

the reflector

FREE
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**I VOTED
TODAY!**

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SAMRU election debate causes confrontation online

Alberta Party candidate Greg Clark called out UCP's Doug Schweitzer for not attending the debate at MRU

Nathan Woolridge

News Editor

On March 28, SAMRU was set to host a Calgary-Elbow debate between the ridings' candidates. But, the event sparked a bit of discussion online when Alberta Party candidate, Greg Clark, put a call to action for his opponents to show up to the debate.

"Debates are a great way to hear directly from the candidates asking for your vote," says Clark. "Looking forward to debating [Janet Eremenko] and [Doug Schweitzer] tomorrow at MRU, hosted by [SAMRU] at 1 p.m. Hope to see you there."

The response to Clark's tweet is where things started to get interesting.

"Forums are a great way to hear directly from voters. Normally, they are negotiated between campaigns," says UCP candidate, Schweitzer.

He then added that the Elbow Park School forum on April 11 and that he hoped both Clark and Eremenko would be able to make it.

"So you're cancelling? I'll debate any time, any place. And I don't need permission from my leader," shot back Clark.

"We let them know right

away. It's too bad you weren't told until now," replied Schweitzer. He then invited Clark and Eremenko to the Elbow Park School forum once again. "Full platforms should be out by then."

In one last attempt to call out Schweitzer, Clark tweeted, "Why won't you be there? What could be more important than talking with [SAMRU] students and sharing how you would represent my neighbours in Elbow?"

To which, Clark received no reply from the UCP candidate.

The candidates in

attendance were Greg Clark (Alberta Party), Janet Eremenko (NDP) and Joshua Codd (Alberta Liberal Party).

March to the campaign office

Later on that same day as the SAMRU debate, a march was organized in Marda Loop. The march was for support of Gay-Straight Alliances. It began with hundreds of supporters meeting in a Safeway parking lot and making their way down the street to Schweitzer's office.

Clark, whose office is in the

same block as Schweitzer's, invited marchers to his office for the "unofficial GSA rally after party."

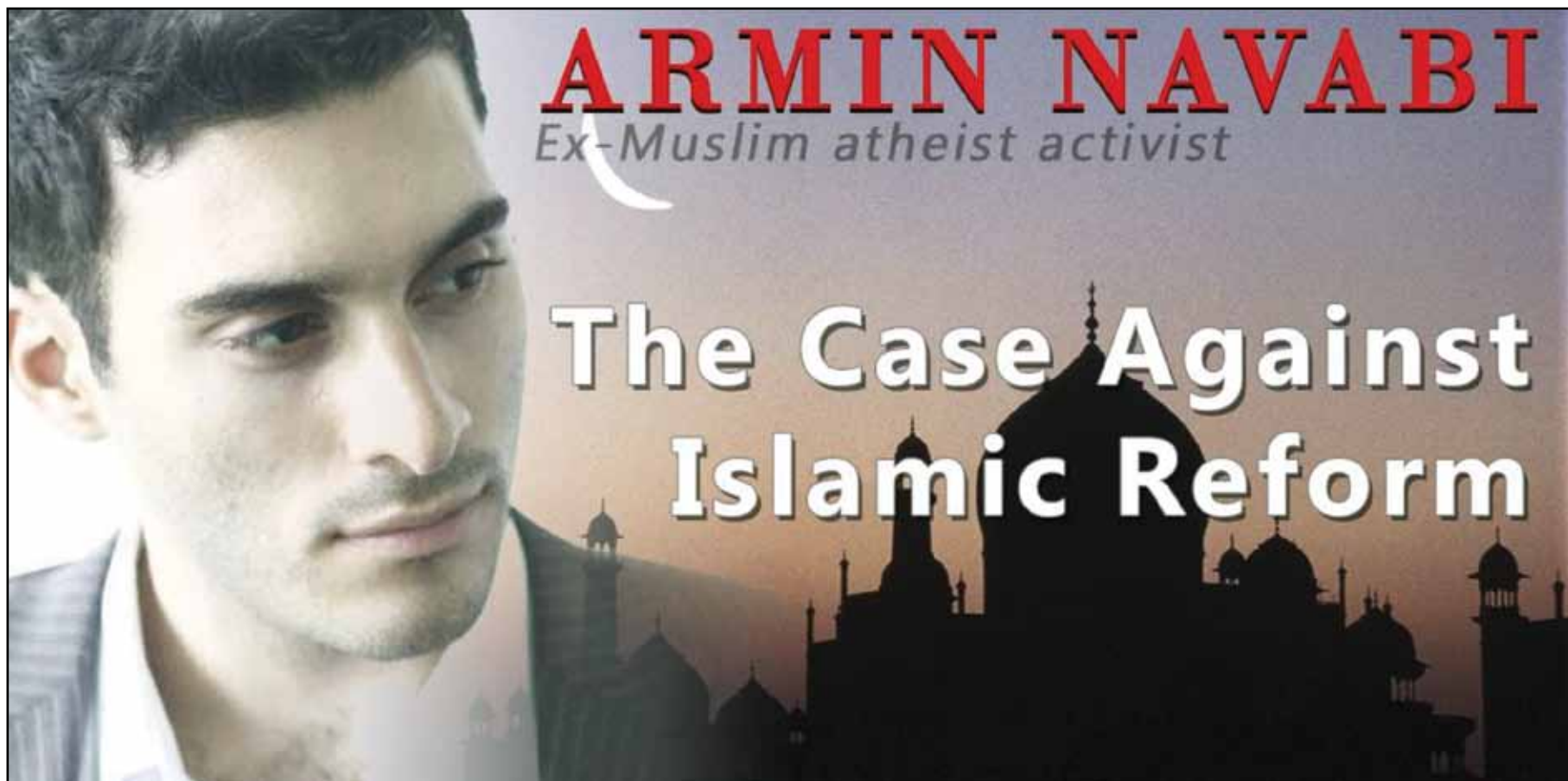
He told his Twitter followers to look for the signs, which he posted a picture of outside his campaign office. The signs had messages of "We support GSAs" and "Join our party."

Early on in the election, it appears that there is some tension in the riding of Calgary-Elbow. Only time will tell which candidates will appear at the debate on April 11 as we get closer to the April 16 election date.



Greg Clark (Alberta Party), Janet Eremenko (NDP) and Joshua Codd (Alberta Liberal Party) were the only candidates in attendance while UCP candidate, Doug Schweitzer was unable to attend. Photo courtesy of SAMRU

Ex-Muslim-turned-atheist, Armin Navabi's MRU event canceled in light of New Zealand terrorist attack



Ex-Muslim-turned-atheist, Armin Navabi had his talk on campus cancelled in light of the New Zealand terrorist attack. The university eventually expressed that they made a mistake to cancel the event. Photo courtesy of Armin Navabi

Nathan Woolridge

News Editor

Ex-Muslim-turned-atheist, Armin Navabi, was recently confused when his event at MRU was cancelled.

In a statement, MRU cites that the event was cancelled because “Last week, a terrible act of terrorism occurred in Christchurch, New Zealand. Many students and employees especially Muslim students and employees — are suffering as a result.

“To start the healing, a vigil was held last Thursday on campus, with more than 150 in attendance.”

The university says that the presentation was to take place on Thursday, which fell on the same day as the scheduled vigil.

“As an atheist, Navabi speaks of tolerance for those who share a lack of belief in gods,” says MRU.

Reaction to the event's cancellation

Navabi was not impressed with the university's decision to cancel his talk.

“What do they want? Do you want to have less conversation? Isn't less conversation exactly what leads to people having extreme radical positions?” says Navabi.

The website, *Friendly Atheist*, wrote a column stating that the decision to cancel the event was “bizarre.”

The author of the piece, Hemant Mehta writes, “Navabi may be controversial, but there's no reason to think his talk would have been disrespectful or insensitive toward the victims of the

attack. There's a difference between criticizing religion and going after religious people.”

Navabi's talk is centered around his struggle with growing up with his Islamic faith. He has openly talked about attempting suicide at the age of 12.

As a result, he eventually left his Islamic faith behind and became an atheist. He shares his story through these talks and in his podcast and book.

Did the university make a mistake?

Once Navabi's event was cancelled on campus, the university was made aware that they had made a mistake.

“It was the wrong decision for a university,

where values of freedom of expression and academic freedom are paramount,” says a statement from MRU.

In the statement, President David Docherty mentions that he soon won't be the university's president. He reflects by saying, “Sometimes decisions made within a particular unit seem right from one perspective and while they may be right for some members of our community, they are not right for others. This dichotomy can exist within individuals as well; as humans, we are complex and multi-faceted and a part of us may feel one way about an issue, while another part of us feels differently. This is what it means to be human.

“We experienced this dichotomy on our campus

this week as a result of such a decision.”

Lesley Brown, Provost and Vice-President, Academic also weighed in on the importance of the conversation in the statement.

“When a speaker is invited to campus, we must always consider that we are providing an opportunity to engage in scholarly dialogue and when we provide a speaker a platform, we must be mindful that we have a responsibility to give that person an opportunity to speak.”

“When we cancel or postpone an invited speaker, we remove the ability to engage in that dialogue. For faculty, this is a compromise to academic freedom,” says Brown.

MRU phasing out the tradition of valedictorians at convocation



Fall 2018 valedictorian Alexandra Daignault is the last Mount Royal Valedictorian to speak at convocation. She hopes future Centennial Gold Award recipients may still get a chance to address their cohorts. Photo courtesy of MRU

Ryleigh Kampman

Staff Writer

For years, many MRU alumni have a distinct memory of their graduating class' valedictorian sending them off at convocation. Usually, an inspiring address to commemorate all the blood, sweat and tears students have put into their expensive piece of paper, followed by some cliché to send them off into the 'real world.'

Recent changes have been made to phase out this tradition and prioritize the Centennial Gold award.

In the past, valedictorian nominees were given consideration for their GPA — students had to have a cumulative GPA of 3.2 or higher. They were also given preference for their involvement in campus and community activities. The

criteria from MRU also stated that "candidates should have strong public speaking skills."

A statement from Associate Vice-President, Enrolment Management & Registrar, has indicated a change to student acknowledgment at convocation — the criteria are being critiqued.

The statement, written by Phil Warsaba, Associate Vice-President, Enrolment Management & Registrar reads, "The most compelling reason for the change is that the valedictorian selection process was deemed to be inequitable, as it excludes viable candidates on the basis of public speaking ability. Committee members felt that academic achievement and contributions to MRU and associated communities are of

greater importance in selecting the most accomplished nominee."

These changes took place on Nov. 22, 2018, a decision made by the GFC Student Awards Committee. Plans for this transition were seeded in previous discussions during the 2017 and 2018 academic years.

Alexandra Daignault, the last valedictorian of her graduating class of Fall 2018, is excited about a more inclusive process. Daignault adds, "However, I wonder what the impacts of absentsing student voice, in such memorable moments, might be.

"I'm grateful to have been given the opportunity to represent my class and cohort," she adds.

Now, each academic year

will feature one Centennial Gold Medal recipient for each credit faculty.

As for the process, it will remain largely the same.

"The recipients will attend either the Spring or Fall convocation ceremonies. The award will be presented to students in a similar fashion to the Governor General's awards and to the Professor Emeriti distinctions."

The convocation program and the university website will feature the recipients and their accomplishments, the students will sit in the front row of the platform party and the Provost will introduce the students to attendees and will invite them to the podium to receive their plaques and medals as well as to take pictures.

THE REFLECTOR

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Aftermath: How authorities of justice and safety look at sexual violence

Sexual violence ignorance and false stereotypes in the law enforcement and justice system

Riggs Zyrille Vergara

Staff Writer

In the 2015 study of Women's Media Center on how the U.S. media covers campus rape and sexual assault, they found that 41 per cent of the topics given focus in these stories are rape proceedings and only 12 per cent are on the impact of the event on victims and perpetrators. They also found that it's rare for the public to read whether the self-identified victim suffered mental health issues or a loss of social status because of the event.

In response to the need of giving more focus on the well-being of the survivors rather than just the personalities involved or the circumstances surrounding the incident, The Reflector initiated "Aftermath: Sexual Violence" – a three-part series shedding light on the importance of the outcomes of sexual violence for the survivor.

It was October 1991 when law professor Anita Hill came forward publicly with a sexual assault allegation case against then-Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas.

Being in the senatorial hearing, Hill was bombarded with questions such as having mistaken the experience as a fantasy from the movie *The Exorcist* and her memory being faulty due to the time of the incident, which destroyed her credibility. Just last September, another woman faced the same experience.

Psychology professor Christine Blasey Ford emerged with sexual assault allegations against another Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh. She also faced questions highlighting inconsistencies on her memory like how she might have mistaken a different person for Kavanaugh or how she doesn't even remember how she got home that day. In both cases, the two accused nominees were sworn in as Supreme Court Justices.

Questions and statements like these always arise when authorities deal with sexual violence cases. The two cases are almost three decades

apart. With it having a striking resemblance, not only on the involved personalities but also on how the situation was met by the authorities and the media, it becomes an alarming notice for us to probe into how our justice systems and law enforcement systems deal with these cases and how it has affected sexual violence survivors through the years.

Consistent inconsistencies

According to clinical psychologist and Harvard Medical School educator Jim Hopper's *Psychology Today* article "Why Incomplete Sexual Assault Memories Can Be Very Reliable," our brains have evolved in a way that it more strongly remembers negative experiences, to enable survival.

What this tells us is that when faced with trauma, like sexual violence, humans tend to remember more of what happened. But what they do remember are not what are called "peripheral details," which are aspects of the event that have little to no significance, like the specific dates, time and locations or



Graphic by Riggs Zyrille Vergara

color of clothing. Research has shown that what people who experienced trauma highly remember are "central details," which are aspects of the event with higher

emotional significance.

But memories fade over time. It becomes more and more abstract mainly due to external influences like other people's stories or movies we watched.

But Hopper emphasizes that "memories of highly stressful and traumatic experiences, at least their most central details,

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"Memories of highly stressful and traumatic experiences, at least their most central details, don't tend to fade over time."

– Jim Hopper, Clinical Psychologist

Continued from Pg. 5

don't tend to fade over time." Although some sexual violence survivors might tell themselves and others superficial abstract stories, it doesn't mean the worst and central details are lost. The vivid sensory details and emotions are still there, waiting to be accessed whenever they are ready.

In any criminal case, thorough investigations are needed to prove the defendant is guilty beyond reasonable doubt. But sexual violence cases are unique in such a way that when met with inconsistent peripheral details, key central details become more reliable as it is the hallmark of memories and experiences met with trauma.

Common beliefs

Psychologist Beverly Engel underscored in her *Psychology Today* article that

women make up stories for attention or revenge on men who rejected them.

Even in high profile cases, like those of Hill's and Ford's

"Victim's accounts are usually scrutinized to exhaustion."

– Psychologist Beverly Engel

one of the main reasons why most survivors do not come forward sooner is the fear that they won't be believed. "Victim's accounts are usually scrutinized to exhaustion," Engel reports, which comes from common beliefs that

which took them more than 10 years to disclose, they get branded as opportunists with hidden agenda.

These destructive, common beliefs also seemed to have seeped into the authorities of our law enforcement.

"Unfounded," the 20-month long 2017 investigation of *The Globe and Mail*, had discovered that one in five reported sexual assault cases in Canada are dismissed by the police as baseless claims. The news agency reported more than 5,000 allegations of sexual assault closed as "unfounded" by Canadian law enforcement every year, which means that the police did not recognize that any crime was attempted or has occurred. It doesn't necessarily brand the victims as liars, but it means they were not sexually violated.

Ottawa criminologist Holly Johnson, who extensively studied the unfounded cases, believed that the high rates "reinforces damaging myths that women lie about sexual victimization, and could act as a deterrent to already low reporting."

Our justice systems also didn't escape the trouble of these damaging myths. In 2014, then-Alberta Judge Robin Camp presided over a sexual assault trial where he asked the 19-year-old victim, "Why couldn't you just keep your knees together?" Also, when the complainant said that at one point she asked the alleged perpetrator if he had condoms, Camp said it led him to the "inescapable conclusion" that the woman had wanted sex. Another notable statement from Camp was him asking that if the victim was truly frightened, "wouldn't she have screamed?"

Camp even allowed the defence attorney to ask whether the complainant had been flirting with other people at the Calgary house party before the alleged incident, which clearly violated Section 276 of the Criminal Code, also known as the Rape Shield Law. This law explicitly prohibits a court to be presented evidence of a victim's prior sexual history to determine whether they are "more likely to have consented to the sexual activity

that forms the subject-matter of the charge."

Power of information

Our justice systems and law enforcements are clearly lacking vital training and knowledge when it comes to dealing with sexual violence cases. What's even worse is that efforts like of Rona Ambrose's Bill C-337 that mandates training for incoming judges on sexual assault law were not being met positively. The former federal Conservative Party interim leader told *CBC News Network's Power & Politics* that she is upset that the bill had been stalled for two years now.

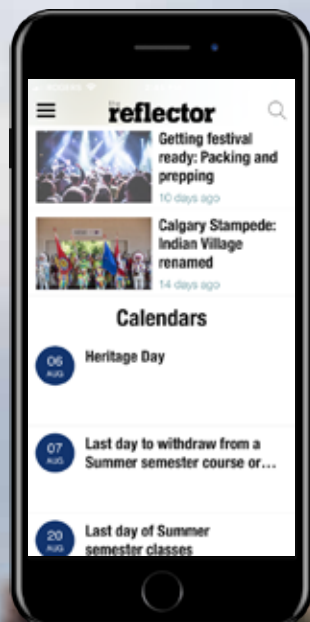
Judges, lawyers and law enforcement authorities are important figures in ensuring that sexual assault cases meet justice. If most of them still adhere to false stereotypes and myths surrounding these issues, external efforts focused on helping survivors will almost be useless. This doesn't only affect survivors themselves but also the public's view on the credibility of sexual assault disclosures.

What's important in letting these systems be fully informed is that we are giving the survivors the power of choice. Cari Ionson, MRU's Sexual Violence Response and Awareness Coordinator told *The Reflector* that it's important to note that not all victims see court trials and reporting to the police as helpful in their healing or is the right thing to do at any given moment. After all, it is still their healing that matters.

But to give that choice to them, whether they want to report or not, comes down to our efforts to having more dependable, more open and more informed authorities on the places where survivors expect they can achieve safety and justice.

"Why couldn't you just keep your knees together?"
– Alberta Judge Robin Camp

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The rewarding, fulfilling and stressful reality of summer internships

Colin Macgillivray

Publishing Editor

At the end of April 2018, I had accepted a summer internship for *Black Press* in British Columbia. I genuinely had no idea what to expect.

Initially, I felt nothing but relief. After a few stressful months of going over my resumé, my numerous cover letters and my portfolio with a fine-toothed comb, I was grateful to have finally secured a summer position somewhere.

Like a lot of university programs, completing a summer internship is mandatory for graduation, so more than anything, I was honestly just thankful that I would be able to graduate in four years once I locked down an internship. Truth be told, I wasn't even thinking about the fact that I would be taking over editorial duties for three small-town papers.

When I made what turned out to be nearly an 11-hour drive — I ended up taking an accidental two-hour detour — from Calgary to Vanderhoof, the idea of being away from friends and family for four months was honestly daunting.

Now that might sound ignorant or naive, but being born and raised in Calgary, I had never lived on my own, or been away from my parents for more than a month. On that drive, the reality of my situation set in.

Not only was moving from a city of more than a million

people to a town that houses around 4000 a culture shock, I did not anticipate what the reporting work would be like.

At MRU, generally speaking, we have nearly full creative freedom on what we want to report on in the Journalism program. Our deadlines are fairly fluid, as long as they coincide with the course material, so we never truly get a taste of what being a reporter in a small town is like.

So, when I first walked into the *Omineca Express*, *Caledonia Courier* and *Stuart Nechako Advertiser* office in early May, learning that I would be working alone in three communities I was unfamiliar with for nearly four months, I was worried. Three 16-page papers a week might not seem like a lot at first glance, but I know firsthand that there's nothing fun about transcribing interviews at 2 a.m. so you can meet your 8 a.m. deadline.

Honestly, it was a little silly trusting a 21-year-old to be the sole editor and reporter in three different towns. People have been reading the *Express* and the *Courier* for longer than

I've even been alive. They know what they



Photo courtesy of Unsplash

like to read and it was my job to do the best that I could.

Internships are a fickle thing. They are a necessary component to any university program, often giving students a real taste for their field. Sometimes it ignites a stronger passion than before or provides a harsh wake up call, giving you an experience that might make you reevaluate your career choice.

The fascinating part of my experience in B.C. last summer is that I never once felt like a stranger. I'm not sure why, but I anticipated some standoffish behaviour and I was prepared to build a new relationship with the people of Vanderhoof, Fraser Lake and Fort St. James from the ground up.

For a reporter, especially in this day and age, that relationship building can be a long and arduous process. Yet, I don't feel like I was ever treated any differently.

From the first week, making a phone-call to

a complete stranger — who was probably confused as to why someone with a Calgary area code was giving them a call — felt routine.

To my surprise, I was immediately welcomed by the communities. Locals, rather than just answering my questions and moving on, went above and beyond when addressing any issues that were affecting their communities.

From recommending other people to speak to, supplying photographs and additional information, all while remaining pleasant and helpful — especially when I was still learning about the happenings of British Columbia's central interior — the hundreds of locals (from Vanderhoof, Fraser Lake and Fort St. James) went above and beyond to ensure my stay there was problem free.

The First Nations communities that I visited were also incredibly helpful over the course of the summer. They allowed me to peer into some very unique and special communities, while furthering my understanding of the ongoing issues that Indigenous peoples face.

In short, what started out as a nerve-filled adventure 10-hours from

home transformed into an unforgettable experience. As a young reporter just starting his career, the skills I've developed working in a one-person newsroom are invaluable.

As a person, experiencing a completely different way of life just 10-hours away is an irreplaceable experience — it's something I will honestly never forget.

Ultimately, this long winded tangent is about giving your internship a shot and to never get discouraged if you don't secure the exact position you want. I never thought that I would have to move to a town called Vanderhoof, of all things, just so I could get my degree.

It was definitely a stressful four months, but in the end, it was the best possible internship I could have taken. It challenged me, both personally and professionally and really opened my eyes to the world of communication in a completely different way.

Long story short, embrace your internship, no matter what you get, because they can honestly be so much more than just something you need to finish to graduate.

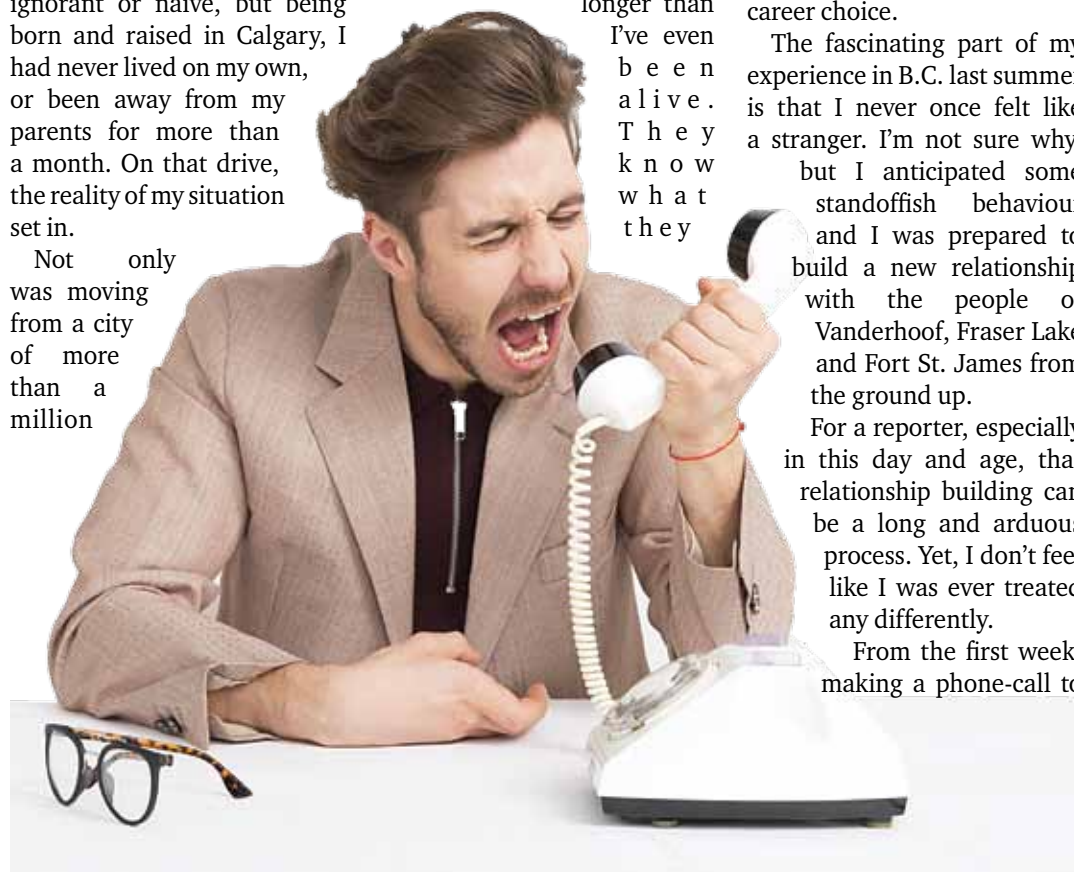


Photo courtesy of Icons8 Team

Not just the rodeo

Summer events to look out for that aren't Stampede, Global Fest and Chasing Summer

Rosemary De Souza

Features Editor

In less than a month, school will be officially over — well, at least for university students. So, pack up those bags and put those textbooks aside as it is time to enjoy the warm months ahead.

Although many are already anticipating a string of summer festivals, raves and activities, here's a few Calgary events you may not want to miss.

Onesie Run

April 7

Calgary's one and only Onesie Run is being conducted by the Calgary Humane Society — a facility that offers multiple services for pets and

pet owners. The shelter provides animal care and supports pet owners who adopt from their centre.

This event is an opportunity for friends and family to spend time with their beloved fur babies in a community that respects and supports their welfare. For all ticket prices, visit calgaryhumane.ca.

Menopause the Musical

May 16 – 18

Menopause the Musical is coming to the Martha Cohen Theatre in downtown Calgary. The musical that started over 17 years ago has already been performed in 16

countries. Calgarians now have a chance to meet the characters at the centre of the play — four women who have nothing in common other than the symptoms of menopause. The parody is set to play tunes from the 60s to the 80s, and promises to have audiences dancing and cheering in their seats.

Pride and Prejudice

June 1

This is for all of you Jane Austen fans who loved her book, *Pride and Prejudice*, published in 1813. Be ready to transport yourselves into the world of Darcy and Elizabeth in this

summer ball to be held at the Fairmont Palliser on Ninth Ave. and 13th St. S.W. The program even includes dance lessons which guests can access prior to the event. Don't have anything to wear? Not to worry because prideandprejudiceball.ca has got you covered with a list of costume rental destinations you may want to visit before this 19th century ball.

Backstreet Boys DNA World Tour

July 24

It's not every day when your favourite 90s boy band makes a comeback, let alone come to your

city. The Backstreet Boys will be performing at the Scotiabank Saddledome in part of their DNA world tour. Ticket prices start at \$39 and are still on sale on Ticket Master.

Pet-A-Palooza

July 29 & 30

Pet lovers will be flocking to Eau Claire in downtown Calgary for this event. Why? Because it's the city's summer pet festival that will be hosting a series of activities like bulldog and weiner dog racing competitions, a puppy stampede and dock diving. This weekend event is free and open to all Calgarians and their pets.



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Pixar SparkShorts: The shifting tale of stories

Short stories from Pixar show how the next generation of storytellers is different



After losing two Academy Award-winning storytellers at Pixar, the animation studio is trying to have a sense of who the next generation of storytellers are and what their creative spark is. Photo courtesy of Pixar

Rosemary De Souza

Features Editor

The animation studio that brought us *Bug's Life*, *Cars*, *Finding Nemo*, *Wall-E* and *The Incredibles*, to name a few, has had a couple of its Academy Award-winning creators leave the company in recent months. But the studio has been making efforts to discover who the next generation of storytellers are and how they are different.

John Lasseter left Pixar by the end of last year due to allegations of sexual misconduct in the workplace. The former chief creative officer was part of the team that discovered the then-

groundbreaking use of CGI in storytelling. He later went on to direct *Toy Story* and won an Academy Special Achievement Award in 1996 for his application of techniques that made the first computer-animated feature film possible.

Lee Unkrich was also a part of the *Toy Story* family, acting as an editor for the film. Before his departure at Pixar early this year, he co-created and directed *Coco*, a film that won the Best Animated Feature and Best Original Song at the 90th Academy Awards.

Early this year, Pixar introduced SparkShorts, a six-part series of animated, short stories that are written and directed by different members of the company.

"It doesn't matter if you are in the story department or an animator or a technical person," says production lead, David Lally, in the SparkShorts introduction video on the company's YouTube channel. "We are looking for directors from all over the studio."

The new group of creators don't only come from different professional

backgrounds but they also come from various walks of life, and their stories reflect a diverse perspective.

Purl

Purl is about a ball of yarn who earns a job at a male-centric start-up called B.R.O. After feeling isolated within the company, the feminine character finds her way to blend in. She turns away from her bubbly personality and morphs into a masculine persona, imitating the actions and language of her colleagues.

After a new female hire

like *Purl* walks into the office, she is reminded of who she was and helps to turn things around. Fast forward to the future, we see a diverse team of different-coloured yarns and men working at B.R.O., along with a culture that is inclusive to different ideas and points of view.

Directed and written by Kristen Lester, *Purl* shows the gender and ethnic disparity that still exists within our communities and workplaces. The short film reminds us to embrace our

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OUT'N ABOUT

Book Launch: Pugg's Portmanteau by D.M. Bryan:

Author D.M. Bryan will be launching her newest book, *Pugg's Portmanteau*, on April 6 at Shelf Life Books. *Pugg's Portmanteau* is an unconventional novel about a dog wandering 18th-century London, which you can hear excerpts of during the launch.

Billy Elliot the Musical:

On April 9, head to Arts Commons to watch the 10-time Tony Award-winner musical adaptation, *Billy Elliot the Musical*. The 2001 film adaptation tells the story of 11-year-old Billy finding himself through his natural talent through an unconventional activity for a coal miner's son: ballet.

Picture this... film festival:

From April 10 to April 13, Calgary Scope Society is hosting an international film festival to screen movies made by or featuring people with disabilities. The 36 films are coming from countries throughout the world, including Malawi, Spain, Russia and more.

Future Womb Album Release:

Celebrate local indie pop group Future Womb's debut album release on April 19 at the Palomino. The album, *Babygirlgalactic*, mixes pop, psychedelic music and passionate lyrics. The openers for the show are locals Pancake and Victoria-based Peach Pyramid.

differences, as it can lead to better environments and cultural practices that benefit individuals of any racial or gender background.

Smash and Grab

Written and directed by Brian Larsen, *Smash and Grab* is a story about two friends, who also happen to be robots, designed and programmed to do one job.

"They are very specialized in what they do," says Lally, adding that, "One guy is essentially a hammer and one guy is a shovel."

As simple as that sounds, things get complicated when the hammer sees other robots living independent lives with a portable life source, whereas shovel and hammer are living off a cord within the facility they work. As the hammer spots the containment area for other portable life sources, he escapes by cutting his cord and using his remaining battery power to obtain two portable life sources.

He comes back to give shovel his own life source but

was followed by flying robots, authorized to destroy them at will. The shovel and hammer defend themselves but once the shovel's arm gets cut off in battle, the hammer throws his portable life source at the enemy, causing an explosion. Hammer then wakes up after the shovel connects his life source to his body. The two are now stuck together, sharing one source of life and continue on their merry way.

Smash and Grab reminds us to decide what we do for the rest of our lives and remember that sometimes the best decisions can also be our hardest.

Kitbull

Kitbull is a story about a stray cat finding its way into the backyard of an abusive pet owner. The little, black kitten stays behind the barbed wire separating the unwanted items from the rest of the space, where a Pitbull runs around. But after being frightened by the aggressive, playful nature of the dog, the kitten guards its area behind the barbed wire, even during a time when the Pitbull saves

the kitten from getting stuck in the thorny mess.

Out of fear, the black cat scratches the dog across the face and runs away, even after the dog's owner did the same. The kitten makes amends with the dog and escapes the lair of its owner. Eventually, the two were both adopted by a biracial couple, after they were found playing in the streets.

The story was written and directed by Rosana Sullivan after watching an endless amount of cat videos. In a YouTube video on Pixar's channel, Sullivan says that along the process of creating the character of the cat, she realized she too was shy and vulnerable as a child and just like the cat, never stepped outside her comfort zone.

Kitbull shows us that we can get along despite our differences, and that we won't know what is possible until we allow ourselves to be vulnerable, make connections and move beyond what we already know.

Float

Although *Float* won't be out

till later this year, this is what we know about the Pixar short written and directed by Filipino-American Bobby Rubio.

A father discovers his son can fly. To keep them safe, the dad keeps his son out of public sight. But after his son's ability was discovered, he will decide whether to run away or accept his son for who he is.

In the SparkShort introduction video, Rubio says that *Float* was his opportunity to tell his story. The Filipino characters in his animated short may be the first ones we'll see to be produced under the award-winning studio. But how does *Float* portray the life of the Asian-American storyteller? We'll just have to wait and find out until...

Wind

Another Asian-American behind the scenes is Edwin Chang, who is the writer and director of *Wind*. The Pixar short, just like *Float*, won't be set to come out on Disney+, Disney's heavily anticipated streaming service, until later


this year. Chang puts his characters in the world of magical realism.

A grandmother and her grandson are trapped in what Pixar describes to be a never-ending sink-hole, scavenging the debris floating around them. The two soon realize their dream of escaping to a better life. Sound familiar? Let's just see if the film depicts the story many middle-class workers, immigrants or refugees know too well.

Loop

The last one on this list is *Loop* by Erica Milsom. But just like *Float* and *Wind*, we will have to wait for this one. Believe it or not, this may be the first time we'll see an autistic and non-verbal character in a Pixar production. Renee is partnered in a canoeing trip with a chatty boy. To complete their journey across the lake, they must learn to understand how the other experiences the world.

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The revival of poetry

How contemporary poetry is bringing the art form back to life

Sarah Green

Staff Writer

We've been there — stuck in a high school English class, head in our hands, attempting to dissect the intricate words of Shakespeare, Homer or Dickinson. We're all familiar with that feeling of frustration — reading the same sentence over and over again, desperately hoping for something, anything to make sense.

For as long as I can remember, I saw poetry as an outdated and stuffy form of writing that had no cultural, social or historical significance. In fact, as a budding writer, I made a point of vocalizing my distaste. Whenever I was assigned a poem to analyze in English class, I would hastily search up the Sparknotes summary and passively regurgitate the information. It was dismal to say the least.

However, my perspective completely shifted when I discovered the evolving genre of contemporary poetry. Made up of poets such as Rupi Kaur, R.H. Sin and R.M. Drake, this genre embodies the phenomenon that revolutionized the poetry community.

Many see Kaur as the

catalyst in the poetry revolution. Since the publication of her book *Milk and Honey* in 2014, the poetry genre has become one of the fastest-growing categories in book publishing. Kaur's poetry collection has been translated into 35 languages and has sold over 3 million copies worldwide.

Kaur's career started on an unlikely medium. In 2012, she began posting her poems on Tumblr and later switched to Instagram, coining the term "Insta-poet."

Like it or not, Insta-poets are defining a new genre of poetry for the millennial generation. Unlike traditional poetry, a majority of Insta-poets' content advocates for equality, diversity and self-acceptance. Kaur's poems contain themes of love, heartbreak and womanhood which are incredibly relatable to the millions of millennials scrolling through their Instagram feeds.

In an interview with *The Guardian*, Kaur's publisher, Kirsty Melville, explains the ingredients behind Kaur's success.

"The emotional intensity of Rupi's message of



Rupi Kaur rose to fame after the publication of her first poetry book, *Milk and Honey*. Her digestible words often address topics like womanhood and oppression. Photo courtesy of Rupi Kaur Instagram, photo illustration by Karina Zapata

self-empowerment and affirmation, combined with her passionate audience really resonated," Melville explains.

"Rupi's honest, authentic voice speaks to young people who relate to her depiction of pain and struggle but ultimate sense of hope. Rupi is not afraid to challenge taboos, and this brave form of expression inspires her readers."

It is precisely this sense of vulnerability that makes Insta-poets so successful. Rather than alienating their audience with complex language and structure, Insta-poets are forming meaningful connections through their heartfelt content.

However, this transformative Internet subgenre has not evolved without its fair share of controversy. Literary critics have not held back their criticism, labelling Insta-poets as "lazy" and "amateur." Some critics say their style and medium is

diluting the quality of poetry and is contributing to the commercialization of the art form.

In the *PN Review*, poet Rebecca Watts argues that Insta-poets are ruining a once beautiful form of expression.

"Of all the literary forms, we might have predicted that poetry had the best chance of escaping social media's dumbing effect; its project, after all, has typically been to rid language of cliché," says Watts.

"Yet in the redefinition of poetry as 'short-form communication' the floodgates have been opened. The reader is dead: long live consumer-driven content and the 'instant gratification' this affords."

Despite this backlash, almost half of poetry books sold in the U.S. last year were written by Insta-poets. According to *Nielsen BookScan*, young girls and women from ages 13 to 24 are now the biggest consumers of poetry.

It is impossible to ignore the radical shift that has occurred in the literary world. For so long, poems have been dominated by a "high-brow" industry, filled with academic prose. Now, people of all ages are able to read, appreciate and share poems brimming with all kinds of emotions, stories and experiences.

Not only that, in the world of social media, it is now possible for young people to share their own form of poetry with the world. By communicating their feelings and experiences, young people are engaging in the art of poetry in today's digital age, making it a medium of self-expression.

Now, I am the proud owner of almost a dozen poetry books. Dare I say it, I've even started writing my own poetry. Looking back at my high school self, I wish I could tell her not to write off poetry at such a young age.

Because as I evolve, so does the beautiful art form of poetry.



R.H. Sin initially found support for his poetry on Instagram with over 1.5 million followers. Now, with 18 published poetry books, Sin is a New York Times best-selling author. Photo courtesy of R.H. Sin Instagram

Music industry standing up for women

How Maren Morris is empowering women with her new album, GIRL

Mackenzie Gellner

Contributor

Music has the ability to make a person feel like they belong or that they are being understood. Music can uplift you and also put you right into your feelings. Recently, however, music and musicians have been given a greater power. With the current political climate, music has become a platform for marginalized voices, such as women.

American country singer, songwriter and record producer Maren Morris recently debuted her new album entitled *GIRL*. The album consists of soft ballads, such as “Good Woman” and “To Hell and Back,” while also showcasing Morris’ upbeat side in songs like “The Feels” and “Flavor.”

The album has been split into two parts, and as you begin to play “Make Out With Me,” you can hear it explain, “This is the end of side one of this record. Please now turn it over for the second side.”

Morris’ describes the first part of her album as introspective, stating in an interview with *Cosmopolitan*, “It’s more about my opinion on the world and myself and music.”

Musically, the album has been praised. However, what had listeners more impacted was the release of her first single from the album. In fact, the title of that single then became the title of the album itself.

The track “GIRL” describes what most women and girls have thought or felt during their lives, or even on a daily basis. Beginning with a simple yet powerful set of chords, the opening line chimes in ringing with relatability. It states, “Man, this shit’s unflattering, all up in my head again. I don’t feel myself right now, maybe I should just lay down.”

When describing the single, *Rolling Stone* said, “The title track from her new one, ‘GIRL’



Maren Morris is deemed powerful and fearless from critics across the world with her new album, *GIRL*. Photo courtesy of Maren Morris Instagram, photo illustration by Karina Zapata

sets the bar high right away. It’s the most ambitious and eccentric song she’s done yet, an emotional powerhouse driven by jagged rock guitar.”

When listened to completely, you can hear relatable line after relatable line. She touches on emotions women deal with constantly while simultaneously giving the listener a lyrical pep talk. Once you know the lyrics, it’s hard not to belt them in your car.

Not long after the release of Morris’ single came the accompanying music video. The video attempts to embody women as a whole through the perspectives of different women. It shows women of different sexual orientations, races, career paths and more; it gives all women a connection with the soulful sound.

Since the presidency of Donald Trump, there has been an uproar for women’s empowerment through movements, such as Me Too, Times Up and the physical Women’s March itself. Other artists, besides Morris, have been trying to also use their platforms to shine a light on the need for feminism globally.

For example, at the 2018 Women’s March in New York City and at *Glamour*’s Women of the Year, also in 2018, American singer and songwriter Halsey gave two speeches in the form of poems. Both speeches were in respect and support of the need

for women’s rights. She tied her own struggles being a woman with other women’s experiences as well.

American rapper Kendrick Lamar also attempted to show women’s empowerment through his own music with his album *DAMN.*, specifically in the song “HUMBLE.” Using his lyrics, he explains how he is tired of the use of photoshop and praises the natural woman with her imperfections.

Although he was looking to compliment women, it did receive backlash to women who utilize makeup, hair extensions or any form of enhancement. It gave the appearance of only one type of woman being considered worthy, when in reality that was not the artist’s intention.

Even though the support can occasionally come off as negative, the idea of women’s empowerment is prevalent. Which is what these artists, along with a long list of others, are now wanting to show with the current political and social climate we are stuck in, specifically in the United States.

There is a lot to be done before feminism is no longer considered taboo. But when pop culture figures, such as singers, use their voices for marginalized groups to be heard and understood, there is a greater chance a larger audience will take the time to listen.



From the opening notes of a hellish interpretation of Blondie’s “Call Me,” it’s obvious Christ has abandoned the soundscape of *Sludgefest*.

Pitched down and brought to 16 speed, this collection of Alvin and the Chipmunks covers ranging from “Heaven Is A Place On Earth” to The Knack’s “My Sharona,” represent an auditory hell which haunts the deepest depths of this reviewers mind.

Particularly terror

inducing is the Chipmunk’s cult-like chants on “Walk Like an Egyptian,” a track that is shockingly well-equipped for the treatment, arguably elevating the original to whole new heights.

Sludgefest is the melting horror we deserve — a reminder that hell is real, and we’re living in it.

-Nathan Kunz

Hi This Is Flume
Flume
Future Classic
Score: A



If someone told me five years ago that I would be positively reviewing a Flume album, I’d say: “Buddy, what are you? Some kind of fortune teller?”

And they would be, because, you know what, there’s a special reverence reserved for those electronic artists that weathered the post-dubstep internet hype-fest of the early 2010s, even those ostentatious enough to still drop a “hi, this is —” tagline on a mixtape. Clichés aside, though, Australian artist Flume’s latest, *Hi This Is Flume*, really does slap.

Featuring heavy-hitters

JPEGMafia and SOPHIE, *Hi This Is Flume* is 17 quick quips that are all killer — each tagged with Bon Iver, 22, A Million-esque track titles and oddball vocal warps that equally flex and fluctuate between club-ready bangers and erudite IDM odes.

It’s the logical next step in a genre that’s becoming a haven for those who want to move beyond “the drop,” and one that’s more than worth the listen.

-Alec Warkentin

2018/2019 varsity season sees unprecedented success

Cougar Athletics trending upwards

Dan Khavkin
Sports Editor

The 2018/2019 Mount Royal athletics season proved to be the most successful the university has seen since its transition to USPORTS university level seven seasons ago but is also seeing major successes outside of the scoreboard.

Director of Cougar Athletics and Recreation Karla Karch believes the varsity program as a whole is trending upwards.

She notes the fact that last year, MRU had its highest number for academic all-Canadians.

"There's a level of expectations and standards to always get better," she says.

"There is a level of accountability to grow as athletes and strive for more wins and be better in the classroom. They don't all need to be academic all-Canadians. They need to show signs of a GPA increase and strive for personal goals."

"The people who enter this way of life know what comes with it, it shouldn't come as a surprise to them. The pressure is there to grow and be better."

That same pressure is what is allowing for the varsity athletes here on campus to grow in their performance because at the end of the day, sports is a result based world.

Karch adds, "We are trying to understand what it means to have high performances from

our varsity athletes ... What it looks and feels like and then threading that through who we are in our beliefs. Yes they need to be working and be active students, but they also need to recognize the training needed during the off-season required so they come back in the fall, they can be better themselves and in turn make their teams better."

This season, seven of the eight MRU varsity programs made playoffs.

Two programs went on to semi-finals.

Men's volleyball became the first Mount Royal Cougars team to qualify for national playoffs at the USPORT level.

"Most of our teams are winning more than they ever have in league play," says Karch.

"That to me is success. We as a Cougars athletics and recreation staff also recognize the casual staff which is a huge portion of students who represent our institution."

Seven years seems like a long time but in the world of university sport, it's barely a graduated recruiting class.

"I honestly thought it might come sooner, before we even entered," says Karch on the men's volleyball team being the first MRU team to make university national playoffs.

"What you realize when you get in the thick of it, it's much harder than the goals you can set. Now that we've done it,

the question will be 'who's next?'"

She adds, "How deep do we make the playoffs? Are we improving by not getting sent home after the first round? Part of me says seven years is not that long."

The student body is also slowly starting to grow its support for the student-athletes rocking the Mount Royal blue and white.

"Every year we see in the student-body seeing what we're doing. That's what's evident. We can see it in the Crowchild Classic. We are noticing higher attendance throughout all sports but we are still working on bettering those numbers."



MOUNT ROYAL UNIVERSITY COUGARS

Mount Royal athletics believes in more than just the numbers on the scoreboard but prioritizes athletic performances while growing the student-athletes as leaders in the community.



The men's hockey team is still MRU's most consistent team, making the playoffs for the sixth straight year and making the semi-finals for the fourth straight campaign despite having a very young core. Photo courtesy of Cougar Athletics

#S

104, points for Duke Zion Williamson to become the first freshman since Derrick Rose in 2008 to do so.

60, wins, for the President's trophy winning Tampa Bay Lightning team who became the third team to achieve the feat.

18, points decided the Elite Eight marking this year as the lowest margin of victory for the final eight teams in the NCAA Tournament.

7,928, out of a total 17.2 million had the Final Four predicted correctly.

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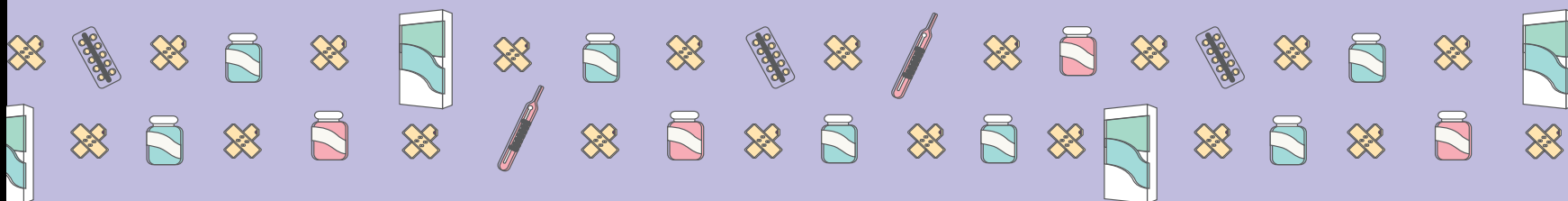
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MRU Cougars year in review

A summary of the most successful collective effort in MRU sports history

Dan Khavkin

Sports Editor

Men's soccer

Ryan Gyaki's boys in blue kicked off their footy season while the rest of us were still soaking in the scorching sun in the final weeks leading up to the school year.

MRU began their campaign with a successful 2-0-0 homestand in late August on the backs of first-year Moe El Gandour who totalled four points in his first two matches in a Cougar jersey.

The Cougars saw a drop in form, dropping three of their next four.

MRU began a B.C. homestand that saw the Cougars drop a scrappy 3-0 game to UFV that was full of controversy as a Cougars player was shown a red card for allegedly stamping a Cascade player.

After responding with a unified 2-0 performance over UBCO the following afternoon, the Cougars failed to pick up a win for five straight matches.

With MRU's record sitting at 3-7-1 later on in the season and the battle for final playoff position changing every result, the Cougars had to come through in the clutch and did just that.

At the schedule reset, MRU bounced back from a harsh 4-0 loss by securing two wins in their final three matches to firmly secure the final playoff position in the Canada West Prairie Division.

In a quarter-final rematch from the previous season, MRU visited top-ranked UBC and were in the game for 62 minutes before the T-Birds wore down the Cougar back-line. After going up 1-0 in the 63rd minute, the Cougars pressed high in a show of desperation but ended up being caught too high two more times as the Cougar season ended in a 3-0 loss in the first round of playoffs.

Rookie El Gandour was named to the Canada West second all-star team and Canada West all-rookie team



Mount Royal's most successful season is highlighted by national quarter-finalist in the MRU men's volleyball team who racked up the accolades this past year. The Cougars finished with their best regular season record, hosted their first home-court playoff game on the university level, reached the Canada West semi-finals and also became the first Mount Royal team to make a USPORTS national playoff, finishing fifth in the tournament. Photo by Cougar Athletics

while team captain and centre-half Daniel Harrison was also recognized on the conference level, also being named to the second all-star team.

Women's soccer

Coach Tino Fusco led his MRU Cougar side to their most successful season in the seven seasons of university competition, finishing with a 6-6-2 record, marking the highest win and point totals for the women's soccer program in school history.

After starting their campaign with a 1-0 win over Lethbridge, the Cougars dropped two tough decisions against Calgary that was decided by a last minute penalty while UBCO stealing a 2-1 win and spoil the home-opener.

The Cougars responded furiously by going on a five game unbeaten run that saw four straight victories against Thompson Rivers 4-1 at home, a sweep of Saskatchewan with wins against Regina and the Huskies 2-1 and 3-0, before coming home and holding the fort down for a four-point weekend against Manitoba teams, the Bisons and the Wesmen, winning 2-1 and drawing 2-2 respectively.

MRU outscored opposition

13-5 during that run.

Down the stretch, however, the form was flipped and saw the Cougars only pick up one win in their final five games before winning the final game of the season against the same Lethbridge team.

In the Canada West quarter-finals, the Cougars suffered another heartbreak, being a penalty kick away from advancing for a second straight season. UFV outlasted MRU 2-1 (3-2 pen) and moved on while MRU's season was cut short.

Veteran and defensive stopper Quinn Hardstaff was recognized on the conference level as a second team all-star. Meanwhile British export and goalkeeper Rose Hemans was named to the Canada West all-rookie team as she played in eleven matches this year and earned three of Mount Royal's four clean sheets. She was in the top five in all of Canada West in save percentage, and top ten in goals against and total number of saves.

Men's volleyball

The most successful varsity team in MRU history was Shawn Sky and his men's volleyball team that saw the Cougars pile accomplishment

after accomplishment as the weeks went on.

MRU finished the regular season at 15-7 that featured one of many accolades for the boys in blue and became the first Cougars squad out of all varsity teams to represent MRU on the USPORTS level in the spring.

After sweeping Manitoba to start the season and then getting swept by Alberta the following weekend, the Cougars went on an 11-1 tear during the most important run of the schedule.

This epic run saw the Cougars sit inside the top five of the national rankings for the majority of the season.

MRU clinched home-court for the first time at the university level and faced the Saskatchewan Huskies who swept the Cougars in the final weekend of the season.

Graduating senior and outside Tyler Schmidt added to the collection of achievements as the senior moved into sole possession of being first in the Canada West all-time kills and point totals.

The Cougars formulated the revenge sweep of their own and on home-court to move on the road to history, reaching the Canada West semi-final.

In the final four, the Cougars drew the number one ranked program in the country in the 20-2 Brandon Bobcats.

BU's only two defeats came at the hands of the Cougars in early November. MRU seemed to be the Bobcats' kryptonite after stealing a game one win before Brandon turned up level of play and won the next two matches to end any hopes of a conference banner.

Despite the semi-final loss, MRU were well within the top eight of the national rankings and the hopes for a national title were still alive for the Cougars. The USPORTS ranking algorithm allowed for the Cougars to be the first team in school history to compete on the national university level.

MRU drew familiar foes in Alberta during the USPORTS quarter-final but were ousted in three sets. Despite the loss, MRU won the consolation final, beating out the rest of the eliminated teams and officially finished fifth in the country as a result.

Women's volleyball

MRU's women's volleyball team was the Cougars' most gritty out of all the varsity teams.

The Cougars quite literally split their way into playoffs as the Cougars finished with an even 12-12 record and squeaked into the playoffs thanks to both controlling their own destiny and some scheduled luck.

Like the men's team, MRU swept their first weekend then got swept the second weekend but the women's team went on to split their next five weekend sets.

After getting swept on the road at Thompson Rivers in early January, dropping two five-set thrillers, the Cougars stuck to their consistent ways and redeemed the sweep by formulating one of their own, against MacEwan, to stop the

Continued on Pg. 16

Continued from Pg. 15
losses from piling up.

During the final stretch, the Cougars lost three straight matches to open February but redeemed themselves by closing out the regular season with three wins that were all must-wins.

MRU upset top-ranked Calgary Dinos by winning the rubber match after getting worked in three sets the night prior and continued their form by sweeping against chasing Saskatchewan Huskies.

The Cougars were one spot out of a playoff position heading into the final weekend and needed two wins along with other teams to lose to make playoffs. MRU did its job and won both games while MacEwan got upset by the lowly Brandon Bobcats and also finished 12-12 but two spots below MRU.

The Cougars stood tall for as long as they could but couldn't nudge the conference powerhouse, getting worked in two matches with both being in three sets.

Rookie Dholi Thokbuom was named to the all-Canadian All-Rookie team after her outstanding season saw her rack up 113 kills, 172 points and 58 total blocks in her first season at Mount Royal.

Men's hockey

Bert Gilling's boys in blue had a season that reached the bar but did not exceed it.

The Canada West men's hockey league is a three-horse-race between the Alberta Golden Bears and the Saskatchewan Huskies battling for one and two in the standings while the Dinos usually end up right behind them, overlooking the rest of the league.

The Cougars finished 12-11-5 that included four overtime losses to Saskatchewan and Alberta which are a step in the right direction in competing against the best the league can offer. Wins would have absolutely changed the course of the Cougar season along with the culture and standards Gilling is trying to build at Mount Royal but the Cougars finished with a 0-8-4 record against the top three.

The rest of the season boiled down to MRU picking up wins when they should have against the bottom teams while not being able to overcome the hump of defeating any of the

top three in the Golden Bears, Huskies and Dinos.

Despite the unpleasing regular season ending, the Cougars shook off the choke-job by beating those same 'Birds away from home in a three-game thriller.

Reaching the semi-finals yet again, MRU were bested by the Huskies 5-1 and then 7-3 to effectively end the Cougar campaign.

A pair of first-year players honoured as netminder Riley Morris and Colton Kroeker were named to the Canada West all-rookie team.

Morris finished third in the conference for save percentage at .919, as the first-year goalie earned 10 wins in 19 games played.

Kroeker was tied for first in Canada West amongst rookies with 22 points.

Women's hockey

Another Cougar squad had its most successful season in university play.

The Cougars also finished with their highest wins and point totals with an 11-14-1-2 record, finishing fifth in Canada West.

Like the men's team, the Cougars are battling to climb up the standings and be more inside of a fight for the top of the league standings. MRU showed they are slowly beginning to compete with the top three of the league, posing a 3-8-0-1 record against Alberta, UBC and Manitoba.

MRU also shot themselves in the foot by dropping points against the bottom of the league as 5-2-1-0 looks good on paper but when taking into account the Cougars dropped seven points, the difference can be seen.

Finishing fifth, MRU traveled to Saskatchewan but had a tough start to their playoff with a 5-0 loss in game one, but responded with a 3-0 win to even the series. In the decisive game three, MRU suffered absolute heartbreak, getting outlasted 2-1 in triple overtime.

Sophomore Tatum Amy was named to the second-team all-star after putting up 17 points while the Canada West all-rookie team was 50 per cent Mount Royal Cougars as Camryn Amundson, Mackenzie Butz and Breanne Trotter all were selected.

Men's basketball

Another MRU team, another milestone.

The men's 'ball team squeaked into playoffs with an 8-12 record and finally had the schedule-luck tip on the Cougars side for the first time ever. The MRU basketball team qualified for Canada West playoffs.

Led by graduating senior and team captain Glen Yang, who finished his blue and white career as the leading-getter in points, assists and steals, the Cougars powered through and racked up the wins needed to make the conference championship.

A buzzer-beater from Yang against top-tiered Lethbridge and a final day win against lowly Brandon was enough for MRU to finish above the lower half of the league and secure the final spot in Canada West.

The book was closed early however as the Regina Cougars bested MRU 106-83 to end the MRU season.

Women's basketball

Unfortunately, the Cougars women's ball team had another season to forget despite taking steps in the right direction.

The Cougars did have a major impact on the community as they raised around \$1,300 during their USPORTS Shoot For the Cure game in support of breast cancer in late November.

The Cougars finished second-last with a 2-18 record but the numbers early on, had MRU competing for a playoff position.

Coach Nate McKibbin will once again take a rough record into the offseason and will hope his hand-picked recruit class will eventually bloom into MRU success.

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