

NEWS

AAGA students have an exciting time at a New Orleans conference!

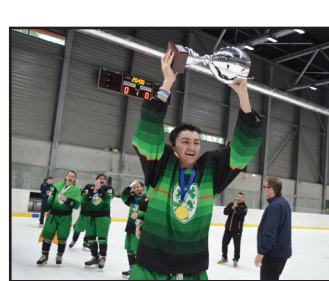
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NEWS

Jess Emery says farewell to her beloved new friends in London.

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SPORTS

Spartan hockey players play for Jamaica and Ireland teams.

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Castleton, Vermont

Friday, May 10, 2024

SCASTLETON SPARTAN

STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF VTSU CASTLETON

Debuting the library documentary

Pearl Bellomo
Castleton Spartan

On Wednesday, April 24, five VTSU-Castleton filmmakers proudly screened “Error 404: Book Not Found,” a documentary about the rescinded all-digital library decision last February, to a maxed-out audience in Herrick Auditorium.

The project began in Communications professor Sam Davis-Boyd’s Documentary Filmmaking class – led by Lily Doton, Jacob Gonzalez, Wm. Smith, Maddie Lindgren and Jacob Ruben – soon after Vermont State Colleges leadership announced a plan for the libraries to go “all-digital.” The plan entailed the ridding of physical books, creating a university-wide

online library, repurposing library spaces and laying off library staff.

“It brought back a lot of feelings. I was ripped after 25 years working here,” said Billie Neathawk, one of the five librarians at Castleton’s Calvin Coolidge Library who lost their jobs.

After significant backlash from the campuses, the decision was rescinded in late April, but not without its lasting effect of decreased trust in administration.

“To me, this is so much larger than the libraries,” said VSCS Chancellor Beth Mauch, who attended the screening. “The striking part to me was everyone saying, ‘you didn’t involve us’ and ‘what were you thinking?’...If we don’t ensure we are having genuine conversations, something like this will

happen again.”

The documentary itself brilliantly compiled interviews with faculty, staff, and students. It also included footage from the library class walk out and library sit-in, statements made at the Casella Theater Town Hall, and creative decisions such as voiceovers of school-wide administrative emails and B-roll of students walking around campus.

“My favorite part was the voiceover,” said Natural Sciences professor Preston Garcia. It really sent home when you said, ‘Best wishes,’ referring to Doton’s cheery, yet nonchalant tone.

“You see less and less students as the B-roll goes on,” noticed student Colby Tucker during the question-and-answer to follow the

screening, to which Wm. Smith explained that it “was an aesthetic vision to show people caring less about it moving forward.”

One shocking part of the film comes from the Casella Town Hall, in which nearly a hundred Castleton members lined up to plead their case for the library; comprising mostly productive arguments, but one racist comment that jumped out to those present and watching the film.

“Learn English!” shouted someone anonymously to former President Parwinder Grewal.

“I was like ‘No! That didn’t happen!’ said Wm. Smith. “We’re supposedly in a post racial society. We’re not there. It tells a larger story.”

See ‘Documentary’ on page 6



The student producers of the documentary react to audience questions at Herrick Auditorium.

We refuse to stay silent

Justin Gitto
Castleton Spartan

On Friday, May 3, students of VTSU Castleton held a sit-in protest calling for a ceasefire in Gaza.

The protest, organized by fellow Castleton student Eva Zimmerman, saw dozens of students posted up outside the Fine Arts Center on campus, crafting signs and posters in support of the ceasefire.

“I think it’s really important for our campus – crucial even – because I haven’t heard a lot of conversation about what’s happening in Gaza,” Zimmerman said. “We need to have a space for students to talk about the issue and to be together with whatever feelings they have.”

Other students discussed why they felt it was important to attend the peaceful sit-in.

“We’re here to raise awareness for the ethnic cleansing – I would call it ethnic cleansing – that’s going on and it’s been going on for half a year now, which is crazy,” said Castleton’s NAACP Chapter Secretary Risthiksa Gurung. “We’re just sitting in solidarity for them. We’re trying to make a change.”

And thus, students got to work on signs and face paint, all packed to the brim Palestine’s red, green, black and white, and filled with peace signs, hearts, and demands for Palestine’s freedom. With every car that passed the Fine Arts Center, those signs were held high and proud.

Prior to the sit-in, VTSU Interim President David Bergh said he “applauds our students for caring enough to take an active role in shaping our collective future.”

He went on to say VTSU is “committed to maintaining an open, welcoming, and safe environment that supports freedom of speech and inquiry, allowing for differing views and respectful dialogue,” and that he “encourages



JUSTIN GITTO

VTSU students and faculty sit outside Woodruff Hall protesting against the war in Palestine.

everyone in our VTSU community to be open to others’ views and opinions in order to understand and better inform their own.”

Many students said they haven’t been educated enough on the matter. Gurung said the goal of the sit-in “is to let people know about what’s going on in Palestine.”

“As soon as I turned 18, I was like ‘oh my god I can legally vote now. I don’t know what to do.’ Everything felt overwhelming, and I feel like this is my first step to becoming informed,” said Keleigh Boise.

“I feel like there are a lot of people out there who say this and that and it can sway what people

think or know about the topic,” said Abed Alawi. “That’s why I appreciate sit-ins like this. It’s a more calm and easy-to-approach way for people to learn and understand what’s going on.”

For Alawi, who comes from a Palestinian family, attending the protest was very personal.

“For my mom, who cares a lot

about this, it meant a lot to her knowing that I was going to this, so I wanted to make her happy and let her know that I was trying my best to contribute,” he said. “When I saw about this, I figured it was a good opportunity for me to peacefully protest what’s going on because it’s really unfortunate what’s happening to families on the other

side of the world.”

A common thought among students is that “the campus has been very quiet,” on the issue and “the silence is too loud,” said student Lily Downey.

Student Tiaria Robinson agreed.

“I wanted to show my support because I’ve seen on other campuses around the world, they’ve been protesting and it’s been really silent here, so I wanted to be a part of something,” Robinson said.

Despite the reported silence around campus, philosophy Professor Brendan Lalor said that “it’s highly relevant” in his classes, which have had many discussions about the topic.

“We’ve been talking about the ethics of violence, and one of the most common planks of ethical discussion for centuries has been the just war theory,” Lalor said.

He added that just war theory considers “the justice in the decision to go to war,” as well as “the conduct of the war.”

“The theory provides checkboxes that need to be checked in order to plausibly justify the use of violence, and we’re not seeing that those boxes can be checked,” he said.

Another student, Samie Hayward, claims to have “been wanting to go to something like this for a while,” because “seeing day after day the families being buried and killed in Palestine is heartbreaking.”

Zimmerman said she’s happy to hear the discussions taking place.

“Even just having space today to sit together and acknowledge what’s happening to Palestinians right now is really important,” Zimmerman said about her goal in organizing the sit-in. “I’m happy if this is the extent of what it is.”

Chancellor Beth Mauch sits down with The Spartan for a Q&A



VTSU chancellor Elizabeth Mauch

Pearl Bellomo
Castleton Spartan

Elizabeth “Beth” Mauch has been chancellor of the Vermont State Colleges System since Jan. 1. She sat down with The Spartan for an interview during her recent visit to the Castleton campus.

Q. Tell me a little bit about yourself and life before you came here?

A. My name is Elizabeth Mauch and I’m the new chancellor for the Vermont State Colleges System. I started in January, but I’ve been in higher ed. for a quarter of a century. I was originally a math professor at a public institution in Penn-

sylvania...Most recently, I was at a small private college in Kansas. When I heard about this job, I just leapt at it. I was so excited because of the fact this is a system where a student can enter at any point in their life...I think that’s so important because we are ensuring that all Vermonters can participate in the higher ed experience.

Q. What do you think is the biggest difference between where you’ve worked and the VSCS?

A. I’ve always worked in areas where there was a high percentage of Pell-eligible students and first-gen students, and certainly our students here meet that. So, I would

say there are more similarities than differences...Our students [at my last job] really did struggle to pay, and I see this system is really trying to ensure that everyone can participate in higher education. That’s been exciting for me.

Q. What’s been the biggest surprise in working here?

A. I’ve been happily surprised by just how excited everyone is to work on the future of this system, and just how dedicated everyone is. The level of care for our students and for this system, in ensuring that we’re doing what’s right has been really heartwarming to me.

Q. What has been the biggest challenge in where you’ve come into the transformation process?

A. Transformation here in Vermont has been occurring certainly for the last four years, but for some of the institutions, even longer than that, when we think of Northern Vermont University. Some of the challenges are just this constant notion of change and just a question of where and when the next change is, has certainly been a challenge. We’re trying to make change with more collaboration and communication for everyone.

See ‘Elizabeth’ on page 6

The documentary project changed me and made me grateful

For my last piece for the Spartan, I will do something a bit different.

Typically, by now, I would have forced some pun or joke about the topic at hand. But this time, I will be honest and write about something that has defined my collegiate experience here at VTSU — “Castleton- Error 404 Books not Found.”

This will be difficult for me, mainly because I am terrible at positively reflecting on a memory. I tend to overanalyze, exposing myself to every wart and bump I find. But not this time; no, I will be earnest, caring, and possibly heartfelt.

Consider this a warning. I remember the first class in Sam Davis-Boyd’s Documentary Filmmaking course. Everyone looked deflated. If I were to make an analogy here, I’d say something along the lines of: We looked like a popped pool floatation device. You know, the one that looks like a horse and has cup holders but no air.

We were limp, lifeless, and devoid of hope.

That is until Sam brought up doing something about it. About using our voice and platform to speak up against this change.

I don’t know what I was expecting. Maybe the stereotypical “meh” response that seems to be the attitude du jour for young adults. But the energy was different. It was positive, hopeful and energetic. It reminded me of the desert after a rain. Ideas were blooming everywhere.

Then we started to work our asses off.

I am not going to subject you to the process, but it was hard. I am not sure about anyone else, but

there were plenty of nights I’d be in my bed staring at my ceiling, wondering what to do next.

In the dead silence of the early morning, I would be there thinking about the project and how to improve it. I was a man consumed. I hoped to make something bigger than us. Fortunately, the people working on this project were as dedicated. We worked out the plan and executed it.

We did it, we made a documentary.

I would like to talk about what happened at the screening and how incredible it was, but in full transparency, it was a blur. But I remember being so proud to have worked with Maddie, Jacob, Gonzo, and Lily.

I was taken aback by hearing how passionate they sounded as they answered questions in front of a fire marshal’s nightmare. As a side note, I cannot express how incredibly astonished I was with the scores of people who turned out to watch our film; thank you for that.

For the team, I want to say thank you for the hard work you put in. Without all of the effort you put into this project, we wouldn’t be having this conversation, and I would be stuck writing about how my hair is falling out due to finals.

You all should be incredibly proud of what you accomplished here. Relish in this moment. Then, take that energy you put into this project and use it as a starting point for your next one.

Finally, Sam, thank you for everything that you have done. This wouldn’t be possible without you.

- Will Smith



JOE VYVIAL

From Steps student to Steps mentor, thriving at Castleton

When I first started on the VTSU Castleton campus, I was a non-matriculated (which means non-degree seeking) college Steps student who was wary of the program due to wanting to hop right into getting my bachelor’s degree.

But over that year, I came to fall in love with the campus and the folks on campus and during the spring of 2022, I made the big leap of applying to become a matriculated student for the fall of 2022.

I was lucky that I was smart and knew who to ask for recommendations, and sure enough on March 18, 2022 I got an email giving me the news that I was a part of the incoming class of 2022.

Fall 2022 came quickly and

I was thrown into the deep end of sorts and I failed my first go around seeking my natural science credit. I was sad, but I had friends who I made during the class cheer me up and I pushed on even with my GPA dropping.

Luckily, during the spring of 2023, I got my GPA up to 2.5 so I could be the vice president of Spectrum Pride and be an SOS staff member the next fall.

Throughout the 2022-2023 year, I earned my certificate of higher education from the STEPS program, I joined CAB, I made friends, and I got the 343 Award during the spring 2023 SGA awards.

As for this year, a lot of things have changed. My two friends who

made my friend group stay together transferred during the summer to another college, I switched my major to communications (Video and Film production) with a minor in theater arts instead of having a major in graphic design and a minor in communications.

Also, the president of Spectrum Pride stepped down during the fall semester so I had to step up as president. I also became the chair of traditions for CAB, I had a roommate instead of a medical single (I switched back to a med single this spring), I even ran for a position in SGA elections this spring.

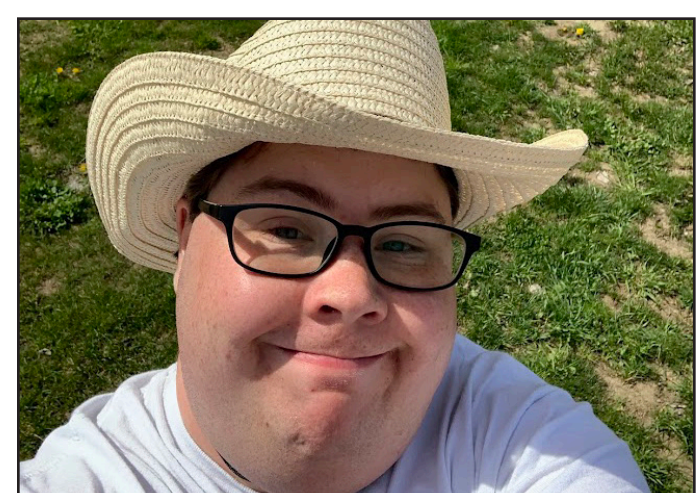
For next year, my experience here will come full circle since I will become a STEPS mentor next

fall. I’m hoping to return as the chair of traditions and be an SOS member again, since I had fun doing those roles this year.

Overall, I am grateful for having these experiences and each positive and negative experience I’ve had here has helped me grow into the person I am today. So here’s to the next two years being on this campus and to everyone who has helped me along the way.

To my fellow peers, professors, staff, and everyone in between: Thank you.

- Adam Shard



Adam Shard

Lessons from an unlikely stint

During my sophomore year, I befriended a German named Annika.

Annika was a Nordic skier and became the national champion in 2022 before hopping on a flight back to Europe.

Before she left, I learned a thing or two.

She was organized, straightforward, smart, heaps of fun, and had a knack for writing.

It didn’t take much convincing for her to drag me to the media room on the ground floor of Leavenworth on a Monday at midday. It was towards the end of the semester, and eyes fell on us as we stumbled our way through brief introductions.

Annika left soon after, committed to a Sports, Business, and Law program in Germany where she would go on to travel the world; reporting on various sporting competitions from New York to China.

I couldn’t very well forget her legacy and passion for news reporting.

So, I stayed on, attending weekly meetings without my German friend to accompany me.

As it turns out, news reporting is delightfully fun and more importantly, it taught me lessons found within the frameworks of a classroom.

As an international student, having a commitment to the newspaper meant a written record of my time exploring this corner of the world. While my memory forgets the multitude of events, holidays, activities, and mundane days at Castleton, the cutouts of each article serve as placeholders that I can hold onto indefinitely.

It took a while before blocks of paragraphs morphed into



Annika Saunus, left, got Camille Jackson, second from right, to join the Spartan newspaper. The duo were joined friends Petra Veljkovic, and Tatiana Tobolka in Puerto Rico during Spring Break, 2022.

journalism-style sentences and longer still before I could confidently edit articles as copy editor.

I even, fleetingly, considered life as a journalist; swayed by the impact reporters have on the perspective of readers. Being a journalist meant selecting what information to share, what adjectives to choose, how relevant snippets of information were, which verbs best described actions, and what smattering of words would likely lasso skimming eyes to a story.

It is power; the power of determination and the power to dictate the direction of a story.

Importantly, being a member of the Spartan team exposed me

to a dimension of Castleton I was previously unaware of.

As a recruit for the Castleton Alpine Ski Team, my scope of interest oscillated primarily around sports, unattuned to the broader changes and happenings of the campus-at-large.

It has been a pleasure to unpack and understand this campus and its interactions with the Castleton community.

Reporting on art, political events, interviewing presidents, and sharing my own experiences with readers certainly made me feel connected to the ongoings of the school.

As I prepare to throw myself into a new unknown post-graduation, I will hold onto the

memory of locking nervous eyes with Annika at our first Spartan meeting, unaware of what the Spartan would teach me and more saliently, the power of reporting.

“The basis of our governments being the opinion of the people, the very first object should be to keep that right; and were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter. But I should mean that every man should receive those papers and be capable of reading them.” Thomas Jefferson.

- Camille Jackson

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The University, its administration, faculty, student body and staff are not responsible for the content of the newspaper.

SGA President resigns unexpectedly

By Amanda Johnson
Castleton Spartan

The recent resignation of Perry W. Ragouzis as President of the Student Government Association left many wondering what the future holds for VTSU-Castleton, as well as who would lead the end of the semester until the next term cycle.

Perry, by all accounts, served the position of President for two years and was well respected by all who knew him. He served with modesty and pride for having been able to serve this important position in such an efficient manner.

According to him, it was with great thought and consideration that Perry Ragouzis chose to step down from his position and pass the torch. In his letter of resignation, Perry gave praise to those who served with and around him, as well as acknowledging his appreciation for the University and the unification changes that have taken place in recent years.

"I am so grateful and proud of all of the incredible work that this board has accomplished," said Ragouzis, as stated in his letter of resignation submitted Monday, April 22. "I am surrounded by those far more capable, caring, and understanding than myself... So it is with great humility... that I make this my final SGA meeting."

Perry laid out his objectives and accomplishments as he expressed his passion for the role and his hopes for the future of the association.

"I was elected with two clear objectives: 1) To establish a more strong, diverse, and capable student governance structure than we had prior to the merger and 2) to leave this campus with no fewer than three advisors... I have accomplished these objectives..." he said.

He then went on to state that he aimed to leave no burden to anyone who fills these shoes following Perry's leave. "I have successfully parsed out the entirety of all my remaining work... there isn't much left... so that there is no one person burdened with my litany of projects and ambitions."

Former Executive Vice President, now President, Adsel Sparrow attested to this sentiment by saying, "not much has changed. I have a few more responsibilities now and more to juggle during the day, but it is manageable."

Sparrow said she has "full support of the SGA board and advisors" and how this sudden role would be much more difficult if her team were not as "wonderful and dedicated as they are." Despite the sudden shoes to fill, Sparrow willingly took the role and is currently finishing end-of-year projects.

"It wasn't something I ever anticipated would occur. I respect Perry's decision and understand that he did what he believed was best," added Sparrow.

She went on to describe what an impact Perry made in his time as President, saying, "Perry did so much for SGA and the student body as President in the past two years, and I am incredibly grateful for the time I worked alongside him. He is a truly remarkable leader."

As for Perry, when asked to describe his experience at Vermont State University in this role, Perry gave an encouraging, optimistic response.

"Through the good, the bad, and the ugly, I have seen just how remarkable this campus's community is and how resilient this student body is—truly the embodiment of the 'Spartan'."

And as for his experience as President of the SGA, Ragouzis said that he has met people who will be in his life "ideally forever" and that these people have made "[his] college experience and life so meaningful."

Perry's only expressed reason for his resignation is his aforementioned satisfaction with the accomplishments made under his direction. But the former SGA President did comment on his

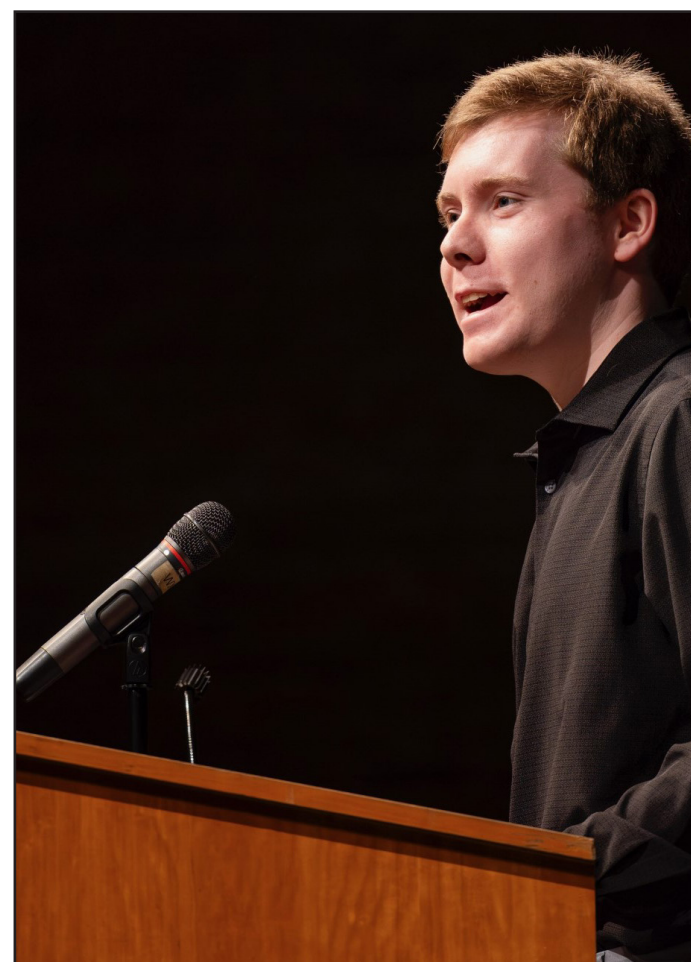
plans for the future, which did give some insight into the ambitions and goals that may have been hindered by his role as President to some degree.

"I will be graduating this coming year, so I am taking time to focus on my next projects and goals, with the knowledge that the Castleton SGA and campus is going to be in the safe and capable hands of a new generation of student leaders", said Ragouzis. He added that he may return to Colorado to possibly pursue a political career.

When made aware about an article regarding his resignation, Perry joked that "Unfortunately, as a student, there is no retirement package available to me, as much as I'd love one!"

Perry ended his resignation letter with some words of wisdom and optimism: "I want to challenge you all to make sure that you remember why you are all doing this work... your own personal thoughts and connections you cherish... hold true to these. If you ever lose them, I guarantee you will lose any passion for the work we do", he said. "The future of this institution is bright, but I hope to serve as a reminder that when the time comes, it's okay to step back and let others take control."

"It really has been one heck of a ride," said Ragouzis.



PERRY RAGOUZIS
Past SGA President Perry Ragouzis gives a speech.

AAGA students present in New Orleans

By Gabby Blanchard
Castleton Spartan

VTSU Castleton's Student Government Association provides amazing support to students including an extremely generous donation this year that allowed eight Anthropology, Archaeology, and Geography program students to take on New Orleans at the 89th Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology conference.

Innovation Lab Director Matt Moriarty and his professor wife Ellen Moriarty supported the students the whole way through the trip, even though they and the students traveled separately.

"They are all adults, and we have a lot of trust in them," Matt Moriarty said in an interview reflecting on the trip.

While in New Orleans, students participated in an organized poster session, presenting multiple projects they had recently been working on, including the Granger House Museum and 3D work on historic billy clubs used by local marble company strikers in 1935-36.

Moriarty explained the process of building the local Castleton museum, known as the Granger House. He said students work hard year-round to contribute to the final product of this soon-to-be digital museum.

He said the house on campus will include hidden history-focused exhibits that the students will virtually create. Visitors will be able to see the perspective of a room through its historical timeline using a QR code feature created by those who help during off-campus hours.

"The New Orleans confer-



MATT MORIARTY

Anthropology, Archaeology, and Geography students present research projects at the 89th Meeting of the Society for American Archaeology conference in New Orleans.

ence was an excellent way for the students to present the overall plan and progress of the Granger House," Moriarty said.

"I can't believe your students are undergraduates; this is amazing," Moriarty said, sharing from a comment made by a member at the conference.

"That made me so proud of our students," he said.

Moriarty also shared that although 3D printing is a big part of the program, other things, like virtual reality, are involved too.

"As long as you get your foot in 3D and VR, you are only going up. No matter what skills within these categories you are getting, it will

always be helpful, and any major can be a part of this program. We want the variety," Moriarty said.

Owen Edgcomb, a junior at VTSU Castleton and second-year participant in the program, shared his favorite parts and memories of the conference.

"Not only was it a lot of fun, but there were so many cool experiences. I loved being able to go to a professional academic place with peers and present research in a professional setting. It was exciting and inspiring to see the wider community of archaeologists," Edgcomb said.

Edgcomb also said New Orleans is a very cool city, and hav-

ing the chance to explore it, "what an opportunity!"

While sharing his favorite foods, events, and experiences from the trip, Edgcomb smiled throughout the whole conversation, and you could see the difference this trip made for him.

He mentioned the Ruby Slipper Cafe, where he had an amazing new variety of homemade eggs benedict: one with pork and hollandaise sauce, another with shrimp and a tomato-based sauce, and lastly, chicken with gravy.

He also mentioned The Palace Cafe.

The bananas foster, found at the Palace Cafe, is a desert that gets lit



MATT MORIARTY

Students enjoy an evening in New Orleans.

on fire and also seemed to be the biggest hit for the group.

"The next day, my family and I went back to get the desert again, and every student was lined up," Moriarty said reminiscing.

Another favorite food trip was followed with a bittersweet memory.

"Sam and I went to this hole-in-the-wall shop that sold killer-po-boy sandwiches that were loaded with perfection," Edgcomb said.

While on the way out of the city, he said they needed to return to get more for the trip home.

"We didn't know if we would get caught going through TSA, so Sam called his dad (who works

in an airport), and he told him to get a gallon zip lock bag and stuff the sandwiches in that. Next thing you know, both bags are getting pulled to the side, and at this point, we are certain it's the po-boys.

However, it turns out that we both had forgotten to take out one of our electronics. When we finally got off the plane and on the drive home, we stopped at a gas station. I started to feel a little hungry, so I pulled out my Po-Boy only to find that they do not travel well, and it sucked cold," Edgcomb said with a smile.

Akane spreads thank you messages

By Akane Minamino
Castleton Spartan

I appreciate all the people, including friends, faculty, and staff, who kindly helped me here in Castleton. Thanks to them, I had a great time here.

Dear my friends: thank you for always saying hi to me and interacting with me. I was so happy when you showed an interest in my home country. I appreciate it.

Also, thank you for listening to me and encouraging me when I had worries. All of the time that I spent with you was very fun, important and precious to me.

Thank you so much for being my friends and spending time with me.

Dear faculty: thank you for supporting my academic life here. Your support motivated me to study hard. I am sure you spent a lot of time and effort on offering support to me. I cannot thank you enough.

Also, I would like to say this to not only you, but also all, but thank you so much for being patient to me although my English skills are poor. In addition, thank you for being willing to explain things until I completely understand although I asked you the same question many times. Thanks to

your support, I enjoyed studying here a lot.

Dear staff: thank you for letting me talk about my worries to you and giving advice to me. Talking with you was always helpful for me to continue living and studying here. Thank you so much.

Dear members of Castleton Friends, thank you for spending a lot of time with me. You took me to many places in Vermont, which was so fun. I believe that you spent great deal of time on planning what to do with me and other international students so that we can have fun in Vermont. I sincerely appreciate it. I will tell people in Japan how beautiful Vermont is.

This is how a lot of people helped me since I came here, which taught me the importance of being kind to others and made me to decide to be kind to others even more. I would like to be in a career related to giving aid to people in one way or another in the future.

I had experiences that I could not have done if I had not come here. Also, I met people that I could not have never met if you had not come here. I learned a lot through this study abroad. I am glad I decided to come here. I would also like to say thank you to my family who let me come here.

I am a little excited about going home in about two weeks be-

cause I can see my so adorable pet. However, I am sad about leaving Castleton because I like living here. I enjoyed nature, interacting with people, and studying here. I will miss Castleton, so I will make an effort to visit Castleton again.

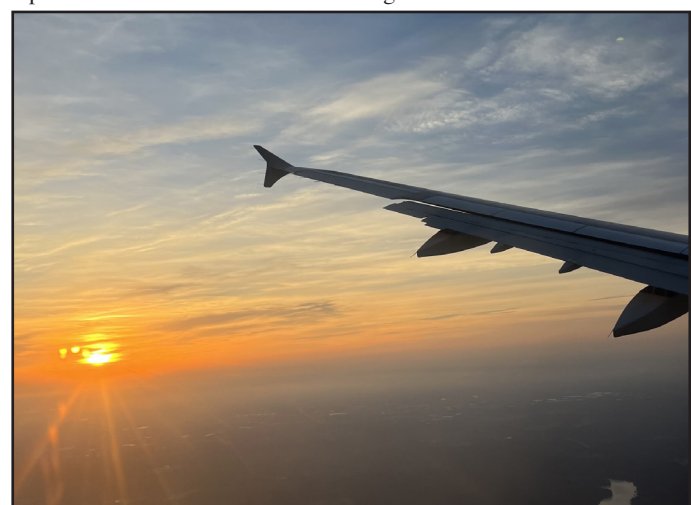
Finally, again, thank you all for meeting me here. I will work

harder so that I can contribute to the world while remembering what I learned and experienced here and return the favor to Castleton. Thank you.



AKANE MINAMINO

The message that welcomed Akane to Castleton.



AKANE MINAMINO

Photo taken mid-flight on Akane's way to America.



AKANE MINAMINO

Akane Minamino enjoys her time on exchange.

Maddie on the street

By Maddie Lindgren
Castleton Spartan



Why are you excited for graduation?



**Angelise Moss
Senior**

"I was a 2020 high school graduate, so I'm just excited to be getting an actual graduation."



**Kaelyn Lawson
Senior**

"I'm most excited to start my nursing career at Albany Medical Center and get to apply all the knowledge I've gained."



**Antonio Mannino
Senior**

"I was taking the certification test to be an AT. I get the results next week, hoping I pass!"



**Lindsey Mariea
Senior**

"Probably venturing out on my own for the first time and learning how to live in the real world while also practicing as a nurse in the ER."



**Jake Halverson
Senior**

"I'm excited to be done with school. All the exams, homework, the stress. I'm just done with it all!"

Empowering multilingual minds with Mary Dinh

By Camille Jackson
Castleton Spartan

Housed on the second floor of the picturesque Coffee Cottage, the assistant director of Multilingual Students Services alternates between faculty and staff as she investigates the educational experience of the multilingual mind.

Mary Dinh, who has a Ph.D., joined the Vermont State University – Castleton community in 2023 as the merger came into effect. A positive outcome of the newly instated VTSU was the scope of vision Dinh was offered as five distinct campuses melded into one institution.

The position in Multilingual Student Services encompasses an array of duties tied to both the experience of multilingual students and the accompanying faculty with whom multilingual students interact.

"The term international student can be referred to a group of students coming here with an F1 VISA, so more like an immigration status than the language part of cultural part of it. So, in research right now, we use 'multilingual, multicultural students' to refer to a bigger context," Dinh said.

This definition thus includes refugees, immigrants, international, exchange, and heritage students.

Tightly linked to her position is recognizing and deconstructing the stigmas associated with multilingualism.

"Because I argue that students of course if you have any disability or learning disorder, you have the documents, then of course you can take the test at Academic Support.

But bilingualism is not disability," Dinh explained.

The assumption that bilingualism equates to dual monolingualism is challenged within Dinh's area of research, as the bilingual mind is itself a unique product. She elaborated that the multilingual student "can work in more than one context. They can communicate with more than one type of people."

This power of multilingual students to add dimension to monolingual concepts elevates the experience of faculty and students alike. Within the limitations of the English language, definitions are restricted to the experiences, ideas, and expressions of English speakers, however, she asks, "what if, we allow the students to voice out what they really think about that, with whatever they have that comes to their mind" to broaden the scope of concepts and theories?

Dinh's doctoral dissertation reinforces this notion. Titled "Curriculum and Instruction, Concentration in Bilingualism and Bilingual Education – How to Change the Mindset from Deficit to Multi-Component," it aims to "document how the multilingual truly learns."

Central to Dinh's dissertation was the construction of an intervention that allows bilingual students to go beyond the "correct" understanding of concepts.

"They can have a deeper understanding of the context because they can draw from their experience from their home country," she said.

Earning the President's Distinguished Dissertation Award, Dinh said she aims to expand her re-

search into the future to ascertain how multilingualism can inform intercultural communication at "a higher scope, like policymaking and teacher education." This was displayed in her class's Intercultural Artifacts Gallery that displayed the multiculturalism of the campus.

Within the frameworks of VTSU, Dinh already implements facets of this concept, as her position includes interactions with faculty who work with multilingual students. Dismantling notions that "the teacher takes for granted that it's your (student) job to understand what I (professor) say," Dinh's office "prepares the mindset of the faculty."

Challenging social stigmas related to the spurious relationship between language proficiency and intelligence, Dinh also notes, "it doesn't mean that conceptually speaking that their intelligence is not equivalent to monolingual students," when in fact, "they show more divergent ways of thinking."

As an international student herself, Dinh seeks to assure multilingual students both that multilingualism can be an asset, not a hindrance, and that success is more than possible.

"I don't want those contextual factors to be a determining factor to their success and I want to show them that yes, with that background, you can still become successful," she said.

To learn more about Dinh's research, position, or services, feel free to reach out via email: mary.dinh@vermontstate.edu



Mary Dinh with students in front of the intercultural Artifacts gallery.

Letters from London

Bidding farewell to my artsy inspirational new friends



VTSU Castleton student Jess Emery, center, and her friends Bea, Dylan, Mel, Alysha, and Marcus outside a pub in London.

By Jess Emery
Castleton Spartan

The rumors are true. Studying abroad will alter your life completely and there will be no going back.

At least that's what I'm noticing for me anyway.

This place and these people are unlike anyone or anything I have ever seen before, and I wish to relay that to you in a way that is coherent.

So let me try. Savannah was my first friend I made here in London. We DM'd on Instagram and she sent me different links of the itineraries for all the trips she had planned.

She asked me if I had any trips planned and I candidly told her that I was waiting to make friends so I wouldn't be alone in the planning process.

We quickly formed an alliance. Now I've always had an inkling for this one, but being here has really set it in stone.

I need creative people like how most need water.

I don't know if it's London specific or just a city thing, but I need to be around creative people so bad.

There are so many characters with so many interesting stories and backgrounds I feel like I would never encounter in Vermont and especially not the small town of Castleton.

Don't get me wrong, I have encountered my fair share of gems at school, but being here has introduced me to a whole new world of people.

Most of the friends I've made are writers and filmmakers, which has been so cool to be further immersed into that world. My

writing has exponentially grown since being surrounded by these people.

Meg and India both write fantasy, which I find beyond impressive. Their world-building skills are unlike anything I could dream of writing.

I love when they ask for my opinion on their writing because it feels so out of my element to be critiquing their work. It's like a fun challenge.

India also pays for Grammarly Premium, and we all use her account so it's a friendship of reciprocity.

She is colorful and brave and opinionated, and I admire her greatly.

Now Meg and India are relentless Swifties, but we forgave them for that.

When Taylor Swift's most recent album came out Meg, India,

and our other friend, Melanie, were all in Paris so they woke up at 5 a.m. to have a listen.

Their dedication is admirable. Meg and I are both die hard hand-written note takers, which I think is the root of our connection.

Marcus and Alysha are both filmmakers and obsessed with themselves and we love them for it.

They both exude this incredible confidence, and it never comes off as arrogant.

Marcus is the sweetest. He's always checking in with all of us and is making sure everyone is having a good time.

He's the kind of guy that when he went to Brighton, he brought us each back a small shell from the beach, as a present.

Alysha also has such a kind heart, not only is she funny and creative but she's always the first to offer up a shoulder to cry on, or a top to borrow, or to make dinner for everyone before we go out, so we all have plenty of carbs in our system before we brave the night.

Bea has an eyebrow piercing, which is cool as fuck, and she's also from Maine, so we've already made plans to hang out this summer.

In these last few weeks, I find myself going to Bea to talk about our melancholic states over parting ways at the end of this term.

Melanie has been one of my greatest friends here, except she doesn't hug, which was kind of off putting because all her closest friends are addressed as "Love," and she ends every call with "Okay bye! I love you."

Melanie got a tattoo of the cat she met on campus that I'm not sure even likes her.

Might I add that I'm not a very

timely person (like genuinely at all, it's one of my greatest flaws) but I can always count on Mel to be just as late as me.

Plus, the girl is down for anything.

In fact, later this month we are going to spend a weekend with the English Dave Blow from Bath and his wife. We will be camping and attending a 90s British Pop show.

I like to think we're two peas in a pod.

Dylan and I had a bit of a rocky start to our friendship.

In truth, I thought he was kind of pretentious and after about four months of being skeptical I realized he's actually kind of a cool dude.

But I stand by my younger self by questioning what, as a man, could he possibly have to say about Sylvia Plath?

But, I was wrong because he is kind and funny and has a fabulous coat collection.

He introduced me to the world of Techno, which I always liked but not many of my friends back home listen to.

And he's always down for a cheeky bev (or three).

I've realized that it's not this place, but maybe it's just the people.

I have had such a wonderful experience with these people and that have shaped my time here to be the best of my life.

I cannot wait to watch them grow and evolve.

I am forever blessed to be able to say that I knew them when they were just starting out as writers, artists, poets, and filmmakers.

Genesis rocks Castleton community

By Carly Centeno
Castleton Spartan

It's a great weekend for Castleton students when Genesis comes to town.

It is practically our version of UVM's Springfest concert, but with smaller artists from all throughout Vermont.

Genesis is a multi-media conglomerate based out of Southern Vermont that creates platforms for aspiring Vermont artists to showcase their talent. The most recent show happened on Mechanic Street on April 27.

It's not the first time Genesis has come to Castleton for a show, so hopes were high for fans of the event and newcomers, though it was the first time they charged a cover for the show.

The cover created a major debate on the app YIKYAK, which is popular on our campus. Many being upset at having to pay \$5 dollars to

go to the show, but it didn't affect the turnout as much as the artists performing expected.

"We had to charge five dollars this time just so we could pay out artists and cover for travel. Also it's good insurance to have considering the stages we build aren't on the land we own," said Tyler Serrani, one of the performers.

The lineup included many different artists who are up and coming or already pretty well-known. Rivan, Obi the Voice God, PSTREETBANDITS, and Tyler Serrani were the major acts that fans raved about. Many of these artists have performed at a show in Castleton, except for Rivan, who is a popular rapper in Burlington Vermont and making his way through the East Coast.

"The crowd was all in front of the stage which was really nice. My favorite artist was Rivan, I really enjoyed his stage presence and the music he brought to Genesis," Cas-

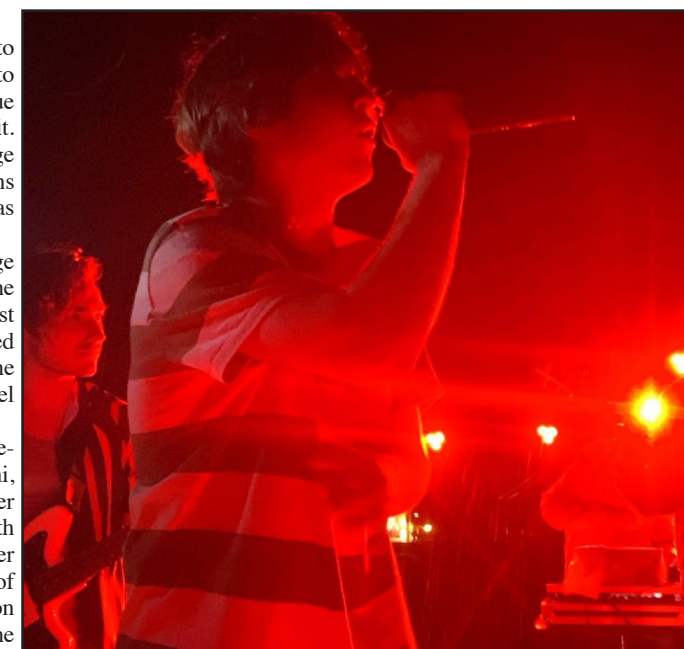
tleton student Evie Marshall said.

Even though the show had to be cut short and many acts had to play shorter sets than expected due to weather, every artist brought it. Each had their own unique stage presence and style, which kept fans on their toes wondering what was coming next.

"There was very good stage presence and performance; the crowd was into it. My favorite artist was Obi the Voice God. I enjoyed how he got on the ground with the crowd and made us dance," Chantel Swasey said.

The star of the show was Castleton student and artist Tyler Serrani, who put the whole show together and planned every detail out with fellow team members. The other people who help organize all of their events are fellow Castleton graduates along with friends of the artists.

See 'Genesis' on page 6.



Tyler Serrani on stage performing one of his original songs at Genesis.

CARLY CENTENO

‘Contemplation’ a metaphor for crossroad at graduation

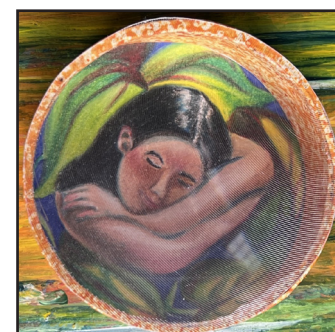
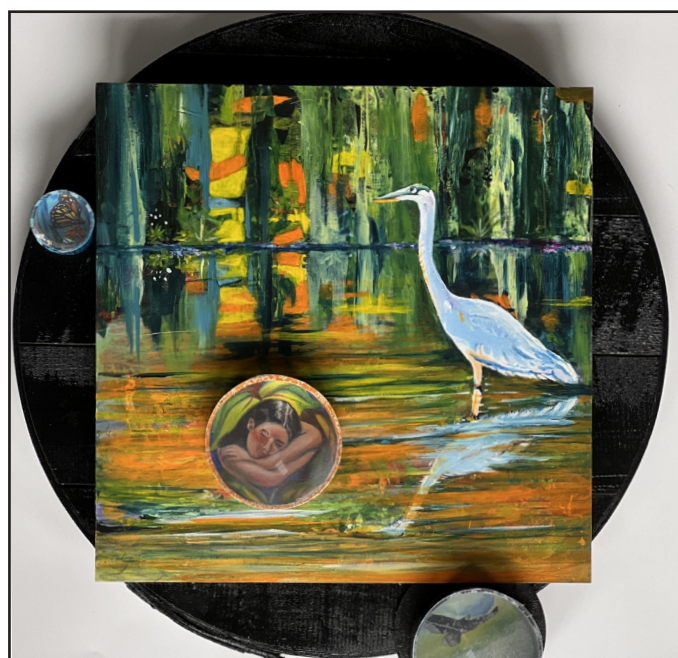
By Pamela O'Connor
Spartan Contributor

I am closing in on a lifelong dream by completing my Bachelor's Degree in Studio Arts. Having a Masters degree in Education and a long career behind me, I refer to this as my personal renaissance. One of my mixed-media pieces, "Contemplation," seems a fitting metaphor as I stand at this crossroad. The work transpired from two prompts, "reflection and refraction," given to us by Professor Schemm in our Open Studio course last fall.

I have observed this scene countless times on our small pond. Surrounded by shimmering color and light, the heron is focused on the goal of retrieving nourishment, much like my focus to create art is to nourish my heart and soul. Looking up at the creature is its own reflection, a stamp of history in the present. I am reflecting on my art journey which has entailed

years of creative exploration. The recent collaboration with fellow students and professors presented opportunities to think critically, historically, and problem solve. Creating art, especially with others, is amazing this way.

Refraction can either bring things into focus or distort their shape and meaning. The upper small circle, covered by a thin magnifying glass, shows a butterfly freed from its cocoon. Could this be the emergence from self perception and doubt, a battle I believe we all endure? This is followed by the center circle holding a resting self-portrait displaying solace and peace. The third circle shows a mighty flying raptor. Bringing closure to my degree, I feel a sense of flight to take my art and allow it to nest where it will thanks to my experiences through Castleton's amazing art department.



CURTESY OF PALEMA O'CONNOR

Graduating Studio Arts major Palema O'Connor details the inspiration behind "Contemplation." Materials used include acrylic on gessobord and wood, color pencil, magnifying sheet, lotka paper, and a 16" Round.

'Art Soup' fuses the arts departments



By Maddie Lindgren
Castleton Spartan

With an assortment of creativity and collaboration, Castleton's "Art Soup" performance exceeded the bounds of traditional performance, captivating the audience for the second year. The display was a celebration of art in all its forms, made possible by the combined efforts of VTSU Castleton teachers, staff, students and community members.

"Art Soup" overtook the audience in a flurry of live music, dance, and theatrical energy from the moment the curtains rose. Every performance showcased the many talents within the Castleton community and was a tribute to the commitment and devotion of its creators.

"The idea is to bring together the different artistic disciplines within the Fine Arts Center because you have the theatre department, which includes the dance department, then you have the music department, then the visual arts department. We're all just in our separate little sections of the building, so we wanted to create a collaborative performance where those different artistic disciplines can work together," choreographer Zoe Murr-Hillard said.

Student Vidur Katyal was apart of the show as a choreographer and a dancer. "It was one of those It brings our departments together. Even for my piece of Ken, the instrumentalists, dancers, singers, and actors came together with lighting and sound design to make that piece," Katyal said.

Hillard said the name "Art Soup" started as kind of a joke from Stephen Gross, the head of the department, but in the end, everyone loved the fun name, and it stuck around.

"Art Soup" started its show with the number "Carnival of the Animals." This piece included many assortments of different kinds of animals. There were lions, aquarium animals, cuckoos, fossils and swans. The piece was choreographed by Hillard, along with one of her favorites out of the show, "Story of Life."

In Hillard's intermediate dance workshop class, her students turned their personal stories, into movement.

"It was a collaborative dance. We worked on it all semester. We

started the first week in January, trying to think of ideas. It was a really fun process to see unfold. A lot of it grew out of personal stories to create movement. That's why we ultimately titled it "Story of Life," Hillard said. "Some of these students have never danced before, and some are more experienced. This became a beautiful weaving of their stories that was so beautiful. I was so proud."

Another standout moment came with "Life is Like a Runway," a dynamic fusion of fashion and dance that brought the glamour of the catwalk to the stage. Choreographers Abigail Hunter and Sarah Serrano integrated elements of style and movement, captivating the audience with every step.

"Greased Lightning" brought an electrifying energy to the stage and soulful rhythms were brought with "Take Five."

Art Soup wasn't without its fair share of challenges as well, but that didn't stop the team from putting together the show. "There are always challenges about timing and everyone's availability especially when we do around 4-5 shows a semester. It was very hectic but a lot of fun," Katyal said.

"Art Soup" delivered a diverse array of performances. Each number, choreographed by Natalie Angel Curtis, Vidur Katyal, Alexandria Schermerhorn, and other talented individuals, showcased the depth of artistic talent and expression within the Castleton community.

For the last number of the performance, all of the bells and whistles were brought to the stage with a fun, light-hearted performance of "Am I Kenenough." Choreographed by Vidur Katyal, Zoë Marr-Hilliard and Alexandria Schermerhorn, they brought the Barbie movie to Casella's stage using songs from the movie.

As the final curtain fell, "Art Soup" left a tasteful mark on all who experienced its fun. It was a performance of collaboration, creativity, and community. Castleton's production of "Art Soup" proved that when individuals come together in pursuit of a shared vision, the result is nothing short of extraordinary.



MARTIN VAN BUREN III

"Art Soup" captivated audiences on April 26 and 27 with music, dance, acting, and visual art.

Book of the Fortnight

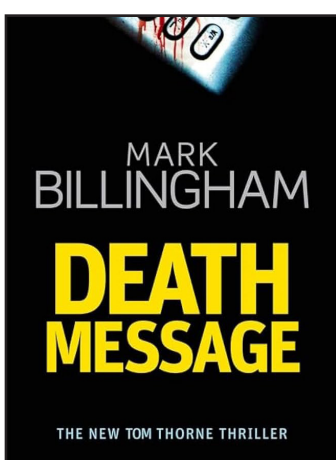
By Camille Jackson
Castleton Spartan

Martyn Jackson recommends "Death Message" by Mark Billingham

Martyn Jackson, ever the thriller fan, recommends Death Message, by Mark Billingham. The series follows British detective Tom Thorne, who in this edition, unpacks the case of "killing biker gang members and police officers," recounted Jackson.

The novel is truly thrill seeking, as Jackson explained, "each time Thorne gets a death message, recording the kills!" Jackson follows, expanding on the premise of the book that "finding out why will make him take huge gambles that may also cost him friendships and his badge."

This "truly absorbing case" is reinforced by Tom Thorne's character, who has a series to his name, as Jackson finalizes, "another great book by Billingham with superb protagonists."

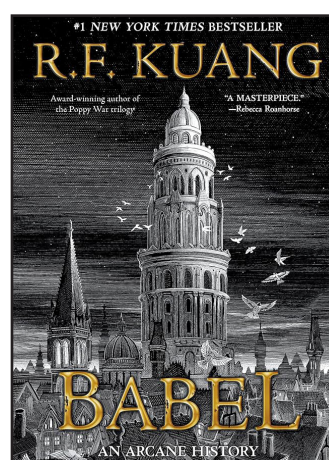


Camille Jackson recommends "Babel: Or the Necessity of Violence: An Arcane History of the Oxford Translator's Revolution" by R. F. Kuang.

As my first novel from the "Dark Academia" genre, I was intrigued by the story line, but also the intense and highly researched academic dimension of the book. As you read, you learn. In this case, the history of the British Empire has included a magic element that metaphorically disentangles complex chains of oppression and exploitation.

The premise of the book brings the severity of the British Empire to light, and the extremely well-rounded characters kept drawing me back. The book develops quickly and moves rapidly as the seeds of revolution are planted early, but the journey to violence is fascinating, emotional, page-turning, and impressive.

I highly recommend this book to those interested in the unique blend of adventure with scholarship and the power of knowledge within an Empire.



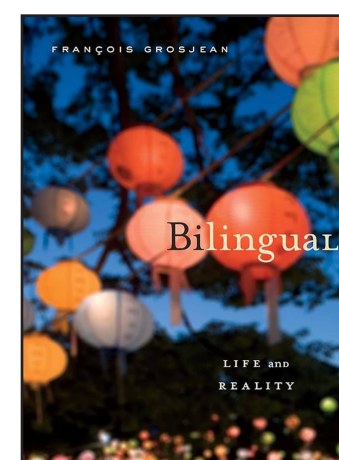
Dr. Mary Dinh recommends "Bilingual Life and Reality" by François Grosjean

Assistant Director of Multilingual Students Services, Mary Dinh, recommends "Bilingual Life and Reality" to understand the power of the bilingual mind. "Before, it's all about, okay you are not a native English speaker, you must move from learning your first language towards mastering and perfecting a second language. But he (Grosjean) says bilingual is not two monolinguals in one body."

Understanding that "the moment your brain takes in new information, you start to lose something," highlights that the bilingual mind has unique, multidimensional means of interpreting and accessing information.

Dinh emphasizes that "that is the beauty of being bilingual, is you can always see yourself as a life-long learner." A caveat within this expanse of learning is that "those are people who never think that they belong to a certain place, a certain cultural identity," highlighting the beauty and

transferability that multilinguists maintain. This book is must-read for those interested in bilingualism and the power of language, according to Dinh's reviews.



Elizabeth: Documentary:

Continued from page 1

Q. What's your primary goal or project at the moment?

A. My next goal is to really look at the objectives of this institution, which are affordability, accessibility, quality relevance, and financial stability, and adding funding for our students. I believe we share a great interest with the legislature in ensuring that every Vermonter can be educated. I look forward to following each one of our students, whether they come in and take one class or many, and then looking at how we can ensure a frictionless transfer from either CCV to VTSU. I'm working with my leadership team, the leadership team of the Vermont State University, and leadership team of the Community College of Vermont to really come up with some actionable items to ensure that we are not just surviving through this [transformation], but how we're going to thrive and become better in the next bunch of years.

Q. Where are we in the transformation process?

A. We're still moving. I would say we're more done than not done. The VTSU came officially into being on July 1, 2023, and this year we'll graduate our first class. We have almost a unified curriculum. But transformation is not just about VTSU, it was really about the whole system. We're working as close collaborators with the Community College of Vermont and Vermont State University to see how we can further the institution as a whole. Some of the funding requirements, we're well on our ways towards... We're on our way to transformation, but it's something that will occur forever, so we will have to continue to look at things like facilities and curriculum, community partnerships and ensure that we are educating students in the 21st century.

Q. What is your response to the financial critique of the chancellor's office?

A. One of things I will be doing is looking at all our offices to make sure that we're spending every dollar in the wisest fashion. Not for me specifically at VTSU and CCV, but certainly very specifically at the chancellor's level to see if the organization makes sense.

Q. Do you have any advice for graduating seniors?

A. I'm sitting in front of you right now because I said yes to an awful lot of things that at the time I would have never thought I could piece together. If our graduating seniors have opportunities for jobs or have their first job and are asked to do something out of their norm, I always tell everybody to do that. For the students here now, pick up an extra internship, do a minor, or get a certificate because you never know where life's going to take you. Just say yes to opportunities.



AVERY BOUCHARD

Professor Sam Davis-Boyd, who taught the Documentary Workshop class that created the library documentary, talks to audience members after the film.

Genesis:

Continued from page 4

"I've watched Tyler Serrani work so hard in order to put on this performance for the students of Castleton and the artists performing. His hard work completely paid off. The show was so fun and featured many artists that I didn't know but since, I've looked into," Gretel Seaman said.

It was not an easy show to put together, with last-minute venue changes and having to build a stage by hand in just two days. For a group of young adults putting on a show in a backyard, fans said it was really well done and very well put together.

"Genesis has been so much fun to be a part of. It's introduced me to my best friends, as well as broadened my musical horizons. We've been able to showcase so many smaller artists throughout Vermont who haven't been able to get their work out to a larger audience," Serrani said.

The night closed with an incredible performance from Serrani that had the crowd dancing in the rain, having the time of their lives. It was a night like no other in Castleton and many looked forward to it, especially Serrani's performance because his music is a lot more well-known among students.

"Tyler preformed great considering the rain and really knew how to bring the crowd together," Seaman said.

Genesis is hoping to return soon for more performances to give even more artists a chance to perform in front of a crowd and share their music. The hopes is to make it an official event every year for students.

"I'd love to have this become a Castleton event in the next coming year, similar to UVM Springfest. There's always been so much talent at Castleton and I'd love the artists to shine through more in the future," Serrani said.



CARLY CENTENO

Former Castleton student Will Buck performs at the latest Genesis concert.

Connecting animals and readers

By Gavin Bradley
Castleton Spartan

To say that it has been a privilege writing for the Spartan this year would be a severe understatement. I have greatly enjoyed this style of writing and educating you all on animals across the Green Mountain state and the world.

My last message to all of you amazing people out there is really important. I want to present a light challenge for anyone reading this, and that is to become more connected with the world of animals around you this summer.

Look around. . . enjoy the world you get to be a part of.

It is easy for our species to be so focused on our own endeavors that we forget about the environ-

ment we live in. However, I promise you, dear reader, that the world you live in is amazing.

The world you live in needs your positive impact. You can't run away from nature; it is part of you.

The very essence of nature is woven into your DNA, and the connection between you and the rest of the animals on earth is very strong.

Go outside and enjoy your world for what it is. Sit down for 30 minutes or more with your pet, do your own research, and gather information on your favorite animal or maybe even help another creature cross the road.

These are just a few examples of the main theme I'm talking about (by connecting yourself to the animal world around you), that

you can make the most out of your summer. I promise, if you connect yourself to animals, you will feel happier.

It is ingrained in you to experience this connection, and it is extremely healthy for you. I have written many articles this year about the countless benefits of a positive animal and human relationship.

In addition, there are many pieces of scientific evidence that back up the power of this positive relationship. No matter if it is wildlife or captive animals, the connection piece is still embedded in you.

A lot of nature is based on relationships, and our animals' health and our own health are certainly no exception.

I also want to thank everyone



Gavin Bradley

on the Spartan staff for helping me with everything. We really have an excellent team working on this newspaper, and I am beyond privileged to be a part of it. I love this newspaper. Above all, I love humans that want to make a

positive impact on this ball of rock in space.

You will make a positive difference. You will be part of a generation that will change environmental activism forever. You will be connected!

Castleton in photos



AVERY BOUCHARD, CURTESY OF MIKE REEVES, PEARL BELLOMO

Castleton was alive with fun events this past week with CAB's Spring Weekend, top left, NAACP's trip to NYC, bottom left, and the Historical Society's Renaissance Fair.

3B hosts 4th annual football tournament

By Jacob Gonzalez
Castleton Spartan

The 3B 7-on-7 football tournament is returning to Dave Wolk Stadium to help spread awareness for alopecia.

Former student Robert Guerin has spent the last three years putting on this event for the Castleton community and has successfully raised money for his non-profit or-

ganization. Despite graduating last fall, he wanted to keep the tradition going.

“The amount of support we’ve had over the past three years has meant the world to me,” says Guerin, who has alopecia. “I want to continue to build off of what I’ve started at Castleton and continue to grow 3B into something bigger.”

This year’s event will not feature the face of the brand, as

Guerin is unable to attend. Knowing this, he wanted to create the opportunity for others just like the one he was given three years ago.

Castleton football players Josh Peters and Jacob Calabro have taken the helm setting up this year’s event. Over the spring semester, they have worked together to plan out the event and continue what Guerin had created.

“The goal every year is to make the tournament bigger than the

last,” Peters said. “Most importantly, we just want everyone to enjoy the event.”

A new venture that hasn’t been a part of the tournament is getting CAB involved to sponsor it. It made the 3B tournament an official student event on campus that will involve more students in addition to student athletes.

“There was a lot to do in terms of planning this year,” Calabro explains.

He talks about how overwhelming the process is to fill in the pieces, but he reflects on how rewarding it is when it’s all over.

“It’s definitely worth it in the end and it’s a great feeling to help support a cause like this,” he said.

Both have taken advantage of this to gain real-world experience managing events, coordinating with facilities, and developing strategies to create a well-organized event.

The games will take place Saturday, May 11 starting at 10 a.m. with a \$5 entry fee. All proceeds will be donated to various charities that help support alopecia research and awareness. Come watch our student athletes compete against each other to be crowned the next 3B tournament champions and raise money for a worthy cause.



COURTESY OF ROBERT GUERIN

Castleton students raise awareness for alopecia by participating in the annual 3B football tournament.

Women’s wrestling club takes off

By Rosa Kehoe
Castleton Spartan

It was late afternoon when women started to enter the wrestling room for the first practice. Scared and excited all at the same time, the nerves were evident as the first practice about to commence.

For some not familiar with the gym, it was like a maze trying to find the wrestling room. For others, like Samantha Hallock, it was like a normal walk in the park.

Hallock, a freshman here at Castleton majoring in early childhood and special education, is the coach of the women’s wrestling club. She has worked hard to make this club happen because wrestling is a passion of hers.

“I’ve been wrestling since first grade. I started at Vergennes area youth wrestling club and then I went into high school, where I wrestled for their varsity team. I got into it because my brothers wrestled and my dad was a coach, and it was just something I loved, my family members did,” she said.

She made this club because it’s her passion and she wishes to help teach others the ways of wrestling. She said wrestling is not just about weight training, it’s way more than that.

“The only thing that I want people to get out of this is it’s a new experience and that there is something that they can try. You are never going to fail at this, because you can succeed in any type of way. This is such a good thing for your mental health, your physical health and just your overall character building in general,” she said.

When Hallock was in elementary school she came to the wrestling clubs held on Castleton’s campus. She fondly remember the experiences.

“I always talked to coach Legacy about having a team here, and he had said something about that when I was younger and how he was really trying to, but he needed people to start it, and so I am the one who started it,” she said.

Making the club has been hard, but Hallock is making it work, in part because of help from Coach Scott Shaddock from the Fair Haven High School wrestling team.

“He’s retiring this year and he is helping me as one of the coaches and the hardest challenge for me was figuring out the difference between freestyle and folkstyle wrestling, because since first grade I have been wrestling folkstyle and it definitely has been a challenge,” she said.

Hallock and Shaddock



ROSA KEHOE

The women’s wrestling club is up and running, and looking for new members.

are hoping by next semester to go to a couple of tournaments for the women to compete in.

“Even if we are not a team, we still will be going to tournaments as a team. There were three that we were looking at, so that was exciting and also we are partnering with Rudess, which is a wrestling brand, so hopefully that will help the team grow having our merch on and wrestling club and stuff like that,” she said.

Coach Shaddock was enthusiastic when Hallock asked if he would like to help coach the women’s wrestling club. Shaddock just retired from coaching for 32 years, having coached lacrosse, junior high football and wrestling. And he said he has been wrestling since he was 9.

“Couldn’t get out of it. Four boys and an older brother got me into the sport, mom and dad bought

a mat and put it in the garage and that’s kind of how the boys got out their frustrations, their energy. We just traveled around the east coast wrestling,” he said.

Shaddock’s kids all wrestled as well. His three daughters are managers of teams now. Wrestling has just always been in his family, so getting this chance to come back out and help coach alongside Hallock was exciting for him.

“I love this sport. This sport is really about family and pretty much Samantha came and asked me I said absolutely,” he said.

The biggest thing is “There is no pressure on anyone that if you come to practice you have to compete, no. The biggest thing is to have fun. If you’re not having fun, why am I doing it?” Shaddock said.

Dorianne Lebanese, another

experienced wrestler, was also offering words of encouragement for those who might be interested in trying wrestling.

“Don’t be afraid to come up to any of us and ask us ‘hey what do you do? What is wrestling? When do you do it? Can I come?’” she said. “We are extremely open to anyone new that wants to come and do it. We promise it is not that bad. It’s actually super fun and it has a lot more benefits than you think it does, and it could end up being the one sport you end up doing even after college just for fun.”

Lebanese is a freshman graphic design major and is ecstatic that this club has started because she hasn’t wrestled since her freshman year of high school because of health reasons. But like Hallock, Lebanese also grew up around wrestling.

“I started wrestling in kinder-

garten due to my dad coaching elementary and high school,” she said.

Lebanese helps manage the men’s wrestling team at Castleton and because of this, she heard right away when Hallock pitched the idea. Coach Legacy wanted them to meet up but, it took some time because of other commitments.

“I wasn’t able to meet with her, but I know how to help out in different ways by making posters and helping design things for the club. So, I am really happy to be able to do that and at least get to be a part of it. I think it is really well put together and Sam is doing an amazing job with coaching. Even though we are pretty new to freestyle, I think she is doing a really great job at learning it then coming and teaching us how to do it,” she said.

Sharon Asolmia Aganah a

sophomore studying health science pre-med, has never wrestled before – until now.

“It was a new experience for me and I used to be an athlete, not at Castleton, but I used to play soccer for six years. And since I came to Castleton, I haven’t done anything remotely close to like working out or exercise, so I miss the being on a team and doing some kind of sport. So, when I saw the wrestling club I thought it could be a fun thing to try so here we are,” she said.

Aganah has been loving it so far.

“So far, it’s fun. I mean you get to flip people around and that’s cool, and I’m getting the workout in. It’s a really cool and tough workout and I love it. If anyone is looking for a workout this is definitely something they should try,” she said.

MLB umpires need to do better for everyone’s sake

By Justin Gitto
Castleton Spartan

One of the biggest topics in all of sports for a handful of years has been the officials.

Somehow the refs and umpires manage to “cost every team the game,” or in every game “they were paid-off by one of the teams,” or “they have money on the game.”

You would think that with all of their criticism they would get better at their job, but year in and year out they somehow find a way to be worse.

This year’s MLB umpires have set the bar so low that I honestly think I could make it as an ump.

The strike zones are as horrific as ever, they’re literally tossing people out of the game for shits and giggles, and somehow, even with replay review, they’re even getting calls on the field wrong.

Just over a month into the season, the MLB has already had to release several statements about how the umps made the wrong call.

Just the other day, Pete Crow-Armstrong of the Chicago

Cubs slid into second base with his helmet in his hand, and used the helmet to stay on the base when he slid past the bag.

The umps called him safe on the field, but MLB later confirmed he should’ve been out.

Also the other day, Minnesota Twins star Byron Buxton got injured running to second base, and as he’s walking off the field, the umpire told him to hurry up and get off the field.

Absolutely classless. A couple of weeks ago, Yankees manager Aaron Boone was ejected just five pitches into the game for doing nothing.

A fan behind Boone chirped at the ump, and he thought it was Boone so he tossed him even though he didn’t say anything.

The ump’s statement the day after was: “I don’t care who said it... I heard something coming from the far end of the dugout. It had nothing to do with his area but he’s the manager of the Yankees, so he’s the one that had to go.”

What the fuck. There you have it, umps have the right to toss any team’s manager just because they feel like it.

And come on, if every umpire tossed out someone for chirping them on a bad call, there would

be ejections in every single game. Yet usually just suck it up and deal with it. They don’t just throw the guy out immediately, so what makes you so special that you do?

It just baffles me that they’re just allowed to be this bad.

They’re literally screwing up in every aspect of their job at every turn.

And they don’t have to answer for it. They don’t get fined or suspended or demoted for these atrocities, and they need to be held in check.

Now to be fair, it obviously isn’t all of them sucking like this. There are still very good umps

who are calling games amazingly, but there aren’t enough of them to get the attention off of the blind ones.

Every year we think ‘there’s no way it’s going to be worse than this,’ and then the next year it’s somehow worse.

But I seriously don’t think it can get worse than this.

And it’s ironic to me, because the threat of robot-umps is getting higher and higher each year so you would think they would tighten it up to preserve their jobs, but no, they just keep getting worse.

One can only hope for something to change, and soon.

Men's lacrosse team expecting improvement next season

By Stone Stelzl
Castleton Spartan

In a season that saw the Castleton men's lacrosse team go through growing pains under a first-year head coach, the team ended the season making the playoffs as the six seed, but falling in the first round to Plymouth State 17-4.

Although the Spartans garnered one less win than a season prior, there were still bright spots including a slight improvement in the offense from a season before posting 133 goals this season compared to 129 last season.

"The biggest takeaway from this season should be that we can compete with the top of our conference as we did in the first half of almost every game, we're just missing numbers and disciplined

decision making. I think the biggest missing piece to the team going into next year in order to take that next step will be learning to be more disciplined and moving the ball faster to get better looks," said sophomore Preston Kozlowski.

Kozlowski was tied for fifth on the team in points with 19. Looking to next year, he and the other four top five scorers will be returning as well.

However, even with the Spartans seeing slight progression in offense, the team did see regression on its defensive side of the ball with 267 goals against compared to the teams 234 last season.

But next year the team looks primed to improve on that as goaltender Chase Strychaluk now has a full season of experience and majority of the team returning next season.

"In my first year, I realized that as a team we do get gassed quick due to not having nearly as much depth. In terms of having a full year of NCAA experience now, I've learned that you need to be consistent and not get down on yourself, especially for me as a goalie. We can compete with everyone, but it needs to be for 60 minutes," Strychaluk said.

With only one player guaranteed leaving due to him being a graduate student and because the seniors have an extra year due to COVID, the team looks primed to take a step forward having another year under new coach Ed Stephenson and having another year of chemistry together.

"Despite the results of the year we had, I feel as though we can take a big step next year because we have so many guys returning



CASTLETON SPORTS

The men's lacrosse team improved in some areas this season, but with most of the team returning next season, they're planning to do better.

and we have another year under coach. I think that we can hang with teams and are very close to

breaking through to be a team that can get some of those close games to go our way instead," said senior

Hunter Sarro, who will be returning using his COVID year of eligibility.

The Spartan and sports made my college experience

I have kinda mixed feelings about graduating.

Thinking ahead, I'm pretty pumped to not have to deal with school anymore.

I think ahead to next fall and it's mind-boggling to think that I won't have to go to classes. I can just focus on my personal life and making money and not having to do so much damn homework.

On the other hand, I don't really feel like I got much of a college experience.

I could be cliché and say that it feels like just yesterday I was still in high school, but I won't bore you with that.

But think about it, as a 2020 high school grad, a quarter of my college experience was taking classes from my room, and for the next 25% I was wearing a mask through my classes.

I know what you're thinking: 'COVID, COVID, COVID, we get it.' But it goes beyond COVID for me.

Because I commuted nearly an hour from Queensbury, New York, I wasn't on campus much outside of class. I didn't get to meet people or go to parties or go to sporting events. Hell I've never even been to Third Place.

Then I walk from my car to Leavenworth and I pass a dozen people laughing together, talking about how crazy the weekend was, and having a good time and I think to myself: 'man, I'm kinda missing out.'

And for most of my time at Castleton I didn't really care, but eventually my FOMO took over.

I don't even care about drinking (although it is fun). I just wish I got to be a part of campus.

It's hard for me to feel like a Castleton student when I was barely there.

If it weren't for The Spartan, I wouldn't have even made any friends on campus.

I seriously owe everything to The Spartan. My best college memories were made on Sunday mornings when we designed the paper, Wednesday afternoons when we had meetings, and obviously that NYC trip.

I'm so grateful and blessed to have made the friends I made in my time with The Spartan. Without them, college wouldn't have been much more than classes, homework, and dumping my bank account at the gas pump.

But I'd be more than willing to burn through a full tank to spend a day with Stone, Gonzo, Pearl, Maddie, Cami, and Joe one more time. And I can't forget Marty, Lily, Wyatt and Sophia either.

Years from now, when people ask me about my college experience, I'm gonna be telling them about these people.

And no matter how annoying it was having to wait for Stone to walk into design on Sundays fully hungover and groggy, those were some of my favorite college memories to look back on.

Anyway, I guess that's a wrap on my time at Castleton. Good luck to the Spartan staff next year — especially Stone, he's gonna need it.

And good luck to Dave when the sports pages don't get started until noon.



COURTESY PHOTO

Castleton Spartan hockey player Andrew Stefura hoists the Development Cup after winning the tournament for Team Ireland.

Shining on bigger stage

Spartan hockey players starring on Olympic teams from Jamaica and Ireland

By Stone Stelzl
Castleton Spartan

Over thousands of miles away in two different directions are Jamaica and Ireland.

They are two countries that aren't known for hockey, however, two current Castleton men's hockey players and one former member are representing these countries on the national stage.

Current member Romeo Torain and 2022 graduate Jahwara Rennalls both represented Jamaica in Chicago for the Challenger Series in which they played four games, two against Lebanon and two against Puerto Rico, going 3-1.

"Getting the opportunity to play for Team Jamaica this past weekend was an ultimate surreal experience. Getting the chance to represent Jamaica and play with some of my former teammates and meet new players was something I'll cherish for the rest of my life," Torain said.

This was the first leg of three for the Challenger Series. There are two more legs of the series over the course of the next few months, one in New York City in June and the other in Toronto in July.

Rennalls has represented Jamaica since his Castleton days, but this was the first opportunity to team up with Torain since the 2021/2022 Spartan season.

"It was great sharing the ice with Romeo as he made his debut for Jamaican Olympic Ice Hockey Federation. It's always special getting to share moments and memories with a former teammate and close friend," Rennalls said. "He was a great addition to our group and I'm excited for what comes next in New York in June and Toronto in July."

As Jamaica prepares for the next two legs, the team hopes to make noise in the hockey world as it continues its goal to bring Jamaica to the Olympics by 2026.

"Being able to represent the Jamaican Olympic Ice Hockey Federation in Chicago was an amazing experience. Putting on that jersey is always special. Although we went into the tournament with a thin roster, we had a special group of players that came together and proved that Jamaica is coming to make noise in the hockey community," Rennalls said.

Across the pond, Andrew Stefura similarly was representing his Irish roots in the IIHF Development Cup in Bratislava, Slovakia, where he posted 13 goals and 9 assists through the six-game tournament on



Castleton hockey player Romeo Torain skates during a recent match for team Jamaica, and poses with former Castleton hockey player Jahwara Rennalls.

route to Ireland winning it all.

"Getting to travel to Slovakia and play hockey was my first hockey experience in Europe. I met an amazing group of teammates and now lifelong friends. Seeing passion for hockey in Ireland was inspiring and eye opening. I hope to continue my journey with the Ireland National team in the future and continue help grow the game in Ireland," Stefura said.

Stefura's 22 points throughout the tournament put him third in the whole tournament in points behind two of his teammates and ninth in total points all-time for players in the Development Cup history.

This was the junior's first-time representing Ireland coming off of a Third

Team All-NEHC campaign and being named a semi-finalist for the Joe Concannon award which is awarded to the New England's best American born NCAA Division III hockey player.

"Representing Ireland was an honor and incredible experience. Putting on the Irish uniform was a thrilling experience. It was an amazing opportunity for my family, teammates, and I to bring home Gold for Ireland," Stefura said.

Throughout the tournament, Ireland played the likes of Portugal, Colombia, Argentina, Greece, and Brazil. Eventually beating Portugal in the championship to claim Ireland's first gold at the Development Cup.

"To have Romeo and Andrew represent their heritage on a national stage was so awesome for their families, our program, and themselves. It was a pleasure watching them represent Castleton on the international stage and to do so the Castleton way. Both players played excellent hockey and were huge contributors to their respective tournaments. I look forward to coaching both again for their senior year and making it their best one yet," said Castleton head coach Kyle Richards.



COURTESY PHOTOS