody Keiser | Sports Editor | keiserb1@ferris.edu

## Championship split



Photo by Mariana Searl | Torch Photographer

Walt Kelser takes a three-point shot during Ferris' GLIAC regular season title clinching win over Michigan Tech Thursday, Feb. 24.

### Ferris splits weekend series but clinches GLIAC regular season title

**Joe Nagy**  
Sports Reporter

For the fourth time in six years, the Bulldogs are GLIAC regular season champions.

Ferris entered their Thursday, Feb. 24, matchup against Michigan Tech tied with the Huskies atop the GLIAC standings, and first place was on the line. Ferris pulled out a 76-72 overtime victory and clinched at least a share of the GLIAC regular season title with the win.

The electric overtime win led the Bulldogs to their fourth net cutting ceremony in six years.

The win on Thursday was head coach Andy Bronkema's 200th victory as the head of Bulldog basketball. This places him alongside coaches Jim Wink and Tom Ludwig in the history books.

"I'm coaching a lot of great players, that's just how I see it," Bronkema said. "I remember how I got the job, and we've been fighting everyday."

The Bulldogs finished the regular season at 21-7, continuing the elite level of basketball that the program sees under Bronkema. They finished conference play tied with Michigan Tech for the top spot in the GLIAC with a conference record of 16-4. That

effort was enough to secure home court advantage for two games in the conference tournament.

The team will host the GLIAC championship tournament by welcoming the #8 seeded Davenport Panthers for the opening round on Wednesday, March 2, at 7:30 p.m. A win on Wednesday would allow the Bulldogs to also host the semi-finals and finals on March 5 and 6.

On Thursday, Feb. 24, both Ferris and Michigan Tech had strong second halves, but both teams struggled to score in the first 20 minutes. The Huskies, who are normally successful from the three-point range, averaged just 21% from three in the first half on the 14 shots.

The lack of shooting prowess isn't the only reason that the score stayed low in the first half. Both teams forced each other to the end of the shot clock multiple times, proving that the defensive abilities of the teams brought them to the top of the GLIAC standings.

"We knew Michigan Tech was a good team, and that showed. They came out and played hard," senior Walt Kelser said.

The Bulldogs went to the locker room ahead 25-22. When they returned, the Huskies jumped in the lead, thanks to senior

Owen White. The momentum shift gave the traveling crowd a boost, as they matched the intensity of the Bulldog fans.

The Bulldogs and Huskies traded baskets up until the ninth minute of play in the second half. The Huskies took a seven point lead, but Ferris rallied the crowd and battled back to bring it within three. Another flurry of shots from the Huskies put them up by six with just over five minutes left to play.

Kelser pulled down a big defensive rebound and got fouled in the process. He made both free throws, adding to his perfect 12-12.

Ferris went on a quick 10-0 run and took the lead. White kept Michigan Tech alive, recording 17 second half points.

The highlight of the night came in the final seconds of regulation. White drained two free throws to bring the Husky lead to three with seven seconds left on the clock. Kelser sprinted down the right side of the court and pulled up from NBA range over three Tech players to make the game tying three and send the game to overtime.

"Coach Bronkema said, 'We need a three, so dribble up the floor and just try to get the best shot you could.' That's what I did, and it went in, thank God," Kelser said.

Wink erupted into cheers and screams, but the excitement died down as the officials gave Ferris a technical because a fan went onto the court to celebrate the shot. Michigan Tech started the overtime with a technical free throw.

"I was a little paranoid that they wouldn't stay back because the officials were [correctly] warning them..." Bronkema said. "I was at one point screaming for Wes [Brennan] to get them behind the barricade."

White missed the free throw, and a strong defensive showing from senior Dorian Aluyi was a key factor that helped Ferris control the score. Despite having four fouls, he forced White into tough shots and stayed disciplined to not foul out.

"I wanted to pressure up, get into him and make him go around me," Aluyi said. "If I got a blocking foul off of that, I'm okay with that, but I didn't want to give him space to shoot."

In the dying seconds, Aluyi stole the ball from White and get fouled during the process. Aluyi calmly hit both free throws and clinched the game and regular season GLIAC championship for Ferris.

"It was a similar situation to two years ago. It was the same score, we were up two, **Men's Basketball** | see page 11

## WEEKEND SCORECARD

### Hockey

Feb. 25 - Northern Michigan 7, Ferris 1  
Feb. 26 - Ferris 4, Northern Michigan 2

### Softball

Feb. 24 - Ferris 6, Mckendree 5  
Feb. 25 - Ferris 14, Truman 2  
Feb. 25 - Hillsdale 5, Ferris 2

### Men's Tennis

Feb. 27 - Ferris 7, Grace 0

# Women's basketball captures North Division Championship with win



Photo by Angie Rosenthal | Torch Photographer

Adrienne Anderson makes a move to the hoop during Ferris' loss to Michigan Tech on Thursday, Feb. 24.

**Jeffery Walker**  
Sports Reporter

With a split to end their final regular season series, the Bulldogs clinched third place in the GLIAC.

Ferris finished with a 19-9 record (13-7 GLIAC) and claimed the GLIAC North Division Championship and second seed for the conference tournament.

Ferris came up short to Michigan Tech with a 63-59 loss on Thursday, Feb. 24, in a tough matchup in GLIAC play.

In the loss to Michigan Tech, the Bulldogs struggled from the floor shooting 34.4% and 25% from three-point range. They got off to a rough start in the first quarter and trailed 14-7.

The Bulldogs were able to fight back and take a two point lead with 6:23 left in the 4th quarter. Michigan Tech then went on a 7-0 run to take the lead back and eventually secure the win over the Bulldogs.

"It was just timely offense on their part," head coach Kurt Westendorp said. "I don't

feel like our defense let us down for most of the half, but all it takes is just one little stretch. Right there we have two possessions in a row where you're a little slow getting out of a screen to challenge a shot with a good shooter, so they did a nice job."

Saturday, Feb. 26, was senior night, and the Bulldogs were able to avenge their loss on Thursday with a great win over Northern Michigan. Their 72-62 victory closed the regular season and earned the Bulldogs the GLIAC North Division Championship.

"I'm really proud of our seniors," Westendorp said. "I'm proud of the young women they are. They're all three going to be graduates of this university, all three going to be great stewards. They're going to be representatives of the university as alumni. I'm just so happy they were able to experience this today."

The three seniors were able to get a win in their final regular-season game and got to cut down the nets following a GLIAC North Division Championship.

Senior Zoe Anderson said the feeling

"was surreal." She had 16 points and seven rebounds to go along with three assists and two steals.

It was a great game and moment for the Bulldogs, as they played well throughout the game with four players reaching double digits. The seniors were not alone last night, as they had help from their teammates, Kady Blanchard and Chloe Itoni.

Blanchard led the way with 20 points off the bench and Itoni had 16 points. Adrienne Anderson finished with 11 points. As a team, the Bulldogs shot 41% from the field and shot 40.9% from three, as well as knocking down 81.3% of their free throws.

Scoring wasn't the only thing the Bulldogs did well on Saturday. The Bulldogs also had a good game defensively, forcing 13 turnovers and pulling down 35 rebounds. Leading the way defensively was Adrienne Anderson with five steals, as well as pulling down five rebounds to go with her 11 points. She also came up with some important steals to prevent Northern Michigan from mounting a comeback in the

fourth quarter.

"That's the role I have to play," Adrienne Anderson said. "I try and do it to the best of my ability and that's what I have to give to my team. Each of us [has] a certain role, and I try to do it to the best of my ability, and I did it and it turned out in our favor so I couldn't be more happy."

With that win, the Bulldogs finish their regular season with some momentum going into the GLIAC tournament, where they secured the second seed thanks to the win on Saturday.

"I mean it was picture perfect," senior Samantha Krauss said. "It was a great way to end our regular season, and on senior night with two of my close friends as seniors and the rest of our team, we all did a great job of pulling in the win."

The Bulldogs will be back in action against Saginaw Valley State on Wednesday, March 2, at 5:30 p.m. in the GLIAC Tournament Quarterfinals.

## Men's Basketball

Continued from page 11

and I had the same opportunity to put us up by four," Aluyi said. "It was the second to last game, against Tech again."

Despite clinching at least a share of the regular season title, the job wasn't finished, as Ferris faced the Northern Michigan Wildcats just two days later.

Saturday was also senior night. Dorian Aluyi, Lee Higgins, Logan Ryan and Walt Kelser were honored during halftime.

Not wanting to repeat the theatrics of the previous game, Bronkema and his team wanted to push the game early. Establishing the full court press on the Wildcats almost instantaneously, Ferris forced 10 turnovers in the first half. But when the Wildcat offense got set up on their half, it proved to be difficult for the Bulldogs.

"We didn't play any defense. You know, they shot thirty three-pointers," Bronkema said. "We weren't in tune with what we wanted to do. Mistakes caused us to feel the wrong way."

Kelser led the Bulldogs in scoring with 19, falling short of his 32 point performance just a couple days before. However,

play was picked up by the senior center Logan Ryan, who added 16 to the Bulldog's total. The duo was followed by freshman Ethan Erickson, who started an onslaught of three pointers in the second half.

Off the bench, sophomore Vejas Grazulis picked up a slam dunk on a fast break to put the Bulldogs up by 10. Then, freshman Mykel Bingham added a big dunk near the end of the first half.

Despite a strong shooting effort in the first half to go up by 15 heading to the lockers, the lead was short lived when play resumed. Max Bjorklund of Northern Michigan led the second half comeback, scoring 40 points in the final 20 minutes alone. The Wildcats won 93-87.

"We know what we have to do now," Aluyi said. "Shoutout to Max, he had a great individual performance today with 46. We couldn't stop him. I think we still could've picked up the win, but that's the details that we learn [about how] to win when somebody is going off like that."

The loss left a sour taste in the Bulldogs' mouths. However, the motivation to claim both the regular season and tournament championship became that much greater.



Photo by Mariana Searl | Torch Photographer

Logan Ryan makes a post move during Ferris' victory over Michigan Tech.

# Men's tennis on fire

## A literal fire preceded a win as men's tennis remains perfect on the season

Dylan Rider  
Sports Reporter

The day got off to a hot start for the tennis teams last Sunday.

Before the Bulldogs even took the court on Sunday, Feb. 27, a tennis ball caught on fire after being lodged in a radiant heater. The ball burst into flames. Senior Mathis Guerre used a fire extinguisher to put out the flames before the fire department arrived. No one was injured, and play began following a thirty-minute delay.

After the unorthodox start, the Bulldogs dominated Grace College with a 7-0 win.

With this victory, Ferris stayed undefeated on the season. They currently sit at a perfect 6-0 record.

Going into the matchups, head coach Mark Doren spoke on playing a college like Grace and how he thought the day would go.

"Grace is an NAIA," Doren said. "Sometimes you're not really sure what you're going to get. Their recruiting and qualification standards are different from the NCAA. So often they get players that took years off after high school to try and make it on the tour. Sometimes they bring guys that have a ton of experience, and so they're more difficult to play. I still think our guys are ready to take on the challenge. I think we should have a good day."

The day started out with doubles play. Guerre and Jan Koupil worked together to dominate their opponents and came out on top with a 6-2 victory in their match.

Josh McDermott and Ben Lortie followed

suit, however, it wasn't easy. McDermott and Lortie battled away and squeaked out a 7-5 win in their match.

Unfortunately for the Bulldogs, they were denied a clean sweep in the doubles match. Yannic Mader and Ayush Dewal came up short in a tiebreaker, falling 6-7. The Bulldogs ultimately won the doubles matchups and took one point going into the singles match.

With one point in hand, the Bulldogs only improved from their singles matches.

Koupil had one of the most dominant performances of the day, taking one set 6-0 and the next 6-2.

The same was seen by McDermott, taking his singles match 6-0 and 6-2.

Success continued for Alessandro Santangelo, who won both of his sets with a score of 6-2.

Mader's first set was a close one. He battled hard and took the first set with a 7-5 win. Following the close set, Mader buckled down and put together a decisive 6-1 win in his second set.

"I think doubles and singles were both a struggle for me today, mentally and physically," Mader said. "I think there were a couple points that could've gone better. After those points, I wanted to bounce back and get a new mindset. I played better in my singles and my second set because I was just in the mindset where I felt more comfortable."

Lortie had the only loss in the set of the entire team. After a 6-7 loss in a tiebreaker, Lortie climbed back and won 6-3 and then 10-8.



Photo by Dylan Rider | Sports Reporter

Before the match even began, this tennis ball caught fire. The match was delayed by 30 minutes.

Guerre fought hard in both of his sets and won both with scores of 7-5 and 6-3.

"I think today was good," Guerre said. "It was a good last match before we go down to Florida and start our conference matches. Doubles were okay. [There are a] few things we can work on, but it was a good doubles match. Singles? Grace is a very good team. There was a little bit of trouble here and there, but it was a good, quality match for everyone. We had a good attitude."

The Bulldogs will head down to Orlando through early March to play a few teams. The next match will be against Dallas Bap-

tist on March 8.

"This was a match where it could be a trap," Doren said. "Playing against a team you think you can beat, a team that's in a different division. But I think everyone really exceeded what I was looking for as far as being able to stay mentally strong during the match."

Doren was happy with the outcome, as he believed Grace College's play-style is what they'll be seeing while playing outdoor tennis in Orlando.

The Bulldogs will return home on March 19 to play rival Grand Valley at 3:00 p.m.

WWW.CAMPUSVILLAGE.COM/BIGRAPIDS

**Campus Village Communities**

**SPRING BREAK SPECIAL**

**SIGN A LEASE BEFORE SPRING BREAK (3/3/22)**

**FOR AN OPPORTUNITY TO RECEIVE 1 OF 5 \$100 VISA GIFT CARDS!**

**SIGN A LEASE DURING SPRING BREAK & WE'LL WAIVE YOUR APPLICATION & ADMINISTRATIVE FEES THAT'S \$120 IN SAVINGS!**

217 MORRISON STREET - BIG RAPIDS, MI 49307  
MORE INFO, CALL US: (231) 796-4900