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MISSISSIPPIAN

THE STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI SERVING OLE MISS SINCE 1911 Visit theDMonline.com @thedm_news

WHAT'S INSIDE...

Is the coveted college degree really worth it?

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Baseball hosts Military Appreciation Weekend

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Basketball legends shoot hoops with LOU



BRIANA FLOREZ

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PHOTOS BY: CAMERON BROOKS

Nearly 100 members of the Oxford and Ole Miss community participated in a meet-and-greet with Ole Miss Women's basketball legends and Athletics Hall of Fame members Peggie Gillom-Granderson and Jennifer Gillom Thursday afternoon in the Tuohy Center. The "Great Gillom Shootout" was hosted by the Ole Miss Women's Council for Philanthropy. Gillom and Gillom-Granderson are the OMWC's 2017 Legacy Award recipients. Gillom (left), Gillom-Granderson, current women's basketball players and cheerleaders also practiced shooting hoops with members of the L.O.U. community.

SEE THEDMONLINE FOR FULL STORY

Mississippi strives to improve child welfare

JONATHAN GIBSON

thedmnews@gmail.com

Children across the country face hardships when it comes to opportunity and living situations, but Mississippi children may have it worse than most.

According to a new study released by the Annie E. Casey Foundation Kids Count Data Center, Mississippi ranks last among all U.S. states in overall child-welfare.

This inadequacy is especially apparent at the state level in the Mississippi Department of Family and Children's Services and foster care programs.

While many states struggle to provide adequate resources for children, Mississippi has repeatedly failed to provide necessary funding and access to programs like foster care and child health care. Simultaneously, poverty rates among families throughout the state have increased drastically.

"Mississippi's poverty rate is higher than most of the states in the country," Oleta Fitzgerald, southern regional director of the Children's Defense Fund said.

The child poverty rate in Mississippi is 34 percent, meaning a third of all children in Mississippi live in impoverished conditions, and more than 60 percent of

impoverished families in the state are headed by single mothers, according to the Mississippi Economic Policy Center.

The average income one adult and two children require to meet basic needs is estimated to be around \$51,180 a year, but the median annual income for a woman in Mississippi is only \$31,465.

This disparity is only one of the ways by which the state fails to provide children many of their basic needs.

Mississippi's foster care program has faced public backlash for its struggles to meet the needs of children in the state before.

In 2004, Children's Rights, a national children's advocacy center, brought a civil suit against the state for its alleged failure to prevent the abuse and neglect of eight plaintiffs in the foster care system.

One plaintiff referred to as Olivia Y., was removed from her family at age three, weighing only 22 pounds. According to a testimony from center's website, she was moved between five placements, including one home where a convicted rapist resided. During her entire time in custody, DFCS failed to provide her with necessary medical as-

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UM Pride Network to host formal

DANIEL DUBUISSON
RACHEL ISHEE

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Barnard Observatory has housed Confederate soldiers, sorority sisters and even a chancellor over the years. This Friday night, it will host the UM Pride Network.

The UM Pride Network will throw its third annual formal from 9 p.m. to midnight in the Observatory's Tupelo Room.

The free event's theme is "Out of The Closet, Out of This World"; attendees are encouraged to show up in their best intergalactic-inspired outfits.

"It's going to be your favorite astronauts, your favorite aliens, milky-ways, whatever you want to be," Spencer Pleasants, president of the UM Pride Network, said. "The sparklier the better. The more silver or metallics the better. Whatever fantasy suits you, do it and come on and party."

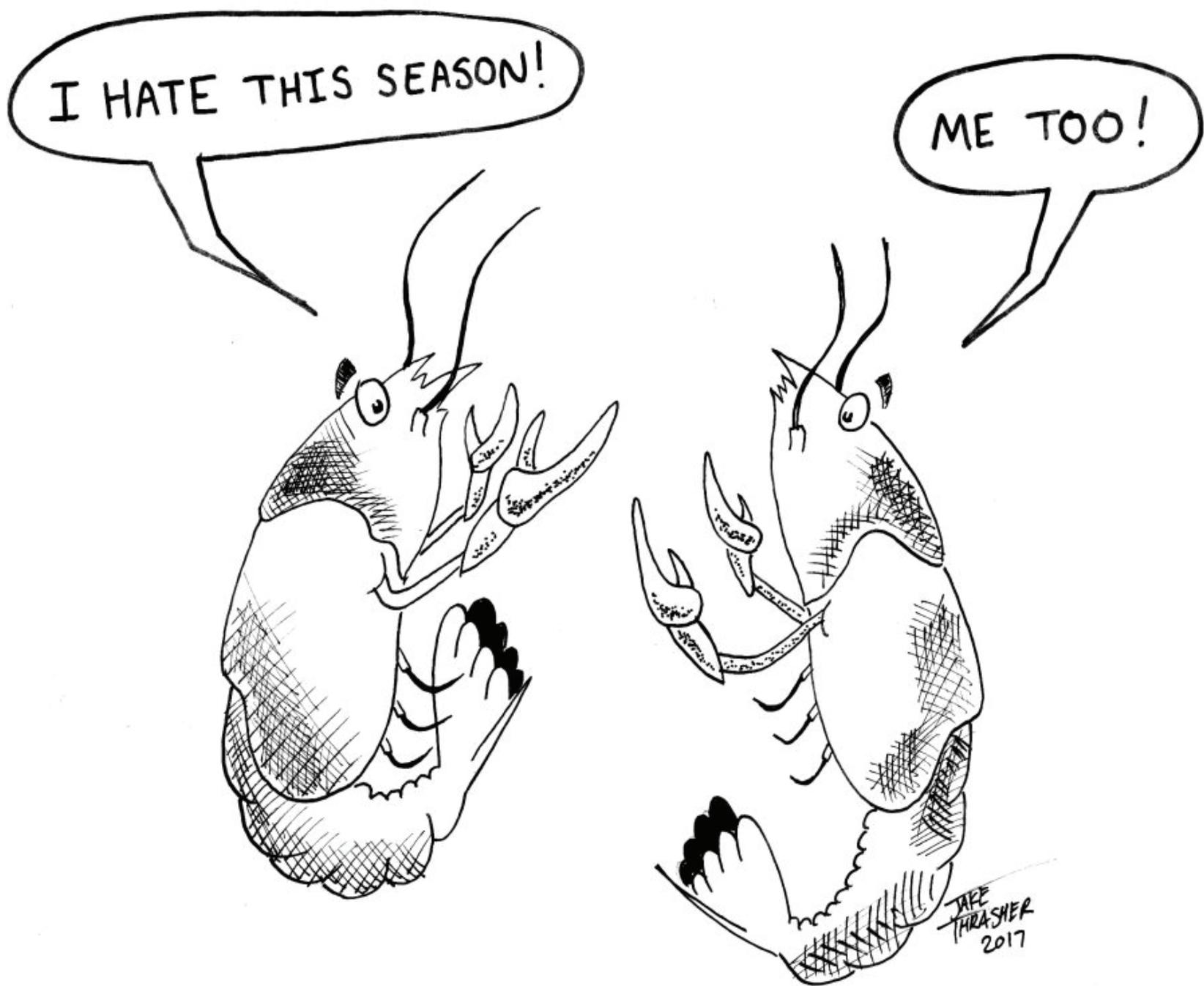
The planning committee created a playlist featuring a sound they describe as "David Bowie meets Lady Gaga meets Star Wars."

"We've been working on a collaborative playlist of out of this world tunes," Pleasants said. "There's going to be a brigade of fabulous dance floor tunes that you can get your space booty down to."

But dancing is not the only draw to the formal. Some students are simply excited to have a safe space to meet new people. In the past, the formal was targeted toward members of the undergraduate LGBTQ+ community, but this year organizers are actively promoting the event to a much broader audience.

"I'm just looking forward to going there and relaxing for a

SEE **PRIDE** PAGE 3



COLUMN

Students should push for state-wide aid programs



MIKALA TURNER
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Lower- and middle-class people obviously understand the struggle of attempting to afford the luxuries—and sometimes even the necessities—of life.

People with a limited income usually consider

it a luxury to further their education past a high school diploma or GED.

Coming from a single-parent household that qualifies as lower-class, I understand the terrifying moment when one is weighing the options between the cost of attendance to a university or community college and the value of that education that awaits us.

Most of the time, unless they are okay with taking out loans, lower-class individuals must rely on their intelligence as well as their financial need to give them a way to afford college.

Although at points, some lower-class individuals barely miss the threshold

for some achievement or income-based scholarships.

Education is not something that should only be for higher income students who do not have to struggle as others do much for financial assistance. Systems like the new Excelsior Program in New York eliminate the idea that rich people are the only ones that universities cater to.

This year New York became the first state to enact a law that created the Excelsior Program, which gives students with an annual income of less than \$100,000 a year completely free tuition.

Although, the program does have some added

catches. The program's benefits only seem to fill the gap after other federal and state financial aid have been factored into the payment. If a student were to have no additional aid other than the Excelsior Program, the benefits from this program would be much greater.

New York is the first place to pass a state-wide law like this, but our own university does have a program that is very much like the Excelsior Program.

The Ole Miss Opportunity (OMO) grant offered here at Ole Miss caters to students who have an income limitation of under \$30,000 a year and are Mississippi residents with at least a 3.0

high-school GPA.

Though the OMO grant does provide immense opportunities and assistance to students with limited financial resources like myself, one must agree that making programs like the OMO and Excelsior a state-wide law would attract even more people to furthering their education.

We as students should all call for state-wide programs in Mississippi that allow everyone access to equal education opportunities, no matter how low their annual income may be.

Mikala Turner is a sophomore social work major from Bruce.

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The Daily Mississippian welcomes letters to the editor. Letters should be e-mailed to dmletters@olemiss.edu.

Letters should be typed, double-spaced and no longer than 300 words. Letters may be edited for clarity, space or libel. Third-party letters and those bearing pseudonyms, pen names or "name withheld" will not be published. Publication is limited to one letter per individual per calendar month.

Letters should include phone and email contact information so that editors can verify authenticity. Letters from students should include grade classification and major; letters from faculty and staff should include title and the college, school or department where the person is employed.

PRIDE

continued from page 1

night,” sophomore accounting major Skyler Knapp said. Knapp said she hopes some new faces will be at this year’s event. “We need something like this because with the LGBTQ+ community and the environment we live in at Ole Miss where the Greek community is so prevalent,” junior biology major and UM Pride Network member Sam Palmer said. “It is not known for being particularly accepting of queer people, so I think that having a formal



COURTESY: UM PRIDE NETWORK

that kind of mirrors the fun things Greek people do gives the queer students a chance to kick back and enjoy that experience they might wouldn’t be able to have otherwise.” Though similar events already exist such as Everybody’s Formal hosted by the Associated Student Body, Palmer said he thinks the Ole Miss community will benefit from something that embraces this group of people who are normally polarized.

“It is different when you cater something to a specific community,” Palmer said. “People think that ‘this is an event for me’...so maybe it’s

not such a bad thing to be queer.” Pleasants said she wants this formal to not only give people a place to cut loose in a safe space, but also get them excited for the upcoming pride weekend. “Our hope is that this formal gets people in gear as a precursor to L.O.U. Pride coming up the first week on May,” Pleasants said. “I’m looking forward to just dancing the night away and hopefully dancing the night into the stars.”

This article was submitted to The Daily Mississippian from an advanced reporting class.

CHILDREN

continued from page 1

assessments and health care. The state settled with Children’s Rights in 2008, under the condition they lower the caseloads for social workers, lower the response time for reports of abuse and eliminate the practice of placing children in unlicensed foster homes. Mississippi wonly has 1,486 licensed foster homes for the more than 5,000 children in state custody, leaving many children with no hope of being placed in a home at all.

A New York Times article noted that as of January 2016, 4,367 children monitored by the state have not been placed in custody.

Since 2014, at least four Mississippi children have died in state custody due to neglect or placement in abusive homes. Because of the massive shortage of licensed foster homes, last year more than 500 children were placed into unlicensed homes — sometimes with relatives that have the same issues with drugs and abuse as the families the children were removed from in the first place.

This oversight by the DFCS has led to a rise in abuse reports, but these reports rarely made it past being officially recorded. Using state data ranging from 2001 to 2016, the New York Times noted that “more than 6,200 reports of abuse, neglect and the use of unsafe foster homes were not investigated [by the DFCS].”

“How could any case worker with a caseload of 70 to 100 manage to go out and see the children?,” Mississippi case worker Julia Wasvick said.

The average salary for a social worker, a profession that requires a four-year degree from a university, is \$23,643 per year. Some make so little they actually qualify for welfare. Because of these



GRAPHIC BY: MARISA MORRISSETTE SOURCE: MS ECONOMIC POLICY CENTER, ECONOMIC POLICY INSTITUTE, AND NEW YORK TIMES

less-than-desirable work conditions, the turnover rate for social workers across the country reaches as high as 70 percent. Conditions for Mississippi children have improved

significantly since 2004, but a lack of licensed foster families in the state lead to a legislative push to get people involved in the program.

Rescue 100, a collaborative effort between the DFCS, the Mississippi Commission on Children’s Justice, 200 Million Flowers and churches across the state of Mississippi, has organized events around Mississippi to support reducing families’ licensing times from several months down to just a few days.

The organization recently hosted an event at the Robert Khayat School of Law to help meet the need for foster families here in Oxford.

These programs certainly help to increase the number of foster families in the state, but much work is still necessary in order to get the state where it needs to be for the future.

“We congratulate the state on its willingness to acknowledge how far it still has to go,” Marcia Robinson Lowry, attorney and executive director of A Better Childhood, said. “This is a significant commitment to bringing caseloads down to professional standards, to making sure all children are in licensed homes, and to ensuring that all children are in homes or facilities that actually are able to care for them.”

“They have a lot of work to do,” Lowry said. “But we are ready to work with them

to see that it gets done.”

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Chicago's Bunny gives punk music a soft side

ZOE MCDONALD

thedmfeatures@gmail.com

As Bunny began, Jessica Viscius had just started writing music and learning guitar about a year and-a-half ago in her Chicago apartment in hopes of starting a solo project.

But then she brought in her sister Alexa to play bass. Tim Makowsky on guitar helped Viscius and Alexa get connected with drummer Shane Prewitt (of Oxford bands Reels and Unwed Teenage Mothers) just a few days before Christmas last year to form the current outfit. They played together for about two weeks before heading into the studio to record nine songs. Of those songs, "Let Me Be Yer Dog" and "Not Even You" will be released as a 7-inch through Chicago DIY label Dumpster Tapes—the cassette label's first vinyl release.

Prewitt said Bunny sets



PHOTO COURTESY: JESSICA VISCIOUS

itself apart with a certain intimate softness in its live performances. Viscius' lyrics are also topically universal.

"They're all love songs.

Anybody can relate, unless you don't have a heart," she said.

In the first stages of Bunny's conceptualization, Viscius said she wanted the venture to be a post-punk band. After the fast-paced songs she was experimenting with didn't seem to fit, Viscius let Bunny become something all its own.

"When I first started playing music... I was really pained over what the band, what the music should sound like," Viscius said. "I would end up sitting in my apartment—I used to live alone—and it was kind of just a stream of consciousness when I was writing the songs. That felt more natural, when it was coming from a place that didn't try to imitate something."

Viscius' love songs are darkly romantic, with frank lines like one from "I Like You": "In the morning I did the walk of shame, but

I skipped all the way home. I've never been so happy and I've never been so alone."

Viscius' output consists of some sad love songs, but don't get confused and peg the music for 'sad girl lyrics.'

"Just because I'm a girl writing love songs it's like, 'oh sad girl.' Like dude, I'm not that sad," Viscius said.

In spite of a male-dominated music industry, Viscius said Bunny has been welcomed into Chicago's scene.

"We did kind of come in as newcomers, and they kind of showed us the ropes. Not in like, a mansplaining way," Viscius said.

Alexa and Viscius, who are both graphic designers, say their knack for design has helped Bunny stick with listeners. They designed Bunny's website (which is an off-the-moment-shade called millennial pink), graphics

and merchandise. Most recently, they screen-printed tees to sell on their weekend-long tour, which will take them to Oxford on Saturday.

Viscius said she is still surprised Bunny has taken off among blogs and venues in Chicago, considering she nearly canceled her first ever solo show because of her fear of public speaking. But Bunny has played consistently around Chicago, with more shows lined-up, including a special birthday bash in June for Viscius, Alexa and Prewitt. And in case you were wondering, yes, they are all Geminis.

"We're twins, we're Geminis," Alexa said. "We have like, a million personalities."

Catch the many sides of Bunny with local act Swear Tapes at Proud Larry's Saturday at 9 p.m. Tickets are \$5.

'Albert Herring' brings shenanigans to Ford Center

JONATHAN GIBSON

thedmfeatures@gmail.com

This weekend, prepare to see hi-jinx, tomfoolery and debauchery run rampant in Benjamin Britten's fictional town of Loxford, England.

When one thinks of opera, a large, blond-haired woman in a Viking helmet singing loud arias in a foreign language probably comes to mind. Britten's comic opera "Albert Herring," presented by the University of Mississippi opera program, may not match up with the stereotypes.

The show revolves around Albert Herring, a timid, sheltered young man who

works at the town shop.

"There have been some shenanigans," Ashley Ashmore, who plays the housekeeper Florence Pike, said. "And the women are not as pure as they're supposed to be."

The town decides only one person in town meets the qualifications for the annual May Queen, an honor bestowed on the most virtuous girl in town. The only problem is that he's a boy: Albert Herring.

Albert is thoroughly embarrassed at being honored for his virginal qualities, and he decides to do something about it.

"I don't want to give away

the ending," Ashmore said. "But he goes out on a little romp, and what ensues is just hilarious."

This is Ashmore's second opera performance with the university, and she has been involved in both the band and choral departments at the university her entire time as a student.

"It's been a lot of fun performing so far," Ashmore said. "It's great getting into a different period and different place."

The show is light-hearted and silly, very accessible even to a first-time operagoer, Ashmore said.

"The show is in English, and theoretically that means you should be able to understand us," Ashmore said, laughing. "We're working on that. It's a good thing. You don't have that language barrier."

She said the comedic nature of the show and its larger-than-life characters help make the show enjoyable and entertaining, even if viewers don't necessarily understand everything that's going on.

Cody Arthur, who plays Albert Herring in the show, said he didn't really know what to expect when he took on the role, but doing it has been rewarding.

"This style of music is much, much harder to learn than, say, your standard Mozart or Verdi," Arthur said. "It's way out there. It's been a bigger challenge than I was expecting originally."

Arthur said one of his favorite moments of the show is when he walks onstage drunk and says everything that's on his mind for the first time.

"That's when you get to

see his real thoughts on everything," Arthur said. "The audience gets even more insight into his brain in this moment. It's funny to get to play that up as much as possible and explore all the different possibilities."

Arthur said students can prepare themselves to better enjoy the show by reading a synopsis before seeing it.

"I always read the synopsis before I see a show, sometimes two because they can be vague, so that I have an idea of what's going on," Arthur said. "This opera is a comedy, so be prepared to laugh."

The show runs at 7:30 p.m. Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday. Tickets are available at the UM Box Office in the Ford Center, and prices vary by seating section. Discounted student tickets are also available.

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SENIOR
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PRESENTATION

Conrad Joseph
Collins

B.A. IN PHILOSOPHY

"The Metaphysics of
Transubstantiation:
The Problem of
Individuation in the
Seventeenth Century"

Directed by Timothy Yenter

Friday, April 21
at 8:30 am

SMBHC Room 016

The defense is open to the public.

If you require special assistance relating to a disability, please contact Penny Leeton at 662-915-7266.

34543

SENIOR
HONORS THESIS
PRESENTATION

Avery Burns

B.A. IN PUBLIC POLICY
LEADERSHIP

"Identifying Processes
Common to Efforts in
Improving the Relationship
Between Humans and
the Environment"

Directed by David Rutherford

Friday, April 21
at 10:00 am

Lott Conference Room

The defense is open to the public.

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34520

SENIOR
HONORS THESIS
PRESENTATION

Cody Michael Austin

B.A. IN PUBLIC POLICY
LEADERSHIP

"University of
Mississippi Students'
Opinions Regarding Sex
Education in Mississippi"

Directed by Melissa Bass

Friday, April 21
at 12:00 pm

Odom Hall Room 101

The defense is open to the public.

If you require special assistance relating to a disability, please contact Penny Leeton at 662-915-7266.

34520

Review: Unicorn food fad makes its way to campus

LANA FERGUSON
dmeditor@gmail.com

Ever since I tasted my first Frappuccino in the fourth grade, I was hooked. Starbucks was my go-to for coffee, even more so in my later years of high school and college when I actually needed caffeine to get through my day.

I'm also a self-proclaimed foodie. I follow all of the cooking how-to videos, read the blogs and try to eat at mainly local places when I go out. One of the latest food trends I've noticed popping up online is a unicorn obsession. I must admit I don't really get it. I'd like to think the "Let's eat something sugar-loaded, pink and sparkly," hasn't drawn me in since my elementary years. But bakeries and restaurants all over the nation, and even locally, are joining in and making their own versions of unicorn food.



PHOTO BY: CAMERON BROOKS

But get this – Starbucks released a limited-time drink Wednesday: the Unicorn Frappuccino. It's bright pink, full of sugar and apparently super popular on social media. It's like a bath bomb you can eat.

Starbucks has marketed the drink as the "flavor-changing, color-changing, totally not-made-up Unicorn Frappuccino." Ingredients include ice, milk, mango syrup, blue drizzle, pink powder and sour blue powder just to name a few.

So, like any true journalist I

was curious and decided to try it. I had to move quick though because this drink is only around for five days and I had already lost one.

After being turned away from the Starbucks on Jackson Avenue because they already ran out of the ingredients on day two, my coworker Jonathan saved the day and brought me one from the on-campus location in Coulter Hall. I was secretly happy I didn't have to say, "May I have a unicorn Frappuccino, please?" in front

of a coffee shop full of people.

To my amazement, the drink looked as pink, blue and swirly as it did in the advertisements. I'll definitely give all the hard-working baristas props for that.

I slid my green straw through the pink and blue sugar-topped whip cream and into the drink. I took my first sip. My eyes closed and my lips puckered... and not in a good way.

This drink was one of the most sour things I've tasted in a long while. It was like popping fifteen Starbursts into my mouth at once – not a good idea. We passed the drink around the office, each taking turns experiencing that first (and usually last) lip-puckering sip before passing it off to someone else.

This was a brilliant marketing on Starbucks part. Everyone saw the Frappuccino on social media and rushed out to get one just like they did when popular Instagrammers posted the secret menu Pink Drink a

few months ago. That drink became so popular it's been added to the permanent menu. They company nailed the look of the drink and even put thought into giving it "magical qualities" like changing colors and taste when you stir the drink. There's no doubt this is a well-made product, it's just not a tasty one. This drink was made to be hashtagged with unicorn emojis, not to be sipped.

No amount of supposed fairy dust is worth a toothache sugar rush and 410 calories in a grande cup. I say buy one for yourself and a group of friends. You can snap a picture of the drink for social media, share in a taste-test and be able to take part in this current conversation.

Both Starbucks locations on campus, one in Coulter Hall and one in the J.D. Williams Library, are making this special offer drink while supplies last.

Free beer, live music planned for Record Store Day

BELLE HANKEY
EMILY SMITH
thedmfeatures@gmail.com

The End Of All Music record store will be hosting an event to celebrate the 10th anniversary of Record Store Day from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday.

The event will be held at the store with free beer, live music from featured artists, food, exclusive merchandise and limited edition releases.

It is The End Of All Music's sixth year participating in the festivities. The store is partnering up with Muscle Beach Records and Fat Possum Records to put on the event.

"It's the biggest day of the year for us," owner of The End Of All Music David Swider said. "This year specifically because of the 10-year anniversary."

Muscle Beach Records started their label in last spring. Since they have only been around for about a year, this will be their first time participating in Record Store Day festivities.

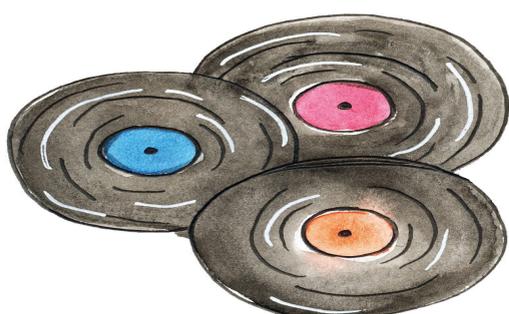


PHOTO ILLUSTRATION: JAKE THRASER

According to Graham Hamaker, one of the owners of Muscle Beach Records, they are expecting a few hundred people to attend the event throughout the day.

"There's a mad rush for the first couple of hours and then it gets more chill," Swider said. "Then we get to hang out with customers and friends."

The event will be held in the The End Of All Music's parking lot, with live music all afternoon, discounted records, food from Smoke Shop and Cookout Catering, Heartbreak Coffee and free beer brewed by James Kelleway from Confit Web Design.

The set list of performers for the event consist of: Swear Tapes (Jim Solo), Graham, Nadir Bliss, Him Horrison, Killer Dale and Starman Jr.

"We put together a compilation tape of Muscle Beach tunes that we released this last year, and the B side of that tape is all unreleased material exclusively written for the tape, for the most part. And we're proud of it, so we're really excited to finally let people hear it," Hamaker said.

Record Store Day is a celebratory day to appreciate the culture surrounding record stores arounds the world, according to recordstoreday.com.

It began in 2007 when independent record store owners and employees gathered to celebrate the approximately 1,400 independently owned record stores in the United States and the thousands of stores internationally.

"I'm looking forward to seeing what limited edition releases they have and what other titles they are going to have that day," senior and Oxford native Breanna Black said. "I know some artists do releases exclusively for record store day, which I think is really cool."

College Radio will be hosting their second annual Vinylthon on Saturday, where college radio stations can register for free. The stations will post their playlists consisting of vinyl record hits and pictures of their vinyl collections using the hashtag #vinylthon on different social media platforms.

The End Of All Music will be selling their own limited-edition cassette tape and koozie package. Swider said the cassette tape has more than 20

songs recorded with Muscle Beach Records. It is compiled of some of the greatest hits from the past and the future.

Little Big Store, in Raymond, Mississippi celebrates record store day every year and is going to have a little celebration with drinks and cookies, according to owner Betty Strachan.

Record Store Day will be celebrated with delicious food, good music and chill vibes. As always, The End of All Music will close at 6 p.m., and records may not be preordered, reserved or held. Titles from the Record Store Day selection list are sold on a first come, first served basis.

"We sell records, and are probably the biggest record store in Mississippi," Strachan said. "So we have the goods."

Lee Catherine Collins contributed to the reporting of this story. This story was submitted to The Daily Mississippian from an advanced reporting class.

SENIOR HONORS THESIS PRESENTATION

Gretchen Elizabeth Edelman

B.A. IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

"Judicial Behavior and the Fifth Amendment: A Question Level Analysis"

Directed by Charles Smith

Friday, April 21 at 3:00 pm

SMBHC Room 114

The defense is open to the public.

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SENIOR HONORS THESIS PRESENTATION

John Cooper Lawton

B.A.J. IN JOURNALISM

"Investigating Potential Anti-Catholic Bias in Southern Media"

Directed by Bradley Schultz

Friday, April 21 at 3:00 pm

Farley Hall Room 126

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SENIOR HONORS THESIS PRESENTATION

Cantrell Norman

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Rebels look to improve upon SEC standing

ETHAN WRIGHT
 thedmports@gmail.com

Positive and Negative Momentum

After a strong offensive showing Tuesday night against Arkansas Pine Bluff, Ole Miss will try to build on their success with a Military weekend series at home against the evenly matched Missouri Tigers. Missouri has the slight advantage over Ole Miss with a 26-12 record, compared to the Rebels' 23-14. Still, both teams sit at just 7-8 in conference play.

While the Tigers and Rebels play in opposite divisions of the SEC, this series will be key for both squads in improving their SEC conference standing with less than a month left in the regular season. For Ole Miss to gain the edge in this tightly contested matchup, they will need to look out for these three x-factors over the course of the weekend.

While the Rebels are currently on a one-game win streak, their past three games have seen a marked improvement in overall play. After a brutal 15-2 defeat at the hands of LSU last Thursday, Ole Miss has gone 2-1 in the past three games with a four-home run victory over LSU and a 14 run showcase against Arkansas Pine Bluff. The Rebels' lone loss saw Ole Miss come just one run from taking the series from No. 8 LSU Tigers in Baton Rouge.

Missouri is currently on a two-game losing streak. The two game hitch may seem inconsequential, but it could prove noteworthy seeing as the Tigers just escaped a seven-game drag in the beginning of April. To take this series, Ole Miss will need to replicate its recent offensive success and



PHOTO BY: TAYLAR TEEL

DJ Miller prepares for hit Wednesday night against Arkansas Pine Bluff.

highlight the weaknesses that have plagued Missouri the past month.

Stopping the Long Ball

While Ole Miss has done well throughout the year to limit home runs, allowing just 24 on the season, they have seen the devastating effects that a home run off of just one miscue can create. This was more evident than ever in the Rebels' 15-2 loss to LSU when an early-inning grand slam put the rest of the game out of reach for Ole Miss.

Defending against scenarios like this will be paramount for Ole Miss, especially since Missouri's

power-hitters Trey Harris and Brett Bond, with 11 and seven home runs respectively, are consistently swinging for the fences. To stop the damage that Harris, Bond or any other Tigers' hitters might cause, the Rebels' pitchers will need to play smart and head coach Mike Bianco will need to be ready to make mound replacements if performance starts floundering.

Home-Field Advantage?

While it is usually in a team's favor to play on their home field, this hasn't proved true for the opponents of Missouri this sea-

son. The Tigers hold a very impressive 7-1 record while playing away this season, an unusual feat for a team playing high-caliber SEC teams in opposing territory. Ole Miss will need a strong showing to ensure the Tigers don't improve their away-game winning streak any further.

Attempting to replicate their own recent successes, should the Rebels be able to protect from the devastating long-ball, expose Missouri's weaknesses and remind the Tigers they are in fact playing in enemy territory, then Ole Miss should walk away with a slight advantage in an otherwise evenly matched SEC contest.

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 - Five score yrs.
 - By Jove!
 - Benefactor
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 - Take on cargo
 - Like — of bricks
 - Breathe hard
 - Complains
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 - IBM and GE
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- Big galoots
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- Lingerie item
- Round building
- Buying frenzies
- Worse, as the weather
- Instant lawn
- Phaser setting
- Organ-pipes
- "— Baby" (Helen Reddy song)
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HOW TO PLAY

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Softball set to square off against No.1 Florida

TYLER BUTLER

thedmsports@gmail.com

This weekend, Ole Miss softball will travel to Gainesville, Florida for a three-game series against the top-ranked Florida Gators. Despite facing one of the top five toughest schedules in the NCAA, the Rebels enter the series ranked 18th in the nation with a record of 31-13.

Ole Miss' season has taken a positive turn in the mid-season. After starting 0-6 against SEC competition the team is now 6-9 and in a three-way tie for seventh with Mississippi State and Kentucky. The Rebels are riding a five game win streak following a shutout win against Memphis, a three game in-conference sweep against No. 16 LSU and a convincing victory Tuesday against UT Martin.

In the last 11 games of the regular season the Rebels will compete against two



PHOTO BY: CAMERON BROOKS

Junior Kaitlin Lee throws a pitch during Ole Miss' game against the University of Central Arkansas. Lee has been a consistent pitcher for the Rebels and will be relied upon as Ole Miss faces Florida, the eleventh-ranked scoring offense.

top-25 teams (No. 1 Florida and No. 12 Alabama) and two top-50 teams (No. 28 Missouri and No. 50 Jacksonville State). The week-

end's series in Gainesville will be a true test for the Rebels as the regular season nears its end with the team's sights set on the

NCAA tournament.

A win against the Florida Gators will not come easy. Limiting the Gators 11th-ranked scoring offense will require continued success from pitching standouts Kaitlin Lee and Morgan Bruce. In the recent sweep against LSU, the Rebels first ever sweep of a ranked SEC opponent, the duo combined to complete two shutout games and totaled a 0.64 ERA across 22 innings. The Tigers posted only 16 hits and a measly 0.198 batting average.

A strong hitting performance against the Gators sophomore standout pitcher, Kelly Barnhill, is also important. Barnhill leads the country in ERA (0.19), hits allowed per seven innings (2.78) and strikeouts per seven innings (13.0). She is yet to lose a game in 18 starts and has allowed only three earned runs in 110 innings pitched. Ole Miss sluggers Elantra Cox, Kylan Becker and Miranda Strother will need to be on

their A-Game to generate offense for the Rebels. If Elantra Cox can hone in on opportunities at the plate she can extend her 14-game hitting streak, the longest in Ole Miss history.

The last meeting between the Rebels and the Gators took place in the 2016 SEC Tournament. The Rebels, coming off of their first ever tournament win against Georgia, held the Gators to only one run in a hard fought 1-0 loss. After four scoreless innings the Rebels failed to bring home a runner in scoring position. In the bottom of the fifth inning the Gators batted in the game's only run.

The Rebels, hungry for redemption, hope to prove themselves as title contenders in this weekend's series. Head coach Mike Smith, fresh off of his 100th win, surely hopes his team will continue to prove their dominance in this week-ends challenging series.

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Basketball inks Memphis graduate transfer

SAM HARRES
thehdmsports@gmail.com

Rebel basketball got another boost Wednesday night as Memphis graduate transfer Markell Crawford, a 6-foot 5-inch shooting guard, committed to Ole Miss.

Fending off interest from schools including Iowa State and South Carolina, Crawford's addition bolstered an already impressive 2017 recruiting class that includes two four-star recruits in Jamarko Pickett and Devontae Shuler, as well as junior college transfer Bruce Stevens.

Crawford committed just days after 247 Sports released their annual basketball recruiting class rankings; Ole Miss came in at 16, the school's highest ever ranking.

Last season at Memphis, Crawford averaged more than 32 minutes per game and contributed 12.8 points per game, second on the team in scoring. Known for his explosive athleticism and lethal shot, Crawford will add much needed veteran composure to a young Rebel team in search of a leader.

Head coach Andy Kennedy, the longest tenured basketball coach in the SEC, has had his eye on Crawford for quite



PHOTO BY: CAMERON BROOKS

Andy Kennedy walks to the bench during a game last season. Kennedy said he recruited Crawford years ago and looks forward to having him in a Rebel uniform.

some time.

"We recruited him years ago when he was coming out of Melrose in Memphis, and this time we were successful," Kennedy said. "He was a heavy coveted post-grad transfer

whom we've played against the last two years. We're looking forward to having him in a Rebel uniform next season."

Crawford posted 16 points and grabbed four rebounds in the Tigers' loss to Ole Miss

last season. He also scored 28 points against eventual NCAA Final Four competitor South Carolina.

"He is a versatile guard capable of playing either backcourt position," Kennedy said.

"He is big, strong and athletic with the ability to make plays both on the offensive and defensive ends."

When The Pavilion opened in last January, both Kennedy and athletics director Ross Bjork were adamant about the effect the world class facility would have on recruiting. That initial investment seems to already be paying off.

Pickett, a consensus four-star prospect and top-100 recruit, and Shuler, another four-star, top-100 high school player, headlined Ole Miss' 2017 basketball class before Crawford's commitment. The two had a slew of options across the nation but decided to take their talents to Oxford.

"Jamarko (Pickett) is a long, athletic, versatile forward who can shoot the three, create off the bounce and protect the basket," Kennedy said.

Ultimately players like Pickett, Shuler and Crawford choosing Ole Miss over schools known more for their basketball prowess speaks wonders to the bright future of Ole Miss basketball. SEC basketball is on the rise and this recruiting class, topped off with Crawford's announcement last night, will put the Rebels right in the mix.

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