

Twenty-one-year-old injured in off-campus shooting

One suspect arrested and in custody, two remain unidentified



Photo from Torch archives

The Mecosta County Sheriff's Department received a call early Saturday morning after gunshots were fired at an off-campus apartment complex.

Jessica Oakes
Editor-in-Chief

The Mecosta County Sheriff's Office released information on a "large shooting scene" in the parking lot of an off-campus apartment complex at 3 a.m. Saturday morning.

When deputies responded to the scene, they reported seeing more than 40 casings from multiple caliber handguns.

It is known that the apartment complex is near Ferris' campus, but the exact address was also not released.

Multiple cars and apartments were damaged. One 21-year-old woman was shot in the leg and transported to Corewell Health - Big Rapids Emergency Depart-

ment via Mecosta County EMS for treatment.

The victim, whose identity has not yet been confirmed to public news outlets, was released with non-life threatening injuries after treatment.

The Big Rapids Pioneer reports that one of the three current suspects was arrested after a series of interviews on Sunday. The interviews revealed information that led the deputies to obtaining an arrest warrant and a search warrant for the suspect's vehicle and residency. The suspect's identity is also still unknown.

At the time of writing, the suspect is currently in custody and set to be formally arraigned at Mecosta County Jail in the 77th District Court.

Deputies were aided by Big Rapids Department of Public Safety, Ferris State DPS, Mecosta County EMS and Meceola Central Dispatch on scene. Because the investigation is still ongoing, DPS has no further information to share on the shooting.

At 11:31 a.m. on Saturday, all students received an email from the Dean of Student Life titled Student Safety. It acknowledged

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News

Ember St. Amour | News Editor | stamoue@ferris.edu

Off campus shooting continued

an “off campus incident” that occurred early in morning, and reminded students that students’ safety is the university’s “highest priority.” The following is a list of advice for students included in the email:

“Pay attention to your surroundings and situations at all times.

Make smart choices about friends and people you surround yourself with, and good decisions about where you’re going and when you’re going.

Have a game plan when you’re going out that is centered on your well-being and ensuring you return home safely.

Maintain an awareness of avail-

able on-campus and off-campus safety resources.

If you see suspicious activity, report it.”

There is no further information from the university about the event at this time. The Torch will continue coverage on this story as the investigation continues.

The Mecosta County Sheriff’s Office is asking the public to assist by sharing any information they may have on the identity of the remaining suspected shooters. Information can be sent to tips@mecostasheriff.org or directly to the office at (231)592-0150.

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Michigan News

Seven tornados hit Michigan Saturday night, impacting several Michigan communities.

Six of the tornados hit the southeast side of Michigan striking Belleville, Canton, Newport, Monroe County, Wayne County, Ingham County and Livingston County. The seventh tornado struck Rockford.

According to meteorologist, Steve Freitag, the multiple tornados hitting Michigan in one night is “about a once every five- to 10-year event.” Freitag, also stated that seven tornados hitting in one night in August is a new record.

The tornados ranged from EF0 to EF2 in strength, according to Mlive, leaving cars, buildings and plants destroyed. According to the National Weather Association, the tornados left one dead and three injured.

The impact of the tornados left multiple communities without electricity, and according to The Detroit Free Press, DTE reported roughly 400,000 customers without power in central and lower Michigan. According to The Detroit Free Press, Consumers Energy also reported roughly 200,000 customers without power. DTE employed crews from several other states to work 16-hour shifts, to help with the process of restoring power to Michigan residents.

According to Mlive, Consumers Energy provided free meals on Sunday for those who lived in areas most impacted. DTE also provided ice, water, and charging ports for those in areas without power as well.



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FFA approves collective bargaining agreement

FFA votes in favor, two months after previous contract's expiration

Jessica Oakes
Editor-in-chief

After months of contract discussions and negotiation, the Ferris Faculty Association voted to approve a five-year collective bargaining agreement.

Starting at last Thursday's general assembly meeting, the FFA engaged in a two-day long vote that concluded at 5 p.m. on Aug. 26. The contract will now be transferred to Ferris' board of trustees for further approval and ratification.

Associate Provost Steve Reifert, who represents the administration in contract negotiation, has been consistently pleased with the conduct of his meetings with members of the FFA.

"I can't necessarily speak for all, but I know that the administration is very pleased [with] the way we resolve this and very pleased with the vote of the faculty. [The administration] is looking forward and moving forward to have a great academic year," Reifert said.

Reifert explained that the contract is "never done" until all voting

is complete. The full contract will only be made publicly available dependent on the results of the board of trustee's vote.

Their next regular meeting is scheduled for Oct. 6, but Reifert predicts that the vote will be conducted sooner. He also predicts minimal challenges in getting the contract approved by the board.

The new contract is set to include changes in economic packages from faculty healthcare coverage to promotion and merit.

While Reifert called the changes made in this year's contract "needed, important and valuable for both sides," FFA Vice President John Caserta expressed a less positive perspective on the great compromise of a faculty contract.

"The new CBA falls short of giving the faculty the full respect that they deserve for the work and leadership they provide to the students and university," Caserta said in a comment submitted to the Torch. "The administration continues to harbor the myth that it is their money. They callously have forgotten that it is the dedicated

work of the faculty that provides the money for their overpaid salaries."

FFA President Charles Bacon was unavailable for comment on this story.

Despite Caserta's dissatisfaction with the contents of the contract, multiple sources have expressed contentment with the nature of this contract cycle's discussions. At this time five years ago, students' first week of the fall semester was interrupted by a faculty strike. Bacon has previously referred to a strike as a failed negotiation.

Both Bacon and Reifert previously attributed this year's progress in contract negotiation to their early start during the spring semester and the absence of outside attorneys at the negotiation table.

Pending the results of the board of trustees vote and approval of the new collective bargaining agreement, the Torch will continue to follow this story with more details on the contract's contents.



Graphic by: Wikimedia Commons

Ferris joins the Detroit Promise Partnership

The opportunity for lower cost for Detroit based students

Tate Zellman
News Reporter

As of this fall semester, Ferris is joining forces with a program that involves helping students find access and support to achieve their academic needs.

The Detroit Promise Partnership is a program that provides a tuition-free path for Detroit-based students. All students who qualify can join whether they are looking to do trade school or get their two-year or four-year credentials.

In addition, not only does the program help students living in Detroit or attending a city school commit to Ferris tuition-free, but it also helps them improve access to an education that can change their lives forever.

Even with the program being available to Ferris students, there

are some students on campus who haven't heard of the program and didn't know it was a partner with the university. Medical laboratory science sophomore David Ngendahayo didn't know that the program existed. After reading about the program's impact on Ferris, Ngendahayo was able to touch on what he believed to be positive impacts the program had on the students and the university.

"We are getting more people to come here [Ferris] from different places in the Detroit area," Ngendahayo said. "The students who would attend here from Detroit would be more entuned to come to Ferris because they'd be attending for less [money]. The more students that come in because of the program, the more Ferris would be recognized as a

school to helping students graduate."

Television and digital media production sophomore Dante Marchesi commented his thoughts after reading about the program's name and details.

"I'd definitely be interested," Marchesi said. "If this is a program for my future, then I would be interested to see what it would have in store for me."

Ferris is one of the six new colleges to become partners with the Detroit-based program. The other new members are The College for Creative Studies, Lawrence Technological University, Olivet College, Siena Heights University and St. Clair County Community College. With these six joining the program's partnership, the total number of partners of colleges

and universities is now up to 32.

With the success of the program, there's not only the possibilities of similar programs being created in the state of Michigan, but throughout the entirety of the United States.

Biotechnology sophomore Brandon Ung touched on the importance of partnership programs being created throughout the country but also reflected on what the Detroit-based program has done for students who live in that area and decided to join the partnership.

"I feel like it's important for other states to apply a similar program to students who attend school at a college that's far away from their county," Ung said. "It would also help people from are living in a lower standard and need the aid to get the schools that are

partnered with these types of programs."

Since its launch in 2013, the Detroit Promise Partnership has supported more than 5,000 students from over 50 Detroit high schools. Having 32 schools join the program as partners shows that their communities care about their students and take extra steps to make their education a top priority. The partnership itself brings these schools together to ensure that students can succeed educationally and accomplish their dreams.

To learn more, contact the university's Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid at (231) 591-2110 and at finaid@ferris.edu. Additional information is available at www.detroitpromise.com.

Global News

The UN Child Rights Committee has reported that climate change has a negative impact on children on Sunday, according to BBC News.

The committee, made up of 18 legal experts who serve a four year term, is currently made up of lawyers and professors who represent their countries in the UN.

The committee has drawn up a contract with the help of children to provide clear ways that children can be protected from climate change in the future. The committee also had children from 121 countries share how climate change has been affecting their communities, with a total of 16,331 contributions.

The guidelines of the contract include monitoring the air quality, controlling toxic lead exposure and regulating food safety.

Part of the contract also includes plans to start the process of switching from fossil fuels to renewable energy resources.

According to the New York Times, the committee believes that it is essential that something is done about climate change to protect youth, and that the youth reserve the right to take legal recourse.

"Children have the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment," wrote the committee. "This right is implicit in the convention and directly linked to, in particular, the rights to life, survival and development."

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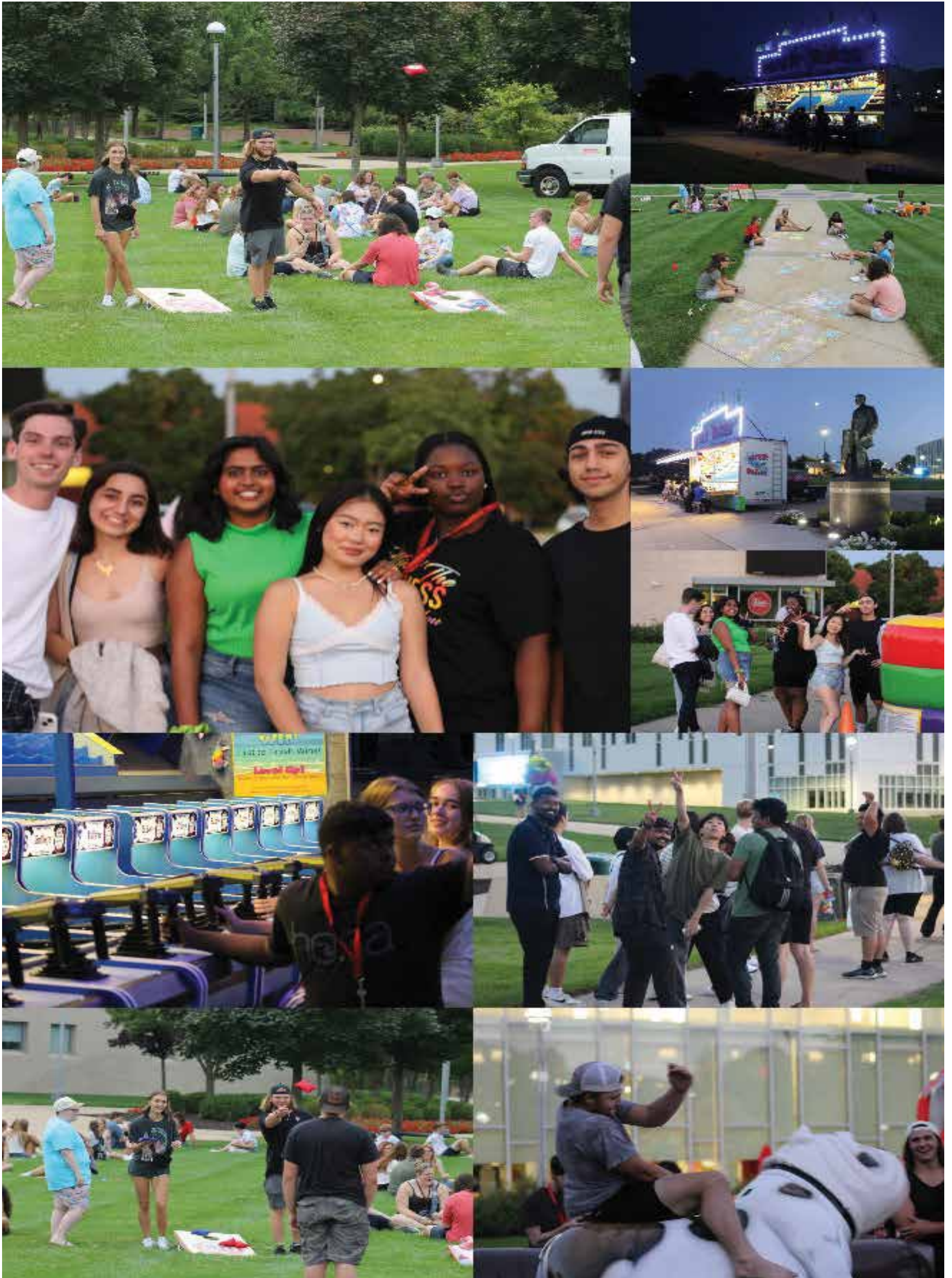
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Welcome week highlights



Photos by: Jessica Oakes & Dylan Rider | Editor-in-Chief, Sports Editor

Culture

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Out with the old, in with the new

How to use Ferris360

The hub for all things Ferris, MyFSU, will be replaced with an updated platform that makes navigating life as students and faculty easier. Here's a guide on what's new and how to use it:

First, let's start off with the basics. Ferris360 is the all new portal that will replace MyFSU on Sept. 12. Ferris360 offers a stylish interface supported by updated software that allows for many new features that MyFSU's software couldn't handle.

Students and faculty will be able to log in to Ferris360 with the same information used for their MyFSU account, and will only need to sign in once. From there, users will be taken to the dashboard.

Ferris360 is all about being user friendly and giving the ability of user customization. The platform is on all mobile devices so it works for on-the-go use and shares the same layout with desktop and PC.

The first thing users will notice is tabs with recommendations based on their roles. For example, students will be recommended resources meant for them including class registration, academic support and financial aid.

There is a smart search bar at the top of the dashboard which allows users to search for everything Ferris related. Below the recommendations, there's a widget tab. This is where students can completely customize the interface of Ferris360 to prioritize what is on their home screen and left-hand sidebar. Students can create new widgets for academic resources like Canvas and their Outlook inbox. Outside applications like social media platforms can also be made into widgets.

The left-hand side of the screen is where users can interact with everything else Ferris360 has to offer. Announcements and tasks are amongst some of the newest features. Tasks will be assigned based on the user's roles. The tasks feature ensures users won't miss important due dates like signing housing contracts or making a first payment for registration.

Announcements keep students on track and alerted in case of an emergency on campus. There are regular notifications that are sent to the user's inbox, push notifications that go to the inbox and pop up on the dashboard and emer-

gency notifications that essentially take up the screen so users are aware of potential threats.

At the bottom of this sidebar is the tools tab. Tools essentially display all of Ferris360's features in a list format. This is where students and faculty can find all campus-related resources like campus safety, maps, academic resources and even a personal planner. The new software also allows users to filter out resources that are not needed.

The tools section also gives users the chance to discover new things they might not have previously known about campus.

Another new implementation is groups. Groups give sports teams and RSO's a place to communicate and share information. With the directory, users can get in contact with group organizers and admins. This allows new students to see all the groups that Ferris has and makes breaking out of their shells easier.

Ferris360 is set to replace MyFSU within the next month. For more information, there will be Ferris360 info sessions on Sept. 5, 6 and 8. Visit Ferris' event calendar for more details.



Graphic by: Hailey Nye | Production Assistant

Neurodiversity in higher education: Welcoming Amy Rutherford

Ferris' approach to supporting students with autism

Marlow Losey
Copy Editor

To celebrate the diverse minds on campus, Ferris welcomed special education expert Amy Rutherford to speak about the psychology of autistic students.

Rutherford works with autistic students at the University of Tennessee in Chattanooga. She is the director of the campus mosaic program that supports "autistic degree-seeking students as they transition into college." The speech was designed to help Fer-

ris professors and faculty understand the neurodivergent mind and accommodate students who may have special needs.

"Neurodiversity is not an opinion or political position," Rutherford said. "It is a scientific fact just like biodiversity. More and more students are coming to our campuses that have different learning preferences. If we don't change our addressing of these students, I think we're missing a future full of really great minds."

The workshop included a presentation that showed what it is

like to be an autistic college student.

The presentation demonstrated how tone and meaning can be lost on neurodivergent students. Director of accessibility and disability services Julie Alexander mentions Ferris' founder, Woodbridge Ferris, wanting an "education for all people" and how that includes "people who think and learn differently."

"Thinking about these people is essential to being the type of campus that we want to be," Alexander said.

A prevalent point of Rutherford's speech was that accommodating students with cognitive and social disabilities is just as important as accommodating students with physical disabilities, such as having ramps for wheelchair users. What this looks like is unique to the individual student.

Associate Dean of the College of Arts, Science and Education Trinity Williams "appreciated learning" from sitting in on Rutherford's speech. The workshop helped her learn how to support all of her students.

"I reflected on times I was teaching," Williams said. "It's unfortunate that I'm learning it just now. I wish I had known it before... We're trying to figure out a way of spreading knowledge and appreciation, trying to inspire curiosity and respect and a willingness to learn. This is our first step, and we hope to continue."

As it was for Williams, Rutherford hopes the presentation is beneficial in teaching others how to take stress away from an autistic student, the professor and the rest of the students in the room.



Graphic by: Harmony Goodman Production Manager

When one door closes

Raven Brewing owner invites Fatty C's Dog House to fill storefront

Jessica Oakes
Editor In Chief

The Ferris faculty-owned Fatty C's Dog House will be moving locations in September as Raven Brewing and BBQ permanently closes.

The location at 121 N. Michigan Ave. has been home to Raven Brewing and BBQ for a decade. Owner Connie Freiberg, a restaurateur previously managing four locations in Big Rapids and Manistee, decided to close the Raven in order to focus on her "baby" and "passion," the Blue Cow.

"The most valuable commodity that we have is our time," Freiberg said. "I had to ask myself at this stage in my career, what brings me joy? Where does my culinary passion lie? And what do I really want to be doing?"

After some professional soul-searching, Freiberg offered the space to Fatty C's due to the noticeable passion that the owners have for their food and their work.

"[Fatty C's has] really great food, but there's such a crappy location," Freiberg said. "I'm sure it's hard for them to flourish. And I thought, I don't want to do barbecue anymore. So, I'm going to ask them if they want to move their operation into my space and put a different vibe and a different energy in there."

Dr. Kasey Thompson is a professor in the college of business and co-owner of Fatty C's hot dog restaurant with her husband, Bernard Agee. In a rare instance of community engagement and

female-led business, Thompson "ran" to the offer to move her restaurant from a small parking lot to the center of Historic Downtown Big Rapids.

Fatty C's was originally located at 107 N. Warren Ave., tucked behind Jets Pizza and Dirty Dog pet grooming. The storefront had limited space and seating that Thompson felt did not aid in the welcoming environment they worked towards.

"If the lobby would fill up, people would kind of feel the pressure to leave, or move a little bit quicker," Thompson said. "Now that we have the space, it's much more of a communal area. People can sit and they can relax and talk... so people will be able to enjoy the energy and the spirit of Fatty C's longer."

Both Freiberg and Thompson valued the personal side of the restaurant business—even more than the profits at times.

"You don't see this story very often," Thompson said. "It's because, and this is a very general statement, in a capitalist society, you're looking to create the greatest level of profit possible. That's business, right? So a lot of times the decisions that you make are based on that versus some of that human connection... Since the very first day we opened up our doors, we wanted to be integrated in the community. [Fatty C's is] a place people could rely on, not just for great food, but just to chill and have a rest, sit and to come laugh. We've always represented that. So in order for us to stay that way, you have to do it in lieu of

making money. And I'm just being very transparent."

For every college student reading, Freiberg recommends the book "Die with Zero." Written by energy trader Bill Perkins, it details the theory that one should not live their life with the goal to die with riches at the risk of wasting their most valuable assets: time and happiness.

"[The Raven] is not going out of business. The restaurant is extremely successful. I made a decision in my life, this is not how I'll choose to spend my time anymore," Freiberg said.

The closure of the Raven will be carried out without any employee layoffs. All service staff who would like to continue working under Freiberg is invited to work at the Blue Cow right next door.

"There'll be some training, there will be a learning curve when you transition people from serving fast, casual barbecue to upping their game to fine dining," Freiberg said. "But the ones that have decided to stay on with us are really passionate about making that transition. And I'm passionate about helping them make that transition and training them to be excellent servers and excellent kitchen staff."

Recent Ferris alumna Celeste Littrup was a second-generation Raven employee and one of the "greatest" that Freiberg ever worked with.

"The Raven had a super laid back environment compared to the other jobs that I've ever worked. It was part of the reason I did fall in love with bartending,"

Littrup said.

Littrup said that even in a laid back environment, Freiberg has high standards for all of her restaurants. If Freiberg was working in the kitchen, Littrup knew the food would come out "perfect." After working at the Raven and Blue Cow throughout her four years studying marketing at Ferris, Littrup is using the skills she learned behind the bar and in the classroom. She is now a private bartender and recently opened Happier Hour LLC.

Freiberg is excited to work in the kitchen at Blue Cow full-time with a full staff for the first time since the pandemic. She even decided to give back to the community that gave her so much by sharing her barbecue sauce recipe.

Recipes:

Ingredients:

8 cups brown sugar
½ cup dried basil
½ cup dried oregano
½ cup onion powder
½ cup garlic powder
½ cup Diamon Crystal kosher salt
½ cup Marion Kay café black pepper
4 cups salad mustard
4 cups molasses
4 cups apple cider vinegar
3 gallons ketchup

Directions:

In a large blender, add all dry ingredients, mustard, vinegar, molasses and brown sugar. Blend for 2 minutes.

Combine ketchup and blended mixture in a 22 qt. container and whisk until thoroughly blended.

Graphic by: Harmony Goodman | Production Manager



Photo by: Jessica Oakes | Editor in chief

Fatty C's Hot Dog House will be re-opening in a new location downtown come September following the permanent closure of Raven BBQ and Brewing.

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Opinions

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EDITORS COLUMN:

Twenty-one and sober

Personal prohibition at a previous party school

Jessica Oakes
Editor-in-Chief

Like a true Torch editor-in-chief, I spent my 21st birthday editing newspaper files and eating free at the Gypsy Nickel. I even managed to do it without a drink in my hand.

There are decades' worth of jokes about drinking to pass the time in a small town. I have heard "What else is there to do here?" more times than I can count. While I've certainly felt the Big Rapids boredom on Saturday nights, I stand by my decision to keep alcohol out of my diet.

I get a few common responses when I tell people that I don't drink and never have. Some feel the immediate need justify or rationalize their own alcohol intake. They tell me that they also don't drink "that much." Others ask how I have fun without it. A few people, including my family members, look so deeply confused when I turn down their offers of beer or tequila and say

again "I don't drink." They aren't familiar with the concept.

It's not my business how much anyone drinks besides myself. I don't judge my classmates for going to Shooters, parties or tailgates if that works for them. If anyone wants to tell me that you don't have to drink in those situations, I invite them to count the enjoyable elements of a frat party while sober.

It also feels that some expect me to have a deep-seated or even traumatic reason to boycott the bottle. While I've probably seen more family drunkenness than I'd like to in my life, I'm sure the same can be said for millions of other people my age. I truthfully never felt any sort of draw to it and find it misguided to force an unhealthy habit onto myself.

Nearly everyone who drinks eventually tries to cut down on it later in their life. It's easy to see why.

The National Institute on Alco-

hol Abuse and Alcoholism's recent statistics show that 1,519 college-aged students die from alcohol related injuries in one calendar year.

Alcohol consumption is among the three most prevalent preventable risk factors for cancer, according to the American Cancer Society. It is linked to at least seven types of cancer and accounts for 6% of all cancer diagnoses.

Combine the long list of health risks with the staggering price and sugar content of a mixed drink, the pros never outweigh the cons. It is sometimes hard to understand how so many "broke college students" find the cash for drinks every weekend.

I never made the conscious decision to swear off drinking in a heroic and dramatic fashion. In a way, I waited to feel the urge to do it but it never showed up. Today, I am so grateful for that.

I have no idea what a hangover feels like and wholeheartedly be-

lieve that I say enough embarrassing things while stone cold sober. Because I never started drinking, I'll never have to go through the ordeal of deciding to stop. No part of me wants to wake up with a blinding headache and Snapchat memories that I certainly don't remember, just to realize that my health and savings depend on me cutting down on drinking.

Surely this decision has limited me socially to an extent. Plenty of college students meet friends at parties or even their significant other at a bar. It can be uncomfortable to be the only person not drinking, especially if you don't want to be assigned the designated driver for life. Still, I was lucky to find a circle of people that feels a similar indifference to alcohol.

I hope everyone had fun at their welcome weekend parties. I had the time of my life drinking sparkling water and leftover birthday cake, and wouldn't have it any other way.



Graphic by: Harmony Goodman | Production Manager

Renovation or demolition

Thoughts on the continuous campus construction

Jordon Wilson
Multimedia Editor

With the recent completion of the Center for Virtual Learning, there has been much talk among students about the addition.

The first concern is the lack of parking, as students and faculty don't want to walk an extensive distance. Yet the larger concern, to me personally, is what this new building means for the future of Ferris.

The CVL is the second building within the last two years built on a spot originally home to a traditional residential hall. Vandercook Hall was demolished to make way for new construction. On the west end of campus, virtually the same thing happened. Bishop Hall was torn down in order to build the new Early Learning Center. Is this going to be a continued pattern that we see? In that case, how much of the original campus will be left?

Some may argue that this imple-

mentation of modern buildings is beneficial to Ferris. It may cause visitors to feel a sense of grandeur when they see the newly built CVL and FLITE at the entrance. Although the new Center for Virtual Learning does not look bad, it also appears to be a massive printer sitting in the middle of our campus.

At least these new constructions may be advantageous to certain programs and students, right? Potentially, but the grapevine of students saying that CVL has already had its basement flooded and other smaller issues doesn't inspire much hope. Especially when considering that the degrees the CVL is catering to are often done virtually outside of class.

These reasons cause me to wonder about the necessity of new construction. Why is Ferris not focusing on saving our older structures, reusing or renovating them for other purposes than what they originally were? We know that

it is possible, as the Timme Center, Johnson Hall and newly remodeled Miller Hall are proof. If it is such a hassle and expense to demolish one building and rebuild a different one entirely, would it not make sense to focus on the true obligation of a college?

Preservation of academics and history are common throughout higher academic institutions. Think about it, no one goes to an Ivy League college and expects all of their buildings to be brand new. This new construction simply lacks any real value on our campus.

As a student I can attest that we do not care about shiny new structures. Instead, we are concerned about our finances, comfort and social life. If the student body had been asked what the money should go towards, most would say a/c in halls, or updating current buildings, not more new buildings across campus.



Photo by: Jessica Oakes | Editor in Chief

Construction workers in front of the new Center for Virtual Learning.



Graphic by: Hailey Nye | Production Assistant

The end of summer?

Why Michigan's new school bill could be a bad idea

Evan Hibbard
Freelance Reporter

As the school year begins, you might be asking yourself, "Is school starting earlier this year?", and you wouldn't be entirely incorrect.

The standard for public schools to return to learning after summer has typically been after Labor Day for quite a while. Although within the last few years, districts and universities have been going back to the chalkboard even earlier.

I remember when I was a junior in high school and it was announced that we would go back to school in late August instead of the usual early September appointment. I was quite surprised that we were going back to school

before Labor Day, and I felt a little bit cheated, as if I was losing my summer.

As a college student now, it's not something I think about as much since I get out in May and return every year at about that same late-August window since high school.

I heard this summer from a coworker that the schools in my hometown were going back to school even earlier than they have previously, so I started doing some research into the situation.

In 2006, Michigan passed a bill entailing that all schools had to start after Labor Day in order to not hamper hospitality businesses, an industry that sees a dramatic increase in activity during Labor Day weekend.

According to MLive, a new bill is making its way through the Michigan legislative system that would let schools start before or after labor day. This leaves it completely up to the districts rather than having them seek approval for earlier start dates, a process which authorities argue is ineffective and results in unnecessary paperwork blockades.

You may wonder, "Why the early start dates?" The answer, that schools believe is that the early start date will enable the schools to end the school year earlier in late May or early June in order to curb declining attendance rates, according to an interview with Detroit Public Schools Community District Superintendent Nikolai Vitti published by MLive.

While I don't necessarily think it's a terrible idea to move the last day of school to an earlier date, I don't think it will do as much as the lawmakers and school districts are hoping.

I also think that the schools could focus on more important issues that might actually increase productivity such as pushing back the start time in the mornings, a practice that could allow kids to get more rest according to the American Academy of Pediatrics.

I personally believe though that moving the start date earlier to encourage kids to attend school in the spring will likely not work. If a kid doesn't want to attend school, they simply won't attend. There may be some kids that can be convinced otherwise, but I expect that

the turnover would be very minor.

The bill in question to move the start date earlier is being championed by Rep. Matt Koleszar, D-Plymouth, who introduced the bill into the house earlier this year in June, although the House has yet to vote on the issue.

To wrap up, while I think it's great that schools are starting to look inward and assess problems that need to be addressed, I also think that this isn't the way to go about it and there are other issues that could probably be solved first. Read more about the bill at legislature.mi.gov.

Sports

Dylan Rider | Sports Editor | riderd1@ferris.edu

Chasing a three-peat

The Bulldogs are back-to-back champions with a goal to make it three



Photo from Torch archives

The Ferris State football team poses with one of their two NCAA championship trophies won in the past two years.

Jeffery Walker
Sports Reporter

This year the Bulldogs will be chasing another championship as they look to lift the NCAA Division II National Championship trophy for the third year in a row.

The Bulldogs are the favorite to win the GLIAC conference and are ranked #1 in D2 Football. These rankings and expectations set the bar very high for the reigning national champions.

Being on top is not the easiest road to be on as everyone will be looking to knock you down. For head coach Tony Annese, nothing changes for the Bulldogs even after back-to-back national championships.

"The goals are always the same for us," Annese said. "Our first goal is to win the first game, then our

second goal is to win the GLIAC championship, our third goal is to go undefeated [and] our fourth goal is to win a national championship."

Annese has no interest in discussing a three-peat, citing that he wants to "punch [someone] in the mouth" when they say the term.

Creating a dynasty within college sports is a difficult task to complete due to consistent roster turnover caused by graduation among other things.

Ferris is no exception to this. The Bulldogs' biggest loss came in the form of the reigning Cliff Harris award and Gene Upshaw award winner, Caleb Murphy. The awards crowned the now Tennessee Titans linebacker as the best defender and best lineman in DII football.

Alongside Murphy, the Bulldogs

also lost notable wide-receivers Brandon Childress and Marcus Taylor while losing defensive-backs Cyntell Williams and Sidney McCloud, among others.

With such absences, there are big shoes to fill. However, senior defensive lineman Ian Hall feels he and the team are prepared.

"I feel like I'm going to be the best guy on that field and I'm going to leave it all out there," Hall said. "Since I've been here, the culture has always been the next man up mentality. So, I feel like those young guys grinded all summer up in Big Rapids and they're going to be able to step up and fill [those] roles."

In addition to having young players step up and having a good group of returning players back, the Bulldogs will be getting back one of their best wide receivers in

Xavier Wade, as he was sidelined all but two games due to injury.

"[It's] just getting my shoulder right and everything else," Wade said. "Getting back into flow of things with the offense, just the chemistry with the guys and things like that."

Wade seemingly hopes to return to his 2021 form where he had 43 receptions for 793 yards and 10 touchdowns.

Despite this team coming out of their seasons on top for two years in a row, the feeling that they have not won anything is present on the team, according to wide-receiver Brady Rose.

"Feels like we didn't win [the championship]," Rose said. "[It] feels like we lost in the first round. Everyone's got the same energy as they did two years ago, so it hasn't changed."

This hunger to win, regardless of their past two seasons, acts as a statement into the Bulldogs' culture that puts winning as the usual.

With all the talk of the Bulldogs being back-to-back champions, the pressure that comes with winning those championships while trying to make it three in a row can be a lot for a team to handle.

The high expectations set on the back-to-back national champions bring a natural pressure that comes with it. However, according to Wade, "pressure makes diamonds."

The Bulldogs look to complete their first goal of winning their first game when they face Mercyhurst University on Thursday, Aug 31. Gametime is set for 8 p.m.

The alum

The untold story of Chris Kunitz, a Ferris State legend



Graphic by: Hailey Nye | Assistant Production Manager

Dylan Rider
Sports Editor

In 1998, one phone call from Melville, SK changed the course of Ferris State hockey history.

The phone call was between Ferris State assistant coach Drew Famulak and his father. The Melville natives' phone call resulted in Famulak flying to Saskatchewan and scouting a forward for the Melville Millionaires of the Saskatchewan Junior Hockey League. That forward was a kid by the name of Chris Kunitz.

For avid Ferris hockey fans and avid National Hockey League fans, what happened next is nothing they don't know. Kunitz joined the Bulldogs, helped the team reach their first NCAA tournament in 2003, signed with the Anaheim Ducks of the NHL, won four Stanley Cups with two teams, played on five NHL teams, won a gold medal in the 2014 Olympics, played over 1,000 games and scored over 200 goals.

Now, the Bulldog legend is tabbed to eventually be inducted into the Ferris State hall of fame. Twenty years later, the story of how Kunitz was brought to Ferris is revealed alongside Kunitz's reflection on his career in his retirement.

The Melville Connection

Anyone familiar with the recruitment story of Kunitz can tell you how crucial Famulak was to the process of bringing the Regina native to Big Rapids. However, the point of view changes depending on who you ask.

For head coach Bob Daniels, Famulak's role in the recruitment was pivotal for the Bulldogs as he was the metaphorical bridge to the small town of Melville.

"I would bet 1,000 bucks that you've never been to Melville," Daniels said. "Melville is a small farm community about an hour and a half outside of Regina. It's a

town of maybe 4,000 people and most of them are farmers ... but small town hockey, like anywhere in Canada, is huge. It was Famu-

"A little bit had to do with the loyalty," Kunitz said. "Coach Famulak coming out, spending some time with me, talking to me and



Photo courtesy of Ferris Athletics

Kunitz played for the Bulldogs from 1999-2003.

lak's connection to that hometown of his father that got us on Chris Kunitz's track."

Daniels stressed the complications of scouting of the time since there "were no cellphones and no video on the players", which adds to the sheer luck that Bulldog hockey stumbled across such a gem all those years ago.

Having an inside tip into where and who to look at when recruiting certainly helps speed up the process. But what about the player perspective? What sold Kunitz on leaving his home country of Canada for an American university approximately 1,225 miles away? Well, for Kunitz, it was simple.

second all time in career goals and sixth all time in career points.

"As things turned out, he was a really, really kind of a big fish for us," Famulak said. "[He helped] take our program to heights at that time that had never been seen."

An Illustrious Career

Following the conclusion of the 2002-03 season, Kunitz signed with the Anaheim Mighty Ducks as an undrafted free agent. He spent his first season split between Anaheim and the Cincinnati Mighty Ducks of the AHL. In the 2005-06 season, there were brief stints with the Atlanta Thrashers and a five game stint with the Portland Pirates. However, Kunitz spent 67 games donning a Ducks jersey.

Kunitz recalled being 24 and trying to figure the league out while being a late bloomer to the professional level.

"I think roughly on that third

professional year something clicked that said 'Alright, I gotta earn a job here,'" Kunitz said. "It's not just playing hockey anymore. From there, I didn't ever have to look back."

Kunitz was right about not having to look back. Following that third year, Kunitz won his first Stanley Cup with a Ducks team highlighted by hall-of-famers Scott Niedermayer, Teemu Selanne and Chris Pronger. Kunitz stayed in Anaheim until a trade in the 2008-09 season relocated him to Pittsburgh. Fortunately for Kunitz, he found himself on another Stanley Cup winning team as the Penguins defeated the Detroit Red Wings that year.

The alum continued on page 12

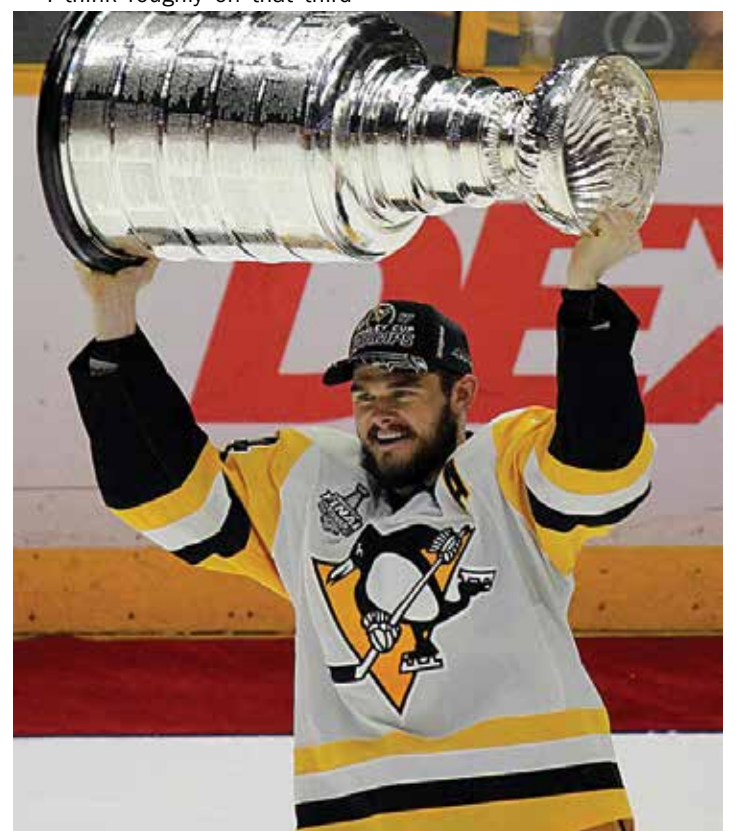


Photo creds: Wikimedia Commons

Kunitz following his 2017 Stanley cup win with the Pittsburgh Penguins.



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3rd SUNDAY

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W. Volleyball vs. Minnesota Duluth

5pm

W. Volleyball vs. Adelphi

12pm

W. Volleyball vs. Indianapolis

5pm

W. Soccer vs. Northwood

1pm

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The Alum continued



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Kunitz played for the Tampa Bay Lightning in the 2018-19 season.

Kunitz found home in Pittsburgh where he stayed with the team for eight more years. Those eight years saw Kunitz add two more Stanley Cups to his resume. His last playoff run with Pittsburgh created a moment that etched Kunitz's name into Pittsburgh Penguin history.

In a game seven match against the Ottawa Senators in the eastern conference final, captain Sidney Crosby fed a pass to Kunitz who instantly shot the puck past the Senators goaltender to take the series in a double overtime.

As the broadcast rang out with "Crosby on Kunitz, a shot, he scores", Kunitz was being mobbed by his teammates. Kunitz reflected on that series clinching goal.

"It gives me chills just thinking about it," Kunitz said. "It's such a fun environment to do that in. I

didn't score a bunch of those goals in my life. I scored a bunch of goals but not in that kind of capacity."

Kunitz mentioned that he had been in a bit of a goal drought at the time and that it just so happened that his legs didn't "feel like a 37 year old" that day where the environment was right and he knew it could be his last game in Pittsburgh.

Following his last cup win with Pittsburgh, Kunitz signed and played for both the Tampa Bay Lightning and the Chicago Blackhawks before retiring in 2019.

Daniels, who has seen numerous athletes come and go from Ferris, believes Kunitz sits atop the list.

"There's so many accomplished alums throughout athletics, but I can't see one being more accomplished," Daniels said.