# The Gonzaga Bulletin

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GU biology students learn how to capture, observe and handle campus squirrels.

CHIANA MCINELLY IG: @picsh

# Wrangling in resident rodents

#### Campus squirrels help students learn about wildlife management

#### **By NATALIE RIETH**

onzaga wouldn't be the place it is without its campus squirrels which you may have seen run up to steal your food or dart across Bulldog Alley. In September and October, a biology elective course

offered at Gonzaga, Principles of Wildlife Management, conducted an experiment to capture, observe and handle these squirrels. Students participated in this experiment for the first time at GU this year.

Assistant Professor of biology, Stephen Hayes, who teaches the course, said that the learning outcome of

the experiment is for students to learn how to set up a collapsible tomahawk trap. To execute a successful experiment and follow

COVID-19 safety guidelines, the class of 16 students split up into two groups of eight. If these regulations had not affected the experiment process, the class would have taken a field trip to the Spokane River or to Pend Oreille County to set the traps in a forest setting. Students began the first week of the experiment

learning how to assemble and set the tomahawk trap. After set-up, the trap was pre-baited by wiring its doors open and placing bait inside so squirrels would feel safe and comfortable entering the traps.

Traps were set at eight different locations around campus with frequent GU squirrel activity. During that afternoon lab period, students observed and monitored squirrel engagement with the traps. This determined the placement of traps for the second half of the experiment.

'My favorite part of this experiment is getting outside and spending time just watching animals," senior Claire Colombini said in an email. "You have to be really patient

#### **SEE SOUIRREL PAGE 2**

## Learning through COVID-19 The Writing Center helps students push through online classes by providing services virtually

#### By LUKE KENNEALLY

Adapting to a lack of inperson work as a student has changed much of the way

John Eliason, director of the Writing Center. "At that point we had been a face-to-face Writing Center predominantly." Haley Wilson, a senior writing tutor who's been involved with the Writing Center since she was a freshman said that she was a little bummed out about the shift to online-only.



# Winners in Washington

Inslee secures third term as governor, Referendum 90 passes and longtime incumbent McMorris Rodgers wins 5th District

**Bv MELINA BENJAMIN** 

58.8% of the vote. Commissioner to represent the 5th District in the of Public Lands Hilary Franz (D) is reelected with 59% of the vote. State Treasurer Mike Pellicciotti (D) is reelected with 55.5% of the vote. State Referendum 90, a key ballot measure which requires Washington school districts to teach comprehensive sexual health education to all students, is approved with a 59.6% vote.

Ferguson (D) is reelected with McMorris Rodgers (R) is reelected U.S. House of Representatives winning 59.4% of the vote. There is no U.S. Senate election in Washington this year. The presidential election is still underway and votes are still being counted.

students operate. The Go Writing Center is no different. The recent shift to entirely

online interactions has altered the delivery for much of what the Writing Center offers. Students from all majors can now receive feedback on their writing from a fellow student via Zoom.

'We were in a situation like many writing centers around the country last spring where we had to transition into a different way of being," said

"I love the Foley Writing Center space and I loved being in the space surrounded by all the other tutors," Wilson said. "But at the same time, I was surprised by how much doesn't change."

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Since 8 p.m. on Tuesday in Washington, when polls closed and voters dropped off their final ballots, most all of the state races and elections have been called.

According to The Seattle Times and Associated Press (AP), Governor Jay Inslee (D) is reelected to his third term winning 59.3% of the vote. Lt. Gov. Denny Heck (D) wins with 47.1% of the vote.

Secretary of State Kim Wyman (R) is reelected winning 51.8% of the vote. Attorney General Bob

Regarding federal senate and house races, in the 5th Congressional District where a news editor. Follow her Spokane County is located, Cathy

More information on state and local election results can be found on The Seattle Times and AP websites.

Melina Benjamin is @melinabenj. on Twitter:

# Thanksgiving: To go home or to not go home

#### By VINCENT SAGLIMBENI

For many Gonzaga students this semester, they must make the decision of either going home for the Thanksgiving holiday or staying in Spokane.

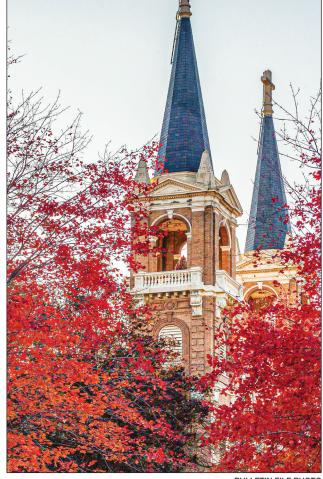
The university issued an announcement earlier in the semester that if students decide to leave Spokane County for Thanksgiving, they are encouraged to not return in an effort to decrease the potential spread of COVID-19. Part of this announcement was also due to GU announcing it would be going remote-only for the remainder of the semester.

Students across campus will be experiencing Thanksgiving in different ways, as underclassmen and upperclassmen share different experiences as to what they will be doing

Freshman Cole Mitchell, from Juneau, Alaska, has decided to stay in Spokane for his Thanksgiving break.

Mitchell said a lot of the people in his residence hall will be staying as well, and he and his residence hall mates will be hosting a potluck dinner.

**SEE THANKSGIVING PAGE 3** 



BULLETIN FILE PHOTO GU students are asked to not return to campus if they leave Spokane County for Thanksgiving.

A&E

### Strong on podcasts GU strength coach sets up success for future basketball players in podcast

#### By SAMANTHA DIMAIO

Most people know Mike Nilson as the strength and conditionaing coach of woman's basketball at Gonzaga University. Some people know him as a co-founder of U-District Physical Therapy. However, very few people know him as a successful podcast personality.

Ever since September 2019, Nilson has been creating roughly one episode each week for a podcast he started called "Hoop Commitment." With a strong focus on basketball, the podcast is tailored toward athletes, coaches and parents of athletes. Throughout the entire series, Nilson brings in several guest stars to talk about nutrition, training and leadership in the dynamic world of basketball.

"It's all for basketball players," Nilson said. "Anyone that wants to improve their nutrition, anyone that wants to improve their training and anyone that wants to become a better leader."

Nilson has loved basketball ever since he found out about Michael Jordan as a kid. He ended up becoming a great player in high school but didn't receive a single Division 1 scholarship as he looked toward the future. It was then that he had the brilliant idea to turn his goals into commitments in order to achieve his biggest dreams.

"If you really want to make your dreams come true, you need a commitment," Nilson said. "A commitment means, 'I have to'... it's so important to you that there's no way you're going to fail."

Rather than having an overarching goal of signing with a Division 1 school, he would make a solitary commitment to carry a basketball around all day every day. He walked through the hallways with it, brought it to classes, slept with it right by his side and even took it to prom along with his date. He still didn't receive a scholarship. However, he did

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# **Planting seeds for the future**

Local nongovernmental organizations provide volunteer opportunities for GU students

#### By GEORGIA COSOLA

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espite the overwhelming helplessness that often encompasses climate change, having the opportunity to volunteer or intern at an environmental nongovernmental organization (NGO) is a great way for students to gain meaningful experiences while also fighting for a cause they believe in.

In Spokane, The Lands Council exists to primarily protect and revitalize forests, waters and wildlife. It also works on issues regarding repair and organization of wildlife management.

"More recently we have been working on creating resiliency to climate change," said Maggie Gates, the community outreach coordinator of The Lands Council. "This includes working with different task forces and groups on ecosystems."

In addition to The Lands Council, Gates also spends a lot of time working with the Sunrise Movement.

The Sunrise Movement is a youth-led movement that works to address climate change while creating millions of well-paid jobs. Its current goal is to build a solid foundation that supports the Green New Deal.

"This group also supports other movements such as Black Lives Matter, the fight for housing justice and making sure communities are safe while pushing for climate change curriculum," Gates said.

In fact, the Sunrise Movement helped to organize the climate strikes that took place in Spokane in 2019.

Another important environmental NGO, Save Our wild Salmon (SOS) works to restore healthy and harvestable numbers of salmon and steelhead to the Pacific Northwest, said Carrie Herrmann, the outreach coordinator for SOS.

"There used to be millions of salmon that would pour up the Columbia River and its tributaries each year feeding bear, wolves, birds and tribal folks and now we've lost over 90% of those return numbers due primarily to dam infrastructure," Herrmann said.

Each organization acts as way for students to see the importance of and work for causes they believe in. It can also help for students to make decisions regarding their future career goals.

In fact, both Gates and Herrmann are graduates of GU. Gates recommends that students looking to get involved with The Lands Council should stay tuned for a variety of internships that will become available in the spring.

"There are also so many volunteer opportunities," Gates said. "Whatever your passion is, we can find a place and location for you to help out. We also always need help in the office."

All information regarding the Sunrise Movement is posted on its Instagram: @sunrise\_spokane. Gates also recommends to DM the account to be added to the movement's Slack.

In regards to SOS, Herrmann recommends that students reach out to them for internship opportunities or, more importantly, reach out to elected officials.



PHOTO COURTESY OF SAVE OUR WILD SALMON'S FACEBOOK PAGE Save Our wild Salmon is working to bring back healthy and harvestable salmon numbers.

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE LANDS COUNCIL'S FACEBOOK PAGE The Lands Council exists to protect and revitalize forests, waters and wildlife.

"

#### If you care about an issue, you should get involved, let your elected officials know, vote for representatives that reflect your values and find ways to bring those issues home to your community in ways that can better it.

Carrie Herrmann, Save Our wild Salmon outreach coordinator

"Sens. Conwell Murray and Maria Cantwell are key movers we need to advocate for this issue, and they need to hear from folks in Washington to whom it's a priority," Herrmann said.

Working for a cause is something Gates and Herrman agree is important for college students to have experience in.

"Whether it is a climate strike or planting a tree, it is especially important for college students to do the work hands on and make the difference every day to see how there are people doing the work and taking action," Gates said.

By doing this, students are able to connect the lessons they are learning in the classroom to topics that may be more prevalent outside education circles.

"If you care about an issue, you should get involved, let your elected officials know, vote for representatives that reflect your values and find ways to bring those issues home to your community in ways that can better it," Herrmann said.

As a result of their work, SOS has been taking agencies that are in charge of the harmful dams to court for the past 20 years and, along the way, have had small wins that lead to better habitat and decreased mortality rates for salmon.

Additionally, the Lands Council is grateful for all the help that GU Students have provided, Gates said.

There are many opportunities to get involved, whether through river cleanups or tree plantings.

In fact, this Friday the Lands Council is hosting a tree planting event in Spokane for their SpoCanopy program in collaboration with the city of Spokane Urban Forestry. Students interested in this event can sign up online.

More information regarding the Lands Council can be found at: landscouncil.org.

More information regard Save Our wild Salmon can be found at: wildsalmon.org.

Georgia Cosola is a contributor.

## "

You have to be really patient and wait for the squirrel to approach your trap and it just felt like such a nice break to take some time and simply watch nature.

# SQUIRREL Continued from Page 1

and wait for a squirrel to approach your trap and it just felt like such a nice break to take some time and simply watch nature."

The following week, students set the traps again and

Claire Colombini, senior at GU



Traps were set up around campus pre-baited with the opening held up by wire. Students sat and waited nearby while waiting for squirrels to be attracted to their trap.

waited for squirrels to approach and enter. Hayes said that he intended for his students to learn how to handle the squirrels. It would be a challenge to maintain a 6-feet distance in the process, considering that the squirrels can be dangerous, potentially biting or scratching as they attempt to escape.

To solve this dilemma, they used denim fabric capture cones that zip over the entrance of the trap.

"When you open the trap door you coax the squirrel to run out the trap into this cone and it goes clear to the end of the cone and its trapped so it can't move," Hayes said.

At the end of the experiment the class successfully captured one GU squirrel.

Senior Amy Schneller, who placed the trap that caught the squirrel, said she was surprised by the capture, since squirrels didn't go anywhere near the traps during the prebaiting process.

After the capture, Hayes handled the squirrel to weigh and collect hair samples.

Schneller said her favorite part of the experiment was gaining insight of how biologists sustain safe practices in handing animals within their field of study.

This month, the class will conduct its next experiment, catching waterfowl by setting floating traps on Lake Arthur.

As a student with a passion for animals, Colombini said she finds this class very interesting. She highly recommends the class to other GU students who share a similar love for nature.

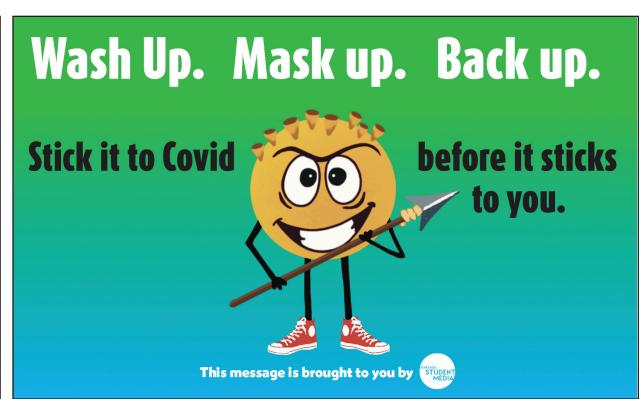
"I've learned so much about the concepts and management strategies behind wildlife," Colombini said. "As someone who wants to eventually work in wildlife rehabilitation and conservation, this class could not be a better match."

Natalie Reith is an arts & entertainment editor. Follow *her on Twitter: @natalie\_reith.* 



Zags Basketball is back! Come get some Hawaiian food at Aloha before cheering on the Men's and Women's **Basketball teams!** 





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#### **WRITING** Continued from Page 1

The transition has had wide-ranging implications for the Writing Center including shifts in the number of students utilizing what the organization has to offer, and the number of students that they are able to serve.

"We transitioned to Zoom and like most writing centers in the country our numbers declined," Eliason said.

When asked why he thought fewer students were utilizing the services provided by the Writing Center, Eliason said that student engagement has dropped significantly across the board in academic settings.

Eliason also pointed out that students can experience "Zoom fatigue" from a large number of online meetings which leads to fewer students seeking out help from the Writing Center because this could be seen as just another online meeting.

However, he noted that in recent weeks traffic has risen significantly citing midterm assignments as a potential reason for this.

Due to its move to Zoom, the Writing Center is now able to assist students that it previously had not.

Whereas before the Writing Center would provide writing feedback only to on-campus undergraduate students, now the center is extending writing tutoring to all online students in both graduate and undergraduate programs.

"Since we've gone to remote only



COVID-19 has extended the Writing Center's support to all students online across programs.

via Zoom, we've been more true to our aspirational goal of reaching a wider scope of students in Gonzaga's undergraduate and graduate programs," Eliason said. "We're striving to be an academic support

unit on campus that really helps people be their best. We're working all the time to be more inclusive and to be more responsive to people's express needs."

Eliason also said that in addition to

feedback, the Writing Center has been providing another valuable service.

"Most students appreciate the time with the tutors, they appreciate the social dimension sometimes as much as the intellectual," Eliason said.

"It's another chance to connect, we've been missing that. We've been missing those faces this year," Wilson said.

Adapting to the challenges of 2020 has meant an increased awareness of the presence of social justice within the services of the Writing Center.

"I think the role of the Writing Center is always evolving," Wilson said. "Something that we've been working on recently has been writing a solidarity statement for the Writing Center and thinking about what kinds of trainings we're doing, what kind of students we're working with, thinking about accessibility."

Wilson is confident that the role of the Writing Center will continue to improve and with its now extended services, provide instruction that she sees as powerful to undergraduate, graduate, in-person and online students.

"In many ways, writing defines a lot of what we do not just in the academic world but in our personal lives as well," Wilson said. "I kind of see what we're doing as providing people the equipment and skills to articulate what they think and be able to understand what other people think too. I think that's more important now than ever."

*Luke Kenneally is a staff writer. Follow him on Twitter: @lone\_trombone.* 

## THANKSGIVING

*Continued from Page 1* 

If COVID-19 wasn't a thing, Mitchell said he is unsure about how much his plans would have changed. Mitchell is currently in a long-distance relationship, and he said it would have been possible for him to go home with his parents or stay in Spokane and have his girlfriend come to Spokane for Thanksgiving.

Mitchell said he hadn't planned anything because by the time he wanted to make plans, the announcement recommending students to not come back after the Thanksgiving holiday was made.

"Whatever happens happens," Mitchell said.

While some underclassmen like Mitchell decided to stay, some underclassmen decided to do school remotely for the entire semester. Sophomore Sal Stazzeri decided to study remotely from his hometown of San Diego, California. Stazzeri and his family will be celebrating Thanksgiving with his family. In regards to coming back next semester, Stazzeri is uncertain as to whether he will be back.

Stazzeri said he thinks GU has taken COVID-19 very seriously and things could be a lot worse than they have been.

He said he is more thankful to celebrate holidays and everything that has been given to him in his life. Stazzeri's father has helped many people with financial situations in California, and Stazzeri encourages other GU students to be happy and thankful. "Some people got luckier than others, but at the end of the day, Zags still get to say that they are Zags," Stazzeri said. "Some people still have jobs and a lot of people still have their families to fall back on in case they fell under financial problems."

Financial problems could be at the forefront of some students' decisions to go back home or not for the Thanksgiving break.

Junior Rachel Folkestad faced a similar problem, which resulted in her decision to stay in Spokane for her Thanksgiving break and beyond. Folkestad, who is from the Twin Cities region of Minnesota, said it would be too much work for her to go back home, citing a potential decrease in productivity heading into finals week if she were to go home.

Folkestad said it was probably best that she stayed home due to recent news she found out last week. Folkestad tested positive for COVID-19 last Wednesday, saying she probably should not have thought about going home anyway. With that in mind, Folkestad will be staying in Spokane and will most likely be celebrating the Thanksgiving holiday with her housemates.

"I couldn't do an easy drive home and back if I wanted to," Folkestad said. "It's a three-day drive for me, and that would be by myself, so I figured that just wouldn't make sense."

For Mitchell, Stazzeri and Folkestad, they do not have any on-campus jobs or participate in any clubs that would be affected whether they decided to stay in Spokane for the remainder of the semester or go home. Senior Ben Pham decided he will be going home to Portland for the remainder of the semester, affecting two on-campus jobs he is currently working. Pham does administrative office work for the Center of Global Engagement (CGE), as well as marketing assistance for Foley Library.

Although most of the work he does for the library is remote, Pham said there will be a lack of convenience not being near campus in case he is asked to do something. Furthermore, with his job at CGE, he won't be able to do as much for it in Portland.

"It's mostly administrative office work, but since it's a position as an ambassador for the department, we spend a lot of time hanging out with international students or whoever is interested and involved with the Center of Global Engagement," Pham said.

The tradition of Thanksgiving will be presented in a different format, and whether GU students decide to go home permanently for the remainder of the semester or stay in Spokane, the message of gratitude remains the same.

"As we wrap up 2020 as officially one of the worst years for absolutely everyone, let's just be thankful that we learned something from it, and if we learned anything, it's to be grateful for what we have," Stazzeri said.

Vincent Saglimbeni is a sports editor. Follow him on Twitter: @vinnysaglimbeni.





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**OPINION J**@gonzagabulletin

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# Hot or iced coffee? You brew you

#### I like it a latte: In favor of iced coffee

A s much as the coming holiday season is famous for its traditional foods such as turkey, stuffing and candy canes, this time wouldn't be as festive without its delicious drinks, namely the wide variety of coffee that begins to emerge in the last few months of the year.

Many coffee drinkers have strong opinions about which type of coffee is best, with most of the debate focusing around hot versus iced coffee.

Having grown up in a house of hot beverage drinkers, I appreciate the perspective of those who prefer hot coffee, and I'm perfectly happy cozying up with a warm cup of chai tea or a steaming pumpkin spice latte. However, my own experience has shown me that iced drinks, particularly iced coffee, are by far superior to any other beverage.

First of all, iced beverages are truly yearround drinks. It's not something you'd think would be true, but it is.

Whenever I go to a café during the winter, I always notice a good portion of the customers drinking frappuccinos and chilled lattes regardless of the temperature outside.

On the other hand, it seems that hot beverages are "too hot" for the heat of summer. Besides those who only order a drip



**By RED KWENDA** 

coffee no matter what café they are at, most people aren't going to order a drink similar to the temperature outside in summer like they would in winter.

With this in mind, taste is clearly a serious factor. Why else would people drink freezing cold coffee in both the boiling heat of summer and the icy chill of winter?

For me, iced drinks also get their superiority from the artisanal skill required to make them.

Knowing I can make drip coffee at home, I am much less inclined to spend money on a marked-up beverage when the ingredients are sitting in my pantry. Every sip however delicious — has me thinking of what spices I would have added were I back home.

With cold beverages, things are very different. I know that in no way, shape or form would I be able to construct a peppermint

mocha at home; I don't even have a blender.

For me, I like knowing that I'm getting a unique experience with my drinks. If I can make it at home, I am much less likely to spend \$5 on it at a café. Iced coffee is something you can only really enjoy outside of your home, unless you can afford to pay for the blender and specialty ingredients.

Unfortunately, this advantage is a doubleedged sword. Hot drinks are naturally easier to prepare than colder ones and are therefore much cheaper. If someone wants a caffeine rush without having to leave their house, then a drip coffee will be their best bet.

However, for those who simply want to enjoy good coffee — or a good drink, for that matter — think about all those who put up with shivering and shaking during the winter in order to taste a frappuccino again, or those who crave the acai flavor but can't find the ingredients in their supermarkets.

At the end of the day, an iced drink will always taste better and be better made than a hot one.

Red Kwenda is a staff writer. Follow him on Twitter at @RedKwendaWriter.

#### Espresso yourself: In favor of hot coffee

t's the battle of the century. No I'm not talking about the 2020 U.S. presidential election, I'm talking about the battle of iced versus hot coffee.

Iced coffee has gotten enough time in the spotlight. It's time to appreciate the elite form of coffee — the classic hot coffee.

There's a number of reasons why I believe hot coffee is the superior of the two. First of all being that iced coffee gets watery after sitting for longer than 10 minutes. Who wants watery coffee? Not me.

Hot coffee is typically my go-to caffeine choice in the morning. It's already ready by the time I get up in the morning, ready to be poured in my mug of choice. That's another fun thing about hot coffee — the mug choices are practically endless.

Coffee mugs are the perfect gift for anyone, mostly due to the fact that there are more coffee mug designs than anyone could imagine. Why would anyone let their glorious mug collection sit and collect dust? Put them to work.

Cold weather has hit the Northwest hard this year, particularly noting the snow that hit Spokane in mid-October.

Getting out of a warm bed in the dead of winter is hard enough, why prolong that chilly feeling with an



By LINDSEY WILSON

iced coffee?

Hot coffee is warm and inviting, and can heat you up from the inside out. When your feet and fingers are cold because your heater hasn't been working as well as it should, there's no reason to put your fingers through more trauma by holding an iced coffee.

There's also a number of drinks that can be bought at coffee stands in the fall and winter that are obviously superior in the hot coffee format. Have you ever thought, 'yeah, I'll get an iced pumpkin spice latte when it's 30 degrees outside?' No! The hot PSL is the only way to enjoy the drink.

You don't even have to go to coffee stands to get a hot PSL either. Especially during the holiday season, coffee creamer brands have a large arrangement of festive creamers that will make it seem like you just picked up the hot coffee from Starbucks. My favorite holiday creamer is the Starbucks Peppermint Mocha, which can be picked up at virtually any grocery store.

I can see the argument now — "but hot coffee gets cold and then isn't as good." Well, my friend, have you ever heard of a microwave? Or, better yet, get a cup of ice and make that iced coffee that you are so fond of.

While I do think that iced coffee may be superior in the warmer summer months, I don't think that there's even a reason to argue the better coffee in the winter time. It's cozy, inviting, keeps you warm, doesn't get watered down and it puts your mugs to good use.

Stop spending tons of money at different coffee shops and get yourself a good coffee machine that can brew multiple cups in one go. Trust me, you'll be glad you did.

Lindsey Wilson is a staff wrtier. Follow her on Twitter at @lindseyrwilson1.

## Smart scrolling: How to develop healthy social media habits

We're on Zoom calls all the time at Gonzaga, whether on campus or at home. Computers are in constant use both in class and outside, and we're also usually on our phones or social media at any hour of the day.

With so much internet and screen use, symptoms such as fatigue, nausea, eye strain, stress, anxiety or feeling overwhelmed are frequent and becoming normalized as we devote much of our attention to the digital world and rely on it more and more in daily life. off the grid?

I reviewed the new Netflix documentary "The Social Dilemma," which dives more deeply into the growing issues of the digital world and does offer some solutions to this query. I wanted to offer some of those to students, as well as my own discoveries with how to use social media and the internet.

Here's my advice if you want o cut down on screen time or



**Beware of rabbit holes.** All too easily one YouTube video leads to another or clicking on a BuzzFeed article points to the next. They're difficult to resist, but a conscious understanding of the process can certainly be a start in recognizing when you've gone too far.

Read multiple, opposing news sources. If you read the news then read nonpartisan news, not only conservative or liberal leaning outlets. This can lead to awareness of biases as well as being intentional with time and use. family or friends, the Twitter notification can wait. Don't let the phone or other devices distract you from your offline moment, whether you're hiking, in an in-person conversation or taking time for yourself.

Be flexible. Like with a diet, sometimes you may slip up with your screen intentions or other circumstances interfere, and this is OK. Forgive yourself and understand that maybe your plan needs to change, with more or less internet time. In short, start developing healthy screen habits now. These will vary from person to person, as we all have different lifestyles and needs, but as long as there is care, intention and commitment, some of these negative effects of increased screen time can be mitigated. Believe in yourself, and good luck.

If the internet is unavoidable and essential, what can we do? Do we let it kill us or go completely make better use of time:

Intention is the first step to internet use. Be aware of why you're doing what you're doing at all times. If you open your laptop to attend class, then go to

#### **By CAITLIN RELVAS**

class and ignore the email or text notification. If you mean to scroll down Instagram, then do so when you mean to and not simply out of boredom.

Notice the time. Often, I find I spend more time than I intend online, which can be helped by an increased awareness of the hour or setting timers on apps and sticking to these rules you set for yourself. **Post with care.** Before posting that selfie on Facebook, think carefully about everyone who will see it and if you want them to. Does Grandma need to see me partying with friends? Probably not, especially during a pandemic.

Take nonscreen time seriously. If you're at dinner with

*Catilin Relvas is a staff writer.* 

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## Unspoken rules of Zoom University

With the transition to online school has come a lot of setbacks: Professors are only available via email, virtual office hours aren't the same and motivation and participation are at an all-time low.

Now that we are constantly attached to our computers, teachers think they can assign additional homework with the confidence that we will notice the email containing the extra assignment and turn it in on time. This adds more stress to our already hectic, exhausting schedules.

Now more than ever I think it's necessary that there is a defined outline of "school hours." For those of us who are taking classes from home, it is more difficult to separate school life from home life.

I am taking classes from home in Minnesota, so I am two hours ahead of those on the West Coast. Although all my classes start at a later time which is a definite bonus, this time difference can also work to my disadvantage.

An email sent at 7 p.m. is still a reasonable time for those in Washington, but for those in the Midwest, 9 p.m. isn't as reasonable. At that time, I have already put all my homework away and signed off for the night.

For those of us who are in a different time zone, I



#### By TESS PICKAR

think it is important professors acknowledge the location of their students attending virtually and send their emails accordingly. The earlier the better.

With that said, a large majority of college students, including myself, are night owls. The last thing I want to be doing at midnight is a last-minute homework assignment when I could be catching up on sleep.

I have gotten emails late on a Sunday night with an assignment due Monday evening, and there's nothing worse than seeing that show up in my inbox.

My hardest day of the week is Monday. I begin classes at noon, and then I don't end until almost 8 p.m.. I barely have time to do homework for the classes I have on Monday, so for a Tuesday class to assign something on a Sunday night only adds to the ongoing stress of trying to balance classes each day. I attend all my classes from the comfort of my room, and I also work on my homework in there too. It is the quietest spot in my house, and I also get good internet connection. By the time I have spent seven plus hours in my room, it's the last place I want to be.

I know a lot of us who are doing this semester at home sign on to classes from their room, and slowly that room starts to become less and less of a favorite place to be.

In the end, having additional homework assigned benefits no one. We get more stressed having another thing thrown onto our already full plates, and professors only get frustrated when they find out no one completed the assignment they sent out in an email the night before their morning class.

Professors normally don't answer emails after 9 p.m., and they make it an effort to express this because they expect students to respect these time constraints. Consequently, I think it's unfair for professors to then turn around and not respect our time constraints, especially considering everything happening this year.

*Tess Pickar is a staff writer.* 

# **COVID-19 won't knock the wind out** of this ensemble

#### **By ASHER ALI**

he extent of music knows no bounds, and the COVID-19 pandemic has really put that adage to the test for the Gonzaga wind ensemble. The wind ensemble, one of the five ensembles and orchestras hosted at GU, is composed of woodwind, brass and percussion instruments.

Just as with other concert bands at GU, the wind ensemble requires a cohesive synchronizing between a multitude of performers in order to produce the pieces they've arranged. Optimally, this would call for the entire ensemble to be together in the same space for rehearsals as they have done in years past, but evident by the circumstances of the semester, the ensemble's procedures had to be adjusted.

Currently, those within the ensemble attending in-person are able to practice together in compartmentalized sectionals. The woodwind and brass sections are able to rehearse together in the Myrtle Woldson Performing Arts Center (MWPAC) for their three hour weekly practices under the tutelage of associate music professor and wind ensemble director Peter Hamlin, while the percussion section practices separately in the Music Hall during that time.

All of those in-person are required to space out 6 feet from each other and perform while wearing specially curated masks with slits built in them to allow for air filtration, and the horn players use bell covers on their instruments to limit aerosol transmission.

"Rehearsals are still really fun and productive and I think [Hamlin] is coming up with ways to ensure that we can still get a whole, good blended band sound," said Dagny Albano. "With all of these distancing measures, he understands that it has been difficult for us to really get that sound when we are that far apart. He's coming up with new ways for us to develop a good band sound because he knows that we're capable of it and it's just a learning curve."

Battling through the adversity, the ensemble has been committed all semester to putting together their new collection of pieces. The ensemble has added three full compositions to their repertoire this semester, including Movements I and II of Julie Giroux's symphony "Bookmarks of Japan," "Potchem" by GU professor and composer Robert Spittal and "Mother of a Revolution" by Omar Thomas.

On Oct. 28, the wind ensemble was able to outfit the MWPAC to accommodate the entire in-person ensemble so that they could record the three pieces. It was the first time that the entire live band got a chance to



Ensemble practice procedures have been adjusted to fit COVID-19 regulations by meeting in compartmentalized sections.

perform together, and the recordings stand in place of the wind ensemble concerts that are normally put on each semester.

The only members of the ensemble who didn't participate in the recordings were those participating in remote learning this semester. At the onset of the semester, Hamlin attempted to have students online play along with the live band during rehearsals, but due to the natural lag of platforms like Zoom, it became relatively impossible for online performers to stay in tempo with the live band.

"It's hard for us to play live with everyone else actually in the room, so we do a lot of listening and taking notes on their sound and how they could improve," said junior trumpet and pipe organ player Kyle Fuxa, who is one of 10 remote ensemble performers this semester. "We're doing our own little project between us remote learners called a virtual ensemble where each of us records our parts individually and then they're going to mash that up together into one video. It gives the effect that we're all playing together even though we perform it individually at our own leisure."

Virtual students are working away from the rest of the ensemble in a multifaceted venture that includes aspects of composing, playing and collaborating. Students are taking aspects from the repertoire they've been listening to during the in-person ensemble's rehearsals, while implementing instances of improvisation to create their own unique piece.

The online ensemble doesn't have the comprehensive range of instruments at their disposal such as the in-person ensemble, so the group has had to utilize ingenuity within their music to compile

a complete composition by developing variations of the standard playings. The 10 online students worked together to plan the arrangement, each recorded their part individually, and then collaborated to mix their performances together to create their own composition.

"The blessing of this time is that we get to focus on things that we don't necessarily always get to focus on like meeting composers and studying more of the background for some of these works," Hamlin said. "But I think the compositions that these students are doing are incredibly creative. There is incredibly creative talent that exists within our wind ensemble that we really didn't know about before, and now that we're able to do these composition projects, you're able to see this element of the students that wasn't being tapped prior to this semester."

Once classes get moved entirely online this semester after Thanksgiving, Hamlin wants to have his ensemble hone into the study of musicianship. They will be analysing the content and historical nature of the various pieces that they've played, and having the composers of those pieces join their practices via Zoom to discuss the creative process of concepting these works.

The wind ensemble has hosted and worked with outside composers in the past, but the unique platform that this semester offers the ensemble allows them to pursue a wider variety of musical interests in the absence of the live concerts that they would normally have to rehearse tenaciously for.

For future endeavors by the concert band this semester, Hamlin is in the works of creating a sub-repertoire of Christmas music that he plans on having the ensemble put together for a virtual Christmas card. This project will hopefully be performed by all members as everyone will be online by the time it's recorded.

"Dr. Hamlin's idea of a Christmas card is really cute," Albano said. "He wants to send it out to friends and family along with the other recordings which will be nice considering that we won't get the chance to perform in front of them this semester."

This year, there are a total of 67 members within the GU wind ensemble, making it the largest wind ensemble that the school has had in recent history. This entails that the ensemble has seen a substantial amount of new members join this semester, but what can be tough for the new students is getting a sense of the band community that really makes it a special and inclusive space.

To fill that gap of social interaction that is potentially being missed by most within the collective, Hamlin and the students who are a part of the wind ensemble board of directors have been working on setting up social events. They're arranging for game nights, discussion roundtables and other fun activities to get all of the students to share in the experience of what makes wind ensemble a special place outside of the music.

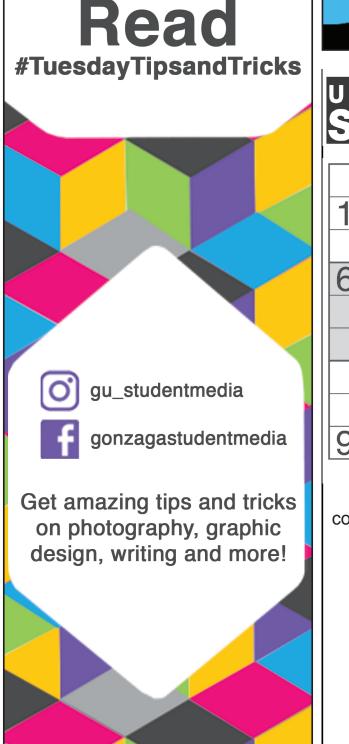
"It has been different, but I am extremely proud of the students," Hamlin said. "They've worked really hard to pull this off together this semester and they've remained incredibly positive with everything that we've been through, and it means a lot for me and for them to be together because a large part of what the ensemble is about truly is community."

Asher Ali is а sports Follow editor. him Twitter: on @asher\_ali3.

## **Universal Crossword**

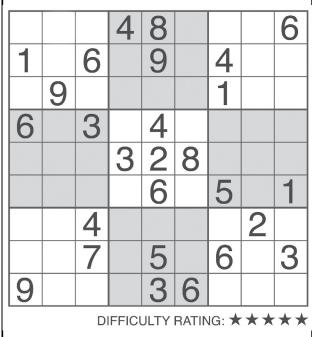
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## UNIVERSAL Sudoku Puzzle



Complete the grid so every row, column and 3 x 3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9 inclusively.

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# 11/8 Happy Sunday! by Kevin Christian

A&E ©GONZAGABULLETIN The art of the sport Zags go-big with eccentric designs on their beer dye tables

Image: mail of the second second

This Arizona and Washington license plate mashup table was submitted by Jake Mills.



Daniel Weinberger pictured with his table and his take on the "Creation of Adam."



This Gonzaga-centric remix of the Pabst Blue Ribbon logo was submitted by Joseph Fountaine.



This extraterrestrial dye table was submitted by Tom Hoag.



PHOTO COURTESY OF MIA MAWER Cult classic movie "Monster House" is depicted on this table submitted by Mia Mawer.

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# **The Kraziness** goes online

#### **By ASHER ALI**

his year, the Kraziness means that much more. Gonzaga men's basketball still plans to hold its annual preseason event Kraziness in the Kennel on Thursday in an McCarthey Athletic Center where there won't be any fans in attendance.

Instead, any and all wishing to attend the event will be able to catch a live broadcast of Kraziness in the Kennel when it gets underway at 8 p.m.

"The 2020 edition of Numerica Kraziness in the Kennel will be broadcast live locally on KHQ," Gonzaga Athletics said in a news release. "The event will occur with no fans in attendance, part of a controlled environment in Spokane coordinated by Gonzaga University and its Athletic Department."

There won't be any players hustling down the stands to the cheers and high fives of an elated fanbase, the bleachers won't be bouncing up and down uncontrollably as the student section gets really into Zombie Nation and new students won't get to make this their inaugural Kennel experience as in year's past.

But in the absence of the traditional fanfare that is customary to the usual Kraziness in the Kennel experience, fans watching from home can relish this year's event as the premiere opportunity to see one of the most revered GU rosters in history showcase their acumen on the court heading into this season.

The component of Kraziness in the Kennel that takes front stage every year is the white vs. blue team intersquad game. Men's basketball head coach Mark Few splits his roster up into two teams that go against each other for 20 minutes to preview fans with what they can hope to witness from the team's members when they get into more serious competition once the season begins.

At last year's Kraziness in the Kennel, fans got to see grad-transfer guard Admon Gilder strut his stuff as he threw down relentless dunks throughout the entire contest and Corey Kispert proved his imperativeness to the team's season going forward after he dropped 11 points en route to a blue team victory. This year perhaps offers an even greater thrill as far as the multitude of exciting talent that the Zags can hope to see from their roster.

"Put simply, Gonzaga can win it all because it has the players to do so," ESPN college basketball insider Jeff Borzello said about the prospects of this year's GU squad. "Corey Kispert is a preseason All-America-caliber player, Joel Ayayi is a bona fide scorer and Drew Timme should take a big step forward. And Jalen Suggs might be the best guard entering college basketball not named Cade Cunningham."

#### the season gets underway.

The preseason all-WCC Zags aren't the only trio garnering mass attention from anyone with an eye on GU basketball this season. Kraziness in the Kennel will be the first time that the public will get to bear witness to the most hyped collective of incoming freshmen that the Zags have ever cultivated, known as the 'tricky trio' of Jalen Suggs, Julian Strawther and Dominick Harris. The three actually all came on a visit to GU during last year's Kraziness and got to witness for themselves the immense gravity of the Kennel when it's in full swing.

There's no shortage of anticipation for the swath of second year players that are hopefuls at Kraziness this year either. Sophomore and Spokane native Anton Watson looked explosive last season but missed the last 14 games of action so Zag fans will be thrilled to see him back on the court. There's also center Oumar Ballo who came to GU with a fair amount of buzz surrounding him before redshirting last year, and 7-foot center Paval Zakharov showed promise during the minimized time that he saw on the court last year.

"Hopefully Zakharov was not discouraged [by his role last season], because in his limited time on the floor he showed he is good enough to play at Gonzaga," SBNation writer Keith Ybanez said. "There is a lot to like about his skillset, and it is easy to see his fit in the Gonzaga system."

Between the scrimmage and the onthe-court contests, which looks to be a 3-point shootout and skill challenge as in past years, virtual spectators will get plenty of time to witness what this year's talent brings to the table.

This year's Kraziness in the Kennel will also host interviews with players and coaches which will be recorded for fans to tune into live. This could potentially serve as a good time for the team to elucidate some of the previously indefinite circumstances surrounding multiple components of this upcoming; such as nonconference scheduling, COVID-19 protocols for the student-athletes over the season and the prospective layout of the 2021 NCAA championship playoffs.

So, despite the unprecedented nature of this year's Kraziness in the Kennel and the elimination of fan attendance which often serves as the most sacred component of the entire event, this year's rendition offers perhaps a more speculative experience where fans will gain insight into the many questions they have about the Zags' volatile season both on and off the court.

Kraziness in the Kennel will be broadcast live Thursday at 8 p.m. PST on KHQ-TV.



Former Zag Jeremy Jones takes on Corey Kispert in 2018 Kraziness in the Kennel.



Last season's Fan Fest ended in 20-16 blue squad victory.

**Fan Fest for everyone** 

#### **By VINCENT SAGLIMBENI**

As sports slowly approach Gonzaga's campus, the basketball season is just around the corner, and with every basketball season comes a preseason rally to get GU fans excited for what is to come in the upcoming season.

GU women's basketball is set to have its annual preseason event Numerica Fan Fest happen Tuesday Nov. 10 at 6 p.m. According to the GU Athletics website, Fan Fest will be shown virtually through an SWX broadcast, and streamed on GoZags. com. No fans will be at the event, as GU and the athletic department coordinated the event in order to keep a controlled environment.

"Gonzaga continues to work with the Spokane Regional Health District to implement appropriate COVID-19 protocols, as well, to help protect the health and safety of all players, coaches and staff," the website said.

Similar to the men's basketball preseason event, Kraziness in the Kennel, this will be an opportunity for GU women's basketball fans to see a sneak peak of what to expect for the 2020-21 season. The Zags will be scrimmaging against each other and competing in multiple competitions, and fans will also get the chance to hear interviews from head coach Lisa Fortier and players. This season is one like no other, as it is no secret that COVID-19 has made multiple changes to the lives of people in all types of professions.

Conference (WCC) tournament last season, the Zags are set to come back with a vengeance, yearning for the ultimate goal of a run at a NCAA championship.

Seniors Jenn and LeAnne Wirth and Jill Townsend will be at the forefront of the revenge tour, as all three are set to have major seasons this year. Townsend is coming off a WCC Player of the Year performance, and the Wirth twins look to step up in a bigger role as leaders for the team.

GU WBB fans will also be showcased the plethora of new talent coming to The Kennel. Freshmen Lily Scanlon, Yvonne Ejim and McKayla Williams will appear for the first time to fans, as they will look to show promise for future Zag women's basketball teams to come.

For the eighth straight season, the team has been selected as the favorite to win the WCC championship. Like 2020 has already shown us, however, this does not guarantee that this is reality. Many teams in the WCC this season have veteran players coming back to their programs, and with the teams matchups against the Zags already circled on every team's calendar, the Zags will be challenged in more ways than one.

Fan Fest will give GU fans the opportunity to see how hopeful they should be heading into the season, and if history continues to repeat itself, they will be more hopeful and confident than ever before looking at this group of Zags.

The hype around players like Kispert, Ayayi and Timme can't be stressed enough heading into this pivotal season for GU, and Kraziness in the Kennel will hope to affirm many of the expectations that fans have for the three stars before

Asher Ali is a sports editor. Follow him on Twitter: @asher\_ali3.

> But something that won't change is the mentality and commitment of the 2020-21 GU women's basketball team.

After falling short in the West Coast

More information and details about Fan Fest 2020 can be found at GoZags.com.

Vincent Saglimbeni is a sports editor. Folow him on Twitter: @vinnysaglimbeni.

# Gonzaga's league of e-sports legends

#### **By ALEXANDER PREVOST**

Though social distancing has changed the structure of how many activities are done, the e-sports scene on Gonzaga's campus is still alive and well.

One of the beauties of video games is that they don't need to be in-person, so many e-sport tournaments and clubs have transitioned online in order to promote safety for their participants. E-sports have done a good job of bringing people together during the pandemic.

When this pandemic first started, I came together with my friends from SFSU and CSUN and we set up a 64 team Valorant tournament across the West Coast that lasted three weeks," said the League of Legends Club President

Robbie Meehan. "I was able to bring some students together from Gonzaga and allow them to play together during a time that was stressful for everyone. We created this tournament solely for students to stay connected during the pandemic and it was a great experience for everyone involved."

The scene on campus is full of variety. Clubs on campus include anything from classics like Super Smash Bros. to Overwatch to newer groups like League of Legends.

We have some of the nicest people in the club I've met," said Smash Club President Abigail Mozzone. "It's such a friendly environment. We're able to joke around. It's welcoming."

All students are welcome and are

encouraged to participate, despite their level of competitiveness.

"That's honestly the biggest barrier for people for this," Mozzone said. "They don't feel like they're good enough. A lot of people don't come and join our weekly meetings because they feel like everyone is hyper competitive and they're going to weekly tournaments and winning, and that's not really the case."

"We do have some people who are like that. Overall, it's just people who want to try out some one-on-one stuff and have fun."

Beyond clubs, several tournaments are hosted on campus as well. Through IMLeagues, students can register to participate in e-sport competitions over

the weekends. Prizes are usually involved.

The e-sports scene on campus is growing in popularity, and with the ongoing pandemic, virtual activities are encouraged, hopefully leading to an expansion of the scene.

"I know there are many members of the Gonzaga community that have yet to join the club and may not be aware of the e-sports scene on campus. I feel like the current e-sports culture on Gonzaga is small, and has a large potential for growth," Meehan said.

Alexander Prevost is a staff writer. Follow him on Twitter: @Alexanderprvst.



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# **Keeping tradition alive**

#### Kennel Club creator Joe Roberts died in October, but will never be forgotten

#### By TOMMY CONMY

ohn Stockton, Mark Few, Przemek Karnowski. To the Zag faithful, these Unames represent the most influential characters in Gonzaga men's basketball history. But what about Joe Roberts? Only the most ardent fans know the name of the man who defined rowdy GU fans in the '80s with this moniker: The Kennel Club.

Roberts coined the term in a meeting among administrators, coaches and the founding members of one of the largest clubs on campus in the fall of 1984. Earlier this October, he died from complications with Parkinson's Disease at his home in Tacoma.

Upon arriving on the GU campus in 1981 after taking a gap year, the Ketchikan, Alaska, Roberts wasted no time in establishing friendships that endured until his last day. Mike Shields was one of the many friends Roberts made through a shared love of basketball.

Shields is a part of the unofficial founding group of The Kennel Club that included Roberts and their various housemates. Shields co-authored the book 'We are G.U." to explain the genesis and history behind the Kennel Club.

According to Shields, former GU men's basketball coach Dan Fitzgerald appreciated the ravenous, albeit small number of GU basketball fans. Fitzgerald tasked Shields with organizing fans in a manner that would create a home-court advantage for his Zags.

Shields' college ingenuity led him to organize a free keg party with two stipulations for attendance:

You must paint your face.

You must attend the basketball game. Thus, the Kennel Club was born as over 50 Zags attended the game (and the party) with painted faces.

Roberts was one of the early riders on the Zag hype train. Although reserved in his daily life, Roberts became a leader at



The founders of the Kennel Club Joe Roberts (left), Mike Shields (middle) and Jon Bolling show off their Zag pride at the 2015 Sweet Sixteen between GU and UCLA in Houston, TX.

Zag basketball games.

"He was one of those guys that if anybody was out on the floor (cheering) he was going to be one of them," Shields said. "But if you saw him Monday through Friday you would never guess that he was that kind of guy."

In the 35 years since that fateful midwinter day, the Kennel has become an iconic student section that is feared nationally. Before settling on the name Kennel Club, other ideas like "The Dog Pound" and "The Dog House" were suggested before Roberts interjected with, "The Kennel Club."

This interjection was somewhat out of character for Roberts, who Shields describes as being, "a very low-key guy, with the exception of his involvement in the Kennel Club."

"He took a lot of pride in the fact that he came up with that name. It's the perfect name, the perfect fit," said Shields.

Roberts told Shields that he suggested

the name, "because he thought that 'The Dog Pound' meant mutts whereas 'The Kennel Club' suggested sophistication and good breeding.'

Crissy Lubke, current brand representative of the Kennel Board, didn't know Roberts personally, but the Kennel Board as a whole had prior knowledge of the creation of their beloved group.

"Kennel Club went through a history training of the club earlier this year," Lubke said. "It was neat to find out where we came from. It made it even more impactful when we heard of Joe's passing."

For Lubke, the club is the most important part of the Kennel. The community aspect of what the club stands for is what brings unity to the school. "Club is a really important word

because it preaches community," Lubke said. "A few if not all of my fellow board members agree that the Kennel Club is such a community. We want to make that known to other students and fans. You

can see how much unity there is. It's really important."

Roberts wasn't just a fan of basketball. He was a regular player in the noon basketball league and intramural leagues in the old Kennedy Pavilion. Basketball was one of numerous activities that Roberts bonded over with his group of friends. The sheer amount of time the group spent together made for relationships that endured beyond college.

"Joe was a really smart guy, but very reserved and the Parkinson's magnified that over the years," Shields said. "He became a little more reclusive, but the one exception was his classmates, his closest friends. There was a group of 10 or 12 of us that were incredibly close. It's almost a daily occurrence that I talk to those guys, and Joe was a part of that group. It's an amazingly close-knit group of guys."

Even the Jesuits took notice of this rambunctious group of young men. According to Shields, two unnamed Jesuits started a Scotch of the Month Club. The "Lectern of the Label" would read the label of the "always" single-malt scotch to the group to broaden their cultural horizons before enjoying their Scottish beverage.

Some time after their years at GU the group made a pact. The premise was simple: when one member of the group dies, everyone will drop what they're doing and attend the memorial service. At the service, they would toast their fallen brother with a bottle of scotch.

"Joe's passing was the first time any of us will have drank a bottle of scotch from that pact," Shields said.

Without him, the Kennel Club wouldn't be the ear-splitting model of fanaticism that it is today.

"His loss was a big one," Shields said. "There's a lot of folks that are really sad about his passing.

Tommy Conmy is a staff writer.

#### Continued from Page 1

end up walking on during his freshman year at GU. The very next year, he got his scholarship and he could finally put his basketball to rest.

As the years passed by, Nilson continued to love the game and put everything he had into improving his skills. Then, in the first round of the conference tournament his senior year at GU, he ruptured his Achilles tendon. He endured rehab without the ability to play basketball for a whole year, all the while working as a strength coach and nutritionist. This experience led him to fall in love with strength conditioning and nutrition and have a practical plan for when he could no longer play the game he loves.

'When that idea presented itself, it was like, 'click' — that's what I want to do," Nilson said.

He went on to play overseas in Europe and eventually returned and retired from the game. At this point, he was able to go right into strength conditioning and nutrition and lead sessions with coaches from all around the world. When these coaches would later follow up with questions or ask him to make an appearance in their area, he simply didn't have the time to do it all. So, he created a single free place for everyone to learn about what he is so passionate about – training, nutrition and leadership.



"I knew I loved nutrition, training, leadership, but I wanted to find a way to be able to share it with people," Nilson said.

At the beginning, he spent just 15 minutes a day reading books by his favorite online businessperson, Pat Flynn. Throughout all of his research, he learned not only how to produce a podcast, but how to create a supplementary website and promote it over social media as well. Once it was all up and running, it was easy to maintain.

From there, he reached out to anyone who inspired him and requested their presence on the show.

"Every week I get to interview people that are mentors of mine or people that I have admired from afar," Nilson said. "I get to pick their brain and then I get to record it and if other people find it useful, that's awesome."

From coaches to players, trainers to nutritionists, authors to professors, Nilson has garnered an array of professionals to share their knowledge with the world as part of his podcast.

"All his guests may not be the biggest names, but they're often times the most credible in the space," said Matt Santangelo, former GU guard and one of Nilson's best friends. "Instead of doing the celebrity thing, he's going for substance in his content."

Santangelo is an avid follower of Nilson's podcast. He falls into all three categories of its diverse audience: he is a former player, a parent whose children play the sport and the coach of

Gonzaga women's basketball strength and conditioning coach Mike Nilson hosts a podcast called "Hoop Commitment."

positivity

his son's basketball team. Santengelo was actually the first to be interviewed on the podcast, and that particular experience proves Nilson's diligence, commitment and authenticity in being a podcast host.

'It was the greatest podcast ever — ever," Santangelo said. "I mean we rocked it. There was laughter, there were tears, there was just profound wisdom. Great storytelling. I mean it was really, really top five podcasts of all time... and [Nilson] didn't record it."

Nilson and Santangelo had to record the whole 45-minute episode over again. Even though it wasn't as amazing as the first take, it gave them the extra time to spend together as lifelong friends catching up. Santangelo said he always enjoys being in Nilson's presence, and so does everyone else who knows him.

"Mike's just the kind of guy that you just feel better after being around," Santangelo said. "You might bump into him for five minutes in the morning and in the afternoon, you realize the sun is shining a little brighter, those birds are singing a little louder and you go, 'Gosh, why does today just feel good? Oh, that's right. I saw Mike Nilson earlier today... I got some vitamin D. I got some vitamin Mike."

Shann Ferch, professor of leadership studies at GU and another of Nilson's close friends from his basketball days, agrees with Santangelo about Nilson's success and contagious

Marianne

"The potential of who he was as a young man has been more than realized as a person of family, a person of business, a person of heart, mind and spirit," Ferch said. "His life, I don't know what you call it, but it's very radiant. Other people get better by being in his presence and that was evident as a young man, but it's kind of full bloom where he is now."

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Displayed on the walls of Nilson's recording studio (his walk-in closet), are the Michael Jordan posters from his childhood as inspiration for what he is doing and where he started. Now, with over 60 episodes and about 1,000 downloads per week, Nilson has found pride and success in his journey to create "Hoop Commitment." He said that he loves what he does for a career, he loves his family, and he loves learning from guest speakers and sharing their knowledge with the world through his podcast.

"My hope is that more people that think like me, that are interested like me, that they find my show; but even if they don't, I'm already home. I'm already where I need to be,' Nilson said.

Samantha DiMaio is a staff writer. Follow her on Twitter: @dimaio\_samantha.

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