

Shots ‘FIRE’d at Wheaton’s freedom of expression policy

BY EMMA KIERNAN AND SILVER MELENDEZ

This June, the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression, (FIRE), published an online article attacking Wheaton’s adoption of the Chicago Statement for its Freedom of Expression Policy. The Chicago Statement was created by the University of Chicago to ensure “free and open discourse.” Many colleges have adopted the Chicago Statement to build a learning community that allows students to engage in conversations with a range of viewpoints. Wheaton adopted the statement as well, updating their policy as recently as 2022.

The FIRE organization defends students and their rights on college campuses. One of their public initiatives involves reviewing various colleges’ Free Expression policies each year. Afterwards, they conduct an analysis to determine how much the policies are limiting the students’ right to free expression. Once FIRE completes their analysis, they post a list of colleges ranked by openness to diversity of opinions. In the 2022 analysis, Wheaton College received a yellow speech code rating. According to FIRE, this means that the college has “at least one ambiguous policy that too easily encourages administrative abuse and arbitrary application.” As a result, FIRE ranked Wheaton 149 out of 248 for its free expression policy.

In their article about Wheaton College, the author, Laura Beltz, concedes that Wheaton retained much of the statement. However, she believes that the college’s ability to take down written posted materials at their “sole discretion” violates the students’ right to freedom of expression. The author also points out the ambiguity of “sole discretion,” insisting that this phrase could have many interpretations; some of which could be used to unjustly limit students’ speech. The author cites an example of how Wheaton’s policy could limit political speech. For instance, the policy states that students cannot post material that “target[s] an individual or organization for negative purposes.” In FIRE’s interpretation, this means that certain political views could be censored. In order to discuss political issues, students often have to critique the beliefs of organizations and the people behind them.

FIRE may have a point about the ambiguity of the wording “sole discretion.” Those words could be interpreted in a way that allows administration to take down any material posted on campus, for any reason. That

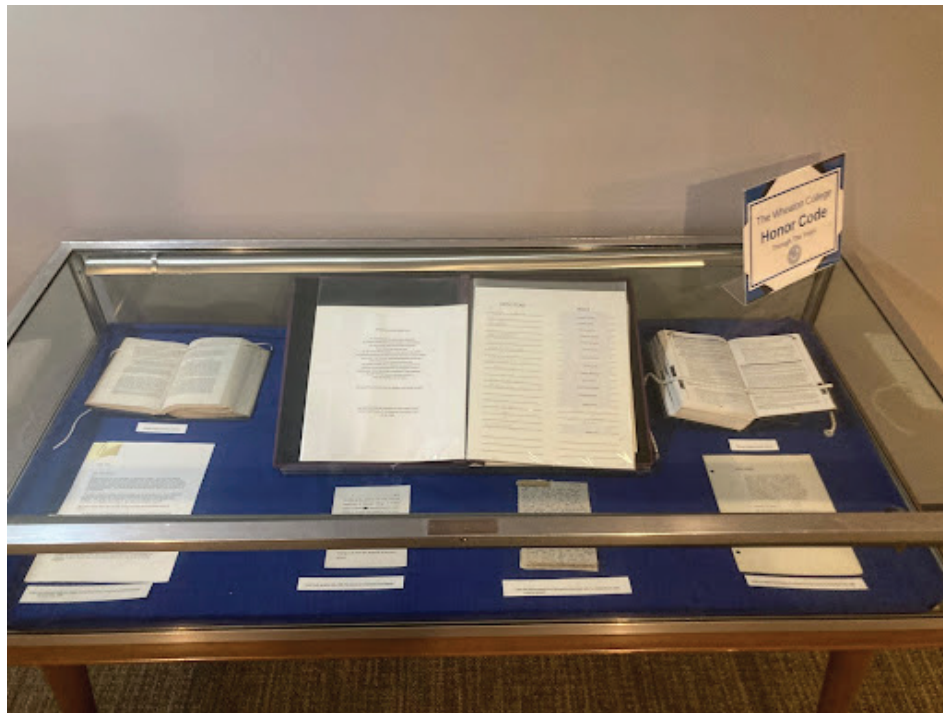


Photo by Emma Kiernan

A picture of the Wheaton College Honor code in its case at the Madeline Clark Wallace Library.

being said, FIRE omitted the next part of the policy, which listed the various limitations that Wheaton has on posted written materials. Aside from disallowing materials that “target an individual or organization for negative purposes,” the college also does not permit anything that “contain[s] any obscene content... is misleading or misrepresentative; advertise[s] or promote[s] the use of illegal substances; or promote engagement in other illegal activities.” FIRE did not place “sole discretion” in context of these limitations.

Still, the phrasing of the policy does not explicitly state that written material will only be taken down if it falls under these criteria. This means that content that does not fall under the college’s limitations might still be taken down under the umbrella of the college’s “sole discretion.” The wording leaves open the possibility that certain opinions and speech could be limited at the discretion of administration.

Wheaton College President Michaele Whelan shed light on the limitations on students’ freedom of expression at Wheaton. She explained the intent of the policy to maintain a respectful learning environment. Whelan expressed that “the college’s sole discretion” did not mean that any random administrator could take down posted written material on a whim. Rather, there is a process in which the President, Provost, and Dean of Students discuss whether or not the material violates the Free Expression policy.

As FIRE pointed out, the Wheaton policy stated that the college does not permit posted material that “target[s] an individual or organization for negative purposes.” However, Whelan rejected the idea that this clause was related to political discourse.

“We are concerned about expressions of forms of hatred toward social groups, like anti-Semi-

tism, or hatred or slander against individuals. For instance, if there were multiple students running for a position in SGA, and some of their campaigning against the other person gets out of hand.” Said Whelan

Conversations with the Wheaton administration also revealed that the students take part in approving such policies. Darnell Parker explained that he shared the Free Expression Policy with the Core Four of SGA (President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer) last year before it was released. “We make an effort to include student feedback on policies that may impact the student experience and we [always] try to include the appropriate constituents in policy that may impact them.” Said Parker

Once a policy is approved, there does not seem to be a Wheaton policy or precedent for challenging the college’s choices to take down content. In contrast, Suffolk University, another private learning institution, does have a policy that allows students to challenge the school. Suffolk has also adopted the Chicago Statement. In their policy, they discuss the statement in context of freedom of assembly, but they also include an appeals process if a member of the Suffolk community feels that their freedom was violated.

If the taking down of posted materials is up to Wheaton’s “sole discretion,” it is unclear how a student would go about challenging the college’s decision.

Conversation with the current Wheaton administration showed that they formed the Freedom of Expression Policy with the protection of social groups, campus organizations, and students in mind. Both Whelan and Parker emphasized the importance of facilitating free and open discourse while not allowing disruption to the learning environment. The college wants to prioritize student voices and ensure that they are heard. However, the college also has

a responsibility to make sure that the school is a place where students can “balance free exchange here on campus with the honor code [while maintaining] free interpretation and opinion in the classroom.” Said Parker As a learning institute, Wheaton has a responsibility to ensure an inclusive learning environment. Part of this responsibility includes upholding the college’s rules about speech that causes harm.

FIRE is concerned with what kind of speech the college considers harmful. In her article, Laura Beltz references the Supreme Court case *Snyder v. Phelps*, in which the author points out that despite offensive language, the ruling decided that even “hurtful speech” should be protected. In this case, members of the Westboro Baptist Church had begun to picket at Marine Lance Cpl. Matthew Snyder’s funeral. On their pickets, they included many homophobic slurs, much of which expressed their frustration with LGBTQ+-identifying people, like Snyder, who was in the U.S. military.

“The wording leaves open the possibility that certain opinions and speech could be limited at the discretion of administration.”

However, it is important to note that this case did not take place on a school campus. The court ruled that Phelp’s speech was lawful because he was criticizing the government for employing LGBTQ+ people in the military. What is important to note here is that Phelp was criticizing the government in a public space. However, unlike in *Snyder*, Wheaton College is a private institution, where constitutional rights don’t always fully apply. As said by President Whelan, “FIRE evaluates free speech as it is on public state-owned land, they operate on free speech everywhere. Wheaton is a private institution, which will have its own policies as a learning institution.” One of the best examples of this is found in freedom of expression, as outside of the school campus, people can express their beliefs without consequence to a greater extent. However, as one steps foot on the Wheaton campus, their freedom of expression will be limited as per Wheaton’s Free Expression Policy. That being said, the college wants to be a space that allows people to share their respective opinions as long as it maintains a safe learning environment.

Read the rest of this article at the bottom of page six.

Letter from the editor

Dear Readers,

It is my pleasure to introduce the first edition of this semester's Wheaton Wire. In this issue, you will find articles from brave newcomers and familiar names. Our staff survived the heatwave and managed to brew up some great stories in our scorching hot office, located above the Club Hub in Balfour.

This issue includes stories of squabbles on campus and on-screen... Have you seen Emma Seligman's Bottoms yet? Oh, and don't worry, the on-campus altercation in Rosa Heric's On This Day at Wheaton was about 100 years ago when student government officials were elected a little differently than today.

Now that our cover story has updated you on Wheaton's

freedom of expression policy, indulge in Elsie Carson and Lily Maguire's article on Art Haus' recent loss of art. And, while on the topic of loss, read about Julie Ertz's retirement, covered by Caden Carpenter.

I am thankful that The Wheaton Wire helped launch my journalism career. With few places on campus for us journalists to get feedback and advice outside of class I can't help but use this space to advertise The Wire as a student resource. If you are interested in writing or copy-editing for The Wheaton Wire or have story ideas, email us at thewheatonwire@gmail.com

See you soon,
Madison Morin
Class of 2024
Wheaton Wire Editor In Chief

Unhinged horoscopes

BY RYLEIGH SEUFERT

Aries

(March 20-April 19)

Liking pink just may be a personality trait the way you do it.

Taurus

(April 20-May 20)

Touch grass before the New England weather kills it.

Gemini

(May 21-June 20)

Sometimes you should push yourself into your fears and let go of those who do not serve you.

Cancer

(June 21-July 22)

Watch a comfort movie, let the tears flow.

Leo

(July 23-August 22)

Ur gorg as usual, give yourself a pat on the back and carry on ;).

Virgo

(August 23-September 22)

You have the same sign as Beyonce and Zendaya so keep that in mind this week.

Libra

(September 23-October 22)

To Libra men specifically (girlies you're safe for now): How about we worry more about getting therapy and less about posting on instagram?

Scorpio

(October 23-November 21)

Try to find the light in the little things instead of focusing on the darkness of the big things.

Sagittarius

(November 22-December 20)

So two-faced u must've been mistaken with a Gemini.

Capricorn

(December 21-January 19)

Try to be a little less mischievous today.

Aquarius

(January 20-February 17)

You don't have to be the most interesting person in the room at all times.

Pisces

(February 18-March 19)

Put an extra emphasis on doing something for your own happiness this week.

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Bernardy is prepared to build on the success of the swim and dive program

BY CADEN CHARPENTIER

What better person to lead Wheaton swimming than someone who has been a part of the success of the past?

Elizabeth Bernardy, an individual who once roamed the hallways on campus returned this summer to take the reins of the Lyons' Men's and Women's Swimming teams. The former All-NEWMAC Second Team swimmer as a breaststroker seized control of the program after beloved head coach Barrett Roberts stepped down following over 11 years of guiding the program to unprecedented success.

From 2016 to 2023, Roberts helped improve Women's Swimming and Diving by 333 points in the NEWMAC championships, bringing them from fifth in the conference up to second. On the men's side, the 50m and 100m freestyle record holder was at the helm to aid his swimmers and divers in breaking an astounding 23 school records. In his final year, his male athletes smashed five school records including the 400 and 800 freestyle relay.

Bernardy recalled her time under the tutelage of Roberts, stating, "I definitely consider him a great mentor in my life; I am really excited to have the opportunity to take over his team that he has done great things with."

She continued, "I would not be here if not for my experience under him."

Although his shoes are massive ones to fill, the fifth coach in the program's history plans to use her wisdom from in and out of the pool to lead this group into a new era.

Since graduating from Wheaton in 2020, Bernardy has taken every step possible to earn a chance like this. The Western, Massachusetts native hit the ground running, securing a spot with a fellow NEWMAC school, Smith College as a graduate assistant coach. The former Lyon swimmer herself held that position for two years before being thrust into an interim Co-Head Coach position with the Pioneers back in February.

She reflected on her time in Northampton, Massachusetts, expressing the fact that the situation allowed her to gain essential skills for the season ahead.

"I got to do a lot of everything, whether that was on the game administration side of things or bringing an athlete to the highest level. Having that external experience to be able to know what other teams/coaches are doing can allow us to

be as competitive as possible." Bernardy brings the knowledge of being inside another conference foe, just like Roberts did when he captured the head job back in early July of 2011.

On Monday, September 18, Bernardy's career as the leader on the pool deck officially began as her athletes took to the water to begin pre-season. The Norton outfit has not released the full schedule as of the time of writing with a month of training lined up prior to jumping into the competition part of the sport.

The women's team has not finished outside the top three in the conference since 2016 while the men experienced an over 180-point jump in the span of a year in the NEWMAC championships. That was the second-largest improvement between 2022 and 2023 out of the six other competing schools on the men's side, behind only Babson College.

The new leader spoke on what she is doing to carry on this upward trajectory for both the women's and men's teams.

"We're bringing in a really good group of first-years, and from there, it is all about continuing to recruit similar classes that not only help us to be competitive in the NEWMAC but are also great teammates who are going to support us in achieving our team goals."

She is a coach who is not only focused on the progress of the club in terms of wins and losses. The former Smith college assistant aims to create a quality "student-athlete experience" in her first season.

Bernardy understands the team concept of the sport, expressing the fact that Wheaton Diving is just as important as the swimming side of things.

"You can't have one without the other at this level which I think is really fun. I have a lot of appreciation for the divers as a swimmer," Bernardy explains, "At Smith, I had the opportunity to work with a diver which was a great experience for me as someone with a swimming background."

The former breaststroker exudes enthusiasm when speaking about the new campaign ahead. Her time away from Norton speaks for itself. This is her time. The Massachusetts native earned it. If you have never been to a swim meet, there is no better time than the present. Rich in talent within each class, more waves are bound to happen in 2023/2024 for the Lyons' Swimming and Diving team.

The college bubble: befriend or break?

A COLUMN BY MADISON MORIN

Note: The following interviews and information was collected in the fall of 2021.

Standing on a well-maintained patch of grass in a corner of campus, a curious first-year student, I found myself on Oct. 9, 2020, with approximately 70 Wheaton College students. On the other side of East Main Street, standing on the Town Common were about nine Norton residents holding Trump signs and American flags. The 2020 presidential campaign was in full swing.

The student's counter-protest was described by the college newspaper, the Wheaton Wire, as an impromptu demonstration. Many students were holding makeshift cardboard signs relating to both opposition to Donald Trump and in support of social justice issues such as racial and gender inequality, and LGBTQ+ rights.

According to the Sun Chronicle, the Facebook page "Norton for Trump" had planned a rally in the Norton Common set for 10 a.m. It is unclear if the Trump protesters organized with the intent of stirring up the college. However, the Town Common, a typical place for town rallies,

happens to be just a crosswalk away from Wheaton's main campus.

A fish out of water at a new college, I found myself ignorant to the town of Norton and its relationship with Wheaton. Months later I couldn't forget about this event. I wondered, "How did Wheaton and Norton get here?" and, more importantly, "What even is here?"

My first impression of Norton was that of a conventional small New England town: suburban, but formally rural, with a mix of young people that moved to Norton for the purpose of living in the greater Boston area, long-time residents, and families. I picked up that the public school system and community are two things important to many residents, and I knew that Wheaton was like many colleges, in its own bubble.

This first impression was relevant, but I still felt there was a deeper story within this seemingly simple town and gown relationship. Wheaton College and the southern Massachusetts town of 19,202 in which it resides have very few interactions, especially ones initiated by Norton residents.

The protest was lively and went on for a few hours, fizzling out

and forgotten as the semester rolled on. However, on that day, Wheaton's college bubble was put to the test.

Town and gown relationships are a lot like marriages. Even the smartest, the richest, the hardest working people often can find this kind of long-term relationship challenging. College town dynamics often have complex histories of broken boundaries, but when connections are made between the two during adverse times, the results can be rewarding.

The separation between the people and priorities of colleges and their residing towns, commonly known as the college bubble, has always existed, but there are almost always strings between the college and the town that keep the peace. After all, the town and gown inhabit the same physical space.

"There's a lot of animosity in Norton between the locals and the Wheaton students. I feel like it's based on a mutual distrust, and I am not sure whose responsibility it is to amend the negative perceptions we have of each other. I feel like both opinions hold some validity, but when I wonder about the real-life implications, I feel scared for POC students considering the current political climate and I think their

safety should be a priority, especially for the administration." says Wheaton sophomore Olivia Payne.

Even before the pandemic, there was animosity. The cycle of town and gown tensions can be redundant. Wheaton is old. The college has been established for almost a century and its status amongst Norton residents has swayed between inhabitant and parasite over the years.

Students' uncertain feelings towards their residing town intrigued me because where I grew up (Waterville Maine, home of Colby College), ignoring the town locals as a liberal arts student is a sign of blindness to the privileges that come along with the pursuit of higher education. Wheaton students seem to be interested in exploring the privileges of higher education, but I look at Wheaton's current situation and see that such an approach wouldn't work and could even be dangerous for students, especially if the administration has not been able to maintain their town relations.

Wheaton's administration has pinched nerves in the past that to this day have not been forgotten. Incoming students however are understandably unaware of these past tensions.

Stay tuned for the next column.

Julie Ertz leaves the game of soccer a beloved trailblazer

BY CADEN CHARPENTIER

Some leave the sport they love quietly. Others fade due to injury or simply age out of the game. Julie Ertz, the now former USWNT midfielder/defender did neither. Ertz departed the sport that she began playing professionally on her own terms, a rare occurrence in today's day and age.

If you aren't a USWNT fan, it is difficult for me to put into words the impact of the former Santa Clara Bronco. Either way, I will try my best.

Even in her final practice, there were no shortcuts. That was the way "JJ" went through her soccer life. The finishing line was so close, but that did not prevent her from providing that consistent competitive fire in each and every drill.

As a U.S. soccer fan, it was hard to wrap my head around the fact that a legend I grew up watching walked off the pitch for the final time on September 21 in Cincinnati. No more fierce tackles. Gone are the leaping headers. Say farewell to the blue pre-wrap. Days later, that reality has yet to sink in.

The entire city of Cincinnati, TNT, and the USWNT faithful gave Ertz a night she would never forget. The scoreline against South Africa that Thurs-

day night was insignificant, to say the least. Signs and posters littered TQL Stadium. In the 35' of the match, No. 8 exited to a standing ovation from an entire nation. It was a well-deserved thank you, something not many American soccer legends received in the past. It was true, genuine emotion. From her, and everyone involved. You could tell, this was what she wanted, but it did not make the transition any easier.

In front of a packed house, Ertz gave a post-game speech, defined by gratitude and selflessness.

"I am beyond grateful to have represented this crest for as long as I have... To every young girl out there who dreams to be here, it's worth it, every part of it. I love this sport, as we all do, and I am grateful to be part of this U.S. Soccer family."

At just 31 years old, it goes without saying that the Arizona native could lace up her boots for another three to five years. Angel City FC would love to have her as the southern California club side competes for a postseason berth down the stretch in September and October. That did not matter to her. The footballer's priorities were straight and after 123 appearances in the red, white, and blue, arguably the country's most dominant midfield force of all

time moved into the next chapter of her life.

Yes, there will be replacements, including Sam Coffey and even Andi Sullivan, but you can't replace that mentality. What is "that mentality" you may ask? Imagine getting an "A" on a test in your hardest class, but instead of giving yourself a pat on the back, you start studying for the next exam that same night. On a much larger scale, that sums it up. Day in and day out on the club and international level, Ertz made strides to get better. Nobody set the standard like the former No. 19.

The midfielder was known for last-ditch tackles, goal line clearances, and her physicality. That fed into the individuals around her. The hope is, as it always is when a talented athlete retires, that the mentality she embodied was learned and adopted by the players of the future.

Her legacy deserves it. She won't go down as the fastest, or most elite goal-scorer on planet Earth. Ertz was simply a player who owned the intangibles. Sure, there were times she found the back of the net with her head off a set piece, but there was nothing like her effort and attitude. As an attacker, the sheer presence of the former Chicago Red Star was frightening.

Due to injury, and her pregnancy, the 2018 CONCACAF W-Championship Golden Ball recipient was out of the game for nearly 18 months. That didn't even keep her down as she fought back to earn a place on the United States' 2023 World Cup roster. Despite the outcome, the starting center-back was one of the key reasons why the team reached the final 16 in the first place.

The two-time U.S. Female Soccer Player of the Year and World Cup champion was the disruptor. She did those things that few noticed even after taking a hard look at the stat sheet. No matter what was asked of her, Ertz did it. In the defensive third, and in the middle of the pitch.

On and off the field, the joy she exhibited was contagious. Few fans who stayed until the end of the game left without receiving some sort of love from Ertz. Whether that be in the form of a high-five, a picture, or an autograph. That was the kind of person she was. A leader, who set an example for every young girl and boy dreaming of becoming a professional athlete someday. Even the ones she competed against respected her.

Madden's mother is and always will be one of a kind.

Wednesday, September 27, 2023

Lost heirlooms and free expression: What the repainting of Art Haus means for the Wheaton community

BY ELSIE CARSON AND LILY MAGUIRE

“Get naked or get out!” Those five words were bright and bold on the Art Haus wall in their living room for years. First painted on in 2019, the words became the motto for Art Haus. One didn’t actually have to get naked or get out, but these words instead spoke of the safe space for artistic expression that Art Haus represents.

Art Haus, located at 44 Howard Street, houses six residents, and hosts events to foster art on Wheaton’s campus. It describes itself as “a place where artists of all media can express themselves and interact with other artists. The goal is to maintain a community centered around art appreciation that is dedicated to helping the arts flourish at Wheaton.”

Following this mural came many more of a similar brand, until Art Haus was covered in provocative, innocent, and all around fun and festive colors and paint. Generations of Haus members’ art branded the walls, doors and windows.

A mannequin, affectionately called Hilga, was the unofficial mascot of the Haus. “Grab Your Mother’s Keys, We’re Leaving,” painted bright yellow on a door was a relic from the early 2010s indie rock, as was “evacuate the dance floor” written on the fire escape.

These are some of the pieces that make Art Haus so special. Benjamin Campbell describes Art Haus as “a safe haven for ar-

tistic expression of any kind, one of the last safe havens for artistic expression on campus, both within majors and outside the major.”

But this “safe haven” for artists was disrupted over the summer, when Art Haus was fully repainted to a sterile white, covering over the murals that gave the house its character. The Residential Life Team, Dean of Students Leadership, and Physical Plant team did a walk through Art Haus in the mid-summer, and determined that “the house needed to be renovated, as the floors, furniture, and walls were covered in mismatched paint, graffiti, and messages that did not meet the standards of the Wheaton Community,” said head of residential life Tim Jordan in an email to The Wire.

Jordan said that over the summer, the floors and interior have been painted, the bathroom underwent renovation, and that new furniture was ordered. He also met with Art Haus leadership, and their faculty advisor, Kelly Goff, to create new guidelines for the house, including allowing painting in the common space but not bedrooms.

As we’re talking, the President of Art Haus, Benjamin Campbell, lists the lost pieces in the haus that were considered heirlooms, “Evacuate the dance floor was an heirloom. There was a large face out in the hallway. That was gorgeous... there was one there, there was a piece right there” he falters, as he tries to remember other pieces, “they’re slipping away already.”

Said Campbell.

Art Haus members agree that renovation was needed for structural continuity, but also claim that no issues were really solved by the summer renovations.

“They didn’t really actually fix anything. They hired an outside contractor and they just took a spray and sprayed over everything” co-president Harrison Rios said. As a result, some of the doors do not close fully anymore due to the amount of paint, and cannot be altered, either stripped down or added to, which according to treasurer Avery Cox, disrupts a longstanding house tradition.

“An arthouse tradition that has been going way back is that everyone paints their doors to their room to make it their individual space and their own. And they painted all the doors white, which, for one, makes it that you can’t open or close them all the way.” Cox told The Wire.

House members also say that the renovation team bagged everything in the living room and basement, causing pottery, sculptures, and other pieces of artwork to be destroyed, something house members want to seek compensation for.

The most glaring problem for Art Haus is the complete lack of communication from Residential Life. “My issue is not that the house is painted over, it was the fact of how it was handled.” Said Campbell. “I just really wish it was a conversation much earlier on. I wish it was not. ‘Alright, let’s just cover everything white’. I wish it was, okay, ‘what? What can we redo? And what can we change?’”

Heirlooms Lost

For Art Haus’ existence, members had access to the haus as their canvas, and had freedom to paint however they wanted. According to members of the haus, one couldn’t look in any corner without seeing an heirloom piece, some even painted by professors when they themselves were students at Wheaton. It was a concrete reminder of the generations of artists who had lived in the house. “What really upsets me, is that with a lot of the older pieces, there was absolutely no communication and a complete rejection of any possibility of conservation” Shared Campbell.

“If we had removed every single one of these walls and placed them in Beard Gallery, it would have been an exhibit,” Campbell went on, as the other house members nodded in agreement. “Where’s the line that you draw between what’s real art?”



Courtesy of Elsie Carson-Holt
A painted door in Art Haus.

When The Wire asked how Wheaton Administration making calls like painting over Art Haus impacts the house, Cox jumped in immediately.

“It impacts free expression,” they said. “[free expression] includes nudity and stuff too.” Said Cox

Changes at Wheaton

Art Haus’ walls being painted over means the loss of a decade of art from Art Haus alumni. But it also touches on something deeper many Wheaton students feel.

This year’s graduating class never experienced the traditions that most other Wheaton students are exposed to. People at Art Haus mentioned they have the sense that something shifted after the pandemic, something I have heard echoed throughout other conversations on campus and throughout my time here.

When the majority of students spent at least some of their formative years of college locked in their dorm rooms, discouraged from socializing with each other to keep themselves and their community safe, it doesn’t seem like a jump to assume that a sense of tradition and community was lost.

“Post COVID I think things are kind of losing a bit of color, so to speak.” co-president Harrison Rios said during our interview.

Wheaton is unique in our lack of off-campus housing. Almost the entire student body lives on campus all four years, shuffling from dorm to dorm and never really settling down. Most people, by the time they are no longer first-years, want somewhere more permanent to call their home, somewhere that makes them feel like a part of a community, where they can decorate the walls and express themselves freely.

Campbell says that moving into Art Haus made them feel like



Courtesy of Elsie Carson-Holt

A mannequin and wall art in Art Haus.

Wednesday, September 27, 2023

they were a part of a community, something that matters because “post-COVID those communities are really, really dwindling.”

“I feel like there are a lot more people on campus who feel like they could call this house their own...it is a space for the entire artistic community. And with the restrictions that I see happening, I’m worried that those safe spaces are going to be harder and harder to come by”.

Art Haus members also spoke to how the arts programs at Wheaton are being defunded, and with the introduction of the new nursing program, it seems like the school is shifting its focus more and more to the sciences.

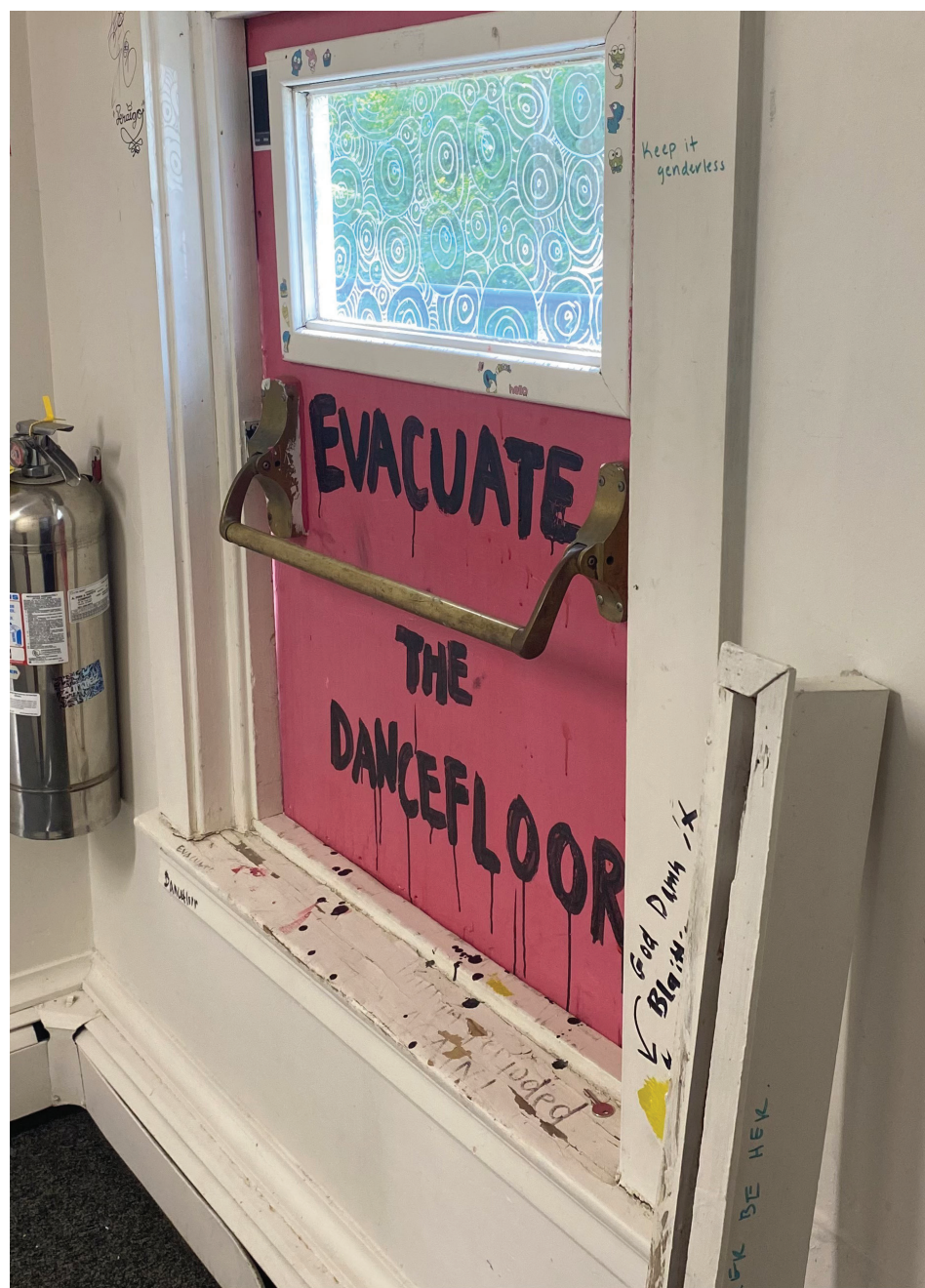
“If we want to be a liberal arts institution, we should be supporting the arts in the liberal arts,” said Campbell.

Last summer, the Residential Life team came under fire for the confiscation of furniture and decorations from theme houses. While progress has been made, it seems like there is an

inherent struggle in that residents of theme houses like Art Haus want to make permanent changes, pass down traditions, and make a place feel like home, that ultimately is owned by, and therefore controlled by, Wheaton and its guidelines.

Art Haus has already started repainting the walls in the common room, but are upset at the fact that they cannot paint their doors anymore, or other rooms in the house. They have also replaced the mannequin (Hilga) which was lost in the renovation, with a new one, named Enrique.

Art Haus wants to have an improved relationship with the Res Life team and Wheaton administration. As Campbell says, “I don’t want to fight with Res Life, they talk so much about promoting collaborative work. I am all for that. I will put all my effort towards making sure that we can collaborate and find common ground. We just need to be respected and have a voice.”



Courtesy of Elsie Carson-Holt

A painted and written on doorway in Art Haus.

Emma Seligman’s Bottoms

BY CASEY DRURY

With 2023 coming to an end, it’s easy to assume that a lot of the year’s heavy-hitter film releases have already come and left theaters. However, this couldn’t be further from the truth thanks to the release of Emma Seligman’s sophomore dark comedy, *Bottoms*. The film follows highschool students PJ (Rachel Sennott) and Josie (Ayo Edibiri), two queer teenagers who lust to lose their virginity by any means necessary. After a lie they “accidentally” spread gives them notoriety, they decide to start a fight club in an attempt to attract cheerleaders in their school away from their football playing boyfriends and towards themselves instead. Through their fight club, a large variety of problems ensue as PJ and Josie dig themselves deeper and deeper into their lie and are eventually forced to face the consequences of their actions.

While I have unfortunately not seen Seligman’s debut film *Shiva Baby* (also starring Rachel Sennott), I’m fairly certain that it does not have nearly as insane of a plot nor as surreal of a setting. The high school PJ and Josie inhabit is filled to the brim with (intentionally) obnoxious

sexual innuendo all over the place. While just referencing penises for a punchline isn’t exactly my sense of humor, the film is filled with more unique jokes which made me and my whole theater laugh, effectively counteracting the aforementioned mediocre raunchy jokes. Actresses Rachel Sennott and Ayo Edibiri excel as their characters. This wasn’t much of a shock to me, as Sennott gave a hilarious performance in last year’s *Bodies, Bodies, Bodies* and Edibiri is easily the best character on FX’s *The Bear*. However, beyond their joke delivery, their friendship and chemistry was one I could watch for hours. The film knows exactly when to be serious and when to return us to the unusually oversexualized world the characters live in.

A standout aspect in *Bottoms* that a majority of comedies need to succeed is good editing. Many times in *Bottoms* a punchline is derived simply from a well timed camera turn, a song in the film having lyrics that are ironic for the events occurring, or something being so blurry and so hard to make out that it’s hysterical, the film knows how to use editing to its advantage. Furthermore, the film has some impressive practical effects considering how low stakes the



Courtesy of IMBD

The movie poster for Emma Seligman’s *Bottoms*.

plot was. One sequence that really won me over involves an exploding car done completely practically, surprising me with how much more the plot could escalate. While the cinematography was also nothing to particularly write home about, the settings/setpieces were unique enough that cinematographer Maria Rusche didn’t need to do all that much to make the film engaging looking anyway.

While *Bottoms* may not have all that much to actually say in terms of subtext, it doesn’t really need to. After all, if touted

“great” high school comedies like 2007 film *Superbad* are allowed to be nothing more than 90 minute quests about teenagers dying to get laid, why can’t *Bottoms*? The film thrives as a dark comedy similar in themes to classics like *Heathers* and *Fight Club* while also bringing a unique touch of modern day humor and satire. While not all of that humor works, *Bottoms* stays genuinely engaging from the beginning to the end. In a year that held a long list of good film releases, *Bottoms* contributes to that list excellently and is a must see before it leaves theaters.



Courtesy of IMBD

An image taken from a scene in Emma Seligman’s *Bottoms*.

Wednesday, September 27, 2023

On this day at Wheaton

BY ROSA HERIC

September 27, 1930

Just last week, the results of the Student Government Association fall election came in, and the winners were announced through email, a far cry from the way Wheaton showcased its class officers nearly 100 years ago. On this day in 1930, the Wheaton News published their September 27th issue recounting a spectacle at the tennis courts earlier that week, where a raised boxing ring had been erected and several juniors play-fought opponents from different classes for their respective Student Government titles.

This was long before Wheaton



Courtesy of Wheaton Archives
A Chilton pen advertisement from 1970.

became a co-educational institution in 1988, so the contestants were all women. The first-round winner was Elizabeth Wells (her boxing name: Betty “Welcome” Wells), rising to Junior class presidency by besting the reigning champion, Sophomore class president “Lucky Lou” Gleason. The girls wore bathrobes as their fighting attire and Betty, until the moment of her victory, wore a mask to draw out the suspense.

The match had five rounds, each time a different girl rising to fame along with her showy nickname. The roster included Carol “Foxy” Foster (soon-to-be Vice President), hockey goalie Barbara “Pee Wee” Wilbur, upcoming treasurer Margaret “Honey” Holmes, and athlete Elizabeth “Wild Cat” Willard. The match itself had been a complete surprise, the confused student body having been lured to the tennis courts at 9:30 that night by ringing bells and odd red flares of light. The tennis courts were brand new at the time, and this dramatic boxing display was their christening.

Needless to say, the Student Government’s secrecy paid off, and the event was such a hit that afterward, the excited crowd swarmed to the hockey fields to parade the new Junior class officers around on their shoulders.

Though little other news from this day in 1930 can be thrilling enough to top this elaborately planned boxing match, an enthusiastic column was dedicated to welcoming the incoming freshman class — as well as profiling them in detail. The class of 1934 consisted of 160 girls, from geographic regions much more limited than this year’s class of 2027. Majority hailed from the New England states, as well as New York, Maryland, and Virginia. One girl came from Wisconsin, one from Indiana, and two called Hawaii home — the farthest of the bunch. The column also made a point of calling out freshman Anna Marshall, who had only just turned sixteen in June.

Shockingly, the most exhaustive report was on the different heights and weights of the first-years! The reporter called out, with names, the tallest and shortest girls, including their weights to stress their petite stature. This report on body type was what — to me — dated the newspaper the most aggressively. In my search of the available Wire issues in the archives, no succeeding issues in the 40s or 50s dedicated any space to the incoming freshmen in this way (other than to comment on their showcased talents at the annual freshman skits).

Those lacking in updates on the social scene need only turn to the Cream O’Wheaton column, which reported various overheard amusements: a junior mistaking a faculty member for a freshman in the pressing room, or a freshman who asked another freshman if she happened to be the president of the senior class. What today we might spread through social media or group chats, in 1930 was carried through word-of-mouth to the Cream O’Wheaton presses, and what caught my eye in this column was this particular announcement:

“The Emily Post influence is abroad again, it seems. A Freshman refused to dance with a Senior because they had not been introduced. Oh, OH!”

This mention of such an Emily Post influence made me curious — and led me on a dive into the popular culture of New England society around the time this Wire issue was published.

Emily Post was a popular American etiquette advice writer in the 1900s. Based in New York, her guidance could often be found broadcasted over the radio or through a regular column in the Bell Syndicate — though on this day in 1930, many girls at Wheaton most likely had her book, *Etiquette in Society, in Business, in Politics, and at Home* tucked away



Courtesy of Wheaton Archives
A photo of the 1970 Senior Class President.

somewhere on their dorm room bookshelves. The book, first published in 1922, advised on manners and other social rules, and has been updated many times since. Most recently is the 19th edition of her book, which was published in 2022 by her great-grandchildren, and could be considered a complete “renovation” of Post’s original guide. The 19th edition features technological etiquette, such as how to address an email and how to conduct yourself in video meetings, as well as how to ask for and use pronouns.

Post’s original guide clearly informed the social landscape of Wheaton dances, as this anecdote shows, though for how long a period, I can’t be sure — if the slightly stupefied tone used by the reporter is any indication, many were probably already considering Post’s guidelines for manners to be too antiquated for the Wheaton social scene, even at the time.

I hope this afforded you a rare glimpse into the past — both the obsolete traditions and timeless student concerns — of Wheaton. One thing is doubtless: from this day, September 27th in 1930, to this day in 2023, Wheaton College has evolved remarkably (and so has the Wheaton Wire).

Freedom of expression policy: *the details*

FROM PAGE ONE

Whelan specifically emphasized that Wheaton does not want students to self-censor. According to the Merriam Webster Dictionary, self-censorship is defined as “the act or action of refraining from expressing something (such as a thought, point of view, or belief) that others could deem objectionable.” Regardless of location, self-censorship is something that many people do, especially to avoid judgment from others. Professor Gerard Huiskamp, a political science professor at Wheaton College, explained how he has encountered self-censoring at Wheaton. Over the past 20

years, Huiskamp has spoken to some students who did not feel as though their ideas would be respected because they were the minority opinion. “While some ideas were celebrated, there were others that were not.” As a college, Wheaton has a responsibility to maintain an environment where students of all opinions feel comfortable to have their voice be heard. However, Huiskamp emphasized that it is also the role of students and faculty members too. By keeping an open mind and being keen on challenging the idea rather than the person, people will be more comfortable with sharing their opinions and will be less likely to self-censor.

As of right now, the phrasing of the Wheaton Free Expression Policy could raise issues of interpretation from future administrations who are not as intent on facilitating free and open discourse. Wheaton’s current free expression policy could potentially open a door to a violation of freedoms. Although even FIRE acknowledges that private institutions are not prohibited by law from limiting expression in various ways, they do believe that private institutions have a moral obligation to uphold absolute freedom of expression. It’s not a question of law, but of values. “While private institutions are not directly legally bound to uphold the Constitution, those

that promise debate and freedom are morally bound...to uphold the fundamental principles of free speech and of academic freedom, principles that underlie the First Amendment.”

Whether or not the policy is “arbitrarily” limiting students free expression, Huiskamp’s point still stands. It is up to the faculty to encourage all viewpoints in their classrooms. It is up to the students to speak their minds and be open to all perspectives. Regardless of policy, without an inclusive community that values open dialogue, not everyone’s voice will be heard.

Wheaton events

BY AMELIA VERHAR

Here's a list of some upcoming events on campus!

Looking to speak with some local artists one-on-one?

On Wednesday, September 27 from 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM there will be the inaugural Beard and Weil Artists Residency, hosted by Bláithín Haddad and Adjua Greaves. Stop by the Beard and Weil Galleries in Watson Fine Arts if interested. Other drop-in studio hours will be offered every Wednesday 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM through October 14.

Wanting some extra academic support?

Stop by the Academic Advising Drop-In Hours on Wednesday, September 27 from 2:30 PM to 4:00 PM at the Filene Center at Kollett Hall. These hours will be offered on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays for the rest of the semester from 2:30 to 4:00 PM.

Interested in studying abroad?

Check out the Study Abroad 101 info session on Wednesday, September 27 at 3:00 PM in the Center for Global Education on 5 Howard Street. The session will go over the study abroad programs available to Wheaton students as well as the processes and timelines for the programs. Later sessions will be offered on Thursday September 28, Wednesday October 4, Thursday October 5, Wednesday October 11, and Thursday October 12, all at 3:00 PM at the Center for Global Education.

Are you a first year student interested in learning some skills to succeed at Wheaton?

Check out the First Year Success Skill Modules: Effective Study Strategies session on Wednesday, September 27 at 3:30 PM in the Hindle Auditorium. These workshop/module seminars are hosted by Academic Advising and Peer Academic Mentors. Do you like free goodies and greenhouses? Stop by the Goodies & Greenhouse Tour on Wednesday, September 27 from 3:30 to 6:30 PM in the Mars Science Center Room 4114. Get to know Wheaton Women in STEM, take a tour of the greenhouse, and grab a self-care goody bag!

Looking to go on a short-term faculty-led trip this winter break?

Come check out the South Africa (January 2024) Study Abroad Info Session on Wednesday, September 27 at 4:00 PM in Meneely 105. A second info session will be held on Tuesday, October 17 at 5:00pm in Meneely 104.

Come celebrate with the Wheaton Wire!

Join us for the Wheaton Wire Publishing Party on Wednesday,

September 27 at 5:30 PM in the Wheaton Wire office (located at the back of the club hub and up the stairs)! We will be reading and celebrating our first print issue of the Fall 2023 semester!

Interested in supporting the environmental sustainability of the Wheaton community?

Stop by the SGA Sustainability Board Open Meeting on Wednesday, September 27 at 7:30 PM in Meneely 105! The board will be discussing environmental sustainability plans and initiatives and are always looking for people with new event ideas, to get involved in planning, or to just hear what they've been working on! These open meetings will be offered bi-weekly on Wednesdays from 7:30 to 8:30 PM in Meneely 105 until the end of the semester. Are you a lover of history and prizes? Come to the Historical Deathmatch hosted by History Club on Thursday, September 28 at 6:00 PM in Knapton 214! Face off your favorite historical figures in a Hunger Games-style simulator, vote on winners, and receive prizes!

Do you enjoy jamming out with friends?

Check out Open Jam Night on Thursday, September 28 from 6:30 to 9:00 PM at the Music Co-op (behind the physical plant)! Bring your instrument and sit in on a few songs! Open to all skill levels and abilities.

Interested in learning more about mental health resources on campus?

Come to Fresh Check Day on Friday, September 29 from 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM in the Dimple. This annual mental health event is an uplifting mental health promotion and suicide prevention event that includes interactive expo booths, peer-to-peer messaging, free food, entertainment, prizes, and giveaways. Do you like good food, company, and music? Come check out the Latinx Student Association (LSA) Mixer on Friday, September 29 from 5:00 to 7:00 PM at the Filene Center. As part of Hispanic & Latinx Heritage Month, LSA's kickoff event for the semester is a mixer! Stop by for empanadas, croquetas, conchas, switch games, kahoot, music, & more!

Interested in trivia and free prizes?

Come to the Women in the Music Industry Trivia on Friday, September 29 from 7:00 to 8:00 PM in Conger Commons! Join Emerson House and Music Co-Op to play trivia with questions about women and their success in the music industry! There will be prizes and snacks.

Looking for some fall festivities?

Check out the Best Buds Fall Festival on Sunday, October 1 from 1:00 to 4:00 PM at the Chapel Base. It will be a fun fall celebration with lunch and games!

Interested in learning more about summer experience opportunities relating to STEM?

Stop by the Summer Experience Showcase hosted by Women in Stem on Tuesday, October 3 from 4:00 to 7:00 PM in the May Room in Mary Lyon. Hear from your STEM peers to learn more about research, study abroad, and other internship opportunities that take place over the summer! The showcase will be broken down into three 1-hour long segments, with a Q&A portion following each session.

Ever wondered how to make your own ice cream?

Come to the Make Your Own Liquid Nitrogen Ice Cream event hosted by the Physics and Astronomy Club on Thursday, October 5 from 6:00 to 7:00 PM in the Discovery Center Room 1343. Several flavors, toppings,

and textures will be available alongside games and good company. If you've ever wanted to try your hand at making Dippin' Dots or want to see ice cream freeze within minutes, this is your chance!

Want to learn more about how you can spend a semester abroad in Bhutan?

Check out the Wheaton in Bhutan Fall 2024 Info Session on Tuesday, October 17 at 5:00 PM in the 1960 Room in Balfour-Hood! The program offers the opportunity for students to immerse themselves in Bhutanese culture and history, complete an internship, and explore the country through multiple excursions.

For more information on upcoming Wheaton events, check out Engage@Wheaton.

For concerns regarding accessibility, email lyon_ben@wheatoncollege.edu

Music Co-op
Wheaton College



Bring your instrument and get ready to play!

Open to all skill levels and styles

OPEN JAM

Songs for This Month*

Cantaloupe Island - Herbie Hancock
Doin Time - Sublime
Love Story - Taylor Swift

*We can accommodate other requests

September 28, 2023
6:30p.m. to 8:30p.m.
In the Music Co-op

WHEATON WOMEN IN STEM PRESENTS:



RESEARCH WITH FACULTY

INTERNSHIPS & STUDY ABROAD!

SNACKS!!

Q & A SESSION

SUMMER EXPERIENCE SHOWCASE

Join us Tuesday, October 3rd in the Woolley Room from 4:00-7:00pm to hear from your peers about summer experiences in STEM fields!

For event advertising contact
verhar_amelia@wheatoncollege.edu

Wednesday, September 27, 2023

Eating Five Lobsters at Lobster Night?

BY KEIRA WHITAKER

Once a year, Chase Dining Hall hosts a lobster night for students. It's a time for Wheaton students to gather around with their friends and the larger community to feast and enjoy lobster. Lobster is a huge tradition in New England, mainly due to early maritime economies and an abundance of high yield lobster farms. Many would say that it is an integral part of its history and culture. So it's only fitting that Wheaton would celebrate this tradition every year with a campus wide lobster night.

When I first walked into the cafeteria I was greeted by the intense smell of lobster, almost like a seafood market. It was quite overwhelming. I was not used to the smell since I am from NYC, where lobster isn't

quite as "worshiped" as it is in Massachusetts. It is still a sort of rare delicacy to me. Unfortunately I did not end up eating the lobster due to the profuse smell, but it looked superb nonetheless. Everyone there seemed overly excited and caught up in the joy of the tradition. It was the talk of the night. Each plate included a whole lobster, potatoes, and some corn. There was also a big table near the seating area where you could get butter, cracking tools for opening the lobster, and a bib.

Lobster night at Wheaton costs around \$10,000, not including decorations or additional lobster accommodations. Let that sink in a little bit. Does a portion of our tuition money go towards lobster night? And is it worth the cost for one night? As one anonymous person said, "Why is

this school spending this much money on glorified sea bugs?"

I spoke to a few students at the event and created a google form to hear general feedback about the night. Here are some of their responses. One student said lobster night is the best night of the year at Chase. They usually eat about three to five lobsters just because they love lobster so much. Another simply enjoyed the fact that it was an entire lobster and not just a lobster roll. A first time lobster-taster gave it a 4/5 for flavor, 1/5 for ease of eating, and 5/5 for fun factor. A group of friends, Calvin, Kyler, and Jake shared that they really enjoyed the lobster and the corn, but above all, the themed bibs were the best accessory.

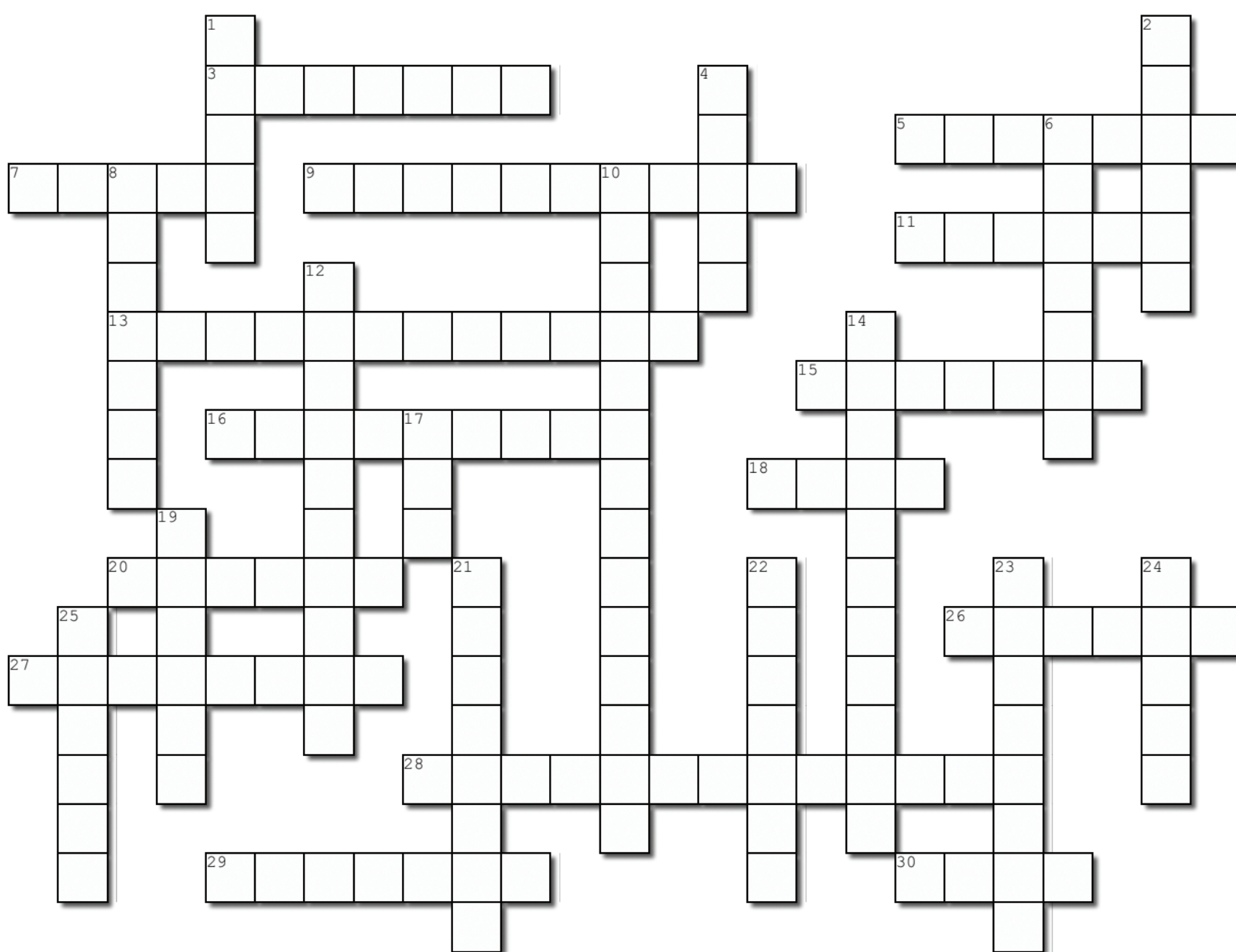
One student, Jackson Elwell, ate a whopping five lobsters, and was even aiming for seven. I didn't count the number of lobsters other students ate, but that may as well be the cam-

pus record. Five lobsters! That equates to about 7 pounds of pure lobster, all in one night. Others were not as impressed by the lobster, but found the decor to be the highlight of the night. One such student is Maddy Guarnieri, who claimed to only eat 2% of her lobster due to the texture. Her least favorite part of the night (and I'm sure many others share the same opinion) was the scent of the lobster, and the way it became infused into the tables and tablecloths. Even now she says she can sometimes still smell it.

But overall, the reviews were mostly positive. As always, lobster night succeeded in bringing many Wheaties together. And it was an enjoyable first-time experience for me as well. As many said, Wheaton should continue to organize more community building experiences like lobster night. Food never fails to bring people together and give them a night (or smell) to remember.

Wheaton Wire Crossword

BY LILY MAGUIRE



Created using the Crossword Maker on TheTeachersCorner.net

Across

3. What this crossword wishes it was
5. Wheaton's finest NASA Scientist
7. A bisexual utensil
9. Goodreads for movies
11. Feminist icon of 2023
13. Temple of whom?
15. Some great fabric scissors
16. 'Better' Dunkin
18. Mason made a jar
20. New meal plan
26. New OnCourse
27. A herb to make a sleepytime tea
28. A relationship that's not a relationship, but we do relationship things... wait now I'm confused
29. Wheaton's Summer Scandal Story
30. Where you can stream Wheaton's best tunes

Down

1. She's a Songbird, he's a _____
2. #15, but Irish
4. Brittany Spears if she was a possessive partner
6. Only Surf, No Turf
8. THE blind King of the 13th century B.C.E.
10. Not Tasty's but still Tasty
12. Norman F*cking Rockwell
14. Close to a Moose who made a mistake
17. New Dorito Flavor
19. *2 Minute Warning*
21. A 'childhood' summer drink
22. The if ykyk fight club
23. An essential (but optional) school supply
24. Vacation land!
25. The category of this crossword

Look for the answers in the next issue!