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CHEKING IN WITH THE STUDENT UNION
BY ELLERY NIMCHUK
page 3

WHY ARE BRITISH COLUMBIANS HEADING TO THE POLLS AGAIN?
BY ELLENA WHEATCROFT
page 2



UBCO KICKS CANCER
BY AMBER MATLOCK
page 4



IF HE (BARELY) WANTED TO, HE WOULD

BY AMBER MATLOCK

WE'VE ALL LOOKED AT OUR POLITICAL SYSTEM AND SAID, "I'D DO A MUCH BETTER JOB". BRADY ROGERS IS TRYING TO SEE IF HE CAN.



Photo provided by Sahiya Arora

MUTUAL AID IN KELOWNA

BY WENDELL ZYLSTRA



Mutual aid takes many forms in Kelowna and the greater Okanagan region, but who do we consider our community and how do we decide who deserves aid?

Illustration by Iso Manuel Rodriguez

OUR COMMUNITY

WHY ARE BRITISH COLUMBIANS HEADING TO THE POLLS AGAIN?



BY ELLENA WHEATCROFT

On October 24, British Columbians will head to the polls to elect their local MLA, two years ahead of schedule, and just one week after municipal elections across the province.

The controversy surrounding the early election call is defining the campaign, as British Columbians wonder whether the election should be happening at all.

BC Premier David Eby, leader of the BC New Democratic Party (NDP), called a snap election on September 22, citing the threat posed by US President Trump. He likened Trump’s threat to wildfires, saying:

“We need to build a firebreak around the things that make British Columbia special... A firebreak against our dependence on the United States, and a firebreak against the Trump-style politics that threaten to infect our province.”¹

Eby’s attempt to justify holding such an early election has not been well received by voters, opposition parties, or municipal election candidates.

Several candidates running for a position on Kelowna’s City Council expressed their dissatisfaction with the overlap of campaigns. Trevor McAleese, for example, now finds himself having to explain that he’s not affiliated with a political party when speaking to constituents.²

For voters, the overlapping campaigns make it difficult to keep up with the candidates, policy debates, and the distinction between local and provincial jurisdiction. The closeness of the elections will strain voters’ spare time, which candidates expect will mean a low voter turnout in one or both of the elections.

Eby’s election call has also faced backlash from opposition parties. Many have interpreted

ed the decision as an opportunistic response to the chaos within the Conservative Party of BC. Eby announced the election just two days after the resignation of the Conservative leader, Kerry-Lynne Findlay, following a disastrous few months in charge.

During Findlay’s four-month leadership, 13 Conservative MLAs either left the party or were expelled. Along with three earlier defections to the newly established rival parties Centre-BC and OneBC, this reduced the Conservatives from 44 to 28 seats.

On September 21, the party appointed interim leader Lorne Doerksen, the MLA for Cariboo-Chilcotin, marking the third change in Conservative leadership in less than one year. The same day, five MLAs rejoined the party, including former party leader John Rustad.

The Conservatives have largely reunited under Doerksen, with the party initial-

ly running 93 candidates, one in each of the 93 provincial electoral districts. After dropping the candidate for Victoria-Beacon Hill due to controversial social media posts, the party now has 92 candidates, 32 of whom were MLAs in the recently dissolved Legislative Assembly.³ The NDP is also running 92 candidates, 39 of whom are incumbent MLAs.³

Since Doerksen’s appointment, the NDP has lost its lead in the polls, with the Conservatives now leading by a slim margin among decided voters.⁴ The rapid Conservative recovery highlights the risk associated with Eby’s election gamble, especially with the NDP already holding a narrow legislative majority, having won 47 of the 93 seats in the 2024 election.

With Eby’s election call worsening his already poor approval ratings and Doerksen’s recent appointment, party leadership is also a central issue in this elec-

tion. A recent poll found that 78% of British Columbians spoke negatively about Eby, while 55% spoke negatively about Doerksen.⁵

The NDP’s campaign against the Conservatives emphasizes Doerksen’s status as an interim leader, as Article 12 of the BC Conservatives’ Constitution clarifies that an interim leader cannot be a Leadership Candidate.⁶ This means Doerksen could not legally become Premier if the Conservatives win the election.

In addition to the NDP and the Conservatives, three parties are running over thirty candidates: OneBC, Centre BC, and the BC Green Party.⁷

In June 2025, OneBC was established by two expelled Conservative MLAs, Dallas Brodie and Tara Armstrong, with the former becoming the party leader.

In March 2025, Centre BC was founded by a former BC United MLA. It is now led by the former BC United, Conservative and independent MLA, Elenore Sturko.

The Greens have been led by 26-year-old Emily Lowan since 2025. The party is currently polling around 10%, the highest after the NDP and the Conservatives.⁴

With the election taking place on Saturday, October 24, and advance voting from October 16–21, constituents will cast their vote less than five weeks after the election was called. For the parties, the short timeline has meant a rushed campaign, with full platforms released only one or two weeks before election day.

The late release of official campaign platforms has heightened the importance of the leadership question, especially with regard to Eby’s election call and Doerksen’s interim status.

British Columbians must decide not only which party’s platform they support, but also who they trust to lead the province.



Illustration by Iso Maquod Rodriguez

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IF HE (BARELY) WANTED TO, HE WOULD



BY AMBER MATLOCK

We’ve all looked at our political system and said “I’d do a much better job”. Brady Rogers is trying to see if he can. A UBCO alumni, Brayden “Brady” Rogers is a local business owner in the cultural district of Kelowna. His business, the Rogerie, focuses on reusing plastic waste and creating 3D printed home oddities.

More outwardly, Rogers has decided to run for city council in the 2026 Kelowna Municipal election. His campaign is built on humorous anecdotes such as “I Barely Want to Do This” and “How Hard Could it Be”. But behind this is someone who simply wants to contribute to his community in a meaningful way.

Rogers believes that earning a spot on City Council would allow him to do more of what he wants to do. Being involved in recycling, re-creation, and sustainability, he says that he would love to bring more of those values to the city of Kelowna. Rogers also wants to focus on support for small businesses, being an owner of one himself.

While he realizes that his plans will be impacted by whomever is elected on October 17th, Rogers has many ideas to counter drug abuse, the homeless crisis, and protection of small businesses. One plan in particular is to involve the RCMP and provide consistent drug control to enforce minor consequences for possession, limit police involvement, and keep the streets safer. He’s also hoping that his fellow candidates not only focus on the issues right in



Photo provided by Sabhya Arora

front of them, but long term goals as well.

It seems as if social media has become the new campaigning tool, as not only Rogers but other candidates, such as Theresa May, have also been attempting to engage with their community online. Examples include recent videos of May wakeboarding in heels or parasailing with her campaign sign have received lots of attention.

Rogers appreciates all that his media involvement has gotten him. He does not take for granted what his Instagram has done for his outreach and his campaign, even being featured in American news broadcasts. He admits that much of his message could not have been spread without his media presence and is excit-

ed to see if this unconventional campaign tactic works.

Besides media attention, dry humour, and representing his fellow small businesses, Rogers believes that what truly draws people to his platform is his genuineness. By having a ‘citizen’s perspective’, Rogers believes people can see the effort being put into this venture. He showcases his relatableness and attempts to show his community that his lack of political experience is an asset to City Council.

Rogers also believes that by having a presence in the community, he can put his ear to the ground and know what his community needs from him. He says that if elected, it would be impossible to immediately become

‘Polititian Brady’, and instead would use his everymanness to help him.

Rogers recognizes how his enthusiasm could perhaps be misconstrued. The ability to be digestible and liked by everyone is one that few possess. Rogers believes that perhaps some people may think lowly of his unorthodox campaign, reducing it to ‘silliness’, and dismissing him because of it. However, Rogers is doubling down. He believes that for those paying attention, his message is clear.

The reliance upon social media has allowed him to openly spell out his wishes. While the algorithm decides who his content is shown to, he can control the narrative, not relaying it through a PR team and website. Through his modern methodology, Rogers has been able to be authentically himself. He proudly states that the gag is a cornerstone of his personality and the only way he would have actually gone through with this election. He hopes that the videos and signs bring people in, but that they stay for his message.

With the political future of B.C. and Kelowna being such a popular topic, it felt imperative that Rogers cleared the air. A weird catch 22 presents itself with Rogers’ campaign, where his slogan is that he did not want to run, but the fact that he has put so much effort into the election tells us something else. In response to a question wondering if he actually wanted to run, Rogers earnestly answered, “Begrudgingly, yes, I want to do this”.

CHECKING IN WITH THE STUDENT UNION



BY ELLERY NIMCHUK

The Student’s Union Okanagan (SUO) general election held in April 2026 resulted in an almost entirely new board. Since taking office six months ago, President Olivia Lai and Vice President External Naden Qually have had a busy summer and start to the semester. On October 1, 2026, I had the opportunity to sit down with them and learn more about their experiences and what they have accomplished since April.

With both in their last years of university, Olivia and Naden have been involved with the SUO since the beginning of their academic journeys. Olivia, a political science major, shared that her passion for “leadership and community service” originated in high school. Upon arriving at UBCO, she learned about the SUO during her first week of orientation and decided to run in that year’s by-election. Although she was not elected, she continued to campaign and was later elected for the Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences Student Representative position, proudly stating that she has “basically been there since [her] first year.”

Naden, also a political science major, had a similar beginning. He mentioned that he has been interested in politics since grade 7. Encouraged by his friends who told him he would make a “good student politician,” Naden was introduced to the SUO by Kelly Yuste, who was looking for people to help showcase the many services of the SUO. In his first year, he became a student-at-large, particularly expressing an interest in advocating for policy, stating, “Since I got in, I’ve been very passionate about talking to the government and advocating for students.”

Reflecting on the previous year, during which Olivia served as Vice President External and Naden as Director-at-Large, I asked them to share their highlights and challenges.

As Vice-President External, Olivia took pride in her efforts to address affordability concerns and in alleviating food insecurity on campus. She emphasized the launch of the community meals initiatives and also mentioned the SUO’s collaboration with other student unions, such as the University of British Columbia Vancouver, the University of Victoria and Simon Fraser University. Their joint efforts were aimed to tackle issues such as “the rise of tuition for international students, the rise in costs for domestic students [and] hidden fees that institutions impose, [such as] paying for an extra building.”

Additionally, Olivia shared that they partnered with UBCV to advocate for \$40 million dollars for climate change initiatives. She expressed pride in the advocacy work they accomplished, stating, “It definitely was not me alone doing it; it was a joint effort with my campaigns team and with the coalitions we formed.”

The most challenging aspect of her role last year was coordinating volunteers for local advocacy efforts. Olivia noted the difficulties in managing various groups and communities on campus and in ensuring that she could fairly advocate for everyone. She used the community meals initiative as an example, highlighting the need to cater to different dietary needs, especially when it comes to meat and plant protein options. In order to accommodate everyone, they were able to provide both options for many of their meals.

As director-at-large last year, Naden mentioned that a significant highlight for him was “reviewing a lot of [the SUOs] regulations and policies.” He specifically pointed out his achievement of creating an “enforceable transitional document policy” that new executives would sign when taking office. Although a previous policy existed, he noted that the wording was unclear and “not very legal.” His revision of the policy aimed to facilitate the transfer of institutional knowledge, ensuring that new executives were aware of what their predecessors had accomplished.

With this new policy, Naden sought to ensure a smoother transitional period for incoming executives, emphasizing transparency and mentorship.

Another highlight for Naden was



Photo provided by Sabhya Arora

the opportunity to attend the BC Federation of Students Annual General Meeting last January, where they protested against removing the cap on tuition increases. He remarked, “It was my first protest, so it was a big highlight for me.”

Looking ahead to this year, I asked them to share how they have adjusted to their new roles and what they have accomplished since taking office.

Olivia shared that for her, “it was a big transition.” She specifically pointed to the newfound responsibility in managing a plethora of other committees and teams, expressing that she had to especially learn “how to be a good listener and to be respectful in different conversations.”

Furthermore, she went to Ottawa for the Federal Advocacy Trip in a joint effort with the Simon Fraser Student Society and the Justice Institute Students’ Union to address the concerns with the changing treatment for international students. Olivia added, “We also talked about other advocacy goals such as transportation and what that could look like for investment.”

As president, she has also focused extensively on collaboration with the university, noting monthly meetings with them. Furthermore, she mentioned that she has been “working a lot with the university, other partners and other student unions to do coalition advocacy and work on how we can advocate for the university itself.”

Naden stated that the transition has been relatively easy for him, attributing it to the fact that he’s a “really big people person [and] really like[s] talking to new people.” He further mentioned that having been around the student union for a while, he has mentors like Olivia Lai and Abby Newman whom he can rely on for guidance.

Reflecting on the past few

months, he noted that they have been “really busy.” Naden also spotlighted the trip to Ottawa, where they were able to explain to federal MPS the “trickle-down effects of the upcoming IRCC changes in 2024” and how this will affect institutional budgets, forcing universities to shift costs onto students through ancillary fees.

While the MPs took these issues seriously and many expressed sympathy for students, Naden emphasized the need to reiterate the concerns, explaining to them that they “can’t just leave students hanging.”

Following that, Naden spoke at the unveiling of the new recreation building. He also spent a significant portion of his summer “reestablishing connections with other student unions and building connections within the BC Federation of Students.”

Another major task for Naden this summer was planning the yearly advocacy budget. He commented on his success in getting the SUO’s advocacy budget increased and raising the honorarium for their research center facilitators. He also focused on planning for the community meals budget, explaining how he had to determine both how much funding to advocate for this year and how to secure that funding.

Olivia and Naden share many of the same priorities this year, focusing on affordability and promoting student well-being.

Olivia specifically mentioned her desire to build more community on campus through “student-led programming and initiatives.” Moreover, she expressed plans to create a better channel of communication between students and the university.

Naden said his goals are primarily “government-related,” but he noted the challenges posed by the potential change in government due to the snap elections. Regardless of the outcome, a d-

ressing affordability remains a top concern. He expressed sympathy for students who “get frustrated when they hear student unions call for affordability because they expect it [immediately].” He emphasized that “unfortunately it can take years.”

Nonetheless, he plans to inform MPs about the rising costs students face, cuts affecting international students, and the importance for the post-secondary sector to remain receiving adequate funding.

“Another priority for me is explaining the Student Union Okanagan to all its members.” He noted his newly started SUO episodes series stating that he strives to “make more engaging content to get students to better understand the student union.”

He also highlighted the importance of ensuring the community meals program is successful during its second year of operations. While the SUO was unable to secure the same grant as last year, he plans to increase the number of meals provided in the second semester to balance the situation.

The last portion of our interview centered around the Board of Governors meeting which took place on September 23. Naden and Olivia presented to the board, highlighting the most pressing issues faced by UBCO and its students.

Their first point addressed the rising food insecurity at UBCO. They stressed to the board that 42% of students face food insecurity, thus making them reliant on various services provided by the SUO, such as Picnic, which offers free cooking classes and community meals.

They requested additional funding from the board, considering the ever-increasing demand for services that alleviate food insecurity. Specifically, they called for a multiyear affordability funding increase from \$800,000 to \$1.2 million, stating that this increase would “mean a lot to students.”

Next they addressed the discrepancies in the Work Study Program, especially concerning it in relation to UBCV. The Work Study program is designed to promote student engagement in their field of study while also providing an income to support their education.

Naden highlighted the “amazing research” conducted through this program, calling UBCO a “powerhouse.” Despite the program’s importance in allowing students to engage in their studies without the burden of insufficient income, Naden pointed out to the board the program remains underfunded. He noted that 70 students were unable to access opportunities that were “advertised.”

This issue remains especially pertinent as the Work Study program is currently funded on an excellence funding that runs out after the 2027 fiscal year. Naden warned that if this program disappears, “UBCO [will be] left behind and [it will] lead to fewer students without opportunities and fulfillment.”

“If you don’t invest in UBCO we are not going to be where you want us to be. A lot of people want UBCO to grow,” Naden further commented. Olivia supported this sentiment, stating that she encouraged the board of governors to see UBCO as an investment opportunity.

They also advocated for the need for a new building, citing a lack of available seating and study spaces which affects not only students’ academics, but the functioning of clubs and accessing school services. The SUO proposed that UBC partner with them to relaunch their plan in creating a new student union building, stating that it will foster community and belonging.

Despite their serious requests, both Naden and Olivia commented on the positive reaction they received from the board. Naden said that members expressed support for food insecurity and work study initiatives and many acknowledged the issues around UBCO being underfunded.

While any meaningful progress on these demands may take years to be resolved, both Naden and Olivia remain hopeful knowing that there are people on the board who understand their presentation and are aware of UBCO’s current situation.



Photo provided by Sabhya Arora

UBCO KICKS CANCER



WORDS BY AMBER MATLOCK

PHOTOS BY SABHYA ARORA

Cancer. It is a permanently life altering diagnosis. Everyone has some sort of connection to cancer, and because of this, October is recognized as Breast Cancer Research Awareness month. According to The Canadian Cancer Society (CCS), 99% of Breast cancer diagnoses are of women and 26% of cancer diagnoses for women are breast cancer 1. This month alone, around 2700 women in Canada are predicted to learn they have Breast Cancer, and there is still no ‘cure’.



To help further the research, many initiatives take place throughout the month, whether independently run, or professionally sponsored. Many CanWest Soccer teams have organized fundraisers and games to shed a spotlight on this cause, including both HEAT teams. These fundraisers are in collaboration with the CCS and all funds go directly to CCS based resources and research.

On Friday, October 9, the men’s and women’s soccer teams faced off against the UNBC Timberwolves for a night in honour of breast cancer survivors, victims, and research. The women played first at 5:00 PM, and both teams were adorned in pink warm-ups and, alongside the referees, held signs describing for whom they played in honour.

The first half of the women’s game was dominated by the leadership of midfielder Nina Louis, defender Rowan MacPherson, and the drive of forwards Megan Sun and Maria Georgacacos, with Georgacacos scoring the first goal of the game and her second goal of the season.

In the second half, forward Haden Thomas stepped alongside a goal hungry Georgacacos and Sun. Sun

scored the second goal of the game in a penalty kick, giving UBCO their first two point lead of the season. At the 86 minute mark, Georgacacos scored her second goal of the night, ultimately leading her team in goals, and allowing the HEAT to pull forward 3-2 and earn their first win of the season. UNBC, also not seeing any wins so far this year, saw their first goals of the season by midfielders Aimee Glasser and Maresha Manulak. Unfortunately for them, the HEAT was on a hot streak and the Timberwolves fell short.

At 7:45 PM, the referees and men’s teams stepped onto the field also holding signs in honour of the cause. Similar to their women counterparts, both teams were still looking for the first win of the season. Immediately, for-



ward Mosi Klusman stayed on the ball, with the help of midfielder Will Armitage and forward Gavin La Montagne, all playing aggressive offence against UNBC.

The first goal of the game was by UNBC midfielder Kaiden Young, after a clear shot from midfielder Mehdi Bounaaja. At the 35 minute mark, UNBC scores once more by midfielder Ryder Russman. With 20 minutes left of the game, the Young-Bounaaja partnership scored again with Young setting up the latter for his first goal of the season. Bounaaja then got the chance to score on a penalty kick and won the game 4-0 for UNBC. Despite some clutch saves by Goalkeeper Ronan Woodroffe, and some hot plays by defender and captain Ian Klumpen as well as defender Kai Gauthier, the HEAT ended up smothered by the Timberwolves in a landslide.

In a twist of fate, the women played for more than a win. The game showed the tenacity of the team and the drive

to win for the cause. This win means so much more than a few points on the scoreboard, as they showed before the game, playing in honour of family members, loved ones no longer with us, and people currently affected by cancer.

The men gave a valiant effort, and not once did they falter. They kept the Timberwolves on their toes all game and came close to a few goals themselves. Unfortunately, the team was not able to come together, showing that this was simply not their night.

Even though UBCO’s big night is over, cancer still looms. Both teams have fundraisers going until the end of the month, each looking to raise for the Southern Interior Rotary Lodge in Kelowna. The Women’s soccer team’s goal is to raise \$5000 and are incredibly close to their goal, having raised over \$4000. The UBCO men’s team decided to raise \$3000 and are having trou-



ble getting started, but have raised a noticeable \$500. The Lodge, “a remarkable facility that provides accommodation, meals, and a supportive “home away from home” for cancer patients and their caregivers while they receive treatment”has been an active partner with the Soccer for Cancer fundraisers and the CCS in helping families affected by cancer.

So, for the rest of the month, there are many opportunities to ‘kick cancer’. Consider donating to one of the HEAT’s fundraisers. Start your own fundraiser, make a donation, or simply share your story. Cancer diagnoses do not stop on November 1st, but now’s the time to make your impact.



AT A LOSS FOR WORDS



BY MEHAK PARIHAR

Turnitin is UBC’s primary plagiarism detection tool, and used widely in writing based courses in the arts, sciences, and engineering. Turnitin is trusted by over 15,000 universities, colleges, primary and secondary schools worldwide, reaching 34 million students in 153 countries.¹ UBC has supported the platform for a number of years, including a full integration with Canvas in 2024.² As of recently, the well used plagiarism platform is under the heat.

Turnitin allows student submissions to be compared against a massive database of books, journals, online articles, webpages, and previous submissions. After submitting a paper through Canvas, the algorithm scours this database for matching text that indicates plagiarism. Text suspected of plagiarism is highlighted for review, for example if a quotation or citation is missing. The paper is given a percentage score based on the number and extent of plagiarized text detected.

As someone who has used Turnitin both as a student and teaching assistant, it is evident that the platform does not provide a completely accurate evaluation of plagiarism. Since it is purely based on text-matching, an authentically written paper could receive a high plagiarism score if common phrases are used. While it is a useful tool, it is important to verify exactly what was detected as plagiarism.

Turnitin aims to benefit both students and educators; students can check for accidental plagiarism before submitting a paper, and educators can verify submissions. The submissions are also checked against previous students’ work for peer plagiarism, and Turnitin claims to have over 900 million student papers in their database.¹

The world of academic integrity previously included plagiarism from oneself, a peer, or

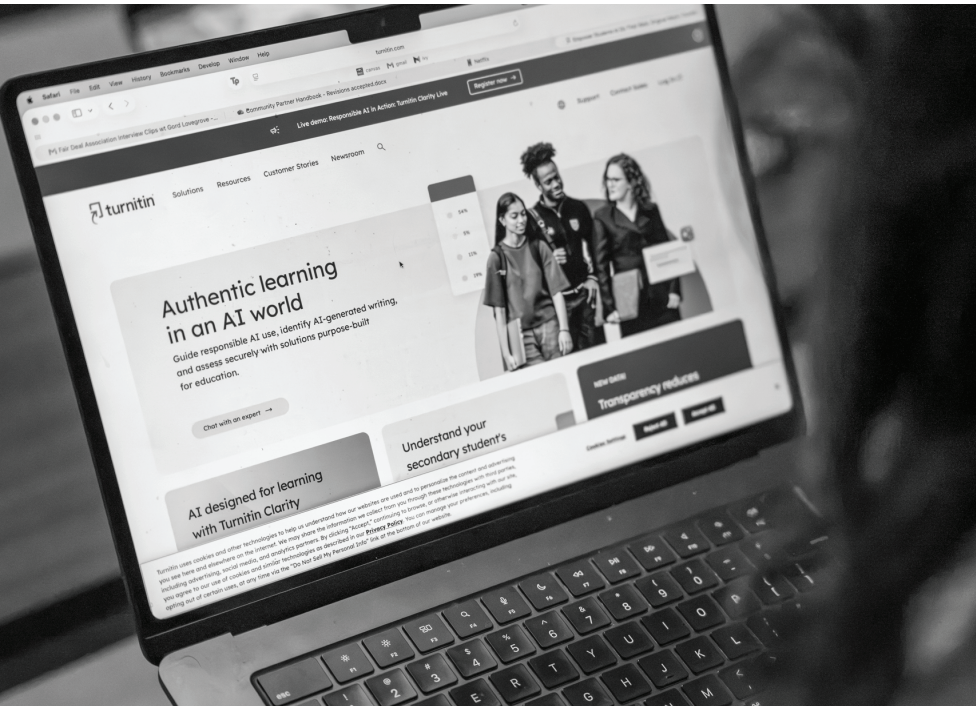


Photo provided by Sabhya Arora

published sources. Now, there are concerns over students outsourcing their writing to AI.

Turnitin attempted to introduce an AI detector in 2023. The detector took advantage of the fact that AI generated writing is consistent while human writing is unpredictable. Many universities, including UBC, rejected implementing this feature due to concerns about detection accuracy and lack of transparency.⁴

Turnitin offered a new approach after reflecting on the issues of AI detection. They proposed Turnitin Clarity, an embedded AI chatbot that monitors and assists student writing while providing educators with a clear indication of exactly how much AI was used in the writing.⁵

The feature would include a composition space for students in which they can access an

AI chatbot. Instead of explicitly writing on the student’s behalf, the bot directs students to answer the question for themselves. For example, if a student asked for a written introduction, the bot might suggest the student considers the main idea and angle of the essay, then requests the student write a first draft which the bot can provide feedback on.

The chatbot records this interaction so that the educators can have more clarity on the paper’s AI usage. The feature can also flag suspicious activity, such as a large chunk of text being pasted into the document. Educators can adjust parameters of the chatbot, like its complexity, types of support, and level of assistance.

This sounds like a brilliant idea on paper; students use AI responsibly without completely outsourcing their work, and educators are aware

of the extent of usage. The issues arise from how the chatbot is developed.

Turnitin announced changes to their licensing agreement that would allow student submissions to be used as AI training data. This provoked backlash from students, claiming that it is unfair for their original work to be used as training data without their consent.

As a student, there is no alternative to opt out of Turnitin, especially if it is embedded in Canvas like UBC. Students must face difficulties submitting outside of Canvas or losing marks if they wish to not support the feature.

Protests that began at the student and student union level eventually incited real change from universities. The University of Cambridge was the first institution to refuse to sign Turnitin’s new contract.⁶ The University of Southampton announced a termination of their agreement with Turnitin, and that they are beginning to introduce alternative tools.

“We have a responsibility to protect the data, intellectual property and academic work of both our students and the University.”⁷

Turnitin did not provide a conclusive response, and instead postponed changes to the licensing agreement until September 2027. So far, UBC has not published a statement on the situation.

The dilemma raises a question of who gets to decide ownership of intellectual property. Should students be able to decide what happens with their original work, or should the decision fall on university?

The fate of this decision could be quietly made by Turnitin, but it is the loud voices of students that are responsible for keeping the fight alive.

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Illustration by Iso Maauad Rodriguez

BY MEHAK PARIHAR

The best work in science happens when humanity is forced to rethink our understanding of nature.

Aristotle posited that every element (fire, air, earth, and water) had a “natural place”, and when rocks fall or air rises, it is because these elements have a tendency to return to their natural place.¹ Based on his observations, Aristotle stated that heavy objects fell faster. This idea was trusted for nearly 2000 years, until scientists observed that objects fall at the same rate despite their mass.

Newton’s laws patched this issue, and instead described falling objects as a result of the force of gravity. Every object attracts each other based on their mass and distance, due to an invisible force called gravity.

Still, Newton’s laws were trusted for about 200 years. Astronomers found that the motion of Mercury orbiting the Sun did not align with Newton’s laws. In 1915, Einstein presented general relativity. This theory described gravity not as a force, but as the geometry of space and time. To date this is one of the most beautiful and accurate theories of the universe, predicting important phenomena like black holes.

This is the cycle of science: equations and laws are formed based on observations, they are tested and trusted until an observation says otherwise, and then scientists reevaluate and get

closer to understanding the universe.

One may expect that Einstein’s genius gave the final answer, but astronomers have observed phenomena that general relativity struggles to explain, principally the missing mass problem.

Galaxies are bound systems of stars, planets, gas, and dust which are held together by gravity.² Earth is bound to the solar system, which is bound to the Milky Way galaxy. According to the current understanding of gravity, galaxies are moving too fast for gravity to hold them together.³ Following their speed and mass, the stars and planets should have been torn away from each other, but alas the Milky Way and trillions of other galaxies survive.

The gravity that holds galaxies together is generated from the total mass of stars, planets, meteors, and other astronomical objects. Newton proved that more mass results in a higher gravitational force. This force holds fast-moving galaxies together, and so there should be enough mass to generate a large enough force. However, an astronomer looking at the sky would find about five times less mass than expected.⁴

There are two possible explanations: either Einstein’s theory is incorrect, or there is hidden matter that cannot be seen. The latter has been named “dark matter” because it does not emit or

absorb light.

Physicists attempting to find a ‘correct’ version of Einstein’s gravity have been met with dead ends because no single theory can explain all the effects of gravity. However, this does not mean that a new theory can not exist, but that it will be difficult to find. Remember that it took a couple thousand years between Aristotle and Einstein’s theories. However, partially due to the lack of progress in finding a new theory, many scientists believe that the missing piece lies in dark matter.

The simple truth is that this is a blank space in physics. Dark matter has never been detected before, as it is exceptionally difficult finding something that likely does not interact with light or ordinary matter.

Physicists have developed many potential theories. Stephen Hawking proposed that dark matter is actually just black holes that are too small to be observed by modern telescopes.⁵ Others suggest a cold, slow-moving fluid of particles that provide extra gravity.⁶ The leading idea is heavy particles that only interact weakly with ordinary matter.

Scientists globally are grappling with the challenge to find a substance whose existence remains unproved. How do you search for something that cannot be seen?

Particle accelerators like CERN and TRIUMF (located at UBC) attempt to create dark matter by colliding particles at high speeds. If dark matter is produced, it would pass through the detector undetected, but there would be a measurable decrease in the overall energy and momentum of the ordinary particles. The missing energy would indicate dark matter was created and left the system.

Additionally, detectors have been launched into space to look for traces of the aftermath of dark matter colliding with itself.⁷ Underground detectors on Earth search for possible interactions of dark matter and ordinary matter.

When it comes to *dark* matter, we are completely in the dark. Many hours, dollars, and resources have been spent on understanding the missing mass problem. It is difficult to gauge how close we are to an answer, but continuing to study this mystery could unlock a new realm of physics. Does gravity need to be reimaged? Or are hidden particles out there? Newton and Einstein opened new doors with their theories, and exploring dark matter could reveal new physics at the edge of our imagination.

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COLLEGIATE INTRAMURAL SPORTS AND STUDENT WELL-BEING



BY ENYA DANGE

There is a risk to being a student that we all know too well: schoolwork taking over our schedules and academic pressure turning us into the worst versions of ourselves, to the point where we forget that there is more to university life. Although it's common to lose that drive once the school year begins, there are ways to preserve it.

Intramural sports are one solution to this dilemma. They remove the daunting parts of athletics while retaining the health benefits, community-building, and overall enjoyment. But membership on an intramural team and competing can also be a learning curve, with more to take away than just wins and losses.

Dr. Jose Sapien, a professor in the Faculty of Biology, organized an intramural soccer team for science students this year. To find players, he asked his students via a Canvas discussion post to gauge interest in a potential team. When asked about the inspiration behind creating the team, especially as a busy professor, he said: "I found sports to be a way to relieve my stress during my own university career." He thought that an amateur soccer team would benefit both his and his students' mental health.

According to Sapien, he faced financial barriers and time constraints, but still felt it was important to show up for critical matches. His team even came to evening games despite having midterm exams the next day, stating: "Going to the game

actually helped me to perform better in my work later, and [I'm] able to sleep better." Sapien also added that the games helped his students ease their stress before the midterm by giving them a mental break from studying. It was this persistence that boosted morale both on and off the field.

When asked why he thought it was important for staff to participate in these kinds of initiatives on campus, Sapien said: "I see my students as colleagues growing in the same classroom with me, 'cause they'll eventually be professionals [and] scientists. I don't see hierarchies, as this is our course." Sapien also expanded on why intramural sports bettered his students' learning, stating: "I find they'll be more comfortable asking me questions about coursework, and I'll understand their needs better. I can find better ways to explain concepts by using analogies that are relevant to what I learn about them."

Undergraduate student Toba Toriola also started her own volleyball intramural team this year. She explained that she came up with the idea alongside a friend: "Our schedules were: roll out of bed, go to class, study, and bed-rot at home. We had

just finished rewatching the anime *Haikyu!!* and thought 'we could totally do that,' and decided to sign up for intramurals." For Toriola, intramural volleyball gave her a chance to unwind and add something fun to what was a mundane routine.

She also said e-

play for vibes." She continued, speaking about how losses didn't mean anything for her team, and that the memories they made mattered more than the match results, stating: "Even if we didn't have the greatest of games, it was always filled with laughter and the funniest of inside jokes being made. Intramurals, also being a set-in-stone commitment, sort of left me with no choice but to show up even on days where I was feeling a little more lazy than normal."

When asked about what advice she'd give to someone wanting to join or create a team, Toriola responded: "More people than you think want to join an intramural team but are too shy to make the first move and ask to join somebody's team, so don't be scared to ask literally anyone you know, even if they aren't your best of friends."

This was the value of being part of an intramural team for Toriola, as it fostered a sense of unity.

The goals of students and faculty members align regarding what they wish to gain from campus recreation, and these goals were achieved through involvement in intramural sports. Whether it be on a court or field—volleyball or soccer—everybody needs a mental detox from schoolwork and a chance to recharge through physical activity and, more importantly, a chance to have fun with people who share that same passion.

scribed what a typical game day looked like for her team, and how intramural matches and practice sessions fit seamlessly into their daily schedules, stating: "My teammates and I go to classes as normal after figuring out who can make it for the game or not. Then, we meet up at the gym, [get] a couple practice bumps in before the volleyball game and sort of just

NEW TIMS, SAME CONCERNS

BY ENYA DANGE

Food and dining have always been an integral

with food at UBCO?

Students were asked to share their thoughts on the new Tim Hortons and the overall food landscape on campus via an Instagram story.

Some students shared that rather than opening a second location of an existing chain, the campus would benefit from more locally-owned food options, to pay homage to Kelowna's many local food businesses. In this way, the city's favourites would be more accessible on campus, especially to students who may not be able to go to their off-campus locations. Similarly, other students also reminisced over UBCO's former Subway locations, saying the reopening of Subway, or the introduction of others, would have also been advantageous.

Some students also stressed a lack of late-night options on campus. Currently, one of the few places open past 9:00 PM is the Pritchard Dining Hall. However, non-first-year students, students without a meal plan,

or students living off-campus, i.e. a majority of students, may not see a dining hall as their first choice in terms of food, especially since there is a walk-in fee for students without a meal plan.

One student also highlighted their thoughts on the Tim Hortons and UBCO's food options over a direct message, beginning first by stating the pros with the second Tim Hortons location, saying: "Honestly, I enjoy the full-service Tim's. I find it nearly splits those who want food and those who want drinks between them, though naturally the full service will likely attract more." However, they also acknowledge that the same issues with the lack of variety persist, stating: "I would have much preferred a different brand rather than a second Tim's. In fact, I find most [of] our food options here at UBCO are lacking. We have one proper restaurant and bar in The Well."

They continued, speaking on how the current options do not reflect the current student demand and cannot satisfy it: "I just want something more, like did you know we used to have a Subway in SCI? A Subway! Even that would improve our options by the variety it offers. We just feel [it's] so lacking for how many students we have here." A Subway location was the most popular request among the responses received.

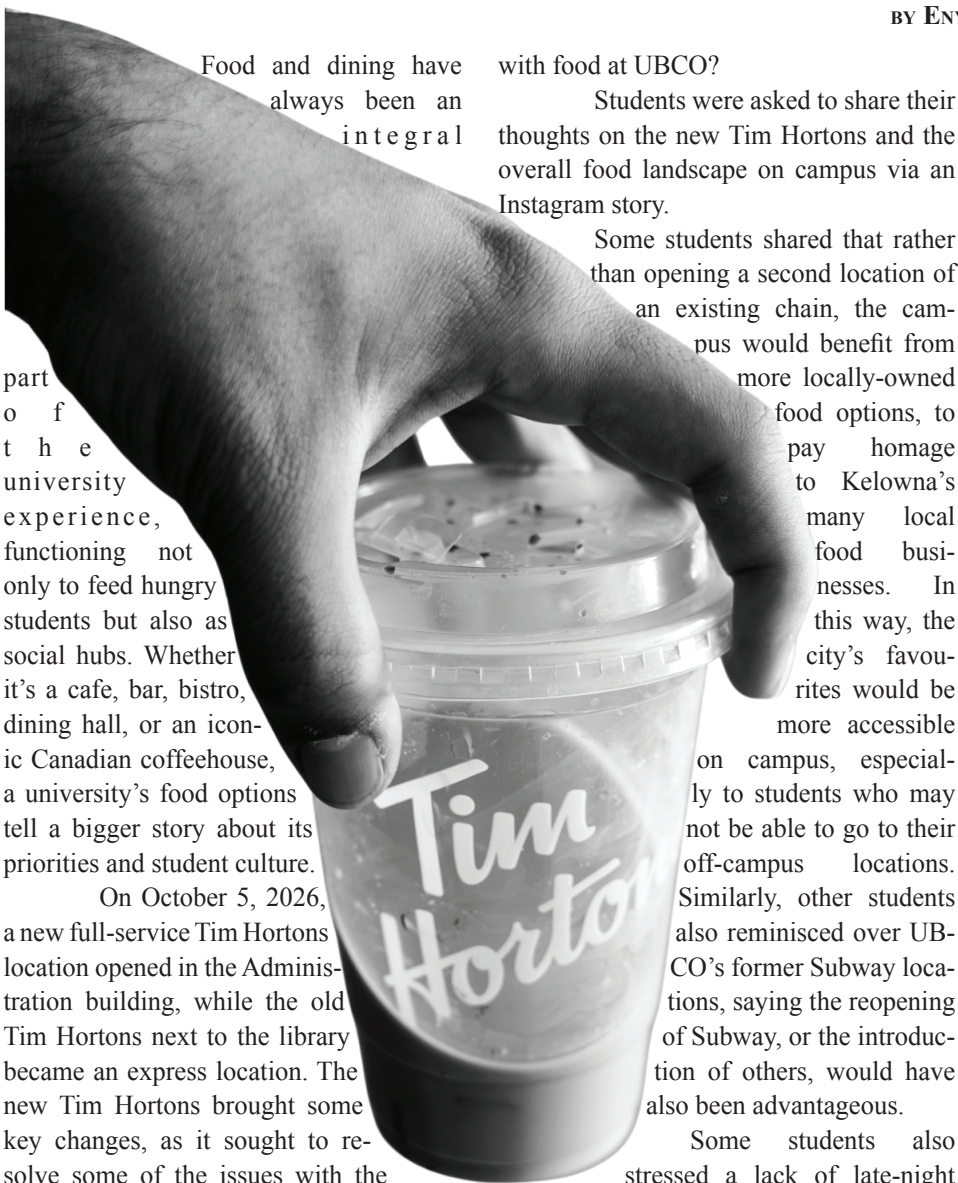
Other responses also shared that same sentiment of a lack of variety in the current options. Besides the familiar chains that were suggested, such as Chipotle, Cactus Club, and Booster Juice, some students

also wished for a variety in price points, regardless of whether they were chains or local. Although initiatives exist on campus which help students struggling with food insecurity, such as the student-led food bank Pantry, some students felt UBCO should also open itself to more budget-friendly options.

In some ways, the affordability problem is also tied to having equitable access to healthy food, and a couple of responses also shed light on the significance of having more health-conscious options at UBCO, such as a salad bar. Many students know it's vital to maintain a balanced diet, but may feel as though the university is not supporting them in that goal. Even though it's important for cognitive function or managing stress, students might feel pressured to neglect their health if the current food selection cannot fulfill their needs or solely attracts students with higher budgets. This also contributes to greater food insecurity.

The responses from the students emphasized different issues, especially a more diverse array of options, in terms of affordability, nutrition, more local spots, and the possibility of new chains; although related, they all require different approaches to solving. The general consensus was that UBCO still had a long way to go in the effort of bettering its current food scene, but a second Tim Hortons was not an obstacle in that progress.

Photo provided by Sabhya Arora



part of the university experience, functioning not only to feed hungry students but also as social hubs. Whether it's a cafe, bar, bistro, dining hall, or an iconic Canadian coffeehouse, a university's food options tell a bigger story about its priorities and student culture.

On October 5, 2026, a new full-service Tim Hortons location opened in the Administration building, while the old Tim Hortons next to the library became an express location. The new Tim Hortons brought some key changes, as it sought to resolve some of the issues with the old location, like the ability to scan a Tims Rewards card and two self-service kiosks. However, was it able to address some of the broader issues students have always had

ARTIST SPOTLIGHT: SHAUN SANTOS

BY WENDELL ZYLSTRA



With the advent of indie music streaming services such as Bandcamp, Soundcloud, and Spotify, many young artists are able to find a platform for their music. While this can be an issue in the sense of finding a wider audience to support your work, it also means that so much music that was previously never able to be recorded and published now has avenues to do so. Indie music as we know it has had a huge bump in popularity since these streaming services became the norm.

In this tidal wave of new art, our greatest guide for what to look out for is through reviewers. Calgary-born musician Shaun Santos reached out to *The Phoenix* to shed some light on his new EP, *B SIDES*.

When listening to *B SIDES*, I first noticed that it took a fresh take on the catchy, lo-fi quality which originally broke into mainstream music through ‘bedroom pop’ a genre dedicated to small-scale recording which capitalized on the indie nostalgia craze of 2018 through artists like *Clario* and *Boy Pablo*. While the term itself has been beaten half to death by artists and reviewers alike since its inception, here, Santos utilizes the aesthetics of bedroom pop, with his catchy beat loops and dreamy vocals, while putting his own spin on it. The influence of bedroom pop no doubt takes hold here, as it does with artists like *Dominic Fike*, one of the artists Santos credits in

inspiration. However, the more complex instrumentation and heavy electric guitar moments in songs like ‘DON’T WAIT’ are more reminiscent of rock artists like the *Red Hot Chili Peppers*, another one of Santos’ inspirations.

In recent years, nostalgia has become an incredibly important part of mainstream media. Most of the media produced is taken from previously existing intellectual properties (or IPs), much of mainstream style is inspired by the

fashion of the early 2000s, and even the genre of bedroom pop looks heavily to the past for its indie inspiration. *B SIDES* focuses largely on a more personal nostalgia which Santos takes from pieces of his own coming-of-age, lending an emotional quality to the music. ‘KIDS GREW UP’, the opening track, takes on this topic bluntly, reflecting on leaving childhood behind. Even the album cover reflects this nostalgia, with one of the default wallpapers on a desktop full

of files overlaid by images of personal pictures from and of Santos himself.

While more general nostalgia can allow us to escape, personal accounts and dreamy recollections about our own pasts allow us to reflect on ourselves and how we define who we are now. Santos puts a heavy emphasis on his live performances as a community space where people can come together and become a part of a larger whole of reflection, all while enjoying the vibrant performances and the joy that comes with being a part of something bigger than yourself. Santos has previously played in the well-known Cowboys music festival in 2025 which allowed him to create this space on a larger scale. I personally love live music for these reasons and the fact that the space it creates allows a very special sense of togetherness to form.

I recommend taking a listen to support Santos’ music (which can be streamed via Spotify or Apple Music), as well as following along his ‘Be Right Back’ Alberta tour beginning winter 2027.

As well as that, *B SIDES* (as the name implies), is only a precursor to the full length album *Strictly For the Sonics*, which is set to release in 2027, so keep an eye out for that.

So many emerging local artists create beautiful work day in and day out, do yourself and them a favour by engaging with it through streaming and going to local shows. You might just find it to be the most fun you have ever had.



Photo provided by Shaun Santos' management

MUTUAL AID IN KELOWNA: OUR COMMUNITY

BY WENDELL ZYLSTRA

This summer’s wildfire season brought on many hardships for Okanagan residents. The fires, many of which began through artificial means, displaced a large number of locals in Peachland and Vernon. These locals were forced to evacuate and many lost their homes altogether. Being displaced so suddenly means you are forced to pack your life into a bag or two and leave with the possibility that everything you own may not be there when you come back.

On the brighter side, the community in the Okanagan and especially in Kelowna came to the aid of the evacuees and set up a number of aid programs to supply housing, food, and other items to those who needed them.

On Facebook marketplace, in specific, many listings popped up of support for evacuees. Furniture, places to stay, pet food, and any number of things were put up for free for the sake of mutual aid. Neighbours were lifting each other up during their times of hardship to keep

However, it made me wonder a lot about the broader mutual aid networks which exist in Kelowna for those who need them, and who is considered ‘viable’ for mutual aid.

The ‘mutual’ in mutual aid implies that this aid goes both ways. Community members help each other to make a community stronger on the whole which provides mutual benefits for everyone involved. Most people want to help others and most people desire a strong community wherever they are. So who do we consider our community?

On many of the same Facebook groups which helped the evacuees and victims

dividuals in our lives and communities as simply pieces of a whole is reductive and leads to broad-stroke generalizations about people who others often know very little about (which can be seen in the attitudes some Kelowna locals have).

If the same mutual aid was applied to other struggling community members and neighbours year-round, would our community not be stronger and happier on the whole?

Many of us are in positions of privilege, which is not necessarily something we chose, but we do choose whether or not we use our privilege for the betterment of others positions in life. As the weather becomes colder and it becomes harder to live unhoused, consider using some of your money or some of your time to help others in your community.

Luckily, this help is easy to provide through the many wonder-

through their Patreon page.

The Central Okanagan Food Bank also accepts donations and volunteers through their website as well as through their physical locations at 2310 Enterprise Way in Kelowna and 203-3710 Hoskins Rd. Often food banks get donations of canned food, however, items such as pads, tampons, items for baby care (diapers, formula), clean socks, deodorant, thermal blankets, handwarmers, tents, sleeping bags and others are very much needed as well. This food bank also provides funding to school snack programs, post-secondary grants, and other wonderful projects which strengthen community.

If you are looking beyond organizations to a more individual level of support then get a group of your friends together and brainstorm your own ways to help your community. Talking with others about mutual aid can be valuable and lead to greater reflection on the ways in which our community helps us. Something as

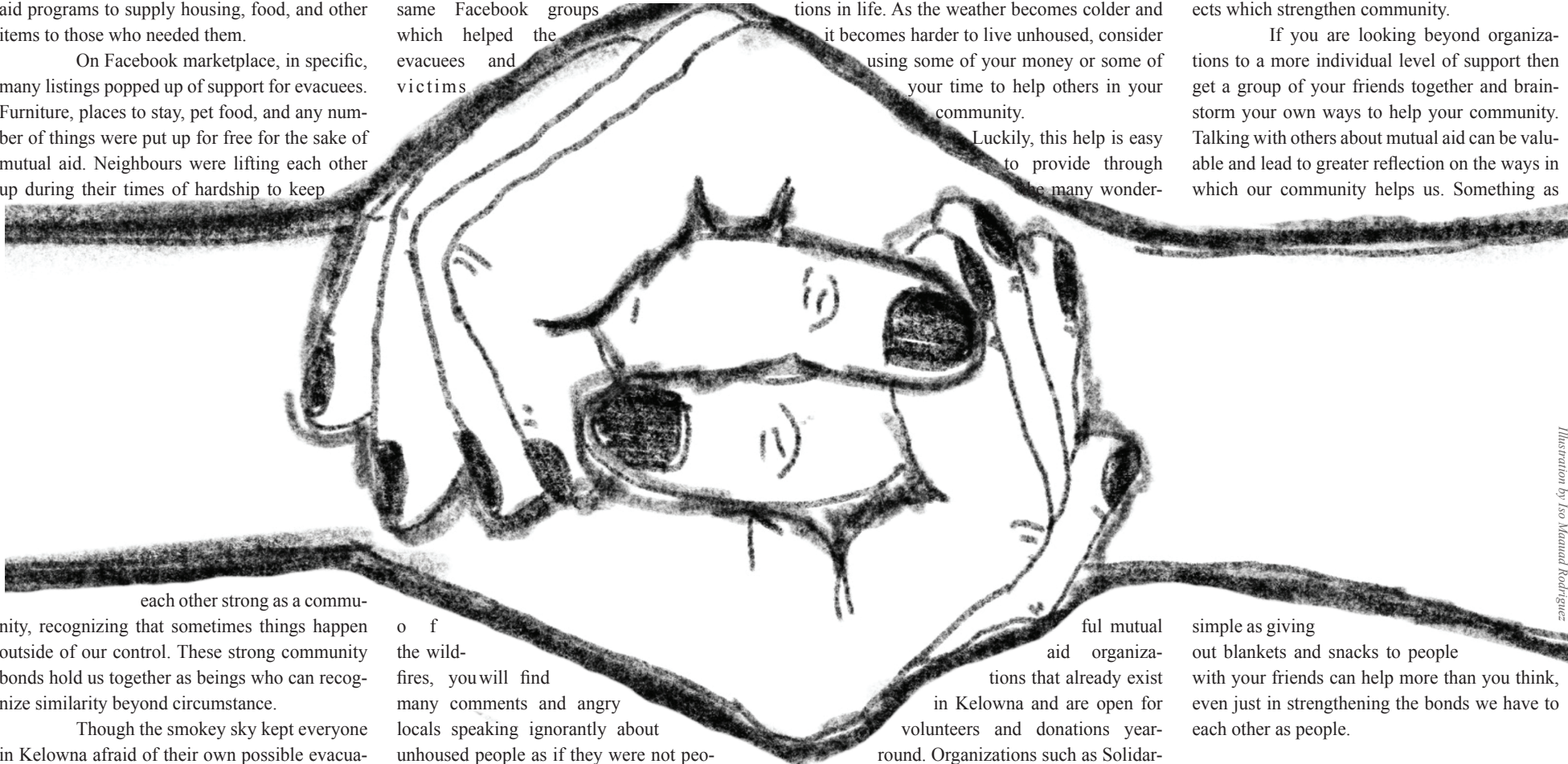


Illustration by Iso Manuel Rodriguez

each other strong as a community, recognizing that sometimes things happen outside of our control. These strong community bonds hold us together as beings who can recognize similarity beyond circumstance.

Though the smokey sky kept everyone in Kelowna afraid of their own possible evacuation, the work of both organizations and individuals warmed our hearts and showed that small but effective action can help others.

of the wild-fires, you will find many comments and angry locals speaking ignorantly about unhoused people as if they were not people at all. There are many complicated individual situations and systemic issues which can affect social perceptions of any group, but treating in-

ful mutual aid organizations that already exist in Kelowna and are open for volunteers and donations year-round. Organizations such as Solidarity Sundays are composed of locals hoping to help others on a donation basis. They accept volunteers through their instagram and donations

simple as giving out blankets and snacks to people with your friends can help more than you think, even just in strengthening the bonds we have to each other as people.

Thank you to everyone who works hard to support those in need.

FROM THE PINES TO PIPELINES

BY OWEN MCINTYRE

In 1990, the municipality of Oka, Quebec, created plans to expand the 9-hole golf course in the town.¹ The outline consisted of nine additional holes and luxury apartments. All set to rest on what is referred to as “the Pines” by the Kanehsatake Mohawk people. That land was sacred to the Mohawk people, as it was where their ancestors were forcefully moved 270 years prior, after living in their village on what is now Montreal island by colonial France. The planned golf course was met with hostility and protest by the Mohawks and resulted in a 78 day siege that laid the groundwork for Indigenous resistance in Canada for the decades to come and was the subject of the documentary *Kanehsatake: 270 Years of Resistance* by Alanis Obomsawin in 1993.

After a blockade began forming in March of 1990, the Kanehsatake people grew the barrier exponentially over the following four months.¹ The Oka crisis began on July 11 of 1990, after the townspeople of Oka claimed it was an illegal occupation and pressure from local government swelled leading to a clash between the provincial police and the Kanehsatake people¹. A group of Mohawk warriors guard the blockade, they belong to the ‘Mohawk Warrior Society’. The provincial police, the Sûreté du Québec (‘SQ’) conducts a raid on the blockade after the townspeople’s claim on the 11th. As the raid commences, gunfire rings out and plumes of tear gas shroud the blockade and the police raid is deemed a failure after an SQ officer is shot and killed. Provincial police retreated, leaving behind squad cars and bulldozers, which were later used to bolster the blockade by the Kanehsatake. The same day the Kahnawake Mohawks blocked the Mercier Bridge in solidarity, worsening the tension between the Mohawks and the nearby townspeople of Chateauguey and LaSalle, who were affected by the bridge blockade.

The bridge blockade resulted in the Kahnawake residents being cut off, nobody is allowed in or out.¹ The next day an effigy of a Mohawk man is burned by the Chateauguey protestors, and some residents call them terrorists. The protests and counter-protests continued for the e Kanehsatake and bridge blockade. The SQ continued efforts to fight back against the blockades and resistance, and a crop of SQ blockades appeared, making travel in the area even more challenging. The Red Cross was briefly given permission to bring food to residents behind the blockade, but their access was quickly denied. Most food deliveries were deemed a security threat and not allowed to cross for most of the crisis.

At the same time the Mohawk people expanded their demands, asking for full sovereignty over their land.¹ Surely an audacious ask, but understandable given that they sacrificed their original land centuries ago with the expectation that this land would not be impeded upon; their demands reflect a more deliberate promise compared to the previous expectations from the Mohawks.

It’s still mid July, and the SQ requests RCMP involvement, and Quebec Premier Robert Bourassa calls on the Canadian Armed Forces for even more support.¹ This resulted in the deployment of 4,000 soldiers around the Kanehsatake and Kahnawake areas that were under Operation Salon.

As tensions rose during the conflict a convoy of Kanehsatake people feared a greater military assault was imminent.¹ Amounting to 75 cars, carrying women, children and the elderly are attacked by a mob of Chateauguey protestors, stones are thrown and cars are badly damaged. A stone breaks a windscreen and kills an elderly man.

Outside of the nearby area and across the country Indigenous people came together in protest and action to support their fellow people.¹ The story of Kanehsatake resonated with many as it is not just something that’s happened once, but dozens of times before all over the country.

The documentary, *Kanehsatake: 270 Years of Resistance*, was made just three years

after the crisis officially concluded. Obomsawin, the director, hated guns but believed that “You can’t resolve everything overnight but if you document it, a documentary is the best gun you can have.”² Obomsawin went on to make several more documentaries in the coming years and is

Another issue is community safety, when these developments are carried out, there are a number of accommodations created for workers. These are called “man camps”, these camps are linked to the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women. Man

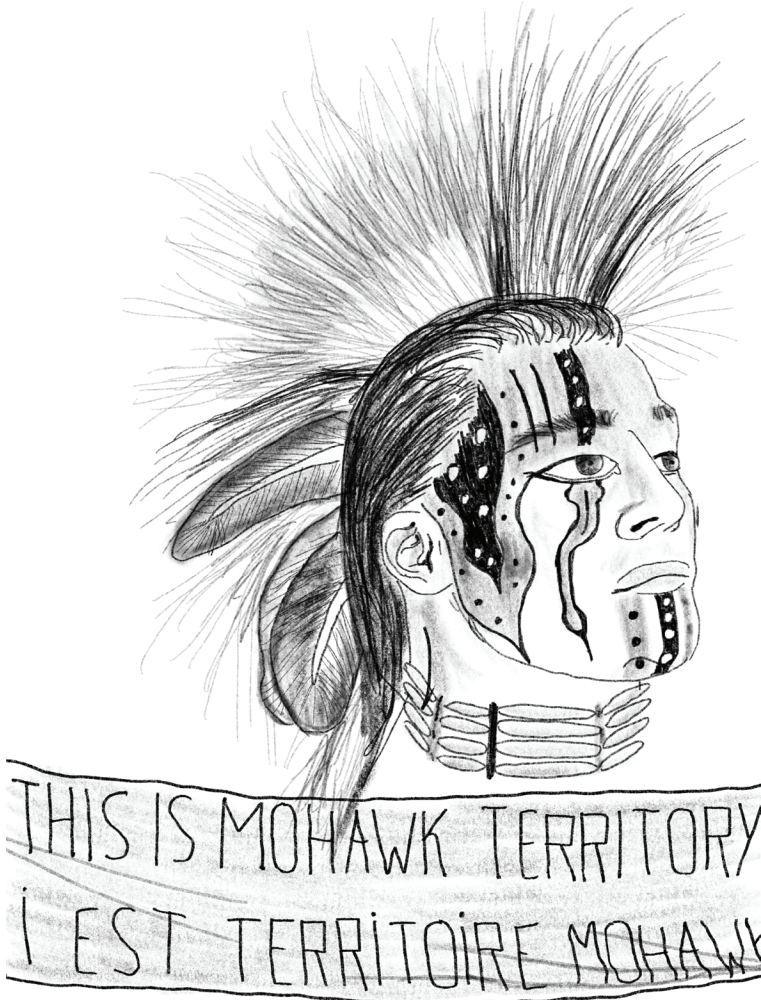


Illustration by Iso Maauad Rodriguez

one of Canada’s greatest documentary filmmakers. The documentation of the crisis provides evidence and a bit of spectacle for the event and with groups all across the nation giving their support, the combination allows for radical change.

As the dust settled and the barricades removed, the federal government kept their end of the agreement and went through with the purchase of the land that the golf course and townhouse expansion were to be built.¹ Additional plots were purchased for the people by the government but the land has not been officially designated a reserve.

No less than twenty years after Oka, the Coastal Gaslink pipeline was proposed and sought approvals from the BC government and various Indigenous groups. The owner of the pipeline, TC Energy began construction in 2018, even though it had not received permission from the Wet’suwet’en hereditary chiefs. Eight years before the beginning of construction, barricades and checkpoints were set up along a development road by the Wet’suwet’en, in response to the then Enbridge Pipeline setting up a camp right in the pipeline’s path. When TC Energy receives their approvals in 2018, they request a formal court order from the Supreme Court of British Columbia to take down the barricades. There was a temporary injunction issued that December and the following year RCMP began a raid, enforcing the court order.

The RCMP arrested 14 Wet’suwet’en ‘Land Defenders’, using snipers, helicopters and dozens of police vehicles. The RCMP set up a local detachment, claiming it is a ‘Community Industry Safety Office’. The Wet’suwet’en maintained their presence along the road with the police still there, any protesters who entered the area faced arrest.

The Wet’suwet’en took issue with the pipeline for a variety of reasons, principally environmental protections and community safety. The TC Energy company regularly did not comply with regulations. A number of violations took place having to do with erosion and sediment control. These violations have ramifications for a variety of habitats, notably on local fish habitats, which are vital to the local Indigenous communities.

camps are notorious for attracting transient individuals and commonly associated with debauchorous, drug and alcohol fueled, behavior.

In February 2020 TC Energy sought to get back to work, and the blockades made by the Wet’suwet’en were taken down and 28 land defenders were arrested. At the same time several reporters along the road were detained, which is a clear violation of the freedom of the press. These arrests resulted in a number of solidarity protests across the country blocking passenger and freight traffic for weeks. Ultimately, these protests brought federal and provincial officials to the table to negotiate a solution that can work with both the Wet’suwet’en people and the government. The officials and the hereditary chiefs could not come to an agreement. The negotiations resulted in a memorandum of understanding on the Wet’suwet’en rights and title. However that did little in helping the cause of the Wet’suwet’en, as the pipeline continued construction and with the encroaching pandemic the in person demonstrations and resistance halted. The pipeline was completed three years later in 2023.

Today, action hasn’t wavered on either side of the ‘blockade’, there has been a rise in residential school denialism, undermining efforts from Indigenous groups around the country. In 2021 it is reported that there is a potential mass grave site at a now defunct residential school in Saskatchewan, coming just weeks after similar reports of 215 remains of children were found in Kamloops. At the time these discoveries were stark reminders to the country of our past and brought forward national shame. In the years since there have been a number of reports of similar mass graves. However as the potential evidence began to rise, some believed it to be a hoax.

This year, just days before Truth and Reconciliation day a group of masked white nationalists held up signs with the phrase “Got Bones?” on a bridge in Kamloops. The group is suspected to be a part of the Second Sons of Canada, who on their website tout garbage like this:

“Will you watch passively as our way of life, our values, and our cultural heritage are defiled and

erased or will you step forward, like the heroes of our past, like our grandfathers did, to safeguard and revitalize the essence of what it means to be Canadian?”³

Their values are quite ironic given they are disregarding and refusing to recognize a key part of Canada’s past. There is an undeniable greatness of this country but like any, there are flaws. Those flaws include the forceful migrations of the Mohawks from Montreal island to the land that is now Oka, or the fact that when the Oka crisis first took place we still had residential schools operating in Canada, which would continue to run for over half a decade after the crisis ended. These kinds of actions by the Second Sons and other groups are done to debase the progress made since the Oka crisis and beyond.

What was meant to serve as an act to discredit the Indigenous communities became a moment of healing, as days after the white nationalists had their demonstration, a group of Indigenous people came together at the site and “cleansed” it. Action was taken by the local First Nation community, Tk’emlúps te Secwépemc, and enacted a zero tolerance policy for similar demonstrations.

While the Oka crisis is looked back on as a chaotic uprising that was a great success for the Mohawks, it is just one of many instances in our country’s history that proves we have a population willing to fight tooth and nail for what they believe in.. While the beliefs of the are fueled by hate, ours should not be. It is important for all Canadians to step forward like the heroes of the past, like Alanis Obomsawin or Brad “Freddy Kruger” Larocque the Mohawk warrior, following in their footsteps to keep the true essence of being Canadian alive.



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