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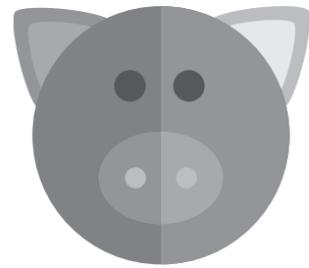
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The Ham, December 11, 2020

The Beacon Staff

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HAM



December 11, 2020

Outdoor classroom gets put to use as new yoga plaza

CEMENT SLABS FOR YOGA MATS

HREE BODNEFIELD
CO-EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

In the spring of 2020, Northwestern College began final stages of construction on the new outdoor classroom, anticipating its need come fall. When classes began in August, students thought the construction was finished. Patches of grass and other plants flourished, along with giant cement slabs to accommodate students' hopscotch matches.

However, this was not the outdoor classroom students were envisioning. As subtle disappointment spread across campus, a few students set out to use the space for something other than studying.

One morning, three boys from North Suites decided to use the cement slabs for their 7 a.m. yoga sessions.

"We used to do our early morning yoga in one of the study rooms, but the outdoor classroom had more space. It just seemed

more logical to do our stretches there," junior Taleb Carnet said. "Outdoor classroom? More like yoga plaza, am I right?"

Suddenly every cement slab was occupied each Tuesday and Thursday morning as students gathered to do yoga. Faculty and staff were confused to see students doing something other than studying for their classes.

"I peered out the science building window one morning and saw several students hanging out around the outdoor classroom," professor of biology Dr. Faura Lurlong said. "I was glad to see students finally use the outdoor classroom for a study session. But then, to my surprise, when I looked again, I saw them holding yoga positions."

Dark MeYounge, dean of Christian formation, also commented on the students' activities.

"I thought the yoga mornings were a joke the first week they used it, you know, just to make a statement," MeYounge said. "But almost a month into the fall semester, more and more students showed up every Tuesday and Thursday morning for yoga."

At the end of August, students received an email from President Chreg Gristy that said the outdoor classroom renovations were not quite finished.

"We are currently raising money for other projects but rest assured when I say we are not finished with the outdoor classroom renovations," Gristy said. "After seeing students putting the classroom to such a good use, Northwestern has decided to rename the project to be called the Dewitt Family Student Yoga Plaza."

In the meantime, NW made the decision to offer three yoga classes starting in October. The classes were set to run until December or until snow covered the plaza.

"We weren't expecting to use the plaza for long because Iowa's winters can be kind of crazy," senior Hen Benker said. "But it's December and we've only seen snow once. So, we've been able to do yoga every week except for that one big snowfall in October."

Because there is only a limited amount of cement slabs for students to use, and to avoid interfering with the North



Suites boys' Tuesday/Thursday routines, the yoga classes are offered Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 10 a.m. to 10:40 a.m., 11:40 a.m. to 12:20 p.m., and 1:20 p.m. to 2 p.m.

"I'll be honest, I was disappointed with how the outdoor classroom turned out. But when I found out that it wasn't finished and they were renaming the plaza after the student activity

taking place, I quickly learned to love it," senior Stuyler Scherk said. "I had never experienced yoga before, but when Northwestern decided to start offering yoga classes in October, I immediately felt the calling to sign up."

NW's updated blueprints for the yoga plaza are set to include a variety of new features including large patio umbrellas, mini fridges and speakers for smooth,

silky meditation music, including MeYounge singing the doxology. The patio umbrellas will double as heat lamps for the colder days.

"Knowing you started an early morning trend is incredible," Benker said. "But knowing you also impacted the start of a new class? Double incredible. That's how I leave my legacy at Northwestern. Take yoga, join the trend. It'll be a good time."

Year of s(HAM)e: 2020 timeline

Disclaimer: We acknowledge that this is a satirical issue of The Beacon, however these are all real events and should be taken seriously.
Instructions: Connect the month to the event

January	Coca-Cola named #1 plastic polluter
February	"Hamilton" was available for streaming on Disney+
March	Joe Biden called as presidential winner
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Answer key on page 4

New mascot imbound for Northwestern

PLEA FOR MASCOT HEARD

NARON ACKMAN
NEWS EDITOR

After Northwestern College's grand reveal of the new athletic logo, students were quick to accept the change.

However, 2020's list of surprises doesn't stop there.

The athletic department was waiting for student feedback before deciding to also reveal the new school mascot, the NW Flags.

Previously, there was no relation between the simple red cross and a red raider. Campus has never been able to see a red raider in costume riling up the crowd at games.

There are a few possible reasons for this. One reason could be due to no one willing to suffocate in a hot stuffy costume. However, it's obvious the more likely possibility there is no mascot is due to NW not knowing what a red raider looks like.

Sure, all students know

a red raider is: "One who is fearless, confident and prepared to finish the task through discipleship, sacrifice and the relentless pursuit of excellence," as stated on the wall in the Rowenhorst Student Center. This definition does not give much of a physical description, though, making it hard to replicate in costume.

The new mascot proposal seeks to fix this predicament. While still unclear how to dress a student as a flag, we will be able to have an easily identifiable unifying image. The debate over having a giant flag costume or simply wrapping oneself in a flag will be discussed at the next board meeting.

While some will be quick to dismiss a flag off as "lame" or a "disgrace," there is much below the surface.

First, a flag has historically been a symbol and we are no exception. As a Christian college, we are to mirror Jesus' example. The addition of a cross to the flag signifies

our commitment to this mission.

Second, it continues to pay homage to the original red raider mascot with flags commonly being carried into battle atop spears and pikes.

Third, we want to be better than Dordt. Because no one knows what a defender is either, becoming the Flags

will undoubtedly strike fear into the eyes of our enemies as they will know what a flag is and what it stands for.

The most important aspect of a flag is its durability and perseverance. Flags take no days off. They persevere through wind and rain. According to united-states-flag.com,

flags have a lifespan around 90 days.

"Every day in the life of a flag is around two human years making some of the oldest flags around 200 years old by the time they retire," said Streydon Hope, a self-proclaimed flag expert and ex-Boy Scout. "Their dedication to their mission is something

we all should strive for."

With our ability to have a mascot, NW will be looking for applicants who embody what it means to be a NW Flag. After the applications have been gone through, there will be a flag impression evaluation to decide NW's new mascot.



Athlete spotlight: bench warmers

THE REAL MVP

TALEB CARNET
OPINIONS EDITOR

Far one of the most underappreciated elements of college sports is the dedication and impact of the benchwarmers.

For years, benchwarmers have been ignored and considered irrelevant despite the major impact they have on their team. But that is going to change.

In an effort to become more inclusive, the GPAC has begun to consider adding a "Most Valuable Benchwarmer" award to its hardware given out each athletic year.

"Sports aren't all about gameday stats," a person close to the decision said. "A winning team also contains behind the scenes contributions that can make or break championships."

While not finalized yet, NW students can expect an announcement by the start of second semester, just in time to declare the

winners for the 2020-2021 athletic year.

This news has been taken well around the GPAC, especially at NW, where several athletes intend to vie for the award.

Two of our most beloved students, Cark Mooley and Smily Echmidt, are prepared to make a run at the coveted trophy.

Mooley, a sophomore with a massive personality and a perennial baseball benchwarmer, has been hyping himself up ever since he heard the GPAC was considering it.

"Of course, I'll win. I'm Cark freaking Mooley!" he said.

His confidence is not unwarranted. He's been perfecting his benchwarming craft since high school, becoming so good at it that baseball coach Wrian Bede did not have a choice but to offer him a scholarship.

"Benchwarming is the alpha position on any team," Mooley said, being both the cheerleader and the emotional support of an entire roster.

Sadly, the baseball team has yet to experience the title effect that Mooley brings, as their season was prematurely cut short last spring. This year, though, the team fully expects to ride Mooley's elite benchwarming all the way to a GPAC championship.

For the women, sophomore soccer benchwarmer Smily Echmidt, passionately referred to by teammates as "Corn Nuts," also is confident in her chances at the award. She, like Mooley, has had years of experience of benchwarming before being signed to NW, something she identifies for being the reason behind her success.

"What many misjudge about benchwarming is that it's a very hard position to coach," she said. "The individual skills can't be worked on outside of games, which makes a great benchwarmer an incredibly rare recruit."

That's not all Echmidt brings to the table, as NW's soccer benchwarmers



have some of the best style in the conference.

"Since we had mild weather deeper into our season, benchwarmers did not get to sport our most dashing attire of coats that look more like sleeping bags," she said. The combined aspects of her skill and style make Echmidt the massive favorite to win the award

come the spring.

For the non-athletic normal people (NARPs) around campus who don't know how to encourage and support our benchwarmers, Mooley and Echmidt offer us some advice.

"The regular people should see benchwarmers as the heart behind any team and understand the

role of emotional support that we bring," Mooley said.

Next time you attend a Raider sporting event, make sure to give a special cheer for the benchwarmers. Give them the spotlight they deserve because they are the real reason Raider athletics stand out.

Are face-to-face interactions still necessary?

SOCIAL MEDIA IS ALL YOU NEED

RANNAH HOSS
ARTS AND CULTURAL EDITOR

With the pandemic limiting social gatherings to small numbers, forcing online school and work and requiring masks if in-person meetings do occur, people are asking if face-to-face interactions are really necessary for good relationships.

In the past, we have maintained that in-person interaction is vital to human life. But recently with the shelter-in-place orders and isolation, we have seen a tremendous uptick in mental health.

"I thought I was a people person, but I ended up loving being in quarantine three times," said senior Wamila Cede, a political science major. "Not getting to go home over Thanksgiving break was the icing on the cake."

One unforeseen benefit of the pandemic is clothing. Since people rarely need to leave their houses, they can stay in their

pajamas or other comfortable clothing much longer than they could previously. Some people stay in sweatpants all day if they are feeling really wild.

"I used to like dressing up every day, but now I have embraced my inner couch and my life is all the better for it," English teaching senior Miley Keeder said.

But how do people maintain the relationships they already have?

Through this pandemic, people have realized that the best way to keep long-lasting deep relationships is through social media. Outlets like Facebook and Instagram have a long history of candid posts and people being completely honest and open about their lives.

"I have never felt closer to people than when I've only been able to connect with them through Instagram," said senior Bangela Arinkman, a biology and secondary education major.

As for school, students rave about Zoom classes. Zoom simulates such an authentic classroom

atmosphere that allows for useful group discussion and easy ways to ask questions like a message feature that the teacher never sees.

And with the fantastic internet here at Northwestern, students are really getting the most out of their education.

"My favorite part of class is when the internet glitches and I miss the instructions for the group project," said senior Eelyak Hguoek, a public relations major. "I get to play a fun guessing game that keeps me entertained."

Students have also used Zoom to chat with wing mates and friends during quarantine over the summer and this year at school.

"Connecting with people over Zoom is so much better than connecting with people in person because conversation flows so organically online," said senior Sanessa Vokes, a public relations and writing and rhetoric double major. "There aren't any awkward pauses or anything when people talk over each other. And I can mute people which has improved many of my



relationships."

With this huge success of online interaction, NW wants to tap into this community. Student Activities Council has planned biweekly Kahoot games where participants will enter a Zoom call, shut off video and audio, and only know who they are hanging out with by whoever is on the leaderboard.

"It will be a great way to connect students instead of making everyone come to the hub," said SAC coordinator Mon Juyskens.

Picah Marker, athletic director at NW, plans to enact virtual practices for teams starting next semester. He feels that comradery will be greatly boosted through these virtual interactions.

"Community is such an important part of the Northwestern experience and I think having athletes connect online will be better now and in the long run," Marker said. "And I don't want to give too much away, but the athletics department has been discussing ways to have whole competitions virtually."

Ring by spring despite mask catfishing

ACCOMPLISHING THE MRS DEGREE

JATIE KACOB
SPORTS EDITOR

When deciding to go to a Christian college, there are differences from other state colleges that you take into consideration like being a dry campus, having dorm hours, being smaller, etc. But you don't normally think about what the dating atmosphere is like and whether the environment encourages getting married before graduation.

Dating is sought out by both males and females. Though, the women seem to be more worried about finding that perfect soulmate and getting married within college, the concept of "ring by spring."

It is pretty easy to single out the individuals who are double majoring in their chosen field as well as the MRS degree, the course of finding your forever partner.

Quite frankly, the MRS degree seems to be one of the more common degrees on campus, but is it more challenging or just time consuming? I wonder how many credits per guy they get until they find the right one.

However, due to COVID-19, we as a campus are required to wear our masks everywhere we go: in classrooms, buildings, dining halls, you name it. Identifying someone when half of their face is covered is not the ideal thing, especially when you are looking for a significant other or soon-to-be spouse. This has sparked much nervous thoughts.

When first arriving on campus in August, it was hard to pick out your friends. There was a funny little guessing game that we all got to be a part of. "Who is who" or "what do they look like?"

It honestly was fun meeting new students and professors and getting to



imagine what they look like under their mask.

But then again, it could become disappointing when you have this distinct vision of someone and, the second they take off their mask, you see what they really look like. You get so used to seeing them the way you wanted to see them that, when they reveal the second half of their face, you are instantly disappointed.

Maybe this can help people fall in love with the personality instead of just the pretty face. Who

knows?

At the beginning of the year, there was so much talk about how one can tell if a person is cute or not under their mask. How are students supposed to find someone when they do not know what the bottom halves of their faces look like? Are they being "catfished" by the mask? Is that really what we came here for?

We are so worried about finding a forever buddy that it seems to be more of a concern than the actual pandemic and

our schooling. There is an unspoken pressure when coming to Northwestern that one should find someone they will marry during college.

The campus culture can feel intimidating if you do not have a significant other during your years here. And if you do have someone, be prepared to answer the nagging question: When are you getting engaged?

When walking around campus, it is almost uncomfortable the number of married

students that you run into. The feeling of them being younger, your age, or even a year or two older is very strange.

Why is it so prominent for one to want to find their soulmate in college at NW or the Midwest in general? What happened to living life while you're young? Some days, college seems more like Christian Mingle come to life. But, at least masks are slowing down the local wedding revenues.

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Fans become tired of NFL games

NO ONE IN THE STANDS

PAITLYN KAN VEURSEM
FEATURES EDITOR

Football games have always been extremely popular. From the New York Giants to the Washington Football Team, people all over the nation are entertained by players tackling each other for points, and they're more than willing to use their entire paycheck to get the best seats in the stadium.

While the lowest ticket prices are around \$99, some tickets can cost up to an average of \$490, specifically at New England Patriots home games. With stadium capacities holding from 65,000 to 82,000 people, those games can rack up a lot of money for the National Football League.

However, as 2020 nears a close, people seemed to have lost interest in football.

While the amount of people watching NFL games hasn't decreased, the amount of people who buy tickets and sit in the stands has. No one wants to watch live football anymore. The empty stadiums are proof of that.

People would rather sit at home on their couch watching football on their 52-inch flat screen television than see live

football in an NFL stadium. They would rather eat their microwaved popcorn or Oreo cookies than have the classic concession stand hot dogs or pretzels. People's priorities have changed and for good reason.

"All the new and updated rules about hitting are taking away from the physicality of the game," junior Eric Bnright said. "The job of the defense is to hit, but they're always worried about being penalized. The point of football is to watch players get run over, so the new rules are taking the fun out of it."

On top of the new rules, players just aren't trying hard enough.

New England Patriots quarterback Tom Brady's skill has decreased immensely with his interception rate increasing and his inability to shake the other quarterback's hand after games.

"It's frustrating to watch a football player not shake hands after a game, especially if the player is a role model to kids across the nation," senior Poel Jan Veursem said. "I say kids need to start looking at quarterbacks like Aaron Rodgers instead of Tom Brady as their superhero."

Teams seem to be making stupid decisions each year, like the Buccaneers picking up Brady even though he's old and washed up



and the Packers drafting a quarterback in the first round when they arguably have one of the best quarterbacks in the league or how a team like the Minnesota Vikings have so many key players but still can't win a game.

It's no wonder that fans don't want to watch live NFL football anymore.

Players have become so frustrated with the nonexistent fans at their games that they've asked for cardboard cut-outs of celebrities and random people across the nation, who are willing to pay for

a seat, to be placed in the stadium seats. They were sick and tired of fans not being at games to boost their egos with shouts and cheers that they wanted something to replace the fans - multiple pieces of cardboard.

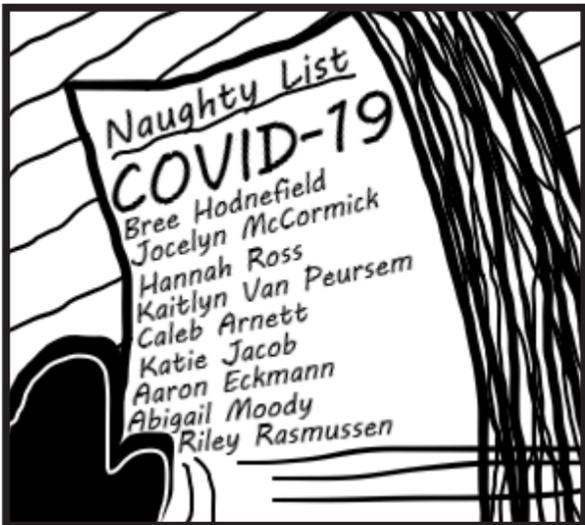
Of course, since cardboard can't create the sounds of screaming fans or applause, the NFL didn't want their players' hearts to be broken. Instead, they created imitative sounds to be played over the speakers at appropriate times. That way, even if there's absolutely no one sitting in the stands, the players can still puff up

in flattery from the speakers' applause.

As this season has been a downer for most players, it's hard to say if fans will gain interest in live football going into the next year. People have become so used to watching NFL from the comfort of their own homes that they might never go back to stadium seating.

Players just might have to get used to the changes, but they can still hold on to hope that maybe one day they can reach the level of college football and have a live audience in their stadium again.

Cured Ham Comic: Santa's naughty list



MOCELYN JCCORMICK
CO-EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



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| January | Coca-Cola named #1 plastic polluter |
| February | Hamilton was available for streaming on Disney + |
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