

Goodbye to the Seniors of The Weekly

Caroline Probst
Editor-in-Chief

What are your plans for next year?

I'm moving to Stockholm, Sweden to take a gap year. I'll be working as an au pair and traveling as much as possible, before starting my career.

Katie Allen
Copy Editor

What are your plans for next year?

Next year I hope to be working at a publisher or magazine in the Twin Cities. I also plan to continue writing poetry and hopefully have some of my work published.

Elliott Robinson
Copy Editor

What are your plans for next year?

I hope to work for a non-profit Queer library in the Twin Cities, and hopefully take a year to recharge before going to graduate school for a Masters in Fine Arts.

Monika Pham
Business Manager & Web Editor

What are your plans for next year?

Currently still undecided, hoping to work in the Twin Cities area.



Weed, the people

A student's perspective on Marijuana legalization



Oakley Clark
Opinion Columnist

As many of you may know, I've been writing for The Weekly for the past couple years, and I have never shied away from controversial topics—whether critiquing Gustavus, ranting against The Donald, or complaining about bad music.

So, for my last issue, I'm going to write an opinion that should reflect all of our perspectives as hip and socially aware millennials: legalizing marijuana.

While I'm preaching to the choir, this discussion must continue—especially in an election year. We must continue to annoy each other and our politi-

cians until the day comes when people can legally and safely take up.

Prohibition doesn't work. You can't ban things.

I wrote about this a couple weeks ago when confronting the silly idea of banning tobacco on campus.

The 18th and 21st Amendments—prohibition and its subsequent repeal—prove that fact.

The first point for legalization is that this is America.

Since when is it the government's job to tell adults what they can and cannot put in their bodies?

The government clearly shouldn't regulate food and drink choice, and, even with the obesity epidemic, most Americans wouldn't support a harsh government crackdown on Twinkies.

Alcohol and tobacco are legal and both are significantly worse for you than the occasional puff-puff pass.

People beat their wives and kids on alcohol and tobacco smoke turns your lungs into a burnt steak.

The country is going through an awful opioid crisis—again, predominantly thought to be caused by greedy pharmaceutical companies pushing for over-decoration of pain killers (German Lopez, Vox).

And those prescriptions are

all legal.

While big pharma executives rake in millions for hooking America, normal people—especially people of color—continue to be rounded up for possessing small amounts of marijuana.

Even those selling significant amounts of marijuana shouldn't be locked up—it's a harmless drug so long as it stays out of kids' hands.

Speaking of kids, in Colorado, a state which legalized weed, the amount of kids who have smoked marijuana has actually decreased in recent years (Antonia Blumberg, HuffPo).

While perhaps not a definitive argument that kids do better under legalization, the numbers certainly point in that direction.

Back to the issue of locking up folks.

A plant that makes you hungry shouldn't ruin someone's life, family, and community.

It's as simple as that.

However, if I really need to make an economic argument for the value of human beings, so be it.

Why spend money locking up non-violent marijuana offenders?

They do not harm anyone.

Actually, locking them up does tremendous harm to the parentless child and to the community with less workers and volunteers.

With Colorado's legalization, the government received nearly \$250 million of tax revenue from weed in 2017 (Colorado Dept. of Revenue).

That's a big chunk of money that can be used for education, roads, and—a personal favorite—income tax cuts.

So even if you don't partake in the devil's lettuce, you receive a benefit as well.

That's not to mention all the US farmers who could profit off this new market.

A common argument against legalization discusses so-called "law and order."

People are going to get high and murder their families, I guess.

Even if you don't partake in the devil's lettuce, you receive a benefit as well.

One, that's a stupid thought. Two, several studies have pointed to an actual decrease in crime because of legal pot (Jamie Doward, The Guardian).

Gangs that once smuggled weed throughout the state no longer have a market, because people can simply go to their local dispensary; people actually know what is in their pot, so it's much safer; and kids are carded

at the door and can no longer buy weed at the street corner.

Internationally, legalization also may be beneficial to our southern neighbors.

Without the massive US market, drug gangs that wreak havoc in Mexico and Central America lose their source of funding and can no longer afford weapons, corrupting politicians, and other activities.

I know I'm mostly preaching to the choir, and, for those few hold outs still opposing good ol' jazz cabbage: why?

Do you really believe you have the right to prevent people from making choices regarding their body?

Do you still believe the "reefer madness" propaganda spoon fed to us as kids?

In the end, it's 2018—an election year.

Minnesota's having a gubernatorial race. Both our senate seats are up.

Oh, and don't forget about local elections for the MN legislature.

As you head to the polls, make sure you know where candidates stand on marijuana.

Even if you don't smoke pot, your pocketbook, neighborhood, and moral compass with thank you.



Clark advocates for the legalization of marijuana.

The wonderful world of cosplay



Emily Pratt
Opinion Columnist

I will never forget the day when I applied the very last touches of silver paint to the clay necklace I had constructed for my Bellatrix Lestrange cosplay. After six years of thrift shopping, modifying garments, and making a corset from scratch (the credit for that last one goes entirely to my mom), the ensemble was finally complete.

As my first fully transformative cosplay creation, there are few moments in my life that match up to the pride I felt then.

Cosplay is a combination of costuming and roleplay, a practice that originated in Japanese fan cultures. It has grown in considerable popularity worldwide, among fans of all types of mediums over the last few years.

Television, books, anime, videogames; you name it and someone probably has a costume for it. Ensembles are shown off at



People dressed up as Harry, Ron, and Hermione.

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conventions and major releases of films or books. Social media alone has thousands of accounts dedicated to posting cosplay and character transformations. What these locations don't show, is the amount of work put

behind them.

Cosplay is not simply "dressing up for adults." Most Halloween magazines don't have an option for over half of the characters cosplayer's are interested in. It requires a kind of

artistry to pick out what pieces are needed to finish off a certain look. Artistry and a lot of patience. Those who don't have the skills to design clothing and sew can spend years scouring thrift stores and the internet just to piece something together. Doing so is far from a waste of time, it zeros in on specific details of a character's wardrobe and can even develop creative problem solving skills. I knew it would be next to impossible to find the River Song (Doctor Who) dress I was looking for, so with instruction from my mom I managed to piece two costume patterns together. Some cosplayers see potential in an in-store clothing item and completely transform it into something new. Every well done cosplay is an individual work of art.

The biggest thing that differentiates cosplay from Halloween costumes is the roleplay. Instead of simply putting on a different look, cosplayers embody a completely new persona.

This can range from altering their walk and mannerisms to fully embodying the voice and reactions of a character. Some cosplayers are particularly dedicated to this aspect of the practice, often times the costume won't matter as much if the acting part is finessed.

What's so brilliant about cosplay is this ability to walk in another's shoes. When embodying a character like Bellatrix, I naturally have to limit myself on how in-character I get, but there is something so fascinating about exploring the thought process of another individual. It's one of the things I enjoy

most about fiction writing and theater, but the addition of costuming adds a whole new level of it to cosplay.

It allows me to explore myself and why I might think the way I do. It's an idea that sounds annoyingly philosophical on paper but has been instrumental in my exploration inside and out of my comfort zone. I cannot speak for every cosplayer when I say this, but connecting with and embodying characters someone either admires or loves to hate can do wonders for someone's confidence.

What those outside of the fandom universe should take from this is, yes, cosplay is fun. It's a chance to meet others who have the same interests and to develop one's artistic side. But there is also a special significance within this community when it comes to embodying another character. It's a celebration of pop culture and can be included in a variety of different social events.

Cosplayers work extremely hard on each look and they deserve every available opportunity to show them off.

You don't have to be a fan of cosplay, everyone has different tastes and that's fine. But recognizing it as another form of art and appreciating the hard work put into each piece prevents cosplay from entering the "weird, problematic" social sphere.

Cosplay isn't just reserved for the stereotyped "geek" and "nerd," it's a form of art anyone can get involved in. There are so many ways to express your individuality and this is just one of them.

The Good, the Bad, and the Meh



The trees on the hill are blooming - make sure to take your pictures in front of the sign before they disappear.



Humidity is on the rise... anyone else sweating profusely in your non-airconditioned dorm?



This is the last Gustavian Weekly issue of the year :(

Is sulfide mining worth the environmental risk?

Andrew DeZiel
Opinion Columnist

In Northern Minnesota, a polarizing political standoff over iron ore mining is pitting the two most prominent industries in the region against each other - mining, the traditional economic bedrock of the "Iron Range," against tourism, which has grown to eclipse a declining industry in many respects.

This political decision could have fateful implications for the future of the Boundary Waters and Lake Superior, two of the most beloved and pristine bodies of water in the United States.

On May 4, the U.S. Department of the Interior announced that it was reinstating the mineral rights leases for Twin Metals Minnesota within the watershed of the Boundary Waters

Canoe Area, although the move is simply temporary and does not constitute a renewal.

This decision will allow Twin Metals, owned by a Chilean Mining company Antofagasta PLC, to continue exploration and potential development of proposed Copper Nickel Mining. The original leases go back to 1966, prior to the enactment of several important laws such as the National Environmental Policy Act of 1970, which have been designed to protect areas such as the BWCA.

Spearheaded by Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, the renewal reversed the a decision made in the waning days of the Obama administration not to renew the leases because of the potential environmental damage associated with sulfide mining.

A related project is the proposed PolyMet mine between

Babbit and Hoyt Lakes, in an area that is currently part of the Superior National Forest.

The site is part of the Lake Superior watershed - should a spill occur, polluted wastewater could flow down the St. Louis River, through Duluth and into the largest body of freshwater in the world.

In order to enable mining on the site, Polymet has proposed a land swap, by which approximately 6,700 acres of land in the area currently held by Polymet would become part of the Superior National Forest, in exchange for a similar amount of land given to PolyMet at the site of the proposed mine.

Both Republicans and Democrats in Congress have championed the land swap, which ironically boasts of adding 400 acres of environmentally sensitive wetlands to the National

Forest even as the proposed mining itself would result in the destruction of nearly twice that.

The trouble with these proposed mines is that while sulfide mining can produce meaningful qualities of valuable elements like nickel, gold and copper, the sulfide contained within the ore, once it interacts with air or water, produces sulfuric acid which can poison the surrounding ecosystem.

While the mining companies insist that they will take the most stringent standards, the polluted water remains toxic for thousands of years after the mine is closed, making environmental protection extremely difficult.

A 2012 report from Earthworks analyzed the 14 largest copper mines in the United States and found that every single one had already suffered from some sort of accidental release of polluted water resulting in significant detrimental effects to water quality.

All but one suffered from major systemic failures in their water collection and treatment.

As a 2011 analysis by the Environmental Protection Agency noted, 41% of all toxins released into the environment came as a result of heavy metal mines like the proposed PolyMet and Twin Metals mines.

Furthermore, the cost of long term cost of cleanup from mines with projected lifetimes of no greater than 20 years is likely to be exorbitant.

Jim Kuipers, a Montana mining consultant hired by the Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy, argued that the given the true cost of environmental cleanup, Minnesota should ask for \$934 million up front to pay for at least 500 years of water treatment and mine closing costs - nearly three times greater than what PolyMet has offered to set aside.

Ever since the Iron Ore industry collapsed in the 1980s, un-

employment and poverty rates in the once prosperous "Iron Range" have remained above the state average, and politicians have searched desperately for avenues of creating new mining jobs and/or to diversify and expand the economy.

One major bedrock of the new Northern Minnesota economy has been a dramatic expansion in tourism.

Although development advocates argue that many tourism jobs are seasonal and low paying, the damage which could be done to the tourism and recreation industry by damage from mining waste would certainly be substantial.

According to an analysis published in the Journal of Hydrology, if polluted water from the Twin Metals project spills into nearby streams, it could affect nearly 2.3 million acres of American and Canadian public lands, along with dozens of resorts and campgrounds and hundreds of homes.

An economic analysis commissioned by Save the Boundary Waters further hammered home the point, arguing that pollution from sulfide mining in the region could lead to \$288 million in lost visitor spending per year, as much as \$480 million in lost property value, and as much as 1.6 billion in lost annual income if the mining reduces or reverses growth in the amenity-based economy.

Certainly, the possibility of adding good paying jobs to rural and economically underperforming regions is always appealing.

Yet given the risk to a ecosystem of tremendous ecological importance, sentimental value and economic worth, it seems unlikely that the likely long term damage to the BWCA and Lake Superior that would result from sulfide mining is worth the cost.



A sulfide mine.

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Letter from the Editor

Dear Gustavus Community,

It has been an honor to serve as the Editor-in-Chief of this long standing publication for the past three years.

At the end of my first-year as photography editor, I was given a unique opportunity as an underclassman to apply for the Editor-in-Chief position as almost all of the editorial board graduated that year.

As my time at the paper and Gustavus comes to an end, I fondly look back at all of the memories I have made, both in and out of the office.

From controversial articles to puff pieces, stolen newspapers to too many left over, my time as an editor on the Weekly will stick with me forever and continue to influence my life through the skills I've learned.

I look forward to officially handing my position to our new Editor-in-Chief, Cole Trebelhorn, as I know he will do great things to improve this publication.

Sincerely,

Caroline Probst
Editor-in-Chief