

THE

METROPOLITAN

The Metropolitan State University Student Newspaper

Spring Break TRIO Service Project:
Feed My Starving Children



(Photos by: Feed My Starving Children website)

VANG LOR & CANDACE HER
uf9344jg@metrostate.edu &
ys6328ux@metrostate.edu

On March 9, 2017, TRIO Student Support Services took 14 TRIO students and two staff members on a volunteer service trip. The service trip was to Feed My Starving Children (FMSC) in Eagan, MN. When we first got there we learned about the non-profit organization and their mission. Feed My Starving Children is a Christian non-profit organization that hand packs meals for children that are in need. After the meals are prepped and boxed up, FMSC teams up with different organizations and distributes them throughout world. The meals consist of rice, soy, dried vegetables and a nutritionally complete blend of vitamins and

minerals. FMSC has three permanent sites, located in Minnesota, Illinois and Arizona, and is open year-round, 6 days a week.

After a quick presentation, all the volunteers were put into teams. Everyone had a role in preparing the meals to achieve the goal. It starts with the scoopers that fill the meal bags with the different types of food. Then it goes to the group that weighs the meals to ensure the bag isn't too heavy or too light. After that process, it goes to the sealer, who makes sure that there isn't any excess air and that the meals are sealed tight. After sealing the meals, they are sent to packaging, where a label is applied to show where the package is coming from. The packers also make sure there are 36 meals in a box. The

meals are then put onto a pallet and are ready to be shipped out to the different countries.

Overall, it was a great experience. We learned about the FMSC and their mission. We were also fortunate enough for FMSC to share their success stories with us. One personal thing we gained from this was learning how to work together as a team to achieve a global goal. It takes many helping hands to achieve something great. Within that two hours of volunteering, TRIO Student Support Services and other volunteers generated 112 boxes with a total of 24,192 meals. Those meals will help feed up to 67 kids for a year. Even though we were only there for a short time, with this little act of volunteering we were able to impact so many lives.

“Even though we were only there for a short time, with this little act of volunteering we were able to impact so many lives.”



TRIO students and staff members using their spring break to volunteer and help others.
(Photo by: PaYong Xiong)

Metro State
Scholarships
Available!

The Metropolitan State University Foundation scholarships application period for the 2017–2018 academic year is open from March 1 until noon on April 14.

Last year, approximately 144 awards of \$240,000 were awarded to students.

For more information, visit Metropolitan State's scholarships web page. .

These privately funded scholarships have a variety of requirement criteria, so check to see which might work for you. To maximize search results, leave the option fields set to "All."

Questions about the scholarships should be directed to Gateway staff at 651-793-1300 or gateway@metrostate.edu.

Healthcare
and Wellness
Services are
Now Offered
at Metro
State!

What is Healthcare and
Wellness Services?

During spring semester 2017, students were charged a \$2.50 per credit fee for Healthcare and Wellness Services, that was approved by the Metropolitan State University Student Senate in 2014. As a result, students will be able to have access to Zipnosis, a telemedicine platform available at no cost. In addition, other health and wellness initiatives will be available to students throughout the year.

SEE HEALTH AND WELLNESS
SERVICES ON PAGE 2

THE METROPOLITAN

The Metropolitan State
University
campus newspaper

Editor
Brayden Mann

Associate Editor
Kevin J. Franken

Copy Editor
Evelyn May

Layout Editor
Scott Lindell

Business Manager
Brittany Jacks

Online Administrator
Joseph T. Parsons

The Metropolitan
offers great deals on
classified advertising.
Contact Brittany Jacks at
Ld2098xs@metrostate.edu

For information on staff positions
and internships, email the editor,
Brayden Mann at
yb6938yy@metrostate.edu

Get Published!

Writing for the
Metropolitan is an
excellent way to inform
fellow students about
important issues and
events while enhancing
your professional
writing credentials.

The Metropolitan pays
non-staff member
contributors \$45 per
article.

The Metropolitan
welcomes article
submissions from all
students. Please see
submission guidelines
on OrgSync.

Email the Editor at:
yb6938yy@metrostate.edu
to share your article
ideas or to submit your
article for publication
consideration.

The submission
deadline for the May
Issue is April 10, 2017.

Mann About Town

An Open Letter to Those Who Fear Monger:

BRAYDEN MANN
yb6938yy@metrostate.edu

Hey Guys, how’s it going?

I’ll be the first one to say this: not everybody who voted for Trump is a racist. That is a broad assumption about a population that gets very little honest press. When I mean honest press, that refers to the average Trump voter—not Neo-Nazi’s, not the wealthy exploiting a very egotistical man and certainly not politically inept politicians.

Because that’s what will define this presidency: political ineptitude. Not just from Trump or his motley crew of circus performers, but rather those who took advantage of the situation; seeing a man who has no political skill take one of the most powerful offices in the world.

I don’t think I’ve kept my feelings very hidden on the situation. To me, this country is our rights and our freedoms. Adding “moralistic” value anything can be a bit of a stick of dynamite in the pond—thinly veiling a healthcare bill that eliminates coverage of 20 million lower- and middle-class Americans while enriching the already wealthy is about as underhanded as politics can get.

I’m reminded of what Jon Stewart said post-election on CBS This Morning with Charlie Rose:

“...there are guys in my neighborhood that I love, that I respect, that I think have incredible qualities, who are not afraid of Mexicans, and not afraid of Muslims, and not afraid of blacks. They’re afraid of their insurance premiums. In the liberal community, you hate this idea of creating people as a monolith. Don’t look at Muslims as a monolith. They are the individuals and it would be ignorance. But everybody who voted for Trump is a monolith, is a racist. That hypocrisy is also real in our country.”

This is how we become divided. It’s not through division of high moral rhetoric or “an act of mercy”—as described by Speaker of the House Paul Ryan in regards to the proposed healthcare plan—that will separate us, but rather the image we paint of each other.

Policy is key to discuss and fight when it is not in the interest of the common person. Fighting immigration bans that simply do not make sense need to be fought. Universal healthcare needs to be strived towards, as that

is one of the hallmark policies of any developed nation. It won’t be any of that which fundamentally creates strife.

It will be our inability to put ourselves in others’ situations that will be the downfall. Simply having a conflicting opinion is not reason enough to hate or shut down one’s voice. That’s the thing about free speech: it is a double-edged sword. I see the experiment of democracy truly breaking down when we choose to yell at each other through a webcam, with the desire of being heard without caring to hear.

It’s the lack of mutual respect and a lack of empathy for other viewpoints that serves a devastating blow. Sure, there are unalienable rights we must defend in the 21st century, but simply ignoring the opposing side of an issue is not only ignorant, but irresponsible. Why simply drown out a contentious opinion while the holders of that opinion gain support and resentment?

This is all theoretical thought, but one of the biggest issues of 21st century is humanizing people despite technology’s often dehumanizing qualities. Better yet, taking time to experience an issue rather than judge via a keyboard—as in seeing a story on Facebook and getting offended right away, rather than investigating multiple viewpoints, truly caring to understand human rationale.

The saddest thing is that many politicians and news outlets recognize this political strife. Rather than coming through with sensible rhetoric, they will just hop on the tornado while their contingency seemingly tears itself apart. But, you have to remember:

“There is nothing to fear but fear itself.”

Franklin Roosevelt said this nearly 80 years ago in the face of political, economic and social turmoil. Many things have changed since then an unrelenting optimism is a defining trait of our culture. We may still be getting used to tolerance, but we are slowly but surely getting better. Don’t let the instigators of fear and hate change that.

Best wishes,
Brayden

HEALTH AND WELLNESS SERVICES FROM PAGE 1

What is Zipnosis?

Zipnosis is an online telemedicine portal that will enable students to access online healthcare in minutes, twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, including holidays. The service is free for students to use. Students will be able to get quick care for a number of conditions, including:

- Colds, flu, strep throat
- Hay fever and allergies
- Swimmer’s ear
- Whooping cough (Pertussis)
- Pink eye (Conjunctivitis)
- Urinary Tract Infections
- And more

Register at:
<https://fairview.zipnosis.com/passcode/msu>

Once registered please use the following link:
<https://fairview.zipnosis.com/>

Who can I contact for more information?

Jodee Fitzgerald, the Coordinator of Healthcare and Wellness Services, can answer questions you have in regards to Zipnosis, the telemedicine platform that is now available. In addition, she can also assist in identifying both internal and external community health and wellness resources.

If you have additional questions, please check out the website for more details or contact Jodee Fitzgerald.

Jodee.Fitzgerald@metrostate.edu
Phone: 651-793-1552
Founders Hall 240D

www.metrostate.edu/student/student-services-support/student-services/health-and-wellness-services

If you need a ZipTicket for a Strep Test, the promo code is MSUTICKET. Please see Healthcare and Wellness Services webpage for more details!

Survival Guide for the Second Half of the Semester

Caffeine: The Student Battle for Concentration

EVELYN MAY
ce4553dr@metrostate.edu

Coffee has been around for centuries, but it’s a mystery of when caffeine consumption began. In the 14th century it was used as medicine throughout the Arabic world. Then that yummy bitter drink got a boost into the spotlight during the 15th century because of new grinding and roasting techniques. So why do we here at The Metropolitan love it so much? Well, we mostly like the caffeine, and the newspaper staff is much like the rest of the student body.

As I sit here at the main campus’ library at 8 p.m., I wish there was a cup of something caffeinated next to me. I just stared a little too long at a man who was probably 50 percent hotter than Indiana Jones. This is because my concentration is off, and I apparently rank men on a Harrison Ford scale. Nonetheless, I really want some green tea or coffee to get me through the evening of writing. In fact, looking around at my fellow students, about half of them have coffee cups next to them.

Most Metro students work, have families and attend evening classes. It’s enough to drive any well intentioned student to sleep deprivation. Grabbing a cup or can of caffeine before 6 p.m. class is common. However, is it healthy?

It depends, is the answer. Caffeine can give you more alertness, as seen in military pilots who are given caffeine laced gum. Since drinking a mocha while flying a mission would prove impossible during a barrel roll, they have to settle for gum. Why does this lovely little day brightener boost your energy? Well, according to Janet Raloff’s article titled “Brain Boosters: Some Natural Supplements Provide Real Food for Thought” and published in Society for Science and the Public, it all has to do with molecule magic. Caffeine blocks adenosine, a chemical created by the body that slows the heart rate and causes drowsiness.

The half-life of caffeine in the blood stream is about 50 percent after six hours, so it could really screw up your circadian rhythm. For students,



(Photo from: Adobe Stock)

we struggle with that as it is. Have you ever had a latte in class, then gone home after a night class, and felt like sleep would never come? This was probably due to the caffeine still lingering in your body. Totally sucks, right?

Perhaps there is a different answer? I’ve tried multiple times to tough through night classes without a caffeine fix, and it’s been rough. Do you find at a certain time of the day that a headache comes on? Or maybe your shoulders and neck hold more tension after a few hours without caffeine? A study published in the American Association for the Advancement of Science looked into anxiety and muscle tension caused by caffeine and possible withdrawal from it.

The study found that a sample of college students who were heavy caffeine users measured to have higher anxiety levels and muscle tension while coming down from caffeine. What I’m saying here is not only does your body become drowsy from withdrawal, you may get a headache from the lack of caffeine you are used to. And you could be left feeling anxious with muscle tension without knowing why. Now you know it may be our loved caffeine kicking our butts.

Now that we’re hooked on java, what can we do? Let’s look for alternatives. It has become a social norm to have coffee dates and to chug energy drinks so full of caffeine the consumer is left shaking in their own skin. Maybe backing off the super caffeinated drinks will help students in their studies. Also, Raloff mentions that tea containing L-theanine (an amino acid known for altering brain waves) mixed with small amounts of caffeine can boost concentration. Without the withdrawal of a high level of caffeine, sleep and wellbeing should come quicker for students.

Let’s face it, no matter what your intentions, coffee and caffeinated drinks are here to stay. However, as consumers we can be more health conscious and reach for decaf coffee and tea before night classes to get a little caffeine boost without destroying a good night of sleep afterwards.

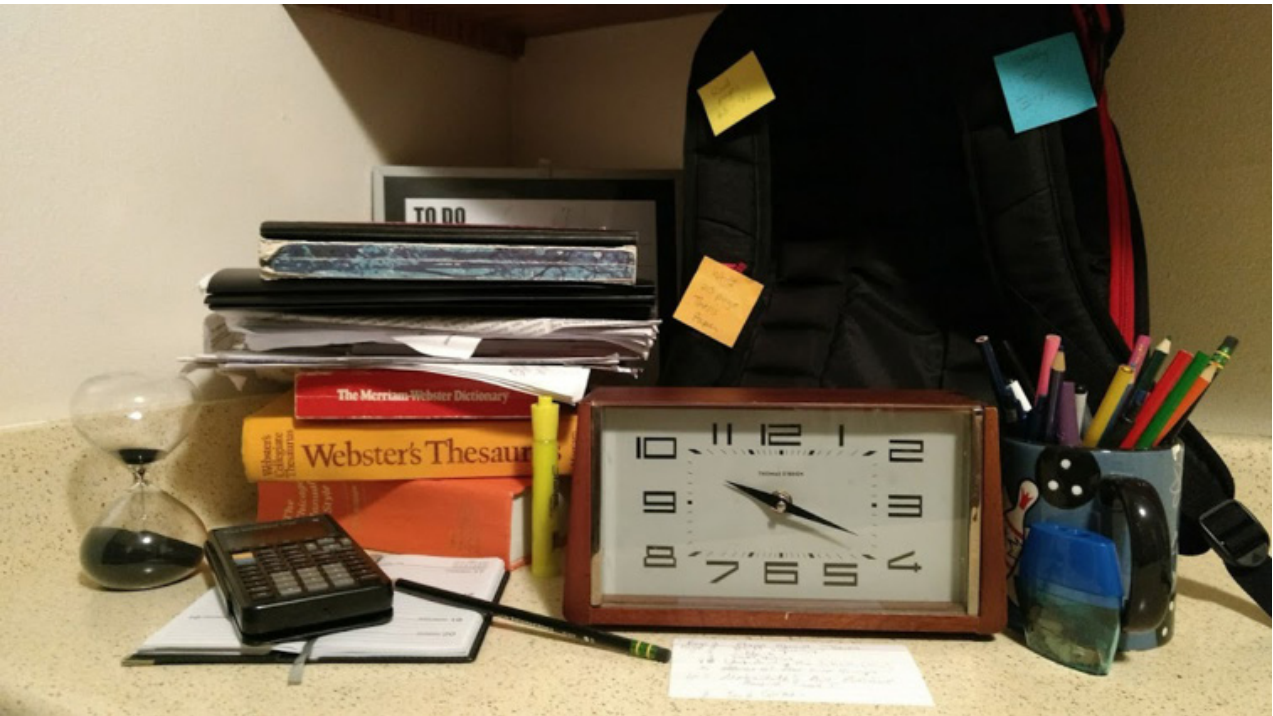
As always, I urge you to make healthy decisions, but understand as students it’s not always possible. However, you can take care of your body, mind, and spirit because they will help you throughout your lifelong learning process.

Five Things You May Not Know About Your Metro State Library (A Quick Access Guide to Using Library Resources)

SCOTT LINDELL
rv1817nn@metrostate.edu

Spring break is over. How was your break this year? Are you refreshed and ready for the second half of the semester? In the next few weeks, Metropolitan State students, like you, will quickly approach deadlines. Time will tick away as you prepare for exams and write your final papers. Speaking of papers, how is yours coming along? Did you start it? If you need help, the Metro State Library is a great place to begin.

Many students flock to the library during final exam season, a quiet place where you can focus and concentrate. At home, distractions may hinder your momentum to tackle challenging assignments. In the library, you will be in the company of students working hard at their studies. Their dedication will inspire you to move forward and produce excellent results.



Tasks are piling up as students approach the final weeks of the spring semester. (Photo by: Scott Lindell)

Survival Guide for the Second Half of the Semester

USING LIBRARY RESOURCES FROM PAGE 3

Besides being an ideal location for study, your Metro State Library has several useful resources. Have you visited this facility lately? If not, this article will help you discover what you are missing. Here are five things you may not know your Metro State Library provides:

Information, Information and Even More Information

You may know that the Metro State Library has many books and periodicals to peruse. Did you know that you also have access to 128 information databases? These individual catalogs contain specific information that corresponds to a particular area of study. For instance, the “MEDLINE” database has health science and medical news. The “Computer Database” source has the latest information on computers and technology. To retrieve these databases yourself, go to the libguides.metrostate.edu/az.php webpage. This site will bring you to Research Guides. I enjoy using The New York Times Historical Database. This resource is my “time machine” to view editorials and advertisements as they appeared years ago.

You may not have time to go through these databases individually. On the right-hand sidebar you will notice a “One Search” box. This search engine will help you find articles fast. Once you locate the desired article there should be a link to read the full text online. Most articles also let you email, download, print or save the document for future access. Articles typically include citation tools to help you complete a bibliography.

After using “One Search”, I feel this will be your go-to place to find information. It will help you save time and also guide you toward scholarly publications that are useful and accurate. You may get different results using Google.

Online Access to a Librarian

Some difficulties may develop when searching for data. Did you know that librarians assist students online? You can find a text box on the library’s homepage to submit your question to a librarian. This text box is also at the Research Guides webpage mentioned previously in this article. If you prefer, you can send them an email at library.services@metrostate.edu. They may help you find something, access archives or arrange an interlibrary loan request.



The Metro State Library can help you with your final projects. (Photo by: Scott Lindell)

Access to Other Resources

As you work on your school projects, there may be things you need. For instance, you may need a laptop, digital camera, voice recorder or calculator. Did you know that students can check out these items at the Metro State Library? You may also need access to a particular computer program. At the Metro State Library, and other campus computer labs, you may find software such as Adobe Photoshop and IBM SPSS to add professionalism to your work. If you are working on a group task, a meeting room may be beneficial. You can reserve and view study room availability online at mplus.mnpals.net/booking/patron_MTR_005881814.html.

Excellent Availability

You can gain entry to all library services by going to the Metro State Library and Information Services webpage.

- Step 1: Go to www.metrostate.edu
- Step 2: Click CURRENT STUDENTS on the header
- Step 3: Select the LEARN MORE button in the blue “Learning Resources” box
- Step 4: Click on the LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES button by scrolling down to the third option on the “Learning Resources” page

You can also go directly to www.metrostate.edu/student/learning-resources/learning-resources/library-and-information-services. This one-stop webpage will help you locate a library service that fits your needs. You can use this site to contact a librarian or use “One Search” to find your material. My favorite feature is the “LIBRARY HOURS TODAY” link above the “One Search” box. If you ever wondered when the library is open, this will help you plan your day. The Metro State Library is open more hours than a traditional library, giving you plenty of time to finish your work.

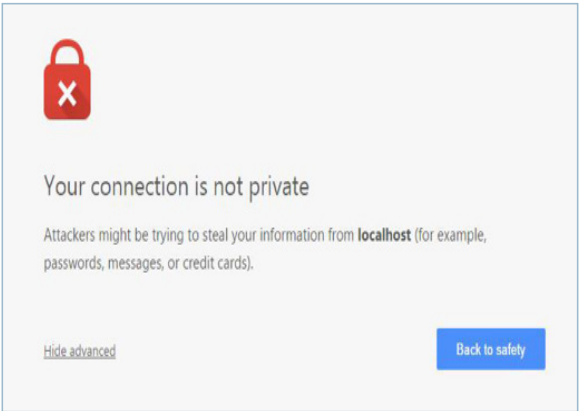
Fun Events

Besides laboring on your coursework, the Metro State library has fun activities for you. During the year, the library hosts events for the Dayton’s Bluff Book Club and Third Tuesday Game Nights. They also have a Teens Know Best book club for teens. To view upcoming library events, click on the UPCOMING LIBRARY EVENTS button at www.metrostate.edu/student/learning-resources/learning-resources/library-and-information-services/events-and-programs. The next game night event will be April 18 from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. in the first-floor library lounge. Game night events feature many board and video games.

Good luck in the final weeks of the semester. The Metro State Library is a great resource to help you achieve your academic goals. I hope you use it.

Understanding the School Email Insecurity Warning

JOSEPH T. PARSONS
dq3685ct@metrostate.edu



Many students received insecurity warnings when accessing their student email.

If you tried accessing Metro State’s email or student portal anytime between about January and earlier this month, there’s a good chance you saw a big, scary warning using Google Chrome or Firefox.

The cause of this warning is technical, and I’d rather not bore you with all the nitty-gritty details. It boils down to exactly how we verify whether a site we are visiting is “real” or an “impersonation.” You see, every big site that sends or receives sensitive information (and this includes login credentials like a username and password) will try to prove that it isn’t an impersonation by first sending something akin to a “fingerprint” — something that only that site, and no one else, has.

There are a bunch of different formulas for creating this type of fingerprint, and some older formulas can be “faked.” Both Chrome and Firefox have decided very recently that one such formula, called “SHA-1,” is no longer safe enough from impersonation. So they will now warn people when visiting a site that is using SHA-1.

Metro State updated its fingerprint on March 4th to use a newer formula, “SHA-256.” If you’re still getting the warning, you may need to clear your browser cache, but most likely it will clear itself out soon enough. Additionally, you may still run across websites that haven’t updated their fingerprinting formulas, but hopefully there aren’t many remaining. In fact, most switched over to SHA-256 and other similar formulas a few years ago.

Student Life

Metro State’s Art Purchase Award

KEVIN J. FRANKEN
fz2751fb@metrostate.edu

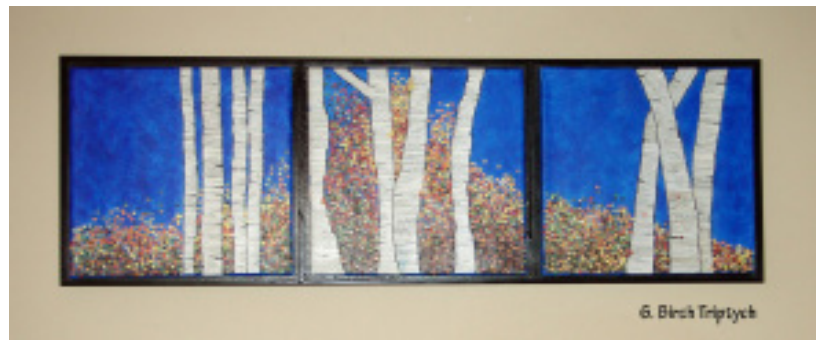
In the March issue of The Metropolitan, the article “Metro State’s Meaning of Art” highlighted artwork at Metropolitan State. Those pieces were commissioned work acquired for display. This article will have a more personal focus, featuring three past winners of the “Art Purchase Award” (APA).

Erica Rasmussen, professor of studio arts and gallery director at Metro State, created the APA 14 years ago. Held every spring, the competition is open to students, alumni and arts faculty. Each winner is awarded \$1,000 and their artwork is displayed at Metro State. This is a great way to spotlight the school’s ongoing presence of skillful artistry and creativity.

Barbara Cobb

Earning a B.A. in Individualized Studies with a focus on the Arts, Barbara Cobb graduated from Metro State in 2006. Cobb pursues her art whenever she can, working around her full-time job as a graphic designer for an engineering company. She is presently gearing up for the “Edge of the Big Woods Art Wander,” held every year in Carver county. Making it a yearly goal to enter Metro State’s Art Purchase Award, Cobb is also working on some pieces for that event.

Cobb has won the APA two times. The first was a few years after she graduated and is titled “Birch Triptych” (“triptych” meaning a set of three panels side by side). The trees in the piece are made of text clipped from magazine pages. Cobb also added black paint to mimic the look of a birch tree’s bark. To create the small squares, Cobb again used magazines, punching out the multi-colored dots.



“Birch Triptych” (Photo courtesy of: Kevin J.Franken)

Cobb’s other entry is called “Sunday on the North Shore,” for which she won the award last year. This mixed-media piece is made up of hand-dyed silk and hand-made felt—both done by Cobb. There are also some hanging stones, as well as driftwood intertwined with the fabrics. Cobb had found the driftwood while on a trip to her father’s cabin in northern Wisconsin, not far from Duluth.

Cobb’s father had recently suffered a stroke and she went up there to visit him, finding the pieces of driftwood while the two of them were out on a walk along Lake Superior. Cobb decided to combine the elements together, saying that the fabrics reminded her of fall colors. The blue background represents, of course, the water.

In regards to winning the award, Cobb says, “It was really exciting and it meant a lot to me, because it had to do with my father and what he went through.” Yearly involvement in the APA “pushes and challenges me,” Cobb says, “It makes me want to change things up and try different things. It helps me grow as an artist.” Cobb also appreciates having her artwork displayed at Metro State, stating, “How great to have original art in classrooms instead of something purchased from Bed, Bath & Beyond.”



“Sunday on the North Shore”
(Photo courtesy of: Kevin J.Franken)

Judy-Saye Willis

After retiring from a career in business, Judy Saye-Willis earned her Masters degree in Liberal Studies from Metro State. Graduating in 2010, she now considers herself a full-time studio artist, also teaching some classes. Saye-Willis works with organic, natural dyes and various aspects of surface

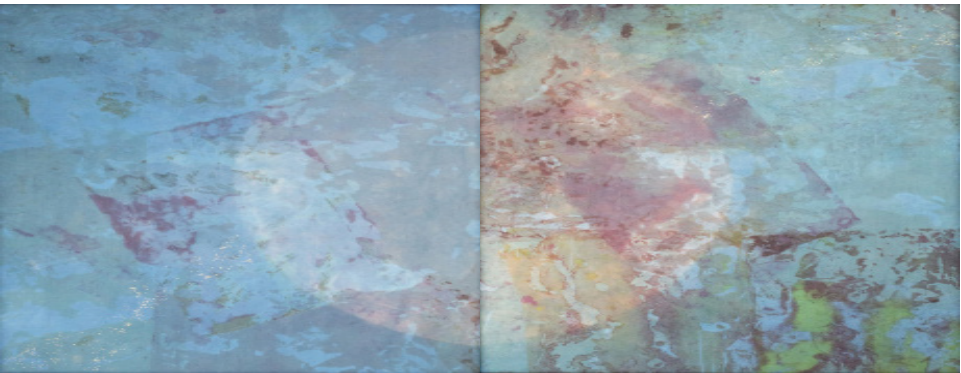
design. Involving much research and experimentation, some of these techniques date back to the ancient Egyptians and were first referenced by Pliny the Elder in the first century.

Saye-Willis has twice won the APA, the first a five-piece framed series titled “The Place Where I Go To Rest.” Regarding her inspiration, she says, “Life can get very hectic and often an artist needs a quiet place to contemplate their work. The series is a representation of that.” Machine stitching was used in the process and the small colored circles were done with a felting technique.



“The Place Where I Go To Rest” (Photo courtesy of: Kevin J.Franken)

Saye-Willis won her second APA a few years ago with a two-piece work titled “Space View.” With a whitish half-circle in each piece, Saye-Willis said it reminded her of looking past the moon at the stars and galaxies. She created these pieces on silk using a series of techniques. This included breakdown printing, stenciling, resist apply and then over-dyeing them in an indigo bath.



“Space View” (Photo courtesy of: Kevin J.Franken)

“It was really quite exciting, it’s nice to have your art in public places,” Saye-Willis says, in response to winning the APA. “I have real strong feelings about Metro State, because I have appreciated what the university does,” she says, adding, “For any artist to get an award like that, it means a lot.”

Saye-Willis recently finished another series titled “From Garden to Gallery: Nature’s Gentle Colors.” The exhibit is now on display at the Paradise Center for the Arts in Faribault, Minnesota. Along with numerous two-dimensional pieces, there are also large panels of dyed fabric hanging from the ceiling.

Saye-Willis created these panels with a technique called Japanese shibori, a manual resist dyeing process that produces various patterns on fabric. Pictures of the exhibit and artwork of Saye-Willis can be found on the Minnesota Prairie Roots website at mnprairieroots.com.

Bryan Starry

Having graduated just last December, Bryan Starry earned two B.A. degrees from Metro State, one in Applied Mathematics and the other in Studio Arts. This seemingly odd duo suits Starry well. “Art is always a good relaxation for me,” he says. “I loved and enjoyed the math, but I had to work really hard at it,” Starry says, adding, “So art is always a good balance for the math.” While he is not working his own business as a high-end property manager, Starry works at his craft. “Art talks to people, no matter where you’re at in the world,” he says.

Starry won the APA a few years ago—while still a student at Metro State—with a sculpted piece titled “Solitude.” Indicative of a human figure, it is what Starry calls “a found-object piece.” He came across the materials (that were essentially scraps) at Amble’s Machinery Hardware and Steel Company in Minneapolis. Starry first found the grinding wheel that

Student Life

ART PURCHASE AWARD RECIPIENTS FROM PAGE 5



“Solitude” (Photo courtesy of: Kevin J.Franken)

makes up the head of the piece. He then decided to build the figure around that, using steel and brass tubes, steel plates, galvanized mesh and copper wiring.

Winning the award was a gratifying experience for Starry. “It was nice to have somebody see a piece of my sculpture and say they’d be willing to put up some money for it,” he said. “I had sold jewelry and that sort of thing before but that was the first sculpture piece of mine that I’d ever had purchased, so I was really grateful. It helped me realize that I maybe had something to put out there in the world that other people would want to look at,” Starry added.

Self-employed as a graphic artist for many years, Starry always had an interest in making jewelry. He started out as a jeweler’s apprentice, and something sparked, “The first time I polished a ring in three dimensions and did a really good job

on it, I got this chill down my spine and thought, ‘that’s what I have to start doing.’” From there Starry began working in bronze and gold which led to blacksmithing and forging metals.

Starry works out of a foundry in Minneapolis, complete with a kiln and forge (or furnace) for melting metals, and is presently putting the finishing touches on two bronze pieces. Starry will enter these in the Student Salon—running from mid-March to mid-April—at Metro State. The exhibit can be seen in the Gordon Parks Gallery on the library’s third floor. Starry’s various artwork can also be found at bryanstarry-artist.com.

Speaking of his school experience, “I had an awesome time at Metro State,” Starry said, adding, “I had great professors and students to work with. As a school it’s a pretty amazing place. I was really glad I got to leave behind a little piece of me.”

What’s So Funny? How to Get into Stand-Up Comedy

C.T. CORUM
c.t.corum@gmail.com

You can feel the sweat begin to form on your brow when you step onto the tiny podium. As you approach the microphone, you feel the intense heat of the bright lights that are shinning down on you. In the audience, all you can see are darkened silhouettes of people who are waiting for someone to ease their stressful lives. You clear your voice.

What do you say?

This is a scenario that faces all professional comedians, no matter the experience level. Audiences may range from a handful of people to thousands of individuals, but the overall process and principles of standup comedy remain the same. The goal is always to make the audience laugh, but how do comedians accomplish this?

But first, how can students at Metropolitan State get involved in standup comedy?

Ryan Patchin is a student at Metro State, who plans to graduate with a major in creative writing. Patchin has done six open mic routines, and he offers his advice for students who are looking to become a stand-up comic.

“You need that exposure,” Patchin said. “You need to get out there as much as you can to get as much exposure as possible.”

This is not only the most important step to becoming a well-known comedian, it is

also one of the hardest. Commitment and dedication are required for someone who is serious about becoming a comic professionally. Agents are known to come to open mics to see if there is anyone talented performing. If they see someone they like, then chances are this comedian will be able to act as a “middle” (buzzword for one of the opening acts) at a show. As the comedian builds popularity, he or she can move up to become a feature and

then a headline.

“You want to be discovered as much as people want to discover you,” said Patchin.

Knowing your audience is another piece of advice that Patchin gives. Jokes need to be tailored to the audience that you are performing to. Without this familiarity, many comedians will fail by either presenting jokes that are too offensive or using jargon that the audience doesn’t understand.



“An almond! I thought we'd agreed—nothing extravagant.”

(Image from: The New Yorker)

Funny things happen around us all the time. Everyday life can be hilarious when looked at from a different perspective. This is why Patchin also recommends that you write things down that make you laugh. Patchin uses his phone and makes notes whenever he comes across something unusual or entertaining.

But how do comedians decide what material is funny?

According to Scott Weems, a cognitive scientist and author of the book “Ha! The Science of When We Laugh and Why,” one of the most important components of humor is surprise. To illustrate this point, let’s look at an example that Weems uses:

“Two hunters from New Jersey are out in the woods when one of them collapses. He doesn’t seem to be

breathing and his eyes are glazed over. The other guy whips out his phone and calls the emergency service. He gasps, ‘I think my friend is dead! What should I do?’ The operator says, ‘Calm down. I can help. First, make sure he’s dead.’ There is a silence, then a shot is heard. Back on the phone, the guy says, ‘Okay, now what?’”

When writing a joke, surprise is one of the most im-

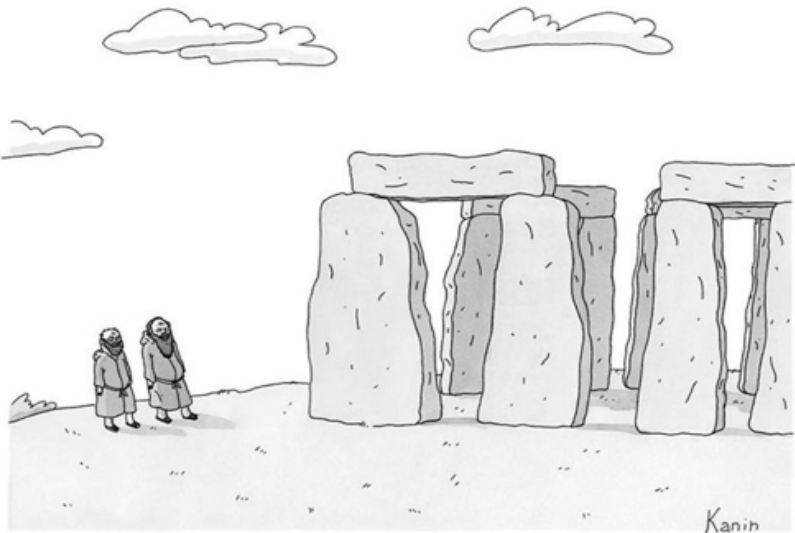
portant ingredients. In this example, it was the surprise that, rather than taking his friends pulse, the hunter misunderstands and instead shoots his friend.

A standup comedian should write down his or her material, practice it every night and modify it to fit the audience. These are the basic tools of a comedian, and these are tools that anyone can use. For Metro State stu-

dents who are looking to become standup comedians, all it takes is commitment, passion and an ability to look at the world in a different perspective.

“Be repetitive, hone [your skills], and get better every day,” said Patchin.

In the end, being a stand-up comedian is easy. All you have to do is make the audience laugh.



“I just hope people in the future are, like, ‘What the hell are these things?’ ”

(Image from: The New Yorker)

Tech Corner

Understanding Internet Privacy

JOSEPH T. PARSONS
dq3685ct@metrostate.edu

I just so happen to be old enough that I missed out on middle-school lectures about social media safety. While Facebook was quite big when I entered high school, adults had not quite caught up with the technology. Schools were more focused on stranger danger (scary chat rooms!) than they were on the actual threats of my time, like cyberbullying and revealing too much information on social media.

This has changed. I expect most college freshmen and sophomores probably did get those lectures, and in any case older students have had plenty of time to learn about social media safety. I'm not going to reprise those lessons here, but I would like to take a look at some of the lesser-known privacy losses people encounter on the internet, and how to avoid them.

(I would also recommend checking out my previous article on Windows 10 privacy, available at themetropolitan.metrostate.edu/issue/2016/09/002/)

Facebook Knows Which Websites You Visit

No, really. Facebook knows a lot about which sites you visit. Any website that includes an un-customized Facebook “like” button, or page widget or comment feed is a website that Facebook knows you’ve visited. Some websites don’t include any of these, but instead include “Facebook pixel” in order to track the demographics of their users—which is done by aggregating the Facebook profiles of people who visit those websites. Those websites won’t know exactly who is using them, but Facebook will know everybody who is using those websites. (Disclosure: The Metropolitan online includes the Facebook “Like” button, enabling tracking. The main Metropolitan State website includes Facebook pixel.)

Now, in general, this applies to other large media platforms as well, like Google. Google does, for instance, have the ability to connect ad hits on any webpage with a distinct user account. Even if you tell Google not to use personalized ads, the company still has the capability of connecting every ad you view with your Google account. Where Facebook seems to differ is that they do this quite intentionally. Google doesn’t need account information to show an ad, and if you disable tracking, they almost certainly discard the information immediately. Facebook offers no equivalent—if you are logged into your Facebook account, they will know what pages you visit. That’s the point of the pixel tracking, after all: to leverage your profile information as demographic information.

Now, there is a sure-fire option to “opt out” of this type of tracking: Adblock. There are many Adblock extensions available, Adblock Plus

(adblockplus.org) and uBlock Origin (available on the Chrome Web Store) being two good choices. Both will automatically block most tracking, ads included, and can be easily configured to block all social media trackers. (For Adblock Plus, social media blocking can be enabled by adding “Fanboy’s Social Blocking List” from easylist.to; on uBlock Origin, you can enable this list directly from the settings menu under “3rd-Party Filters.”)

Google Knows Where You Were Last Summer

I actually find this feature quite cool, but most people don’t seem to know about it: Google keeps a log of the places you visit. Whenever you use GPS through a Google service (be it on Android or iOS), Google keeps a log of it. It uses this information in some very useful ways. For instance, Google Now may use it to remind you where you parked, and Google Maps uses it to ask people to provide reviews for restaurants they’ve visited.

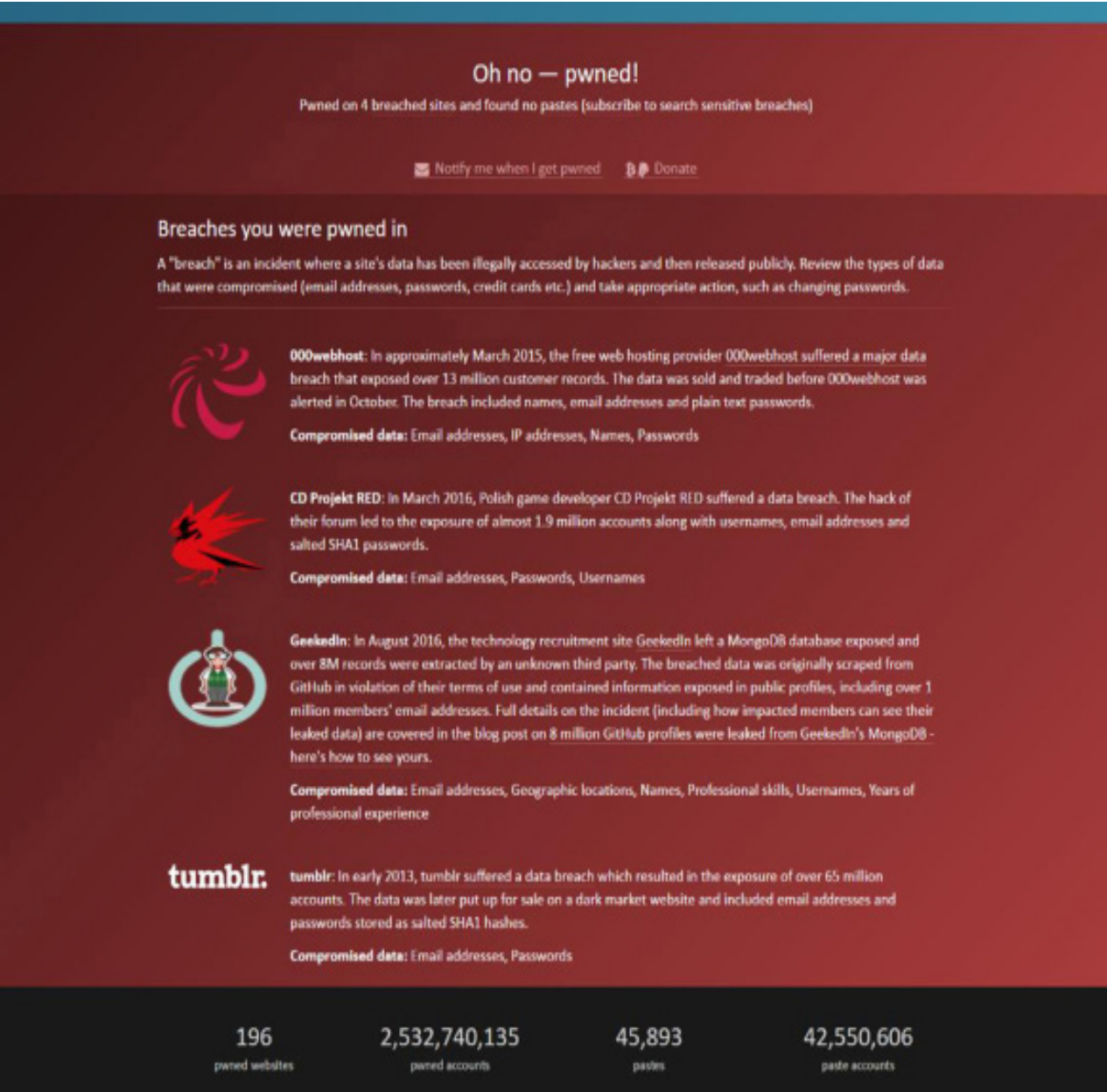
Still, Google is remarkably transparent about this information. You can view everything they know at google.com/maps/timeline in an easy-to-use day-by-day map of your activities. You can also disable your location history completely by

going to myaccount.google.com/activitycontrols/location. But, honestly, I prefer to keep mine on because it’s nice having an automatic log of my activities.

Password Leaks Can Open Up All Your Accounts

One persistent issue with keeping your data private is keeping the accounts holding your data private. Everybody should be using a password manager (I highly recommend reading themetropolitan.metrostate.edu/issue/2016/03/002/ for more on that). This ensures the use of only random, varying passwords for every site, but in practice most people just reuse the same two or three passwords for every account. And, unfortunately, websites are often less secure than we realize, with prominent website hacks releasing onto the internet millions of user passwords every year.

If you’re the reactive (instead of proactive) type, and don’t use a password manager, you can at least check haveibeenpwned.com to see if any accounts associated with your email address or password have been leaked. If you see that they have, *make sure you change the passwords to any accounts that reused compromised passwords!*



In total, my five-year-old email address is associated with four (4) different breaches, three of which contain passwords!
(Photo from haveibeenpwned.com)

The Metropolitan is online.

Read past and current issues at themetropolitan.metrostate.edu
Like us on Facebook at facebook.com/TheMetropolitanMN

Student Involvement

Metro State at the Women’s March

BRITTANY JACKS
Ld2098xs@metrostate.edu

In light of President Trump’s election, many Americans feel the need to fight for what they believe. Such an event took place in Washington D.C. on January 21st. The Women’s March was a way for hundreds of thousands to show their support, speak their minds and to fight for what they believe in. Protesting was a way to create waves regarding many political issues, including the rights of women, LGBTQ, immigration and racial equality. Those who were in attendance felt strongly about supporting legislation regarding human rights and opposed the offensive actions and positions of President Trump. This protest, one of the largest peaceful protest demonstration in U.S. history, involved supporters from around the world.

If the hordes of people weren’t enough of a shock, many women in the crowd wore a pink, knitted hat that made an enormous visual impact. Knitted from pink yarn and styled to have cat-like ears, it became what is now called the Pussyhat Project. The idea started off as a way to visually turn a derogatory word for women into a positive and empowering message. These hats were made by crafters around the

world to take back the word. It was a way for women around the nation to show support and make a stance even if they couldn’t make it to the march. However, the hats became so popular that they were a fundamental accessory for the Women’s March. This small project grew immensely and united the crowd, making a visually impactful statement.

After the March, many speakers shared their stories and ideas, including political leaders and celebrities. Many felt the importance of demonstrating concern and the significance of being a part of something you believe in. At the march, strangers from different backgrounds united and huddled together.

Members of Metro State’s Student Senate also attended the march. Senate member Heather Moenck said that being in the crowd “felt amazing,” adding, “There were so many people surrounding us that we couldn’t move. There was a quiet awe around everyone... even strangers were sharing stories and commenting on signs they liked. I was so happy to be there.”

Some from Metro State felt compelled to advocate for their own reasons. Metro State librarian Jennifer DeJonghe sat through a 22-hour bus ride to Washington



(Morguefile photo by: lauramusikanski)

D.C. with some colleagues, friends and family members to attend the march. Even on the ride there DeJonghe thought, “It was truly inspiring...an experience that I will never forget, and it still gives me chills to think about it... because the people seated around me turned out to be some of the nicest, most interesting people I have met, and we learned a lot about each other on that trip.”

In D.C., DeJonghe engaged in the march, protests and rallies and feels that this sort of event is a fundamental part of our democracy. For DeJonghe, protecting free speech is something she strives for as a librarian, believing that speech in any

form should be protected and preserved. To her this is a way to stand in the face of adversity much like the people in history before her. These marches were much harder and the risks were tremendous, but she feels that participating is just as important so we can also change our country for the better.

Four women from Student Senate attended the March. For Dhibo Hussein and Heather Moenck, marching was a way for them to fight for the rights of women and against racial inequality. Something that they had faced just getting out of the car before they started to march, their fight for these

issues represented a small fraction of a bigger picture. Hussein explained that marching “was a surreal experience and one that I felt would stay with me for the rest of my life.”

Both Hussein and Moenck feel that representing oneself and making a difference matters. This includes being able to have uncomfortable conversations, understanding the importance of politics and how to have an effect on politics to make positive gains—all attributes they learned from being on the senate. Now back at school, these women are feeling a new sense of empowerment, determination and motivation to make a difference.

Upcoming Metro State Events

Please visit orgsync.com/511/community/calendar?view=calendar up-to-date information for upcoming Metro State Events and Activities. You can also visit the News@Metro online newsletter at metrocatlyst.wordpress.com/category/events/. These websites will give you information on when events will occur and their locations. Here is a list of events planned for April and early May:

Psychology Club Meeting
Friday, April 7, 2017
5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

**International Cultural Festival
(International Student Organization)**
Friday, April 14, 2017
3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Haute Dish Spring Reading
Saturday, April 22, 2017
7:00 p.m. to 9 p.m.,

Student Senate Meeting
Friday, April 28, 2017
6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

**MANE Graduating Cohort Pinning
Ceremony (Nursing Student Organization)**
Monday, May 1, 2017
1:00 p.m.

The Metropolitan is hiring staff members for next year.

Please submit a cover letter, resume and two writing samples by email to Brayden Mann at yb6938yy@metrostate.edu by April 16, 2017 .