

“Laying Low” before the holidays



Emily Seppelt
Opinion Columnist

As Thanksgiving break quickly approaches, all Gusties are now in a “lay-low period.”

“Students (on- and off-campus) and employees should stop in-person social activities and move group work and meetings to a virtual format,” the email from President Bergman to the student body said.

Citing the fact that there has been little evidence of any transmission of COVID from in-person classes, however, in-person classes are still running as normal.

I find this decision to be... interesting, to say the least. To me, it does not make very much sense to limit our social contacts if we don’t also limit our time spent in class with our peers. The definition of a close contact is anyone we spend more than 15 minutes with, even if we are wearing a mask. Considering that there are not currently any classes at Gustavus that last less than 15 minutes, it would seem to me that every person that I attend class with would be my close contact.

In the last week, COVID cases on campus and off have been increasing quickly. At Gustavus, at the time of writing this article, there are 65 total positive student cases and one positive case among the employees. We cannot forget the number of people that are quarantined either—currently, there are 54 students on campus in quarantine and eight employees. This is also not taking into consideration the fact that many students who are deemed close contacts may have chosen to quarantine at home.

Outside of the Gustavus bubble, it seems that we are again entering a period of possible state-wide lockdown and hospitals full of COVID-19 patients.

“The next six to 12 weeks are going to be the darkest of the entire pandemic,” Dr. Michael Osterholm, director of the Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy at the University of Minnesota, said. This urgency and danger of COVID-19, especially now, makes it so important that we make the right choices now and in the next two months when we are home.

Honestly, I am amazed that we made it this far on campus without a larger outbreak like the one we are currently experiencing. In just one week to the next, we went from just 11



Gusties maintain their social life while “laying low”

Gracie Jackson

active positive student cases to 61 active positive student cases. Unfortunately, I blame Halloween weekend for this spike in cases. While the vast majority of Gusties were probably safe, the thought of celebrating the holiday in unsafe ways was just too tempting. Instead of dwelling on our mistakes, we should take steps to help do whatever we can to correct them and to be as safe as possible going into the holiday season.

“The next six to 12 weeks are going to be the darkest of the entire pandemic.”

-Dr. Michael Osterholm

In my opinion, I think it would have been safer for Gustavus to institute the online period earlier to keep everyone safe, rather than simply limiting on-campus events only. While I commend the argument that it keeps everyone safe before Thanksgiving, still holding in-person classes seems to defeat the purpose of the lay-low period. It would be smarter to institute a two-week quarantine period in our dorms (outside of necessities like the Caf) before heading home for Thanksgiving break to help protect our families.

While I understand that it is disappointing to go to online classes sooner than we may have expected, that disappointment and possible disruption to class is nothing in comparison to the

chance that students could be bringing back the virus from class to their roommates and eventually to their families when they leave.

Ultimately, if in-person classes are still happening, students need to at least take the responsibility of limiting their outings to class and food only when possible. Considering that we are now nearing the end of the semester, with workloads that tower above

our heads, this should not be too difficult.

At this point, I know that everyone is sick of hearing these warnings and taking these precautions, and I know I am personally disappointed that COVID has reached all the way to the Christmas season. But keeping up best practices and being as safe as we can allows for people to still have their family around for the holiday season instead of

in the hospital, and maybe helps healthcare workers to have some time with their family. Keep it up, Gusties.

The Good, the Bad, and the Meh



Election is “over”



It’s a No-VID on the COVID



Having the heat on all the time

Despite COVID, off-campus jobs must prevail



Grace Worwa
Opinion Columnist

Gusties are minimizing contact with the outside world, but in the midst of it all, some students continue to work off-campus jobs. While this may first appear as an unnecessary risk, especially when there is work study available on-campus, it is not. In fact, it is a necessary and unavoidable risk and a rather small one at that.

Working an off-campus job is necessary for some students because it offers important benefits that a work study cannot. The most important one, of course, is a higher wage.

According to Junior Jack Milford, he began working as a delivery driver at Domino's for this very reason.

"The school doesn't pay enough. The school waits until the beginning of the month to pay you. I need something more

consistent. I need something with hours. I need something with tips for additional income," Milford said.

Better and more frequent pay is also a primary benefit for Sophomore Autumn Zierman, who works as a barista and shift lead at Diamond Dust in addition to her on-campus roles as a Writing Center tutor and staff writer for *THE GUSTAVIAN WEEKLY*.

"My off-campus [job] has a much better income and a much steadier one. I get paid biweekly instead of monthly. I also get weekly tips that make it really easy to cover my expenses from week to week," Zierman said.

In addition to getting paid more often, an off-campus job offers a level of community interaction that work study just can't. This is essential for students who want to expand their social circles beyond just college students and professors.

"It definitely embeds me more into the fabric of the St. Peter community and makes St. Peter feel more like home than like a college town. I meet a lot more people that are diverse in age, income status, life experience, [and] interests," Zierman said.

Finally, off-campus work serves as a mental break for students, who would normally spend 100 percent of their time on-campus. Gusties live, eat, study, work, socialize and do just about everything else within the invisible walls of college life, shielded from the outside world. Not that our Gustavus com-

munity isn't great, but for some students, having an activity off campus to look forward to, even if it is work, can be a necessary breath of fresh air.

"It's independent of school,

"Finally, off-campus work serves as a mental break for students, who would normally spend 100 percent of their time on-campus."

which makes the world feel as big as it should be rather than make my entire existence be about college," Zierman said.

Off-campus jobs offer students significant and necessary benefits as an alternative to work study. In the COVID era, they do come with some risk of exposure, as does any other activity that involves other people, but that risk is not so big as to merit asking these students to stop work. For one thing, protective measures can be and are being taken by the individual students to protect themselves from exposure.

"I would just wear my mask and wash my hands all the time," Milford said.

For another thing, the employers themselves are taking drastic safety measures in order

to limit the spread of COVID. After all, it is in their best interest to avoid an outbreak so that their business can stay open and their employees can stay healthy. Domino's, for example, uses no-contact deliveries to reduce driver-to-customer contact, and according to Zierman, similar safety measures are in play at Diamond Dust.

"Everytime a new person comes in and uses our Point of Sales, I sanitize it. I also sanitize all the tables. I wear masks at work all day. We use protective gloves whenever we're handling food items that people then take out. We have weekly check-ins on health status," Zierman said.

In fact, due to employers' strict adherence to COVID guidelines, working off-campus is much safer than most other off-campus activities that students participate in, such as going home over the weekend, hanging out in Mankato, or attending parties. These activities warrant much more human-to-human contact than would leaving a box of pizza on someone's doorstep or serving a customer from behind a coffee-shop counter.

"We have regular inspections at our place of work by CDC representatives and FDA representatives to make sure that we're following all the codes of conduct that have been set forth by the state of Minnesota, so it is far, far more likely that somebody who goes off campus to party or who travels around a lot or every

weekend will bring COVID back to campus than it is that I will," Zierman said.

Even if the risk wasn't so small, the fact is that nobody can just tell students they can't work off-campus. After all, it's not as if it's a choice. It's a necessity. It's for income. We might be living through a pandemic, but that doesn't freeze these students' expenses, and work study simply isn't enough.

"Even if the risk wasn't so small, the fact is that nobody can just tell students they can't work off-campus. After all, it's not as if it's a choice. It's a necessity. It's for income."

"The school just doesn't pay enough. They accommodate as much as they can, but I need money not just for [school] because I'm completely self-sufficient. I just live off myself," Milford said.

Perhaps working off-campus is a risk, but it's a small one and a necessary one. Besides, who are we to tell these students that they can't make money.

COVID-19 cases on campus spike: Are we really surprised, though?



Emma Pufahl
Opinion Columnist

surprised that this is where we are?

Colleges across the country have already had issues with COVID-19 outbreaks. It started to feel like we were never going to have the large uptick in cases like those that have been so commonplace to hear about on the news. But here we are. Over half of our total COVID cases, 66 of the 127 total positive cases since Aug. 15, are active right now (as of Nov. 10).

While I greatly appreciate and commend those who have worked so very hard to prevent this from happening, I do think that we've allowed some activities to occur that should never have even been an option.

My largest grievance is with the music department. I'm sure many of you know that all of the orchestra, jazz, and various band groups that exist on campus have been meeting in person. Everyone stands six feet apart and are masked, but brass and woodwind instrument players have masks with holes cut out of them so they can still play them. When I hear this, I imagine one of the videos of the COVIDidiots where the person has cut out the mouth of their mask so they would be able to breathe better.

While the masks used by Gusties don't look like this, I can't help but think that the effectiveness of the masks greatly decreases. These students are also required to place a mask on the end of their instruments as another safety precaution, so their germey breath doesn't shoot into the air. How many precautions should be our limit? Like many other student orgs, they are also still meeting in person during this "lay-low" period.

The Caf is a very scary place if you have a fear of catching "the Rona." I am grateful that I don't have a meal plan and can avoid going to the Caf all together, especially since each time I went to the Caf, I left absolutely horrified. The employees in the Caf are trying their best, but during lunch and dinner rushes, there are just too many people to make sure everyone is doing the right thing.

As a PSA, although it is more environmentally friendly to use reusable plates and utensils, I would highly encourage everyone to opt for the take-out containers. I don't know if you guys know this, but people are gross. Really gross. I cannot tell you how many people will either not sanitize their hands upon enter-

ing the Caf, or will sanitize their hands but then play with their masks and then grab a plate or touch a communal resource that may not be sanitized between every user.

We also all know a group of people who will either try to have two or more people at a table or will sit around to chat for an hour and "forget" about putting their masks back on. This isn't acceptable during a global pandemic. It may seem minor and knit-picky, but when people are dying because of negligence, can it really be seen as minor?

There are also so many Gusties that live on-campus that make off-campus plans every weekend. The college cannot control everything we do and the areas of college-life they have no control over are where we are most likely to get infected. We are adults who need to make adult decisions on our own. Unfortunately, too many people in our age bracket don't really consider themselves as a risk. Our age bracket will often say "I'm young, if I get Coronavirus, it won't be a big deal, I'll be fine." This is a big deal. This virus is not like the flu. We know a lot about Influenza and we are nearing a full year of COVID with so many

unknowns yet to be answered.

We don't know the long-term effects that this will have on people who were asymptomatic, had a mild case or on those who were taken off their feet by this illness. We just don't know anything and we shouldn't take our health (and youth) for granted. We should be taking these precautions. We shouldn't try to weasel our way out of wearing masks or social distancing. I'm telling you now, you are not the exception. We all need to take this seriously and act like being in public or being relaxed about COVID restrictions is life or death, because it is.

I am grateful that Gustavus is trying to take this pandemic seriously and trying to hold people accountable, but unfortunately, it isn't enough. We need to keep each other accountable and remember that these restrictions are not forever. The sooner we all follow the rules and regulations, the sooner we will be able to be done with it and the world can go back to some form of normalcy. But for now, sanitize everything you own, stop going out to eat in public places, thank a Gustavus employee and wear your mask.

Plant Parenthood: Gustie plant enthusiasts



Tori Smith
Opinion Columnist

I think it's fair to say that campus life isn't what it used to be. Now that this new "Lay Low" period has begun, it's even stranger. If you didn't already feel as if your social life was dwindling, you do now that the school has decided to prohibit students from visiting any other person's dorm room. The reason behind such a drastic measure is understandable, I guess, but it still sucks.

Although we're all stuck in our rooms until Thanksgiving, many Gusties have found a common hobby to keep themselves busy. According to yet another poll on my Instagram story, 72% of Gustie participants reported that they own and take care of houseplants. At this rate, we might have more plants on campus than students.

Junior Hannah Reckinger is just one of the many proud plant owners at Gustavus.

"I like taking care of plants because they're pretty to look at, and it's neat having something that's a decoration that also changes overtime," Reckinger said.

Reckinger says she has four plants with her in her campus dorm room and a whopping ten more at home that her parents watch over while she's gone.

"They have to water them once a week and I text them every time to remind them," Reckinger said.

Reckinger says her favorite plant is her golden pothos vine named Daryl.

"I've had him since he was just a little leaf. He's very long now and has little ornaments on him. He's gone through a lot because he doesn't like moving, but he gets over it pretty well," Reckinger said.

Reckinger isn't the only plant parent to have favorites.

"My prized plant is my *ne-anthe bella*, or dwarf palm, who I call Jakob," Senior Assistant Editor-in-Chief of THE GUSTAVIAN WEEKLY Ben Wick said.

Like Wick, many Gusties have some very unique names for their leafy friends.

"I have many succulents, but only named my philodendron, Hope, and my jade, Lucille," Senior Emily Jesmer said.

Just like with real parenting, taking care of plants comes



Junior Hannah Reckinger's plant named Daryl photosynthesizes in a dorm

Submitted

with some drawbacks.

"I've had him since he was just a little leaf. He's very long now and has little ornaments on him. He's gone through a lot because he doesn't like moving, but he gets over it pretty well,"

-Junior Hannah Reckinger

"I dislike the bugs. Sometimes you get like spider mites or little fruit flies," Reckinger said.

I don't know what spider mites are, but they don't sound like the kind of creatures I'd want living with me in my tiny dorm room.

Another drawback to taking care of plants is the disappoint-

ment when a plant decides its time is up.

"What I don't enjoy is feeling like a bad plant mom when I'm not sure what's wrong with my babies," Jesmer said.

Taking care of plants and predicting their every need is a challenge. Are they getting enough sun? Did they get too much sun? Did they get too much water? Did they get too much water? It's like they say, parenting is a hard job. Junior Allison Schulte knows this lesson well.

"Honestly [my plants] might be dead... I haven't watered them recently," Schulte said.

"What I don't enjoy is feeling like a bad plant mom when I'm not sure what's wrong with my babies,"

-Senior Emily Jesmer

With all the challenges and heartache, taking care of plants also brings out a lot of positiv-

ity for people.

"Now that winter is officially around the corner (and just outside our windows), students need as much greenery as they can get their hands on before the snow completely turns everything to white."

"Plants are a source of life, and it helps me in the winter when everything is dead and dark," Junior Anna-Olivia Machado said.

Machado makes an excellent point about the important role plant-life has in our lives. Many studies show that being exposed to greenery increases recovery from stress and attention fatigue, among many other benefits.

With the entire campus on

an even stricter lockdown, many students are more stressed than they've ever been. Now that winter is officially around the corner (and just outside our windows), students need as much greenery as they can get their hands on before the snow completely turns everything to white.

"Reckinger suggests a philodendron and/or a pothos plant to start with because they are very easy to take care of."

If you're planning on becoming a new plant parent this winter, Reckinger suggests a philodendron and/or a pothos plant to start with because they are very easy to take care of. I would also suggest giving them funny little names, because why not? In fact, writing this article has inspired me to try my hand at plant parenting, too. As soon as I forget about those spider mites, find me at the local greenhouse.

Word Search

Star Wars Characters

Y Z J A R J A R B I N K S L K O Y Q L R
P A L P A T I N E I B U O V W P Q M F V
P C A P T A I N P O R K I N S T S T K K
U A L Z Q X N J A B B A T H E H U T T Q
K S W U X R R D E V I F Q K G X S S G B
E C I D K S I B M R S L P W L P T I E L
S O J S Q E Y F D T T A I O J M R D S T
P U E Y H I S N Q M F N N O H A X I E K
A N W V O T N K L K L D K N A C T O U K
D T V Y B W M V Y A E O D D N E P U O T
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E O P K W U V O Y T A A O F O I Q K A I
A O L K A I Y B H H O L C L L N A A D T
M K O I N G R A V E R R K Y O D M W U R
I U K T K O U F A C G I M E T U H P A W
D H O F E N H E D H A S D Q R D X E H X
A N O I N J R T E I N S H U W G U H H T
L T N S O I V T R L A I V V H E J I O W
A L A T B N P G P D T A A O F M U X R O
C O P O I N J M R D O N N N G A U N T K

- Boba Fett

Captain Porkins

Count Dooku

Han Solo

Jabba the Hutt
- Jar Jar Binks

Kit Fisto

Lando Calrissian

Leia Organa

Luke Skywalker
- Mace Windu

Obi Wan Kenobi

Padme Amidala

Palpatine

Plo Koon
- Qui-Gon Jinn

Sidious

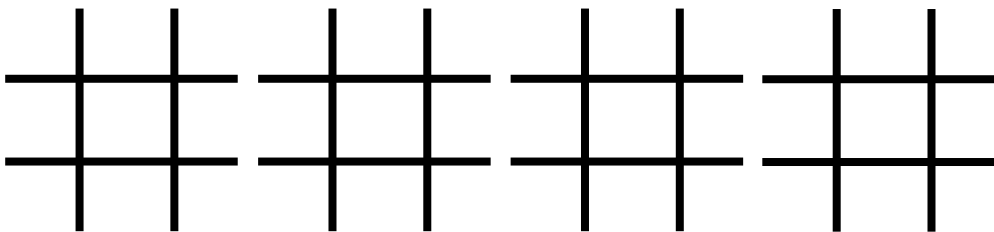
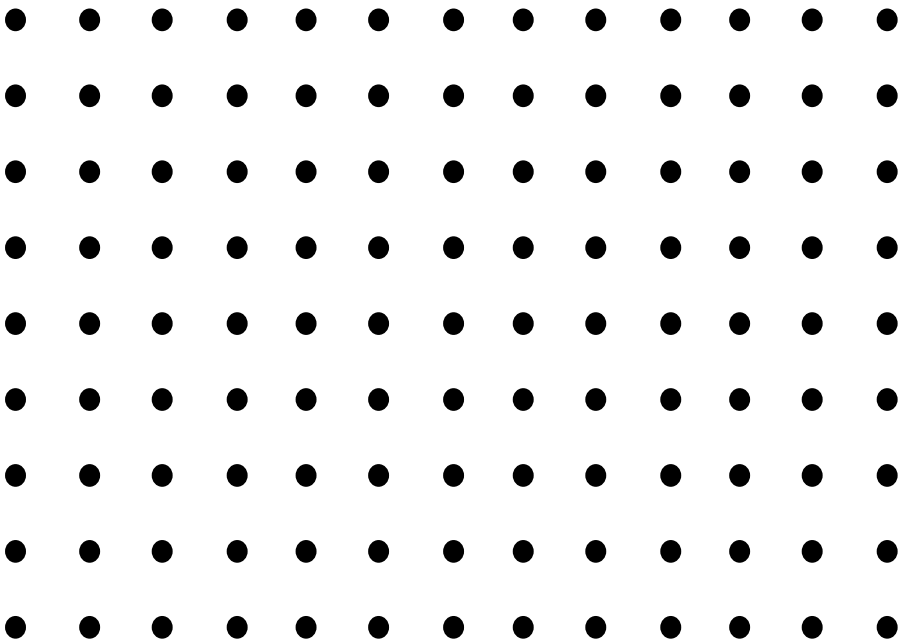
The Child

Vader

Yoda

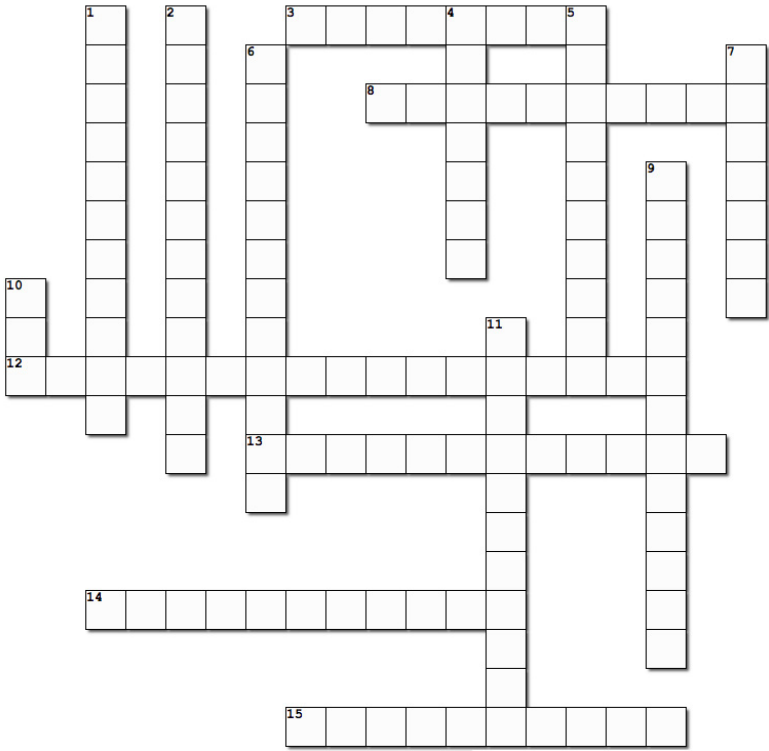
Dots & Boxes

Take turns drawing one line. If that line completes a square, write your initial in the box and draw another line. Continue until all dots have been connected. The player with the most boxes wins!



Crossword

Star Wars Trivia



- Across**

3. The sounds of the Rancor are actually recorded from which animal?

8. Director, producer and screenwriter for the Mandalorian (two words).

12. What Star Wars special does George Lucas wish he could forget (three words)?

13. What kind of business does Uncle Owen own (two words)?

14. This director was in Hawaii with Steven Spielberg when A New Hope premiered (two words).

15. C-3P0 is fluent in how many languages?
- Down**

1. How old is Yoda when he finally joins the Force (two words)?

2. Which actor of the three main heroes of the first Star Wars trilogy refused to sign a three picture deal (two words)?

4. A stuck up, half-witted, scruffy-looking, nerf herder.

5. A fan favorite writer for the Star Wars franchises The Clone Wars, Rebels and the Mandalorian (two words).

6. The real MVP of all Star Wars movies (two words).

7. Original Yoda and Baby Yoda are both ____.

9. We don't talk about the ____.

10. Kylo Ren's lightsaber sound comes from a ____.

11. The Mandalorian is played by ____.

"A Different Kind of Snow Fort" by Bryanna Filip



Crossword Answers: Across: 3. daschund, 8. Jon Favreau, 12. The Holiday Special, 13. moisture farm, 14. George Lucas, 15. six million. Down: 1. nine hundred, 2. Harrison Ford, 4. Han Solo, 5. Dave Filoni, 6. John Williams, 7. puppets, 9. Sequel Trilogy, 10. cat, 11. Pedro Pascal.

Taking A Stroll Through 7 Mile Creek

Jack Wiessenberger
Staff Writer

Just down the road from the Gustavus campus is a 628 acre park beloved by many Gusties. Seven Mile Creek is a Nicollet County Park that is home to wild turkey, deer, squirrels and the occasional Gustavus student going for a hike. Over the years, Gustavus athletics teams and clubs have utilized the vast and beautiful park in many different ways.

The park offers opportunities for a wide variety of activities. Steep hills for hiking, miles of trails for jogging, fields for playing spikeball and a creek for fly fishing. These are just some of the things Gustavus students have been able to do since the park was officially opened in 1967.

"The cross country team does a barnburner of a workout every year in August during our early camp. The trails at Seven Mile Creek are crazy hilly, so it's a great hill workout. We normally do two sets of two mile runs at race pace with an all-out mile around the flat part of the park at the end. You

can definitely tell the difference between being on the steep trails and running around the fields," Senior Cross Country Runner Nick Kerbeshian said.

Seven Mile Creek offers those looking for a challenging workout plenty of hills to utilize. For those looking to go for a more peaceful nature walk, the park also has less demanding trails and plenty of nice views.

"The creek is an amazing place to hang out with friends, go on a date or play yard games. Looking at the beautiful fall landscape there is a great time. I've made a lot of good memories with the cross country team at Seven Mile. Every year we get out there for a campfire during our early camp and just have great talks and tell stories which is always a great time," Kerbeshian said.

The park has the facilities for practically every outdoor activity. In addition to the hills and trails, there is also the creek for which the park is named. The creek was called Seven Mile by early settlers not for the length of the stream, but for the distance between where it crosses an old trail (now Highway 99) and the county

courthouse in St. Peter. The creek is a naturally cold-water stream that makes it habitable for trout. The Gustavus Fly Fishing club has enjoyed fishing in the park for years.

"The club usually goes to Seven Mile for spontaneous fishing outings and teaching new club members how to fly-fish. It's a pretty forgiving place to fish since it's so open and fairly shallow. I'd say the club typically has good luck fishing there, but it depends who you ask. The fish aren't huge, but there are decent sized ones in there," Senior Fly Fishing Club President Alec Donald said.

"The park has the facilities for practically every outdoor activity. In addition to the hills and trails, there is also the creek for which the park is named."

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR)

stocks the creek with fingerling (about four inch long) brown trout every year. The good fishing combined with the relative location of the creek to Gustavus has made it a favorite spot for the fly fishing club.

"It's the perfect place for teaching people how to fly fish. There's not much to get your line caught on and the fish are fairly easy to catch since they're farm-raised, although they definitely get smarter as the year goes on due to how popular of a fishing spot it is. Seven Mile provides us with a great way to partner with the DNR too. Over the years they have given the club experiences with the stocking process and an opportunity to learn about how habitat restoration can impact fishing," Donald said.

"It's the perfect place for teaching people how to fly fish."

-Senior Alec Donald

Seven Mile Creek has become the destination for Gustavus fly fishermen to go catch

some fish, but it's also a good place to learn about the ecosystem. Working with the DNR has given the fly fishing club many opportunities to learn more about the activity they love. The creek has also become a common spot for Gustavus professors to take their students on short field trips.

"I've had several classes take trips there over the years. I collected aquatic insects and other invertebrates from the creek for one of my biology classes last year, and we explored the eroding ravines for a geology class," Donald said.

Since it opened to the public roughly 53 years ago, Seven Mile Creek has given many Gustavus a place to get away from campus for a while, without going too far. The diverse and scenic park provides many opportunities to participate in activities both in the water and in the hills.



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A Gustie fly fishes at Seven Mile Creek

Submitted

Calling Timeout

Gustie athletics begin “lay-low” period

Eamonn McCullough
Staff Writer

A sudden uptick in COVID-19 cases this past week prompted a drastic adjustment in campus-wide prevention measures. The “lay low” announcement detailed in President Bergman’s email on November 6 to the student body had especially far-reaching implications for student-athletes finishing off their fall season before Thanksgiving. For some, the news of tightened restrictions was not unexpected.

“I wasn’t surprised by it at all. I thought that we were going to go online, so it was definitely a bummer, but it was better than I expected it to be” Senior Women’s Swim Captain Hailey Auran said.

For others, the news came as a sort of resigned relief, however anxious their initial reaction may have been.

“I was a little disappointed. Just in shock, sort of. I didn’t know what that [“lay low”] meant classes-wise, sports-wise, but I was kind of relieved in a sense. I knew that cases were exploding and I felt like we weren’t doing a whole lot as a school to try and combat this, and we should be trying to control what we can to stop the spread,” Sophomore Gymnast Annie Corbett said.

Features of the “Lay Low” period, which is slated to last from Friday, Nov. 6 through Friday, Nov. 20 (when many Gusties will be leaving campus for Thanksgiving), include a push to move in-person events to virtual formats, prohibition of visitors to residence halls, and more stringent policies for athletics teams. For many fall and winter sports currently operating under the “pod” system, this has meant a temporary pause in organized practices.

“If anyone is being tested, we’re on a pause. Like, right now, we’re on a pause. With these new restrictions, we will be paused more often than previously. I think the mass testing on Friday (Nov. 13) might affect us. Not many people have been getting tested, but I’m sure there are people that are asymptomatic,” Auran said.

Pausing whenever athletes were tested and contact-traced has been a regular occurrence throughout Gustie athletics this fall.

“Our team was in something of a “lay low” situation anyway [prior to the announcement] because we were on pause. I think that, for the most part, it’s a stronger encouragement to do what we were supposed to be doing anyway,” Head Coach of the Gustavus Men’s basketball team Mark



Lund stands empty with practices being withheld under “Lay Low” policy

Isaac Bui

Hansen, said.

As far as other safety measures go, the largest change Gustie student-athletes can expect for the last two weeks of on-campus practice is a more adamant pausing and testing program.

“The way that this has changed during the Lay Low period is we’ve gotten a lot more aggressive with pausing sports if they’ve had positive cases. If their numbers go up, we really do some contact tracing and see where that athlete was prior to that case. If someone’s getting tested, we are pausing teams to prevent someone who is positive from coming to a practice,” Gustavus Assistant Athletic Director Kari Eckhart said.

Even with the uncertainty of pausing and unpausing sporadically throughout these next two weeks, Gusties remain motivated to finish their fall season of training strong before the holidays. Corbett described her plans for staying fit in the absence of organized practices between Thanksgiving break and the start of J-term.

“Hopefully we’ll be able to

get back into the gym [after this pause]. I think most of our team is going home and staying home through December, then coming back for January in hopes that it looks as normal as possible for practices and school and stuff,” Corbett said.

With the “Lay Low” plan, any hopes of relaxed restrictions during the fall semester are well and truly dashed, but this news didn’t seem to dampen the resolve of most Gusties.

“Over these five weeks, I was quite impressed with [the team’s] continued levels of enthusiasm. In my conversations with them, I would say they were just excited to be able to play because so much has been prevented. Just to have a basketball in their hands, to have teammates around, and to get to do what they love to do competitively, I think they had a focus on ‘here’s what we can do, let’s be excited about it,’” Hansen said.

Hansen added that he didn’t see any let down compared to past years of intense training periods without competition, with one stipulation.

“It’s always risky to com-

pare one year to the next,” Hansen said.

It should be noted that the pandemic has not upset sports on an equal basis this semester.

“For every team, how much you can do of your normal sport really depends on... your sport. [Mask-wearing and social distancing] doesn’t really affect swimming. Tennis has been somewhat the same. Our runners can do a lot of the same things. It really has impacted some of our high risk activities, for example, like football, soccer, basketball, hockey... They’re not able to play defense. When you’re socially distant and you’re still doing your sport, their sport is looking a little different although the criteria is the same for all of our athletes,” Eckhart said.

Making decisions about athletics this semester has been no easy task, and balancing the wholesomeness of student-athlete experiences with the wellbeing of the wider campus population has taxed administrators, coaching staff and athletes alike.

“I feel like none of the decisions we’re making are awe-

some ones. You’re making the best of the most unfortunate ones. A lot of our athletes came to Gustavus not only for a quality education, but to compete in a sport they love...and it’s looked completely different this year. Decisions were made, and then they’ve had to be changed to rules that are pretty restrictive, and that’s hard on everyone,” Eckhart said.

“The administration’s job is to look at the whole picture of what needs to be best for the entire college. I want our athletes to assume that the administration is doing the best they can in a situation that nobody’s completely prepared for,” Hansen said.

As the end of yet another unique semester on the hill approaches, Gustie student athletes do their best to support each other and make good decisions.

“Just stay smart, wear your mask and keep working,” Corbett said.

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT:

Andrew Stumbo (Men's Track & Field)

Autumn Zierman
Staff Writer

Entering the limelight this week—in a time when his humor could not be more appreciated nor needed—is Senior Andrew Stumbo of the Male Cross-Country team.

Originating from Ogden High School in Boone, Iowa, Stumbo has been involved in athletics since elementary school, and has done Gustavus proud over his athletic career here—this past January he was named an All-Academic Athlete by the U.S. Track & Field and Cross-Country Coaches Association.

For Stumbo, the best part of Gustavus athletics is the community.

"The cross-country team is a very tightly-knit group and we're pretty comfortable looking like idiots in front of the rest of campus. Most of the team is willing to do some ridiculous shenanigans together because we don't take ourselves too seriously. This balances nicely with the competitive edge we've developed over the last few years," Stumbo said.

He also enjoys getting to run with his teammates.

"We go out and chat, joke and generally just mess around. If it's a hard day, there's always someone you can rely on to take the lead," Stumbo said.

Stumbo also commented on the changes that cross-country has faced this year.

"Running in pods has been less than ideal. One of my favorite things about cross country is having a group of 20+ guys all out for a run together, which is a shocking thought in the current environment," Stumbo said.

Despite it all, it seems the fun of the cross-country team cannot be marred completely.

"We get the hard work done and we have a lot of stupid fun doing it," Stumbo said.

Stumbo says that cross-country has given him a good way to manage college stress.

"[It's] a good outlet. A few hours every day spent on something that isn't whatever is stressing me out (unless it's the running that's stressing me out) is a great mental reset, making me much more productive," Stumbo said.

Cross-country has also given Stumbo quite a few fun stories.

"Last year, right before COVID ended everything, we had our conference meet for track. I ran the 5K and the 3k and had a very poor 5k race. The 3k was that next day and I was scared out of my mind for it because the slow heat was a few hours before the fast heat and the



Stumbo sprints his way to victory

Submitted

guy that won the slow heat ran exactly my PR. I went into that race fully prepared to hurt a lot and told myself that that wasn't going to stop me, and I wound up running a solid PR and getting fourth in the conference," Stumbo said.

The euphoria of performing so well didn't last long.

"Well, I would have [performed well], had I not been disqualified," Stumbo said.

Despite the loss Gustavus will feel at his graduation, Stumbo (and all of us with him) look forward to the future with excitement.

As a Music Education major, what Stumbo most looks forward to in future is having his own classroom.

"I'm a Vocal Music Education major and I'm just really excited to get out and direct a choir," Stumbo said.

Outside athletics and the classroom, it is a less commonly known fact about Stumbo that he has, in the past, been heavily involved in theater.

"I've done quite a bit of act-

ing in my life. I've appeared onstage in my underwear, dropped into a split I was very much unprepared for and carried a rubber chicken onstage instead of a gun," Stumbo said.

It is no wonder then that Stumbo is known for his trademark sense of humor.

Stumbo offered a few words of advice for underclass students.

"For the love of god, don't overextend yourself. What I started this year calling a 'senior slide' is actually 'a healthy school/work/life balance.' Every year I hear about first-years hurling themselves into three labs and a 300-level religion class while founding a student org and learning to juggle while playing the clarinet. I know it seems like you need to do all of that right now, but just relax a little bit. You'll thank yourself when you're my age, practically geriatric," Stumbo said.



Andrew Stumbo runs swiftly toward the finish

Submitted