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ANTI-ABORTION FREEDOM WALL DISPLAY CREATES DISCOURSE

First and foremost, we wanted to call attention to the 62 million human beings who had a future and a life that was ended by abortion.” — Pepperdine College Republicans

“The Freedom Wall is a venue for individual members of the community to respectfully express themselves and may not be used by organizations for advertising.” — Pepperdine Organization Handbook

“I didn’t want people — if that was the only experience that they had with Jesus that day — I just want them to know that is not a representation of what I believe Jesus is and what a Christian should be.” — Ashtyn Adams

A collection of signs and symbols greeted students passing the Freedom Wall last week, all contesting the same issue: abortion. The signs covered the expanse of the corkboard and trickled off onto the wall below, creating a gallery of student opinions and rebuttals.

Pepperdine College Republicans put up an anti-abortion display Sept. 28, on Pepperdine’s Freedom Wall. Shortly after, other students, many of whom disagreed, covered this display with abortion-rights messages. PCR club members and other students engaged in dialogue and argument regarding the Freedom Wall, culminating in DPS eventually appearing on the scene.

First-year student Peter Briggs said he appreciated the ability to have conversations, though he wished there was a way to have discussions that did not result in hurt.

“I was hearing people saying that this was an improper use of the Freedom Wall,” Briggs said. “And it doesn’t feel like that. I feel like this was a really productive and really stimulating use of the Freedom Wall, but that led to a very real experience on Pepperdine campus.”

The three developments of the Freedom Wall, on Sept. 28, detail a Pepperdine College Republicans anti-abortion stance, an abortion-rights response and then removed signage.
Good News: Friends and food

LIZA ESQUIBIAS
NEWS ASSISTANT

During my short time living at Pepperdine, I found the combination of food and friends is a major source of joy in my life.

I am lucky to have a kitchen now, but I did not have one for the first few weeks of school. I do secretly miss the chaos of figuring out how to cook pasta in the microwave and mastering the perfect peanut butter sandwich.

Food bonds us. When I moved into my new apartment, the first meal I cooked was for me and my News editor, Emily, whom I barely knew. I undercooked the pasta and used canned sauce, but she still said it was good, and we ended up talking for hours. Now, she is one of my closest friends.

This past week, I had eight of my friends over for a family dinner. Earlier that day, I went to the farmer’s market and bought handmade pasta, basil, pine nuts and garlic to make pesto. I saw a bin of French baguettes by the flower stand and purchased two, which I made into garlic crisps, topped with freshly picked tomatoes.

Five hours and a sink full of dishes later, there we were — all of us on my floor — eating overfilled plates of pasta and snacking on chocolate like we have known each other forever.

During this dinner, I found out our Perspectives editor, Anitiz, is younger than me even though he is a junior and I am a sophomore. I love that — and I would not have known if we did not have that dinner together.

Our Life and Arts editor, Beth, brought peanut butter cookies her mom made, and I have had one with friends is a major source of joy.

As much as I complain about the complex, I love that my friends are the Graphic, and they bring me an incredible amount of joy.

The food that brings a smile to my face is not always particularly special. The wraps I put together with every-thing in my fridge when I am running late for class are so exciting. The Italian dinners that make my heart happier.

I now have an unexpected creative outlet and allowed me to bond with people. I now have a running invitation for Sunday night dinners, because food brings us together, and together we bring out the best in each other. There is nothing that makes my heart happier.
A Timeline of Events

Before 8 p.m., on Sept. 28, the PCR displayed an anti-abortion statement on the Freedom Wall.

Around 11 a.m., on Sept. 29, senior Ashley Adams posted an abortion-rights sign on the Freedom Wall, next to the PCR’s display.

Some time before 1 p.m., DPS arrived on scene, where students crowded around the wall.

At approximately 3 p.m., students began hanging more abortion rights signs. Students hung more signs advocating for abortion rights at 11 p.m.

Pepperdine College Republicans Make a Statement

The PCR intended for the Freedom Wall posting to act as a memorial and reveal the “magnitude of the atrocity” of abortion, the PCR club wrote in an Oct. 2 email to the Graphic.

“It was just staring at me,” stated the cross, which was symbolic of God’s love, according to the Freedom Wall memorial. “It was just radiating off of it,” Adams said.

“I could physically see them look at the sign and harm each other,” said Adams, while passing the display. “I felt that that was not supposed to be something that’s a part of our society.”

“I was intelligible to them look at the sign and harm each other,” said Adams, while passing the display. “I felt that that was not supposed to be something that’s a part of our society.”

Students Engage In Discourse at The Freedom Wall

Junior Philip Young said he arrived to the Freedom Wall at 7 p.m., on Sept. 27 and watched the PCR put up the display, and he returned the next day.

“I find abortion personally horrifying,” Young said. “And so I was certainly horrified by the statistic that was demonstrated in that post, but it didn’t cause me to believe that abortion should be illegal.”

At the wall, Young said he did not post or take down anything, but he did engage in conversation with other students.

“I’m glad that an activism project was pursued that could result in increased conversation, although I would prefer to pursue tactics that are maybe a little more persuasive in nature,” Young said.

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Social Action and Justice colloquium organizer Lockwood said they decided to have that up, and my friends and I thought it was better if this was not here,” Briggs said. "And hateful isn’t the right word, but it was something that made me feel unsafe; it was something that way, so I didn’t want to put any thing crude or anything that they could use against us.

Senior Vanessa Aguayo said she and senior Andy Fest arrived at the Freedom Wall between 2 to 3 p.m. Aguayo said she saw postings about the wall on social media, and Fest and she decided to see and make postings for them selves.

Fest said when Aguayo and he arrived, members of the PCR stood near the wall. Soon after, more students gathered around the PCR display; rather, she found an empty space to just stare at me,” stated the cross, which was symbolic of God’s love, according to the Freedom Wall memorial. “It was just radiating off of it,” Adams said.

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When Adams first saw the Freedom Wall around 1 p.m., during a break in her class, her experience at the wall, DaSilva said, was confrontational, especially when she returned later at night, when members of the PCR argued with and filmed DaSilva as she posted signs.

DaSilva puts signs on the Freedom Wall to raise awareness for the Oct. 2 Sisters March, and unknown individu als later took down her signs. DaSilva said she learned about the march in her Social Action and Justice colloquium class.

“I didn’t want to put anything de grading to the other side’s opinion — personally, to me, it’s not an opinion, because human rights can’t be an opinion,” DaSilva said. “However, I understand that some people may not see it that way, so I didn’t want to put any thing crude or anything that they could use against us.’”

On Oct. 2 email to the Graphic. “We’re not supposed to be something that’s a part of our society.”

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**FSL recruitment size sets new record**

**LIZA EQUISQUIAS**

**NEWS ASSISTANT**

In the first in-person fraternity and sorority recruitment process since the pandemic, 1,187 students participated in events and activities that lead them to the sorority or fraternity fit for them. Every student had unique experiences and expectations of recruitment, and many ran into both emotional obstacles and pleasant surprises along the way.

In the final two weeks of September, students were able to split their time between their favorite attire — and mask — and put their best foot forward, preparing themselves to open the bid letter to join a fraternity or sorority they had been waiting so long for.

First-year student Aidan Hulbert said the recruitment process was stressful and at times overwhelming, but what was worth it to him was finding the FSL organization that would be a home for life.

“My expectations were definitely met,” Hulbert said. “I expected that it would be busy, and I’d be meeting a lot of people, and it definitely was busy, at least for me. But you can make a rush [recruitment] what you want it to be.”

Green said there were a record-breaking 387 potential new members for Panhellenic Recruitment this semester — a steep incline from the normal range of 270 to 300. In previous years, she said this was the best year for retention in sorority recruitment at Pepperdine.

“We really saw a collective PNMs attitude of, ‘I want to be involved, I want to find community, I want to be a part of a sorority no matter the letters,’” Green said. “So that was really awesome to see.”

Sorority recruitment was five days long, consisting of an orientation, a seven-hour Zoom open house, two days of sisterhood rounds, two days of preference day and bid night, and one who is already a member of that sorority and acts as a guide for PNMs during recruitment — during recruitment this year. Avolio said being able to support women through each phase was rewarding.

When she was a first-year student, Avolio said she felt lost and out of sync with other students during recruitment. This year, Avolio wanted to help potential new members who felt confused navigate the process.

“I wanted to be an outlet to help other people that may have been in a similar situation. I was in,” Avolio said. “Avolio said she felt concerned with the open house being online. Avolio thought recruitment would kick off on an awkward note and connections would be difficult to forge. Once the night was over, she said she’d been proven wrong and was happy that friendships were made just as they would have been in person.

Green — who refers to herself as the “informed fraternity and sorority advisor” — said with open house being the largest student event of recruitment, the decision was made to hold it over Zoom and avoid over-filling classrooms.

The rest of the activities took place outdoors for COVID-19 safety reasons, Green said, but that shift may be permanent cause heightened reactions. Green said Amirmokri said recruitment again or answer questions with the two fraternities who invited him to inter"

**PHOTO COURTESY OF SASHA AMIRMOKRI**

New members of the Kappa Alpha Theta sorority gather for the first time on bid night, Sept. 20, at Firestone Fieldhouse. After five days of recruitment, students received a letter naming which sorority, if any, chose them.

“Being in a sorority or fraternity isn’t the only way to have a social network or to have friends,” Green said. “So I want to make sure that they are connected on campus.”

Recruitment for fraternities has fewer rules and requirements compared to sororities, Green said. It is also a 10-day experience, with bids going out on the 11th morning, double the amount of time women spend in recruitment, Green said. The North American Inter-fraternity Conference does not have guidelines for fraternity recruitment. For this reason, the University structures the process — which is why attendance for fraternity activities is not required, unlike sororities.

Hulbert said, in his experience, recruitment was flexible enough for everyone to participate in their own ways.

“The free will part of it and not having to have someone trying to keep it structured — for me — I really did like it because I felt I was making it my own rush week,” Hulbert said.

Still, Hulbert said he would have preferred to participate in recruitment again or answer questions with the two fraternities who invited him to inter-

**LIZA EQUISQUIAS@PEPPERDINE.EDU**

If he could redo the week, Hulbert said he would have given himself more grace.

“You have to find that balance between being open and putting yourself out there,” Hulbert said. “But also respecting your own mental health and physical health.”

Hulbert said answering questions with the two fraternities who asked him to inter-

It was very intense,” Hulbert said. “This fall definitely broke you down and tore me to shreds, and I think, obviously, you could tell they weren’t as connected as they could be to the questions. It’s just how you reacted to high-pressure, high-intensity situations.”

Hulbert said answering questions with the two fraternities who asked him to inter-

With a low number of fraternity PNMs this past year — only 78 compared to the normal 200 — Green said Pepperdine fraternities experienced a higher number of students to register this fall.

“We had 185 men register for IFC recruitment,” Green said. “It’s still within our healthy range — I wasn’t disappointed by the numbers by any means — but I really thought it’d be 78.”

With so many students new to Pepperdine, Green said she also didn’t know how anyone would react to open recruitment this year or preferred to adapt to on-campus life before joining. Green said she would have participated in recruitment in person and that going into it, she made it his intention to enjoy the process.

“I went in with an open mind just to use it as a way to meet new people,” Gamboa said. “I didn’t really have many expectations — I just saw which one fit me.”

Once he met the chapters on the first day, however, Gamboa said he connected well with Psi Upsilon and decided that was the community he was interested in joining.

“It puts even more pressure on [students],” Gamboa said. “But I guess you don’t want to ‘join a frat to join a frat’ either. You want to join the one that’s right for you.”

Gamboa closed out recruitment week pledging to Psi U, and he said he looks forward to carrying bonds with his fraternity brothers throughout his time at Pepperdine and after.
**IP builds on foundations in Japan, Uganda**

**SAMANTHA TORRE**  
NEWS ASSISTANT EDITOR

Pepperdine’s International Program’s office prepares to launch two new faculty-led summer 2022 programs: Japan and Uganda. IP is hosting these programs to encourage students to explore areas the University is familiar with in new ways, Dean of IP Beth Laux said.

Summer faculty-led programs are popular with students, Laux said, especially in places where Pepperdine does not offer academic year programs. International Programs staff expressed their excitement about the potential these two programs have.

“Because it’s the first time we’re doing this particular program [Japan], we want to make it as great as possible and draw on the right students and create a life-changing experience for them,” said Charlie Engelmann, director of Asia Programming. “And then from there, we’ll see what opportunities there are and continue to explore how we can build on it.”

Uganda, Laux said, also works well with the popular East Africa program, the University’s mission and President Jim Gash’s experiences there.

Japan as a Temporary Base

IP decided to host a faculty-led summer 2022 program in Japan early summer of 2021. IP hopes to have 15 participants, Engelmann said.

Although both programs are in Asia, Engelmann said the opening of the Japan summer program was a separate endeavor from the closure of the Shanghai program, where Engelmann served as director.

The University visited Japan through the recently closed Shanghai program’s Educational Field Trips, Laux said. Additionally, the Caruso School of Law has a business program in Japan, which is unrelated to the summer 2022 program.

“It was a place where we were comfortable piloting some activities to see if that’s something that resonated with students and if it’s a good opportunity academically for Seaver College,” Laux said.

“The presence of the Japan summer program is not indicative of the academic year Asia program, and IP is still in the early stages of creating said program, Engelmann said.

The Japan program has a focus on Japan’s economy. In addition, Japan offers students the one-unit “International Experience” class, taught in every residential program.

“The way I teach that class is to help think more critically about culture and understanding culture through the lens of our own personal experiences — but also helping, through that broader cultural understanding, to understand ourselves better,” Engelmann said.

To foster cultural understanding, Engelmann said his class will have local guest speakers to offer an outside perspective. IP also encourages students to explore Japan on their own outside of classes.

“I hope to have other cross-cultural opportunities with students in those cultures so either partnering with a local university or a local institution and seeing if there’s engagement opportunities for our students with their students,” Engelmann said. “Some of these things, we’re in the early stages of trying to find opportunities for, but that’s an ideal situation.”

IP Background in Uganda

Because the Uganda summer 2022 program is a pilot program, IP aims for 25 to 30 participants, said Ronald Cox, associate dean of IP, IP’s standard minimum is 12 students, and the program’s capacity caps at 35 to 40 students.

“The goal is to take what we’ve already done and add to it by having another Uganda program so that they’re [East Africa and Uganda] at least alternating,” Cox said. “And again, ours is a pilot program, so we’re checking to see what the interest is, we’re checking to see what it will look like. We’re also hoping that we will be able to expand or develop our program as we go along.”

While the summer 2022 program is separate from the Caruso Law School Uganda Fellowship, Cox said IP will depend on the law school’s knowledge of Uganda and use the program as a framework for students.

Gash said, as a resource person for the Uganda program, he offers connections, encouragement and past exposure to allow the program to explore a variety of opportunities.

“Past experience with the law school has demonstrated that this can be done safely, that students can engage in a transformative experience that expands their view of the world and allows them to engage directly with the local population in ways that our overseas programs don’t always fully maximize,” Gash said.

The program will provide students opportunities to learn from Uganda citizens and leaders, Gash said, in addition to IP staples like encountering a language barrier and learning about themselves.

“Learning and spending time in another culture is humbling because you realize, ‘Well, my worldview has so many pre-suppositions that come with it that I just accept without critically evaluating,’” Gash said.

To encourage cross-cultural conversation, IP will educate students on how to engage with Uganda in a culturally sensitive way, spending time with Ugandans their age and listening to guest speakers, Cox said.

“Our approach in terms of how we understand service learning and how we understand exposing students to what’s going on in the country and understanding it — not from the angle of what can we do to help Uganda but what Ugandans are doing to strengthen their own communities — is a high priority to us,” Cox said.
In celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month, which began Sept. 15, award-winning LA Times journalist Gustavo Arellano spoke at Pepperdine’s Student Affairs Office event held Sept. 30 about what it means to him to be Latino.

During the event, Arellano spoke about overcoming his struggles to embrace his Latino identity as a child and in the journalism industry, offering insight into how to use storytelling to amplify the voices of those whose experiences are overlooked.

“Your passion is writing about racial injustice,” Barton said. “And that students will come in and feel a connection with God, and then to best create a sense of community among students who do not come from the same places.”

Arellano closed out the night by offering an action for students to embrace and honor their culture. He said sharing stories about those who are marginalized can do that here.”

“I learned a lot in his discourse,” Weaks said. “Seeing him being so vulnerable and talking about his battle with really identifying with who he was — and realizing it’s not an easy battle, but that something that we all go through.”

Weaks said Arellano’s speech spoke to her on a personal level, because as one of the vice presidents for Pepperdine’s Black Student Association, she understands the struggle of embracing a culture that is often ignored in the U.S.

“It’s very important to ICA to have Arellano as a speaker during Hispanic Heritage month, because we want to make sure that people advocating against the coverage of cultural subjects, said Valentina Carvajal, a Pepperdine graduate student at the Grazia Business School and intern for ICA.

Carvajal was born in Colombia, and as someone who identifies as Latina, she said she appreciated the way Arellano represented their culture. Senior Aniah Weak said she felt more knowledgeable on Latino culture after hearing Arellano’s speech.

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Weaks said Arellano’s speech spoke to her on a personal level, because as one of the vice presidents for Pepperdine’s Black Student Association, she understands the struggle of embracing a culture that is often ignored in the U.S.

“Because we go to a predominately white institution, having cultural events is important for any group of people, but especially at Pepperdine, because we live in such a bubble,” Weaks said. “Having people outside of the Pepperdine sphere come in and talk to us is super important.”

Hahn said ICA believes it is imperative for students to see new perspectives and for the University to understand how to best create a sense of community among students who do not come from the same places.

After attendees eat a meal, the band performs and the team running it is excited to expand The Table’s influence throughout Pepperdine and even to the surrounding Malibu community, Barton said. Barton said UCC encourages students to get involved with The Table, whether they want to share a poem or perform a song.

The members of The Table hold that worship could be through whichever gifts God has given; it does not have to be strictly through worship songs and a message, Barton said.

Mastalerz said The Table has numerous benefits for the community, like introducing many diverse backgrounds and building fellowship.

“Just bringing communities together, having something to do every Saturday night and being able to have something special and personal worship-wise — and being able to find a community where I’m constantly worshiping and I’m constantly meeting new people,” Mastalerz said.

The Table is relatively new in the past year, and it is still a work in progress, but the team running it is excited to expand The Table’s influence throughout Pepperdine and even to the surrounding Malibu community, Barton said. Barton said UCC encourages students to get involved with The Table, whether they want to share a poem or perform a song.

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The Table began with the President Jim Gash’s appointment as president of Pepperdine when he decided to expand the media team at Pepperdine, Barton said. The Table hosts a daily podcast, is a columnist for the LA Times, wrote three books and teaches journalism at Orange Coast College.

“All of those things that I do, they all interlock into my general philosophy of who I am not just as a person but my ethnic identity — which for me is Latino,” Arellano said. “And so when you see all this where I’m talking about politics, I’m talking about Southern California, I’m talking about food, I’m talking about all these issues — it’s a dream.”

Arellano’s speech were also appreciated the way Arellano represented their culture. Senior Aniah Weak said she felt more knowledgeable on Latino culture after hearing Arellano’s speech.

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Religion doesn’t just women’s reproductive defamation

SARAH BEST
PERSPECTIVES ASSISTANT EDITOR

It’s a good thing the 700,000 people who died from COVID-19 weren’t teasers, or the Pepperdine College Republicans would’ve been outraged.

On Sept. 28, the Pepperdine College Republicans orchestrated a display on the Freedom Wall depicting a plethora of crosses. Specifically, there was one for every 100,000 people who have had abortions performed since the 1973 passing of Roe v. Wade.

Since its enactment into federal law, the legislation makes abortions safe and legal. As a result, the anti-abortion agenda began to try to highlight the fundamental female reproductive right ever since. A woman’s reproductive health — as well as her access to safe, legal abortions — has no place in the same conversation as religion.

“I personally think this isn’t a political issue,” said Brandol Rudolph, Pepperdine alumna (’21) and Women’s March protester. “If you think abortion is wrong, then don’t get an abortion.”

Freedom Wall

The Freedom Wall establishes a safe space for respectful discourse on the premise that “the principle that speaking freely in a participatory democracy must be done with responsibility,” according to the Student Organization Handbook.

How is it responsible to publicly shame the millions of people who have had abortions that those crosses represent?

Freedom Wall regulations also state it is “a venue for individual members of the community to respectfully express themselves and may not be owned by organizations for advertising.” Reports from the Inter-Club Council show the Pepperdine College Republicans did not violate the policy of the Freedom Wall because the display was not considered a club advertisement — a prohibited clause under Freedom Wall regulations.

However, the Student Handbook rules are confusing and should be revised, considering its explicit mention of the wall being for “individual members.” Groups should stop abusing what the Freedom Wall was intended for — individuals to voice their opinions and encourage respectful discourse and debate.

Seeing this as a display that directly attacks women’s reproductive rights is not a place for organizations to take up, the general position of the group.

The Freedom Wall display conveniently neglects to include how many of those abortions were performed as a result of incest, rape or the pregnant woman being in no physical, mental or financial position to withstand full-term pregnancies.

Anti-abortion perspectives hyper-focus on the unborn and turn a blind eye to those who are living. One cannot be “pro-life” — anti-abortion — and actively neglect the children confined to the foster care system, the millions of people in our country without health care and the lack of quality education in schools.

What about the separation of families at the border and the children who are confined to cages because of it? Is it with the consideration of these humanitarian issues in mind when it becomes hypocritically apparent that “pro-life” advocates are only advocates when it comes to the unborn?

Where was the display on the Freedom Wall campaign for universal health care — a crisis that comes with the unborn.

This legislation further lacks the exemption of rape and the children who are confined to cages because of it. Is it with the consideration of these humanitarian issues in mind when it becomes hypocritically apparent that “pro-life” advocates are only advocates when it comes to the unborn?

How is it responsible to publicly shame the millions of people who have had abortions that those crosses represent?

Going back to the Freedom Wall display, it is decreased to the “pro-life” visual that pays tribute to the relevancy of the nearly 700,000 lives lost due to COVID-19 — perhaps seven crosses, for every one hundred thousand people who have died since the start of the pandemic.

Politics

The national discourse on abortion is intensifying in the recent weeks following Texas’ abortion bill SB 8 — the strictest piece of abortion legislation in the United States. With Texas Governor Greg Abbott’s passing of SB 8, women now only have a six-week window to have a safe, legal abortion — a timeframe in which many women aren’t even aware they are pregnant.

This legislation further lacks the exemption of access to abortion care as a result of rape or incest. At a Sept. 7 press conference, Abbott responded to questions about survivors having to potentially carry out full-term pregnancies specifically because the bill neglects these circumstances.

Men should not be making decisions about women’s bodies and arguably should not have opinions on anything in the realm of female reproductive care either. In binary terms, most men will never experience pregnancy or even begin to conceptualize the burden it can bear if one is not mentally, physically or financially prepared to bring a child into the world.

Letters to the Editor:

Letters to the editor must bear the writer’s name, signature, class standing, major, address and phone number (except in some circumstances) as determined appropriate by the Graphic. Letters must be fewer than 300 words and will be edited for syntax, grammar and brevity. Letters can be mailed to student publications or emailed to peppergraphicmedia@gmail.com.
Open Essay: Abortion and the Holocaust

HOPE LOCKWOOD, GUEST CONTRIBUTOR

To use this word to mean anything other than the attempted annihilation of those whom the Nazis deemed so unworthy of life that they must be burnt to ashes is not only cruel and ignorant but also disminishes any so-called cause that “promotes life.”

Though some have reduced the word “Nazi” as a title denoting someone who is “really, really bad or mean,” the Holocaust is not something that can be minimized.

So, perhaps the word you were looking for was genocide? To which I answer with my list of things that qualify as genocide: the violence and destruction Greek and Armenian people faced in the late 1910s to the 1920s, the treatment of the Uighur people in China today, the murders of Bosnian and others, experienced under a violent, fascist regime.

Never again does not mean never again for us — it means never again for all. Never again means carrying the traditions and the memories of people violently murdered by a fascist, antisemitic regime. It means to remember Dr. Gisella Perl. It means to carry this forward, and keep it from happening to others.

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Do better. Be better. Act better.

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This past week at Pepperdine, student discourse raised tension over the topic of abortion. I overheard a Christian, anti-abortion advocate saying abortion is comparable — if not worse than — the Holocaust. As a Jewish student, I was deeply offended.

How dare people use and misappropriate a genocide committed against my people, my culture and my religion that sought to wipe out Jewish people, Romani people, Polish people, gay men and disabled people as justification for your selfish, political arguments.

Stop linking the tragedy of the Holocaust to Jim Crow. It means to carry this forward, and keep it from happening to others.

So, I am asking: Who’s protected by relating the Holocaust to abortion? Because it is certainly not me, and it is certainly not those who are forced into situations where they have to get abortions.


Referencing Micah 6:8 — the words of the Bible that both of our religions find sacred:

“This is what the LORD requires of you: Only to do justice and to love mercy, and to walk modestly with your God.”

Who is in need of justice? Is the thousands of children detained in cages at the border? Is it 60,000 children in foster care in California alone? Is it the 34 million people who live in poverty, unable to feed themselves or their children? Prisoners? Orphans? The sick? The poor?

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However, I don’t consider genocide to be a medically necessary procedure that grants individuals — specifically women — bodily autonomy and the freedom to make their own choices and decisions to have a child. To equate abortion, a medical — and sometimes necessary — procedure, with genocide is particularly barbaric.

Are we comparing the actions of those faced with the question of whether to have an abortion, especially late-term abortions, to the actions of Nazis? To literal war criminals?

From a young age, I was taught the importance of the words “Never Again” and the connotations they have for Jewish people and other victims of the Holocaust.

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Do better. Be better. Act better.
Dear Pepperdine, be mindful of the meals

EMILY CHASE ASSISTANT PERSPECTIVES EDITOR

There is a lack of nutrition labeling in the Caf, the menu has diminished at the HAWC, prices have increased across cafeterias and students with dietary restrictions are left with limited options. There is no reason a student should be fearful, unhappy and feeling lost when it comes to eating a meal at their university.

Pepperdine uses the food provider Sodexo, which works with independent vendor Fooda. They bring “the hottest tastes right to campus daily,” according to the Pepperdine Dining Services website.

Though Pepperdine advertises great cafeteria food, many students are not impressed.

“Not bad for a college cafeteria but I’m in my third year and the food gets old,” 2021 alumna Rachel Hogan wrote on Google Reviews one year ago.

Hogan expresses the same sentiment many students are feeling a whole year later. It begs the question — has the food really improved since then? Students remember the food they eat on a daily basis better than the notes they take in a three-hour class. Therefore, it should be food that doesn’t “get old.”

Moreover, students with dietary restrictions — such as vegetarians, vegans and those with lactose intolerance — are among those suffering while searching for food to eat.

This is the case for junior Juliet Johnson. Johnson’s dietary needs include both dairy-free and gluten-free food, so picking out what she should eat every day isn’t always a walk in the park.

“The only thing I can be sure I can eat is salad,” Johnson said.

“The vegan bar is never appropriately labeled.”

It is unfair Johnson is rolling the dice with her life every time she enters what is supposed to be a harmless cafeteria, under no fault of her own.

Equally as important are the expensive food and drink items. For example, Naked Juice beverages are sold at many grocery stores, gas stations and convenience stores.

At Nature’s Edge store campus, Naked Juice drinks cost $6. At Ralph’s grocery store, they cost $5. This is a full dollar markup for the same exact drink of the same exact size.

This is the case for many other beverages, sushi and snacks sold on campus. A majority of students already pay so much for meal plans and spend all their meal points on items they could buy cheaper elsewhere.

What Pepperdine needs to do is label the food it makes for students with dietary restrictions. The nutrition labels are lacking in clarity for many food items that dietarily restricted students purchase. Therefore, Dining Services needs to make the vegan and vegetarian bar clearly branded for its consumers.

Potentially creating a specific store on campus dedicated to vegan, vegetarian and healthy food options would better suit the overall well-being of dietary restricted students. Additionally, fully opening the Caf food spots would solve a lot of problems. The Caf is functioning on a smaller scale right now. By opening the rest of it, students would not only have more options, but there would be enthusiasm when going to get food each day.

Furthermore, Pepperdine needs to price its food better based on the quality of what it makes and the market price for the products it sells. Eating should be a time to refuel the body and enjoy — not a dreaded journey to search for the most edible dish.

Safe parking providers must extend their reach

SARAH BEST ASSISTANT PERSPECTIVES EDITOR

LA County has one of the highest concentrations of unhoused people in the country. Alongside the growing rate of homelessness in cities like Malibu and Santa Monica, such concerns can be alleviated by adding safe and secure overnight parking lots for those living out of their vehicles.

California is one of the leading states in its unhoused population, and with a significant population in Malibu living out of their cars, they need a safe place to park overnight.

LA County alone — as of September 2021 — has over 15,700 people who live and sleep in their vehicles each night. This number makes up 25% of the entire population of unhoused people in LA County, according to SafeParkingLA.org.

Out of the entire unhoused population in our country, California is home to 47% of them — according to the 2018 Annual Homeless Assessment Report.

Established by Safe Parking LA in 2016, the organization opened nine parking lots by 2019 that provide safe places for those living in their cars to stay overnight, according to its mission statement. Security officers guard these lots, which are free of charge to the 190 vehicles and more than 200 people who park there each night. By the end of 2019, Safe Parking LA provided secure overnight parking for 450 vehicles.

These lots, however, are predominantly located in cities like Hollywood, North Hollywood and Echo Park. Beach communities with significant unhoused populations, like Malibu, have been left out of such safety and security.

Safe Parking LA is one of four providers of secure and free lots that allow overnight parking for LA’s unhoused population, alongside End Homelessness CA, Community Partners and Volunteers of America. Though these safe parking groups offer dependable places to stay for LA locals, these volunteer groups seldom remember the people who call PCH home.

In Malibu, there are approximately 240 unhoused people, according to the LA Homeless Services Authority.

Criteria for parking in these lots include having an operational vehicle, not being listed on the National Sex Offender Registry and having a valid driver’s license. After filling out the short vehicle form, workers contact potential users for phone interviews that would direct them to the parking provider most suitable for their needs.

Though those living out of their vehicles in Malibu are welcome to fill out the form and relocate to LA County parking lots if desired, they shouldn’t have to drive from PCH to central LA to obtain a safe place to stay at night.

What if their car doesn’t have the operating capacity to drive that far? What if they’ve experienced being unhoused exclusively in Malibu and have become comfortable or familiar with the area and would rather stay there?

There have to be more safe parking spaces across LA County in cities like Santa Monica and Malibu. With growing concerns of the unhoused populations in these cities specifically, more parking spots would provide concentra-tion spaces for them to dwell rather than being spread out across the community.

Though safe parking initiatives are steps in the right direction to alleviating the extreme issue of unhoused people in LA, other safe housing initiatives for those not living in their cars must not be neglected but rather improved upon and expanded further.

In 2020, the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority reported an unhoused population totaling 66,436, a number that’s risen 12.7% from 2019. Rather than simply passing legislation to remove those experiencing homelessness from sensitive areas, city officials should include a plan to provide secure places for them to stay as well.

This initiative for safe parking and housing for those experiencing unhoused life in Malibu and Santa Monica would require the community’s advocacy and support for secure lots to be implemented. Inherently, this would grant those in the community who are concerned with the growing number of unhoused people a greater sense of safety as the unhoused population relocates to secure and controlled lots.
Staff Editorial: Pepper-done with Sodexo

Pepperdine students are graced with overcrowded locations, expensive pricing, confusing labels and limited options when trying to nourish a basic human need.

The issue begins and ends with Sodexo, the University’s longtime food service provider. Pepperdine’s contract with Sodexo was slated to end in 2020, but the pandemic delayed the selection of a new provider. The interim contract will end spring 2022, when the University will take up the Request for Proposal process yet again.

Sodexo deserves credit for adapting to countervailing COVID-19 guidelines and helping Pepperdine navigate the pandemic, but make no mistake — when dining locations consider signing a new long-term contract with Sodexo in the spring or choosing a new provider, the resounding opinion of the students is clear — Sodexo needs to go.

New Developments are Failing

Sodexo partnered with Grubhub as a way to “cut down on lines,” a great idea with terrible execution. Waves Cafe only lists its featured options of the day, leaving out grab-and-go alternatives including sandwiches, sushi or burgers — the most consistent and reliable choices. Some cafeterias have meal options listed that they don’t actually serve. For example, the HAWC has an Impossible Burger listed on Grubhub, but apparently when students reach the register, no Impossible Burger exists.

Locations are posted as closed even during open hours. As of late, the Starbucks — one of the longest lines on campus to jump — Grubhub posts the majority of menu items as sold out, meaning students who aren’t in the mood for juice, milk or yogurt are out of luck.

Food trucks on campus are another new development to ease traffic in main dining spaces. While supporting local small businesses is admirable and the food from these trucks is usually tasty, these trucks are not sustainable or permanent solutions.

Let’s face it — food trucks are unhealthy, expensive and not designed to handle hundreds of hungry students at once.

Existing Options Suffer from Understaffing

Perhaps Dining Services should focus on bettering the existing dining spaces rather than testing innovative yet ineffective new strategies. For example, why are the hours at Oasis Pizzeria so limited? Why are the options in the Caf as restricted as ever?

Returning students will remember Oasis was open until 11 p.m. in the past, which helped ease lunch and dinnertime traffic in the Waves Cafe and late-night traffic in the HAWC — but that was also when Oasis served personalized pizzas.

The Caf formerly offered personalized sandwiches, a larger salad bar, more breakfast options and a kiosk ordering system for all three meals.

The pandemic seems to be a great time to utilize the kiosk ordering at the Grill, so each customer’s food could be sold separately. Instead, students crowd around a small condiments area to add tomatoes and other toppings to their prepacked burgers.

The answer to these questions regarding limited options is simple: Sodexo has not adequately staffed the dining locations on campus. Students cannot blame Starbucks employees or cafeteria workers for the long lines or turning off the Grubhub service — there are just not enough staff.

Given Sodexo’s history of mistreating and underemploying employees in schools, prisons and hospitals, this is hardly surprising.

Bills, Bills, Bills

When students decide to purchase meal points through Housing and Residence Life, they have the option to check the meal plan rates and see which meal point options work best for them. At the very bottom of the page, above summer rates, is an interesting sentence of fine print.

“Estimates are based on seven to eight points per meal,” according to the HRL website.

The average Caf meal, without dietary restrictions, costs $8.99 — before the surcharge for takeaway plates and tax. The more sustainable green diet option costs $8.99 plus tax. The more sustainable green diet also costs extra. Forget about the food trucks — they average about $12 to $15 per meal, which is double HRL’s estimate.

Staying on budget is a difficult task for students, which can be exacerbated since the product is food — a basic necessity. The anxiety is heightened for resident students who are required to purchase meal plans and do not have cars to go off campus to offset some of these high costs.

If you already find the Waves Cafe prices shocking, you’ll be even more surprised when you find out Malibu Whole Foods has cheaper options than the University cafeteria.

Try the $3 vegan grilled cheese. It’s fantastic.

Dietary Restrictions Shouldn’t Be This Restricting

With the Sister March only days after the Freedom Wall incident, it is no wonder why the protest attracted such a diverse crowd.

It was almost perfect timing because the protest is today,” first-year Lydia Weldon said. “Then people could be not only coming to support that [reproductive rights] from the start but then coming to support it from seeing the stuff on the Freedom Wall.”

The position of being anti-abortion, particularly among men, has become a seemingly justified excuse to wrongly intervene and control what child-bearing people can do. It’s simple — no uterus, no opinion.

“We’re here for the rape victims who get pregnant, who are being forced to carry that child full term, then look at that face for the rest of their life — the face of their attacker,” said Christy Catlin, protest-attendeed and Woodland Hills resident.

Anti-abortion does not allow one to throw judgment onto a woman’s body, nor the choice to have an abortion. What each of those crosses on the Freedom Wall display failed to represent is the unique circumstance behind why each of those abortions had to happen — stories that are meant to be understood and reasoned by no one outside of the women who made those decisions.

“Women who are being forced to carry a full-term baby who doesn’t have a brain or a heart, or that’s stuck in the fallopian tube, they are not allowed under Texas law to have an abortion,” Catlin said. “That’s archaic, that’s draconian and that’s what we’re out here for.”

Spouting religious dogma to justify and shame others isn’t the most effective way to speak about this issue. The Freedom Wall and the Women’s March are good starts to sparking a conversation and curating healthy discourse so that everyone can fully understand the complexity of this issue.

“It’s not that black and white, and I do think if we’re able to sit down and have a conversation, we’ll find that we have a lot in common than not,” Catlin said. “So we’re not enemies, you know, we’re all in this together.”

Stop hiding behind the veil of religion to justify intolerance and make oppressiveness more palatable.

The pro-life agenda should not merely be confined to the lives of the unborn but additionally to those who are living.
Across

2 The watery mascot of Pepperdine.
4 The Waves Weekend invitees.
7 A day filled with school spirit, a carnival and a pep rally.
8 An exciting game filled with slam dunks and free-throws, and it features LeBron James.
9 A weekend for families to visit campus and interact with campus traditions.
11 An event filled with games, prizes and a Ferris wheel.
12 The organization that provides scientific ice cream at the carnival.

Down

1 The Malibu campus gymnasium.
3 The name of the Blue and Orange Madness carnival.
5 The name of the most popular park at Pepperdine.
6 The First Lady of Pepperdine.
10 The group that organizes Blue and Orange Madness, as well as other campus events.
Students adopt plant-based diets

Addison Whitnen
Life and Arts Assistant

Completely giving up meat and animal byproducts may sound like a difficult transition, but plant-based diets and alternatives grow in popularity every year.

The offerings at major chain restaurants reflect this boom in demand for plant-based options. McDonald’s agreed to a partnership with Beyond Meat in February to develop its own plant-based burger, the “McPlant,” while Taco Bell offers guides for how both vegans and vegetarians can enjoy the menu.

Adopting a plant-based diet has numerous health benefits and positive environmental impacts, but there are some struggles, too. At Pepperdine, students who adopt plant-based diets — like vegans or vegetarians — face some challenges with finding food on campus that works within their diets.

Despite these difficulties, students, like vegan sophomore Ian Rampton, said they work to stick to a lifestyle they are passionate about.

“The more you learn, the more it just becomes a no-brainer,” Rampton said. “The more I educated myself, the less and less I wanted to go back to my previous diet.”

“At a certain point, I just felt selfish for this overconsumption of natural resources just for taste,” Rampton said. “I couldn’t justify eating the way that I did any more after learning all these sustainability aspects, so I started integrating more plant-based products in my life.”

Now, Rampton has been fully vegan for nine months.

Plant-based diets are mostly or completely reliant on plant-based foods versus a “plant-forward” diet — a more recent iteration of this idea — which just emphasizes the inclusion of these foods in a diet, wrote Katherine McCune, a registered dietitian-nutritionist at the Student Health Center, in an email.

One of the main factors motivating people practicing plant-based diets in recent years, McCune wrote, is the realization of diets’ environmental impact.

“A sustainable diet (low environmental impact) has health benefits, is usually more affordable and minimizes climate change by lowering greenhouse gases,” McCune wrote.

Why Go Plant-Based?

Rampton said he made the shift to vegan eating after watching a documentary, “Cowspiracy: The Sustainability Secret.” The documentary showed the negative effects meat production and consumption have on the environment, which made Rampton reflect on his own dietary choices.

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Students benefit in the quiet ASMR world

Beth Gonzales
Life and Arts Editor

ASMR, or Autonomous Sensory Meridian Response, is the relaxing stimulant many young adults use for scalp-pricking sensations, with triggers such as whispering, tapping, cracking and more.

Some Pepperdine students who feel close to the ASMR community urge to destigmatize the abnormal element surrounding what helps them study, relax and focus. The average age of ASMR viewers ranges from 18 to 25, according to a recent study.

ASMR has been a trend on YouTube for years — the first published video appearing in 2009 — and in 2021, there are over 5.2 million videos under the term “ASMR.”

The community is booming, and scientific research is underway to determine the health benefits of this cultural phenomenon.

At the start of the pandemic, ASMR consumption increased due to social and mental health challenges such as isolation, financial stress and emerging health concerns.

One of the most popular ASMR content creators, or “ASMRtists,” with 1.5 million subscribers is ASMR Glow on YouTube, who goes by Sharon. ASMR helped Sharon through college with sleeping, studying and her anxiety, she said.

“I have met so many people with different backgrounds and circumstances who told me how much ASMR helped them — people with PTSD, autism, depression, anxiety, insomnia,” Sharon said. “I really believe that mental health is becoming more and more important in today’s society, so if something can help, even a little, why not try?”

Sharon first found ASMR in high school when she stumbled upon it with her brother scrolling through YouTube, she said, never guessing that in a few years it would become her full-time career.

“We were kind of laughing about how strange it was, but then we kind of really enjoyed it,” Sharon said. “My favorite videos to watch are the ones where there’s a lot of personal attention, and those are my favorite to film as well.”

As an experienced ASMR content creator with over four years under her belt, Sharon said she wanted to bring more sci-fi and fantasy videos to the community — something she hadn’t seen before.

See Online Resources
Art professor paints a dreamland

Pepp student starts sustainable swimwear brand

Clare Cornelius, junior International Studies major and Sustainability minor, said she is deeply passionate about sustainability and fighting climate change. Cornelius started her small business, Resurface Swim, in April, selling handmade eco-friendly women's swimsuits in a multitude of styles and sizes.

To be more environmentally friendly, Cornelius wove her own fabrics. Cornelius said she decided to make swimsuits because they are one of the few garments that are hard to buy used, because it is unhygienic.

“[Swimwear] is one pocket where they don’t really have a lot of options, and you can’t buy secondhand,” Cornelius said. “So those were all the thoughts going through my head when I was deciding.”

Resurface Swim started when Cornelius had a dream on a flight home to Nashville from the Bahamas, where she was sewing swimsuits. Cornelius said she participated in an abroad program her junior year of high school at the Island School in the Bahamas, where she learned about sustainability and ocean conservation.

Cornelius said her hometown influenced her beliefs around climate change, but that program opened her eyes to the truth of this crisis and its impact on the planet.

“I didn’t believe in climate change until junior year in high school,” Cornelius said. “I grew up in a very conservative area [and went to] a private Christian school.” Before starting her business, Cornelius said she made sure she did her research to deciper where she could get the right material to ensure her products were as sustainable as possible.

Cornelius said her swimsuits are made of eco-friendly material made from recycled waste — imported from Italy. The material is turned into yarn and then transported to Carvico Fabrics — also in Italy — where it is transformed into fabric. From there, the fabric is shipped to Solid Stone Fabrics in Martinsville, Va., where Cornelius buys it.

“I’ve liked working with [Solid Stone Fabrics],” Cornelius said. “It’s good to know that it’s not some huge corporation; it’s a small fabric store.”

At first, Cornelius said she was nervous to start her swimwear business because she knew little about sewing and fashion in general. However, she stumbled upon sewing tutorial videos on YouTube and built confidence in her skill. Cornelius spent about a month and a half trying to make a swimsuit she was proud of before she started selling her wares.

Cornelius first sold her bathing suits through her Instagram account @resurfaceswim, but, as business grew, she created a website.

Abby Gearhart, junior Liberal Arts for Education major and owner of Sweats by G, advised her through the process of making a website and marketing her products, Cornelius said.

Over the summer, Cornelius was making around 10 swimsuits in one week — each one taking about two months to rise off the canvas — peeling away the layers of movement. The colors progressively become more luminous, and the human compositions grow in a way that causes them to appear to rise off the canvas — peeling away the layer of calm found in the first two paintings. Any viewer can visit this exhibition and feel the colors of emotions of the past two years — yet the details of the imagery allow people to interpret the depictions in many unique ways.

The exhibition will be open until Oct. 16, at the LA Louver art gallery in Venice, Calif. Gellis created these compositions as part of her tenure exhibition there.

Yvette Gellis’ colorful pieces hang on display at the LA Louver art gallery in Venice, Calif. Gellis created these compositions as part of her tenure exhibition there.

“LIFE AND ARTS COPY EDITOR

YAMILLAH HURTADO

LIZA ESQUIBIAS | NEWS ASSISTANT

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Cornelius said her swimsuits are made of eco-friendly material made from recycled waste — imported from Italy. The material is turned into yarn and then transported to Carvico Fabrics — also in Italy — where it is transformed into fabric. From there, the fabric is shipped to Solid Stone Fabrics in Martinsville, Va., where Cornelius buys it.

“I’ve liked working with [Solid Stone Fabrics],” Cornelius said. “It’s good to know that it’s not some huge corporation; it’s a small fabric store.”

At first, Cornelius said she was nervous to start her swimwear business because she knew little about sewing and fashion in general. However, she stumbled upon sewing tutorial videos on YouTube and built confidence in her skill. Cornelius spent about a month and a half trying to make a swimsuit she was proud of before she started selling her wares.

Cornelius first sold her bathing suits through her Instagram account @resurfaceswim, but, as business grew, she created a website.

Abby Gearhart, junior Liberal Arts for Education major and owner of Sweats by G, advised her through the process of making a website and marketing her products, Cornelius said.

Over the summer, Cornelius was making around 10 swimsuits in one week — each one taking about two weeks — each one taking about two
DIET: A plant-based lifestyle

FROM B1

Senior Michaela Gromer began her vegetarian diet after a Green Team meeting during her first year at Pepperdine, she said. Green Team is a club that promotes learning about the environment and living sustainably, and it taught Gromer about the impact a person’s diet can have on the environment.

“They were talking about the production of meat and how it’s so bad for this environment and I was like, ‘What? No one told me,’” Gromer said. “I felt like that was just the push that I needed, to hear that in Green Team, so literally the next day, I stopped eating meat.”

While she didn’t face any pushback for her decision to adopt a new diet, Gromer said some people were surprised by her dedication to a plant-based diet, which she has followed ever since.

“As the months went on, my friends would be like, ‘I can’t believe you kept it up for this long,’ acting like it was something kind of big when in reality it felt like it was very small,” Gromer said.

The Challenges of a Plant-Based Diet

Gromer said one of the main challenges of being vegetarian is the cost of certain ingredients. In addition, the time commitment required to research new ways to eat and recipes to prepare are substantial issues — but she prioritizes her diet enough that they are manageable for her.

“I just feel like it’s a value of mine that I’m like, ‘OK, I’m willing to spend more on it,’” Gromer said.

Rampton said one of the most common misconceptions about a vegan diet is that it’s hard to get enough protein after cutting out meat. While Rampton carefully tracked his protein intake when he began his vegan diet, he now knows he gets plenty of protein because of his established routine and no longer monitors it as closely.

“It’s an adjustment because in our previous diet, a lot of that is coming from meat and dairy,” Rampton said. “So once you take that off the plate, you have to find something to substitute it with.”

A plant-based diet requires planning to get a healthy amount of protein, as well as nutrients like B-12 and iron. McCune wrote.

Navigating Food Options on Campus

Another difficult aspect of navigating the food options on campus. Gromer said, this year in particular, it is challenging to find things to eat on campus, and her go-to’s are the vegan station in the cafeteria, vegetarian sushi or Starbucks. Rampton said.

Rampton said he enjoys working on starting a club for students interested in adopting plant-based diets or who already follow one as a way to create community and provide a support system. While he is vegan, he said this club will be inclusive of anyone who is on a plant-based journey.

“Most campuses in America have some kind of vegan club, and I just transferred into Pepperdine, and I was kind of surprised to learn that we didn’t have one,” Rampton said. “I do feel like we have a substantial amount of plant-based eaters on campus, but it’s just a matter of assembling them and creating that community.”

While following a plant-based diet can be very beneficial both health-wise and for the environment, McCune wrote she emphasizes students should not strive for perfection when it comes to eating. Trying to eat perfectly creates unhealthy, disordered eating habits and removes the enjoyment from food.

“Eating should be a pleasurable, nurturing experience,” McCune wrote. “Seeking out healthy choices like fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, legumes, nuts and seeds, olive oil and other healthy fats is a healthy way to eat. But I think there is room for occasional sweet treats, burgers and fries if you desire.”

Students who are interested in joining Rampton’s club can email him at ian.rampton@pepperdine.edu for more information. Students who would like to set up an appointment with McCune at the Student Health Center can call (310) 506-4316.

INFOGRAPHIC BY ALI LEVENS

INFOGRAPHIC BY EMILIA LEKHTER
Some of her most popular videos include “ASMR Haircut Roleplay,” “ASMR in Different Languages” and more — ranging from seven to four million views each.

“These days I am inspired by what I watch myself,” Sharon said. “I am pretty in tune with the rest of the community, but I also follow requests sometimes and I look at what my viewers like to watch on my channel.”

Senior Moises Vargas found Gentle Whispering’s ASMR channel at 13 years old. Vargas listened throughout high school when he struggled with sleeping and continues to listen in college as classes became more stressful, he said.

Vargas feels ASMR helps him focus and keeps him on task during homework and projects.

“It immediately gave me this feeling of relaxation — like when I entered an empty office or quiet library, this body chill that went down my spine and made me feel relaxed,” Vargas said. “Since then, I have been completely addicted to it.”

Senior Hannah Cheng said ASMR helped comfort her nerves when her family was in the midst of a move from New York to Hong Kong. Now, Cheng watches channels like Goodnight Moon on YouTube every night before bed.

“It makes you feel like a little kid again,” Cheng said. “There is something about that action [ASMR triggers] — it’s just so nostalgic and comforting and it brings me back to a simpler time and it eases any worries that I am experiencing. ASMR has definitely improved the quality of my life.”

In terms of content, Cheng said she prefers more low-fidelity or Low Fi ASMR — a type of video with less production quality because it’s filmed on an iPhone — and more storytimes, fashion hauls or simply tapping on household objects.

“I think something about it [Low-Fi] feels more intimate, and I think having an intimate space is another big reason why people like ASMR,” Cheng said. “Something about that feels nurturing and it’s a great way to feel comforted at the end of the day.”

While ASMR might not be the most conventional type of media consumption, Cheng said she used to feel self-conscious about telling people she enjoyed ASMR. But as its popularity increased due to people indulging in “oddly satisfying” videos on social media, she said she felt confident in sharing that part of her life.

Vargas said the stigmatization of ASMR can be attributed to spectators getting confused between poorly done ASMR and content creators putting in the effort to consciously relax people.

“There is so much diversity within ASMR content creators that it is very easy to generalize it,” Vargas said. “There’s just a lot of stereotyping that happens and, since ASMR is so personal, no two people are going to have the exact same taste so it can be hard to bring it up in conversation.”

As creators continue to understand cues from their audiences, it doesn’t look like ASMR will be fading anytime soon, as percentages for ASMR consumption have gone up every year dramatically since 2018. Sharon said the majority of her viewers leave positive comments, but for those who don’t, she chooses to ignore it and realizes some are not ready to accept ASMR.

“For myself, I don’t have a goal really, I think once you arrive at this point you just want to enjoy it and continue what you’re doing for as long as you can,” Sharon said. Sharon said she is working hard to encourage ASMR research in schools, medical settings and more so that the world can finally understand the spectacle that is ASMR. The sensation is proven to help with a slew of things ranging from ADHD to addiction to athletic performance and more.

It makes you feel like a little kid again. There is something about that action [ASMR triggers] it’s just so nostalgic and comforting and it brings me back to a simpler time and it eases any worries that I am experiencing. ASMR has definitely improved the quality of my life.

HANNAH CHENG, SENIOR

[ASMR] immediately gave me this feeling of relaxation [...] this body chill that went down my spine and made me feel relaxed.

MOISES VARGAS, SENIOR

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FROM A1

BETH.GONZALES@PEPPERDINE.EDU

OCTOBER 8, 2021 | LIFE AND ARTS | PEPPERDINE GRAPHIC MEDIA
The orchestra returns with Beethoven’s 5th symphony

The heat was on for the Pepperdine Orchestra, as they put their skills to the test, hoping their month’s worth of rehearsals — but the change from online to in-person performances — because you can never really tell what is going to happen. This excitement and the comfort from his team are what helps him prepare for a show. “My biggest takeaway for tonight is that it is a fun show for PIT, and I’m glad they are going to keep having more shows, and I’ll be glad to help with shows to come,” Zink said.

This first show begins not only the new school year — but also the beginning of a series of shows hosted by Pepperdine's band of improv stars.

PIT brings much-needed laughter

The PIT players hang out at their rehearsal Oct. 3, gearing up for their next show. PIT began in 2000 and has been a source of community laughter with free monthly shows in Elkins Auditorium.

Award-winning violinist Samuel Sun performs a solo during the Pepperdine Orchestra’s concert Sept. 30. Sun was featured in the show along with award-winning violinist Jonathan Vu.

Sun’s biggest takeaway from the show came from how much more enjoyable he finds performing in person than online. He said it was refreshing to be able to hear the instruments together in one space — versus playing separately online, he said.

While many shows differ in perspectives from performer to audience member, this show seemed to share one common chord — its unpredictability. Max Zink, senior and PIT member, said the least expected things come from both the audience and fellow performers — because you can never really tell what is going to happen. This excitement and the comfort from his team are what helps him prepare for a show.

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This first show begins not only the new school year — but also the beginning of a series of shows hosted by Pepperdine’s band of improv stars.
Trinity Watson (No. 13) takes a penalty kick against University of Portland on Saturday, Oct. 2. The Waves won by a score of 3-0, and improved to 10-1-0 on the season.

Soccer experts have long bemoaned that 2-0 is the most dangerous lead in soccer, claiming it can prompt complacency. But the Waves, jolted by Waldeck’s energy, played the rest of the game with starring intensity.

Waldeck put the Waves up 3-0 with a moment of magic in the 72nd minute. After finding the ball on the right side of the penalty area, Waldeck rifled a right-footed shot toward the goal. Gliding just over Wahlen’s outstretched hand, the shot nestled into the top left corner of the net.

“One of my favorite things to do is chip the keeper,” Waldeck said. “So if she’s out, I thought I might as well do it.”

The Waves almost added to their tally several times in the remaining minutes. Sophomore midfielder Skylar Enge came the closest in the 74th minute, but her shot from the top of the penalty area glanced just wide of the post.

Another close call for Portland came in the 82nd minute, when Wahlen miskicked a clearance on the right side of her penalty area. Freshman midfielder Caroline Coleman did well to intercept the ball, but couldn’t take full advantage of the keeper being off her line.

Three goals proved more than enough for the Waves, who recorded their fourth consecutive shutout when the final whistle blew. The Waves have shipped a mere five goals through 12 regular season games, giving them the best goals allowed per game in the WCC.

“It’s something special,” Watson said. “A shutout, we as a team, it’s not just the backline. Everything we do, we do together.”

The Waves had little time to rest on their laurels, as they’ll travel to the University of San Diego on Wednesday, Oct. 6, where they won 4-0. From there, the Waves go to Loyola Marymount University on Saturday, Oct. 9, in what will be their third conference game in seven days.

“I didn’t even know who we were playing next,” Ward said, when asked about the upcoming games. “I don’t really look at the schedule. We give our girls the schedule, it says, ‘Vicious opponent number 12.’ It’s not that I don’t care about the opponent, it’s just that everybody is good. Everybody is good enough to beat us, and we’re good enough to beat anybody.”

As the Waves continue their season and pile up wins, the end of Ward’s comment should not be understated.

With this win, Pepperdine continues its scorching start to the season, earning a six-game win streak and starting off WCC conference play undefeated in four matches. The Waves had an overall record of 36-16 against LMU before this matchup, with its previous win this past March in a victory that took three sets.

“I think the beauty of playing in a great conference is you've tested all the time,” Head Coach Scott Wong said. “Really proud of our team for fighting and battling no matter the situation.”

The Waves drew first blood Saturday afternoon, as they won the first set 25-18. The first set saw both teams trading points, as neither team was able to gain much offensive separation from each other.

It wasn’t until junior setter Isabel Selkurt scored an ace on the Waves up 13-10 that the Waves offense picked up steam.

Fueled by Zelaya and senior outside hitter Rachel Ahrens, the Waves went on a scoring run, increasing their lead to 17-10. The set closed with Ahrens landing the critical kill, ending the first set 25-14. Pepperdine committed 11 errors, while LMU had six.

The second set was where the Waves offense picked up steam. Ahrens and Ballo went on a scoring run, taking an early 4-1 lead. Zelaya led the team with eight kills.

Chillingworth was an offensive weapon for Pepperdine, registering a .421 hitting percentage and finishing the match with 18 kills.

The second, third set, it came down to communication, and then we picked it up,” Shields said.

The Waves weren’t worried, Wong said, and they trusted their teammates and the defensive effort that they’ve worked on all season long.

“Really proud of our team for fighting and battling no matter the situation,” Head Coach Scott Wong said. “I think the beauty of playing in a great conference is you've tested all the time.”

On Saturday, Oct. 2, senior outside hitter Rachel Ahrens delivers a striking blow to LMU’s defense. Ahrens continued her stellar play this season, ending the match with 18 kills.

Senior middle blocker Rosie Ballo goes for a block versus LMU. The Waves started WCC conference play undefeated through four games.

The Waves took control of the first two sets, LMU returned the favor with their backs against the wall. LMU came out firing in the third and was able to score six straight points during one stretch, which included five attack errors from Pepperdine and one kill by Geissberger, increasing LMU’s lead from 11-11 to 17-11. Pepperdine could not recover from that assault, and due to their errors, lost the set.

The Waves weren’t worried, Wong said, and they trusted their teammates and the defensive effort that they’ve worked on all season long.

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After a staggering start to Sunday’s game, the Pepperdine Men’s Water Polo team (10-7) capped the 3-0 weekend off with a huge win against No. 2 UC Berkeley (14-2), giving them momentum heading into conference play.

Before Sunday’s matchup, the California Bears had only one loss on the season to USC a week prior, and the Waves hadn’t seen a win against them since 2019. The last time the Waves beat Cal at home was in 2008, making this game more meaningful.

“We’re just trying to get the guys to believe that we can play with and beat a team like that,” Head Coach Terry Schroeder said. “We’ve seen the guys progress and grow as a team, so as a coach, that makes you very happy.”

The Waves came out with an aggressive first quarter that started with a quick goal from senior attacker Sean Ferrari at the 7:18 mark, followed by senior attacker Balazs Kosa after a perfect pass from Tierney. There was a sudden change in energy when the Waves saw shots on goal just over a minute later. The Waves’ start proved to give them the momentum they needed as sophomore attacker Jake Howerton added one of his five game goals at the 4:19 mark off of a solo effort down the left side.

“Just like any other game, you come in and you game plan, and it really came to us today,” Howerton said. “Everything came together because we’ve been working so hard this season.”

Senior center Nicholas Fichman, junior center Austin Smit and sophomore center defender Nico Tierney all added to the attack with a goal each to give the Waves a 6-3 lead to end the first quarter.

In the second quarter, the Waves started strong with a quick goal from Howerton, followed by another goal from Kosa after a perfect pass from Tierney.

There was a sudden change in energy when the Waves saw shots on goal just wouldn’t go in. Their shots flew strong, missing both high and wide, and the Bears’ goalie made a huge save by redshirt senior goalie John Claude Marco allowing Pepperdine to maintain their attack. The Waves faced a five-minute drought without a goal while the Bears saw three go in, making it 8-6 for a Pepperdine lead.

“Every game has runs, and we knew that Cal wasn’t going to give up,” Schroeder said. “They came back hard, but it was key for us to be able to withstand that run.”

To end the Bears’ run, Howerton provided the Waves with an answer with his second goal of the quarter at the 2:04 mark. Fichman added to the attack after he scored an electrifying goal with a second left on the shot clock from a Tierney assist.

To finish off the quarter, Howerton scored one more time with 35 seconds left to play, but the Bears responded with an answer of their own to close out the half, making it 11-7.

The Waves didn’t start the third quarter as strongly as the first two, while the Bears saw themselves firing first and shifting the energy in their favor. A couple of the Waves’ missed shots were capitalized on by another three of the Bears’ goals, bringing them within one point of the Waves and a 11-10 score.

“In moments like that where you start to see the momentum shift, you have to keep fighting through it,” Schroeder said.

The Waves did just that after a foul on Ferrari gave him the penalty shot, which he scored. The 12-10 lead was quickly decreased after another Bears’ goal at the 2:20 mark, but Kosa gave the Waves another goal to close out the quarter with a 13-11 lead.

The fourth quarter made for a nail-biter after the Bears came out with a quick two goals to tie the game. Howerton had the answer, yet again, to give him his fifth goal of the game and Pepperdine a 14-13 lead.

“In the end of the game like that, you’re not looking for yourself to score,” Howerton said. “You’re looking for the team to score and anything that’ll help the team win.”

The Bears came down to try to decrease the lead, but a huge save by redshirt senior goalie John Claude Marco allowed for an attack in the other direction and a Tierney goal for a 15-13 lead.

“In my mind, I know I have to make big saves for my defense, mostly because I give the energy to the offense when I make key saves,” Marco said.

The latter part of the fourth started getting scrappy, and a lot more fouls were committed on both sides. Marco had another huge save with three minutes left in the game. He made a quick pass out to Tierney on the right side for a beautiful assist to Kosa, resulting in a goal down the middle.

The Bears tried to answer the attack, but Marco made another big save with just under two minutes to play. Following the Bears’ timeout, they were able to score a goal bringing them within two points of the Waves.

Time was in the Waves’ favor, and after a game of keepaway, they closed out the game with a win and a bunch of cheers to follow. As the horn blew, the Waves instantly started splashing the water while their teammates outside the pool hopped out of their seats to celebrate.

“We’re a special team, we thought of them not differently than any other team,” Marco said. “We just wanted to come out and play our best.”

Howerton added that a game like this was huge for them mentally heading into conference play.

The team now has the week to prepare for their next game where they will play Saturday, Oct. 9, at California Baptist (9-8).
New fitness center under construction

KARL WINTER
DIGITAL EDITOR

Though experiencing a construction delay, the new structure between Seaside Residence Hall and Eden House will be complete by the end of 2021. The project should have opened in fall 2020, but the COVID-19 pandemic delayed the start of construction.

The structure will soon be a new, temporary fitness center, dubbed the “Pepperdine Fitness Center,” and will be twice the size of the Firestone Fieldhouse weight room.

With the proposed student activities and sports arena in Rho parking lot — known as “The Mountain” — still years from completion, the structure will improve student recreation opportunities temporarily, wrote Marie Chu, senior project manager in the Department of Design and Construction, in a Sept. 27 email.

“The project has been delayed, largely by geotechnical issues that we have encountered,” Chu wrote. “We expect this project to be completed by the end of this calendar year.”

Campus Recreation will staff and manage the new facility.

The project includes two structures: a fitness building and a restroom building, each one floor. The fitness space will be 5,000 square feet, while the restroom and locker room building will be around 900 square feet, Chu wrote.

The structure is temporary insofar as it does not sit on a permanent foundation, Director of Campus Recreation Robb Bolton said.

A rendering of the Pepperdine Fitness Center shows a tent-like structure with windows facing Greek Dorm Road. The structure will have air-conditioning and plumbing, Bolton said.

Chief Operating Officer, Phil Phillips, presented the renderings at the Oct. 6 President’s Briefing.

“Our plan is that the structure will be removed and replaced by a new, permanent fitness center as part of The Mountain project,” Chu wrote. “It is vitally important to the wellness of our students to provide them increased and improved recreation space.”

Campus Recreation advocated for a new fitness space prior to President Jim Gash’s appointment, Bolton said. Strength and cardio spaces consist of the Firestone weight room, The Cage near the tennis courts, and satellite resident-only facilities in Towers and Seaside.

Campus Rec employees like Bolton and fitness coach Becca Brackett said the space under Firestone, known colloquially as “the dungeon,” is too small to properly accommodate the number of community members who utilize it.

“It did suck always seeing the awesome facility the athletes got to use and then having to go down into a poorly ventilated basement to do my workouts,” Brackett, a 2021 alumna, wrote in a text message. “I hope the students that get to use it will really appreciate the new space and give it some good use.”

Gash pressed ahead with the new events center project, The Mountain, but also made plans for the new fitness center in the meantime, Bolton said.

“The project remains on-budget, Chu wrote. “The surprise was President Gash finding this interim step which we weren’t expecting,” Bolton said. “Which is a really welcome surprise because we were just thinking, ‘Well, we’re gonna have to wait the time period that’s going to take for this larger project.’”

The new structure will include all brand-new equipment, cardio machines with Bluetooth and streaming capabilities, more free weight stations and open space for students to do core and body-weight exercises. The equipment in Firestone is more than 10 years old, Bolton said.

“I’m very excited for the community — having the larger space, the natural lighting and the windows, all brand-new equipment, new technology,” Bolton said.

“The space will also appear more open, with the view overlooking the soccer field and ocean, according to design mockups.

“It’s supposed to be a community, social place as well, and that’s what the new space will allow,” Bolton said.

Campus Rec will no longer use the Firestone Fieldhouse weight room when the new fitness center opens, but there are no plans regarding the fate of the underground room, Bolton said. The group fitness center in the Harilela International Tennis Stadium will remain open, Bolton said.

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