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the grizzly

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Election Results Are In!

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This January, the United States of America will likely have a new president. Last weekend the tumultuous and chaotic 2020 presidential election reached its conclusion ... probably. On Saturday, November 7, the Associated Press called the race in the favor of the Biden/Harris ticket after it surmised that the campaign had won Pennsylvania, therefore crossing the 270 electoral vote threshold necessary to seize the White House. In light of this news, celebrations across the country erupted and even made their way to the campus of Ursinus itself.

President Trump has yet to concede, and there are no signs that he is going to anytime soon. Instead, Trump is fighting the results in court. The Trump campaign has mobilized in both state and

federal courts with nearly a dozen lawsuits. Most of these lawsuits were filed in battleground states such as Pennsylvania, Georgia, Michigan, and Nevada. In nearby Philadelphia, Rudy Giuliani, Trump's personal lawyer, has alleged that the election system in the city is besieged by fraud. Mr. Giuliani made these allegations without offering up any concrete evidence to support his claims. Furthermore, Trump has taken to social media, specifically Twitter, making bombastic and inflammatory comments about the election and its legitimacy. Many of these tweets have been flagged by the social media company as misinformation. It's worth emphasizing that although various news outlets have predicted the outcome of the election, the election is not officially over. The final certification of the electors

by states will not be complete until December, and the inauguration does not take place until January.

If Joe Biden and Kamala Harris are indeed confirmed, it will be a historic moment. Joe Biden will become the oldest sitting President, a title which was previously held by Ronald Regan. Kamala Harris will be the first woman and second person of color to occupy the office of the Vice President, following in the footsteps of Herbert Hoover's VP Charles Curtis, a Native American member of the Kaw Nation. No matter who ends up in the Oval Office, this was nonetheless a historic election. It is projected that 161 million people voted in this election, the greatest number in American history. So while we may not have an official verdict on who actually won and by what margin, the true winner of this elec-

tion is clear; the American democratic system.

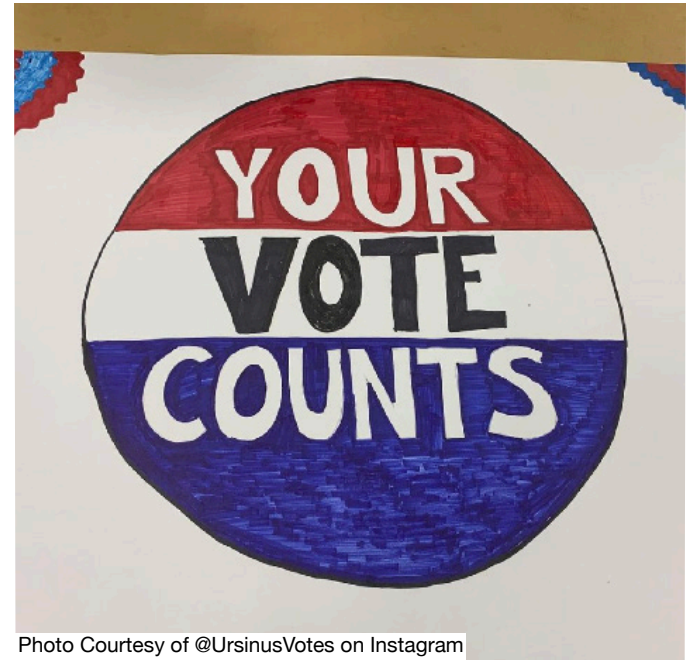


Photo Courtesy of @UrsinusVotes on Instagram

Ursinus Students On In-Person Voting vs. Mail-In Ballots

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In-person voting was a contentious issue among voters across the country in the weeks leading up to the 2020 election. Many feared hours-long lines, rampant disorganization, and exposure to COVID-19. Ursinus students who chose to vote in person had not much to worry about, it turned out.

All Ursinus students who register to vote using the address of the college are assigned to the second voting precinct in Collegeville.

At approximately 1:30 PM on Election Day, the polling location in the second precinct was virtually empty, with lines lasting a maximum of five minutes. The people working and voting there seemed to be practicing proper social distancing,

there was hand sanitizer at the check-in table and by the door, and the voting process

instead of by mail, McCarty stated, "I just want to be positive my vote gets counted. I

walk here, and there was no line or anything...It took me probably less than five minutes to check in and cast my vote."

When Slaboda was asked about his decision to vote in person, he stated, "I actually didn't vote here, I'm from Jersey and I dropped off my mail ballot a while ago...I've just been driving people I know down here so they can vote. It's only around half a mile from campus but I know people who wouldn't vote if they had to walk." Regarding his thoughts on the polling location, he stated, "I was here at around ten, and the two people I brought

were in there for about fifteen minutes. It wasn't bad then and I don't even think there's a line right now...The people I drove didn't have any complaints or anything negative to say about it."

The in-person voting situation in Collegeville was a nice spot of calm in a stressful election week. Collegeville managed to deliver a safe, fast, and efficient method of in-person voting in the midst of a pandemic, and the students at Ursinus benefited from it.



Photo Courtesy of @UrsinusVotes on Instagram

was efficient and organized. Colin McCarty and Brandon Slaboda are both current juniors at Ursinus who were interviewed at this polling location.

When asked about his decision to vote in-person

don't think [mail-in ballots are] as reliable or fast as voting here, and I don't want to take any chances in an election this important." Regarding his experience voting in-person, he also stated, "It took me like ten minutes to



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Radio Plays a Success

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From October 29 through November 1, Ursinus broadcast two radio plays, Angela Carter's *The Company of Wolves* and *Puss in Boots*. Directed by Dr. Meghan Brodie, Associate Professor of Theater; with sound design by Shannon Zura, Visiting Assistant Professor of Theater and Dance in Design & Technology, these plays were the culmination of students' and professors' collaboration, labor, and meticulous preparation.

During an ordinary (which is to say, pre-pandemic) semester, the Theater and Dance Department produces several on-stage, in-person plays. Working in this new medium required an adjustment for everyone involved. Jacob Ryan '22 reflects on his experience acting in the lead role of Puss in *Puss in Boots*: "Before the radio plays, the last three shows that I did were comedies.... And we all had audiences for [those]. Having a sense of timing when it comes to comedy [is important]... and for me, I loved building off of the energy of an audience; but for *Puss in Boots*, we didn't really get that. So, I wouldn't know if people are laughing or not, and it was... difficult to not have that verification or sense of certainty." Nonetheless, Ryan appreciated the opportunity to expand his repertoire through this unfamiliar format: "What I enjoyed about

the radio plays... was how it was a completely different branch of theater that a) I didn't know existed or b) how it operated, so I got to learn about that."

Donovan Erskine '21 worked on *The Company of Wolves* and *Puss in Boots* as a musician, an experience he describes as follows: "There is no stage blocking, no major scenic elements, and during tech [week] we had to account for



Photo Courtesy of Meghan Brodie

camera passages... [this] was the biggest difference considering cameras had to replace our live audiences." Erskine continues: "As a musician, I obviously provided musical score to the plays but also assisted in sound effects to increase the overall sonic environment." On the shift from in-person to virtual theater media, Erskine comments: "I understand why elements of audience, accessibility, and acting have had to change in order to protect performers and audience members. However the energy that is received from live audiences will never be replicated by virtual technologies and

that [is] a fact we have to accept moving forward." For more experienced members of the theater and performing arts world, this range of media is familiar. Dr. Meghan Brodie recalls, "Professor Zura and I actually collaborated on producing Holly Hughes' *The Well of Horniness*, an over-the-top radio play, a few years ago. I directed and Professor Zura provided the sound design. We both love

radio plays and enjoy the challenges of creating a comprehensive soundscape to engage audiences in the world of a radio play." Professor Zura recounts her own experience: "Many years ago, I worked in public radio and have since worked professionally as a lighting, sound, and scenic designer. My sound design work is definitely informed by my radio experience."

The COVID-19 pandemic has undoubtedly compromised the performing arts, but with this challenge has come the opportunity for inventiveness and exploration for students, staff, and professors alike. Professor Zura

explains, "I think the pandemic has forced us all to be more creative and think outside of the box in terms of how we can make theater safely. For the two plays we produced, Dr. Brodie shifted the focus from the actor's body to the actor's voice and I asked all of the actors to help create sound effects."

Behind the production of a radio play, technological intricacies abound. Dr. Brodie

states: "While radio plays may seem easier to produce than traditional plays or musicals, they present design and technology challenges. Without sound designer Professor Zura, audio-visual technician James Futter, and master electrician Cassie Mazza, we could not have live streamed this work to an audience nor achieved the level of professionalism we are committed to modeling for our students. There aren't too many theater designers who have a lot of Foley and radio/audio experience so my direction would not have been what it was without the expertise of Professor Zura who had a team of students who man-

aged our effects, mixing, and instruments."

Despite the complicated nature of radio play production, Dr. Brodie and Professor Zura were pleased with the work of the cast and crew. Dr. Brodie reflects: "I am thrilled with the results and audience responses. If the students are interested, I would love to direct more radio plays if my faculty and staff current collaborators are up for it. The students did spectacular work and I am touched by the community they created over the two months on which we worked on these plays."



Photo Courtesy of Meghan Brodie



Photo Courtesy of Ursinus College



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Photo Courtesy of @UrsinusVotes on Instagram



Photo Courtesy of Meghan Brodie

Emily Gurganus: A case of voter suppression?

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Over the past few months, America was bombarded by one word: vote. Each time we opened up our social media, there were links to register. Celebrities posted photos and videos urging us to vote. “Vote” was plastered on signs, shirts, masks, and buttons as a reminder of our civic duty. Additionally, Ursinus College set up voter registration booths and sent out multiple emails reminding students when and where to vote. Everything came to fruition on November 3, when nearly 150 million people cast a ballot either in-person or through mail, according to “USA Today.”

Along with voting, though, comes voter suppression. According to the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), voter suppression occurs when laws “lead to significant burdens for eligible voters trying to exercise their most fundamental constitutional right.” This includes limited polling locations that lead to long lines, strict voter ID laws, and voter purges. The “ACLU” states that the groups most affected by voter suppression are African Americans, the elderly, people with disabilities, and students.

Emily Gurganus, class of 2024, from Alabama, thought she would be immune to voter suppression. To Emily, voter suppression meant polling stations closing early, or in-person voting being inaccessible in low-income communities. To her surprise, she may have been a victim of voter suppression and was unable to vote in the 2020 election.

Emily wanted to register to vote in Pennsylvania instead of

“They really don’t care about me. Why is it so difficult for me as a college student to cast a vote in the state I’m living in?”

- Emily Gurganus
2024

Alabama because she felt that her vote would hold more power in a swing state than at home. She began the PA registration process two months before the deadline. Despite her early action, Emily got tangled in a nightmare of phone calls, applications, and waiting. Her first application was denied due to an invalid signature since she did not have a Pennsylvania driver’s license. She filled out the application form three times before missing the registration deadline. During this time, Emily called the PA voter registration office. She



Emily Gurganus

received little help after multiple calls and was told another employee would take care of the issue. She never got a call back.

“They really don’t care about me,” Emily began. “Why is it so difficult for me as a college student to cast a vote in the state I’m living in?”

After being denied her PA registration, Emily applied for an absentee ballot in Alabama. She sent in her application a week before the deadline only to never hear back from them either. By now it was too late to do anything. Still, Emily was determined to vote.

On November 3, Emily and a friend walked to the polling station near campus to seek out a provisional ballot. Already having little hope, Emily was more

disappointed when she was turned away. She did not even bother with the

“Don’t blame yourself for the shortcomings of the government. They are there to serve you.”

- Emily Gurganus
2024

voter registration table outside of Wismer Center because she believed they could not help her.

Emily spent most of this time blaming herself. “I just felt like I was a bad person,” she said. She looked forward to using her voice in this election. Emily was unaware that she experienced voter suppression until a friend brought it up. She then realized all the circumstances she faced were just the shortcomings of

the government. This allowed her to think about other American citizens who were possible victims as well, and how common it was for people’s voices to be suppressed by legal barriers.

Despite her frustration, Emily knows that her situation is neither unique nor her fault, and she wants other victims to realize that, too. “Don’t blame yourself for the shortcomings of the government,” Emily stated. “They are there to serve you.” Emily looks forward to casting her vote in the next (general or primary) election.



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Comparison steals your happiness

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“Comparison is the thief of joy,” Theodore Roosevelt once said. He was right and still is. We humans have the capability to choose happiness but let social standards define it for us. How can we be happy if we continuously compare ourselves to others?

In this country we have a serious mental health epidemic. Many believe it stems from comparison and how society encourages it. When one compares oneself to others--based on what is glorified and seen in the media--it takes away from their happiness. It makes that person feel insufficient, empty, and unmotivated to acknowledge the positives about themselves. Instead, they assume the positives about other people and contrast them negatively to their own self-image. In today’s social-media landscape, comparison is really the thief of joy.

Comparison takes

place in many situations, but social media seems to be an important culprit. Research from “Psychology Today” shows that teenagers and young adult users, who spend the most time on platforms like Instagram and Facebook, have a 66 percent higher rate of reported depression. College students see others’ highlights on social media and start comparing themselves to those influencers.

Let’s discover motivation and gain insight from those we have close access to: successful partners, family members, friends, leaders.

Many students, however, fail to realize that those influencers conceal their disappointments or hardships. Therefore, the highlights only help display a false lifestyle. This furthers the toxicity of comparison and lessens the focus on self-care.

We must first remember that everyone is on a different life journey. We carry various strengths but weaknesses and hardships as well. Real-



Layla Halterman

izing this helps remind ourselves that our life journeys and purposes are just as important as others’. Just because someone else attains something we may desire does not mean we will never attain it. True, it may take longer for some of us to acquire it, but the fact is we may attain it eventually. Or, we may not and thus not have exactly what others have. What is meant for each of us will be for us. It is all about timing and patience.

Secondly, we must find gratitude for what we already have.

Thanksgiving, for instance, is right around the corner. Let’s gobble up some things we are thankful for; surely we will find something that someone else does not have (and vice versa). We will be surrounded by family, which many of us have either lost or been away from, and good food. That itself should be enough to make us feel grateful.

Thirdly, let’s discover motivation and gain insight from those we have close access to: successful partners, family members, friends, leaders who convey healthy

morals and well-being to you rather than social media celebrities who only expose one part of their lives.

The comparison mentality does not need to be entirely dismantled but definitely quarantined if possible. We should use the current time to foster an objective mindset, focus on gratitude, and rely on close motivators who will remind us of our self-worth and value in this world. By turning these into practice, we will find our lives more abundant and make ourselves more happy.

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COVID-19, Climate Change, and Sacrifice

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I, like many people at first, was a COVID denier. I saw the early reports on the coronavirus in December and early January as usual media hysteria. I was wrong about this. Yet, being wrong at first has not kept me from taking action to keep myself and my family safe from Covid. Similarly, while we might love to point fingers, we cannot let past actions or beliefs prevent people from working on climate solutions.

I have been amazed by how Ursinus, both the administration and the community, has banded together to keep campus open and classes in person. Many colleges put the burden solely on their student bodies, without giving them safe ways to socialize and live together, and as a result had to go entirely remote. Ursinus, by setting out a framework with universal masking, family units, and the option for anyone to attend remotely, gave us both the responsibility

to keep each other safe, and the tools to do it. By giving up things we loved but didn't need, we have been able to keep the things we really need: in-person classes and social life with our peers.

When we think about climate change, we need to think the same way. While individuals can and do move the needle, ultimately we need societal solutions to this societal problem. And as we have learned, climate action does not mean only sacrifice. By for-

going some things, we can keep the things we really need, like a stable climate and weather, clean air and water, and the means to build back from disruptions. We need to think of climate action not as individual sacrifice, but as community adaptation. So when we hear from politicians and our friends how life needs to change to avert the worst of climate change, think not of what you may lose, but think of what you can gain.

The Literature Storm to Come Post-COVID

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The year 2020 has been anything but ordinary, especially during the difficult spring months of intense quarantine. Much of the world's population was cooped up to prevent the spread of COVID-19 (with gracious thanks to our essential workers and hospital staff) and society had to work with the cards we were dealt. Many attempted to pick up new hobbies and try new things within the four walls of our homes; cooking, crafting, maybe exercising too, but I am positive both professional writers and ordinary people too wrote down experiences of the history we lived through and are continuing to experience. Literature stems from experience,

quarantine was most definitely, and still is, an experience to write down and remember. This soon-to-be-published literature will not necessarily be restricted to a million non-fiction memoirs about quarantine or COVID. There will be a large variety of poems, prose, non-fiction, creative nonfiction, journals — most likely any form of literature in bulk when the time is right. The next question is: when is the right time to publish this anticipated literature? Right now, as we continue to struggle and mirror the early months of this pandemic? Or, in several years from now when the global community has recovered and adapted to the new normal that will follow? The possibilities truly depend on the

intention of the writer, and how they believe readers will be impacted by their work.

Aspiring writers who may have been nervous to publish their work may now flourish publishing COVID literature. For some, their biggest change was the transition to a remote style of school or work; however, essential workers continued to go into work every day tirelessly seeing the virus firsthand. Pieces that are to come from the point of view of an essential worker would be very empowering. A piece focusing on a family who have not lived together for that extended amount of time under the same roof would be a new perspective; how does each family member acclimate to

the lockdown? College students are bound to publish their stories and emotions they felt when receiving the devastating news about in-person spring semesters being cancelled. The strongest pieces to possibly come out of this literature boom would be pieces from COVID survivors; those who contracted and experienced the illness firsthand themselves or someone they know. Each individual is experiencing this pandemic differently, handling the severity differently, and learning from the horrifying statistics and images published. The time will come when COVID pieces will be published — if not individual pieces, collections will hit the shelves and the media before we know it. It may be

tomorrow, next year, or perhaps it happened yesterday, but it should be written down and never dismissed.

When the world, hopefully sooner rather than later, controls this virus, individuals will remember the severity that accompanied it. Writers will compose pieces that put readers in a time machine, taking us back to months cooped up in our homes, distanced from friends and family, opportunities created and diminished. Like any period of important history, quarantine and COVID may eventually be absent from our lives but should never be forgotten. The best way to remember these significant months, possibly the entire year, is to have it written down.

Men's Soccer cont. from

the players look for in a physical contact sport, so being limited to new rules, such as not touching or engaging in any of that behavior, can lead some players to feel an absence from the game.

"The hardest part about practicing under the COVID-19 regulations has been having to play with masks up at all times."
—Devin Nunemaker, Class of 2022

Maintaining personal goals without an actual season can be one of the biggest adjustments for student athletes, but Nunemaker sees this as an opportunity to grow. "These training sessions have given the coaches a chance to work with us more closely and fine-tune our weaknesses so that when we can finally play again we will be ready to go." While not having games can be a huge disappointment for Nunemaker, taking away the pressure of winning allows him the chance to tweak some skills that he may not have had the opportunity to get to in the past. "Not many teams have had the opportunity we have had this fall in getting to train so we have to be grateful for every minute we get on the field" states Nunemaker.

In addition to personal goals, the men's soccer team has taken this season as an opportunity to get closer as a team. "The team has seen this

as a chance to really bond and get closer. No other past Ursinus team has faced the adversity we have faced in 2020 so using this as a chance to just get to know each other better and learn about each other's play styles has been a valuable experience," says Nunemaker.

"These training sessions have given the coaches a chance to work with us more closely and fine-tune our weaknesses so that when we can finally play again we will be ready to go."

—Devin Nunemaker,
Class of 2022

This is something that is new to the whole team, so going through it together has allowed them a chance to get closer which will help them on the field as well. "When we get back out on the field with full freedom and no restrictions again we're hoping to be ahead of the competition. That's our driving force," concludes Nunemaker.

With another "season" in the books, we wish the men's soccer team the best of luck in their upcoming potential spring season, and we hope that this year has allowed them a chance to grow together. Go Bears!

Post Election cont. from pg. 8

of everyone holding their breath while we waited for results to come back, everyone was nervous for who would win especially since actual human rights and lives depended on who won. I think that everyone was so drained that week while we waited that when results actually came out there was definitely excitement for me, but I also think the energy didn't change all that much because everyone was so emotionally exhausted, and no one really had it in them to do much," says Rossi.

"I think that I was surrounded by people who had the same political views that I did in my house which added to the support I felt during the week."

—Randi Rossi, Class of
2021

Additionally, where students reside may influence how they view the political energy on campus, so connecting with family units can make a big impact on how they deal with political conversation. To get through election week, students made sure to check up on each other, took time away from the news and media, and sparked conversation that was not so politically focused. While this election is still very important, almost two weeks after, taking conversation

breaks is the healthy decision to make. Rossi had many tips on how to take one's mind off of the most popular Twitter trending moments. "I think that I was really focused on the election as someone who really cares about politics and is passionate about human rights, as we all should be, so I did not really take my mind off the election even though I probably should have. But I think that self-care is really important so even when thinking about or watching election coverage I made sure to take care of myself too to combat some of the emotional exhaustion I was feeling. Being with friends is always a good way to take your mind off things, or at least to ease your mind, too," concludes Rossi.

Post-Election: How's Your Stress?

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With almost two weeks passed since the major networks called the 2020 election, an anvil weight has been lifted off of many students', as well as the country's, shoulders. On-campus, it was rarely comfortable to communicate about politics publicly. There were few discussions open to the community, and many students expressed frustration with Residence Life's prohibition on campaign signs in students' windows.

However, while the school as a whole did not engage in organized discussion, students did not let that stop their own conversations. Now that the next president-elect is apparent, how is the Ursinus community doing post-election? Have friendships or peer relationships been harmed? Claire Vance, Class of 2021 Secretary, says, "I think that the campus is very uncomfortable when it comes to any

type of political statements, and I think that I would say I felt uncomfortable on campus during the election. I was worried about how students would react depending on certain outcomes of the election." Family units helped to relieve some of the stress around campus by allowing conversations. Randi Rossi '21 claims that talking to her house mates has eased her mind. "I think that I was surrounded by people who had the same political views that I did in my house which added to the support I felt during the week. I think that Ursinus tried to not fully let people discuss politics in fear of any kind of unrest, but I think that discussion is really important and should have been fostered in class." What is next for the Ursinus community and its residents on campus?

The energy has seemed to shift. "I think that there was a feeling

See **Post Election** on pg. 7



Men's Soccer Hopes for More

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With all fall sports starting to wind down, the men's soccer team has been making a close to their "fall season." Just as all the other teams have been doing, this team has been spending their season adjusting to the constant changes from COVID-19 regulations. With no real games to look forward to, and team goals, as well as personal goals, being pushed to the back burner, what has moti-

vated this team to be in the best possible shape they can be in? What gives them their hope and drive to look forward to something that is possibly a year away?

Junior Devin Nunemaker talks about some of the hardest adjustments that have been made since COVID hit: "The hardest part about practicing under the COVID-19 regulations has been having to play with masks up at all times." Similar to what almost all other teams have said, wearing a mask can be one of the most difficult things

during practice. While this is the safest way to participate in practice with fellow teammates, it can also be one of the most challenging tasks. Nunemaker also adds, "I would also say that having strict no-contact regulations has made playing the sport tougher because going in for tackles and interceptions are now much more limited." In a physical contact sport such as soccer, throwing a few elbows, as well as pushes, is part of the game. In fact, this is what some of

See **Men's Soccer** on pg. 7

Thinking of You!



Photo by Ursinus Athletics



Photo by Ursinus Athletics