



Photo courtesy of the Associated Press

A Deeper Look at Presidential Politics

By Madeline Wilbanks
Copy Editor

Over the years the president has played a major role in our political system. Presidential elections now last many months. This year has been one for the history books when it comes to elections, not only for political change but also for diversity within congress.

“The presidency was not initially designed to be the face of American Government, but it quickly became the face of American Government,” said Paul Rutledge, Associate Professor of Political Science. “The presidency is the office in which people look to in times of crisis. It sets the policy agenda for Congress and advances proposals to policy solutions through the legislative process. The president is the face of our nation to foreign citizens and leaders, and it is no exaggeration to call the president the leader of the free world.”

With the importance of the presidency rising over the years, voters have viewed it as a chance to bring change. As a result of wanting change Biden received the popular vote ahead of Trump. As a result many national news stations predicted Biden’s Electoral College win. However, the Electoral College still has to vote and verify elections for the next president to officially be named.

“The Electoral College is a hot topic because for debate,” said Rutledge. “Many folks, including some political scientists have argued for the Electoral College to be abolished.

“To support that argument, in fact, the Electoral

College’s original intent by the framers of our Constitution was to separate the president from the people by having a body of electors choose the president,” continued Rutledge. “Historically, it has been rare, however, to see any elector vote differently than the citizens of the state they represent.”

Biden, as predicted by polls and news outlets, will hold office come January, with this presidential actions and perspective might be different for the years to come. President Trump made history by becoming the first president to effectively use social media to talk directly to his supporters, and the American people. It is hard to say whether or not Biden will continue that tradition once he becomes president or if other future presidential candidates will take that same approach in the future.

“Vice President Biden is much more in line with what we are used to in our presidents,” said Rutledge. “However, without question, the lack of a concession and the lack of cooperation thus far during the transition will hurt the chances of the Biden administration getting off to as good of a start as possible. The peaceful transition of power is extremely important, as is helping the incoming president to establish a foundation for success.”

Although the presidential election is important they also require a lot of focus for both politicians and voters. Local elections play a major role as well. Currently both special

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senate elections in Georgia are predicted to go into a runoff. If voting numbers are lower in the runoff election than the presidential election in Georgia, this can lead to what Georgian voters actually want for their state. Local elections allow for the true voice of the voter to be heard directly.

“I also think that citizens focus too much on the presidency,” said Rutledge. “Citizens should focus as much attention to what is going on in Congress, who their representatives are, and what is going on in states and localities.

“The unorthodox presidency of Donald Trump made this even clearer, and citizens would have benefitted from a stronger focus on Congress, states and localities as well as the president,” continued Rutledge. “It is very important to know who your representatives are and what is happening in Congress, state legislatures and local governments, where citizens can also have a much bigger impact than they can comparatively on presidential politics.”

NEWS

Center for Adult Learners and Veterans Holds Celebrations

By Lily Head
Contributing Writer

The Center for Adult Learners and Veterans held its annual veterans celebrations activities from Nov. 9 through Nov. 13. This year’s celebrations were held entirely virtually. The celebrations were put together by Danny Gourley Fischer, Director of Center of Adult Learners and Veterans, in collaboration with various UWG departments such as Career Services, Auxiliary Services and University Communications and Marketing.

One goal of the Center of Adult Learners and Veterans during this event was to celebrate the student veterans in a way that would not be a burden to them. Fischer said that the center highly respects veterans, but it wanted to avoid celebrating them in a hero-worshipping way. Something the center did to celebrate the veterans but not cast them in the hero light was naming the event that featured veteran students the “Veteran’s Spotlight” and not “The Wall of Heroes” as someone had suggested.

“When veterans are set up as perfect heroes, it creates this impossible vision to live up to and can prevent them from feeling like they are allowed to care for themselves,” said Fischer. “We wanted to be really careful about not doing that.”

Another goal of the center for its celebration activities was to host events that would be useful to student veterans. Feedback from student veterans showed they wanted events that would help them with the transition from actively serving to attending college. Because of the

feedback, events for the center have been changing over the years to better focus on the needs of student veterans.

“We’ve been working gradually to solicit feedback and try to make the celebrations something that the students feel like is valuable to them,” said Fischer. “So far the two things that students have consistently said that they want help with is financial aid and finding a job.”

The center received many student comments about veterans stating that they would like help finding a job, and the celebrations this year consisted of an event to help them with just that. “Linking In: A Guide to Selling Military Skills to Employers” was one of the events held on Veterans Day where Career Services explained how veterans can create a LinkedIn profile to market their jobs skills.

“If someone’s job as a service member was moving around explosives all day, there are not a lot of jobs in the civilian sector that involve that, but there are skills that are transferable,” said Fischer.

Another event held during the celebrations to give practical advice to veteran students was the “VA Home Loans: Presentation from Atlanta Regional Office.” A loan officer from the Atlanta Regional office went through the process of getting a VA home loan and explained why they are a good loan choice for veterans. Fischer said events like the home loan event allow the center to help veterans in a more long-lasting way than a one-time celebration would.

“We know that there is a lot going on for veterans every year during Veterans Day,” said Fischer. “Holding the weeklong celebrations with lasting events is a way that we can expand the appreciation and make It more visible.”

All Eyes on Georgia: Senator Runoffs

By Reilly Robbins
Contributing Writer

The state of Georgia is under a national microscope with the upcoming senator runoff competitions of Republican Kelly Loeffler and Democrat Raphael Warnock as well as the race between Republican David Perdue and Democrat Jon Ossoff.

Both political races have Georgia on everybody’s mind, with the fate of which political party will hold control over the U.S. Senate. If both Ossoff and Warnock beat their Republican opponents, the chamber will be split with Kamala Harris serving as the tie-breaker because of her role as vice-president. If this happens, it will be the first time since 2008 that the Democrats have had control over the U.S. House of Representatives, Senate and White House.

“All eyes will be on Georgia,” said political scientist Dr. Karen Owen. “Georgia is really at the center of discussion when it comes to what is going on in our partisan politics right now.”

Georgia is expected to be flooded with resources to ensure that each candidate has people that turn out and vote. With the runoff being during the holiday season it will be harder to ensure that those who voted in the original election will come back out and vote. This will drive up the money spent on political advertising. According to pbs.org, this 2020 election cycle has been the most expensive campaign year in U.S. history. Before the runoff campaigning began advertising, spending reached the 2.5 billion mark. With the current runoff in Georgia, the political advertisements are going to be more extreme than ever before.

“The runoff is all about turnout,” said Owen. “Historically in Georgia republicans have done really good in

runoffs. They have been able to turn their voters back out to vote.”

Ossoff and Warnock as well as Loeffler and Perdue have joined together in campaigns in hopes of running up voter turnout.

“If I win, she wins,” Perdue said at a rally last week. “If she wins, I win.”

Celebrities and political figures are showing their support for Ossoff and Warnock on social media. Gabrielle Union, Billy Eichner and Marco Rubio are among those who have gone to social media to show their support in the democratic duo.

Many are encouraging people to vote, including one-time governor nominee Stacy Abrams. Abrams and her organization, Fair Fight, recently raised millions in the span of two days for the campaigns of Ossoff and Warnock. Prior presidential candidates, Andrew Yang announced on Twitter he and his wife are moving to Georgia to help Ossoff and Warnock in the runoff election.

Voter registration for the runoff is Dec. 7. Early voting for the runoff begins Dec. 14.



Photo courtesy of the Associated Press



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NEWS

Online Learning Amidst the Pandemic

By Reilly Robbins

Contributing Writer

Higher education has been forced to move the majority of classes to online learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

America is coming up on month eight of fighting the COVID-19 pandemic, which still is actively affecting colleges across the country as well as students and scholars. After having to conform to the new norm of the virus by closing campus and moving classes online, many students feel overwhelmed and distressed with their ability to learn.

“I have always been one of those students that has to be in a classroom to learn,” said UWG senior Caroline Day. “Not being able to sit in front of my professors in person during class has really impacted my motivation and grades.”

Back in March of 2020, UWG’s spring break was extended due to the virus. What seemed to be just an extra week of vacation turned into something much more drastic. Students were quickly sent home for the remainder of the semester, not knowing if this pandemic would still affect their Fall 2020 semester.

“I never thought I would miss going to my in-person classes,” said Day. “Virtual learning has become our default. This is definitely not what I expected for my senior year.”

When it comes to children in elementary and middle schools, the pandemic has affected them at large as well. College students that are chasing a degree in education must conform to teaching children during a pandemic.

“Something that I never thought I would have to ask my students to do is stop playing with their mask,” said UWG senior and student teacher, Cailyn Kelly. “It is really hard to keep the kids involved when they are in the classroom all day, including during their lunch.”

Because of classrooms going virtual, colleges and universities have also been affected negatively in the realm of finances as well. After having to lower tuition cost because of the lack of in-person classes, many universities are having to lay off faculty. The lack of a normal in-class learning environment has caused many institutions to notice a decrease in admission numbers, as well. UWG along with many other schools in the state have removed the requirement of SAT and ACT testing from admissions requirements because of the lack of ability to take the test due to the pandemic. Before the pandemic’s shutdown, UWG was already struggling with the decline in admissions. Now many colleges are having to find creative ways to combat the effects of COVID-19.



Photo courtesy of UWG Theatre Co

UWG’s Theatre Virtually Produces ‘I and You’

By Alma Beauvais

Contributing Writer

Though live entertainment took a big blow this year due to COVID-19, UWG’s theatre company offered virtual performances to keep theatre alive.

UWG actors performed in front of cameras rather than an audience for the production of *I And You*, directed by Amy Cuomo. Students have access to online viewing through Broadway on Demand from Nov. 11 through Nov. 20, 2020.

I And You is the second Fearless production of the UWG’s theatre company for the 2020-2021 season. It is a contemporary play written by Lauren Gunderson dealing with the ephemeral yet profound connection between two teenagers.

The plot revolves around a long conversation between Caroline and an unexpected visitor, her popular classmate Anthony. The pair talk about life and death while exploring Walt Whitman’s poem *Leaves of Grass* for a class project. Since Caroline is homebound due to illness, the entirety of the play takes place in one setting—her bedroom.

What’s captivating about this play is how it presents the conversation, which begins awkwardly and very lightly. However, as the conversation evolves, it reveals the complexity of adolescent life by perfectly touching important topics that are familiar to most high school students and young adults, such as the fear of not fitting in society and the fear of dying.

Though the play starts as a comedy, the ending will make any audience speechless. While the audience realizes the importance of *Leaves of Grass* to the meaning of the story, the information given by the protagonists makes total sense at the end. Further, a fascinating element of the play lies in the decoration which foreshadows the ending. Indeed, the *Romeo and Juliet* poster works as a subtle reference to another brief connection between two young lovers. As the story unfolds, the similarities are strongly apparent.

While the action is seen through video, the audience gets a clear sense of Caroline’s personality thanks to the actor’s placement on set and the cameras’ tracking shots. Throughout the play, Caroline and Anthony constantly move, which allows for the discovery of Caroline’s bedroom. The bedroom is filled with Caroline’s pictures, revealing her passion for photography and her love for cats, which makes her personable for the audience. Overall, the actors seemed as comfortable on camera as they would be during a live production.

Watching a play on video is an odd experience, and not everyone will appreciate it. Yet, the on-screen performance did not prevent viewers from enjoying the play. UWG’s production of *I and You* was refreshing. The actors did a good job occupying the space while being followed by the cameras. Although there were a few jump cuts, camera shake and some audio inconsistencies at times that took away from the production value of the play, the production crew’s effort to offer this performance amid the pandemic is commendable.

ENTERTAINMENT



Photo courtesy of Netflix

‘Jingle Jangle’: A Christmas Movie Review

By **Terrion Newton**
Contributing Writer

Jingle Jangle is the typical feel good Christmas film. It entails the usual predictable plot of hardship and redemption, but it is worth every minute.

Jeronicus Jingle was a man of joy and prosperity. He loved life and lived every moment like his last. Unfortunately, one of his own students, Gustafson stole one of his holiday toy themed inventions. Because of this, Jeronicus’ business Jangles and Things suffered severely over the years. He ran out of funds and popularity to keep the place afloat, and after an investor refused to loan him money, Jeronicus was left with no other choice but to close the business for good.

The storyline really starts when Journey, Jeronicus’ granddaughter, comes to visit him so they could bond and catch up. After Journey arrives, Jeronicus is hesitant to have any company. However, he eventually stops being so stubborn and allows her to stay. Journey becomes mesmerized by how creative Jeronicus is when she notices all his stashed inventions and formulas. She encourages him to finish the things he started, but he insists that it won’t be successful. Meanwhile, Gustafson finds out about one of Jeronicus’ new inventions. He tries to steal that idea by talking to Journey, but she quickly stops him in his tracks.

Journey spends the majority of the film trying to resurrect the work that Jeronicus has ultimately thrown away. With the help of her buddy Edison, Journey convinces Jeronicus that he is worthy of a huge comeback and his toy ideas will

be successful. They first have to go through a little drama before any positivity shows up though. After spying on Journey and Edison testing out one of Jeronicus’ toys, Gustafson steals it and shows it off at his toy shop. Luckily, the toy mysteriously fails to work in front of the audience. The two then figure out a way to retrieve it before any more mischievous behavior is carried out.

It would have been interesting if the film focused a little more on Gustafson’s life and why he always felt the need to steal ideas from Jeronicus. Did he feel inadequate or jealous? The two were very similar in how clever they were with creating toy machines. It really made no sense how desperate Gustafson was to portray Jeronicus’s ideas as his own.

Jessica also decides to return to Jangles and Things to help convince Jeronicus that his creativity is meant to be shared with the people who supported him in the past and as well as new friends. They end their years long period of separation and become close with one another again.

It’s amazing how a girl so young could encourage her grandfather to become alive again and believe in himself. She did what the adults in town could not do. She helped him redeem his toy inventions, expose Gustafson for being a thief and gain his popularity back with the citizens in their hometown. At the time of the re-opening of Jangles and Things, the bank investor returned and informed Jeronicus that they would offer him a lifetime of loans whenever he needed it.

The film teaches the importance of being kind to others. It also shows how the most simple gestures can produce the happiest rewards.

ENTERTAINMENT



Photo courtesy of Netflix

Netflix's 'Rebecca': When Love is a Crime

By Terrion Newton

Contributing Writer

Rebecca, is a British romantic thriller that was released in the United States on Oct. 21. While it holds the romance title, most of what it entails is quite far from the typical love story.

Maxim DeWinter tragically loses his wife, Rebecca, after she drowns in a boating accident. That is what everyone thinks at least. A young woman who is nameless to viewers at this point in the film, works as a companion for Mrs. Van Hopper, a rich woman in Monte Carlo. She randomly crosses paths with Maxim and they soon become infatuated with one another. The two spend about a month going on dates and falling in love, only a short amount of time spending time and asking questions about one another.

After getting the news that the woman she works for will be moving to New York, the companion panics at the idea that she will never see her new love again. To avoid separation, Maxim proposes to her and they eventually get married, giving her a new name, Mrs. DeWinter. After moving into the DeWinter mansion, Mrs. DeWinter immediately begins to suffer the consequences of rushing into marriage and she soon realizes that Maxim has been holding on to a lot of secrets about the death of his previous wife.

First off, constantly being compared to your husband's previous wife can get very annoying. That is exactly what the mansion assistant, Mrs. Danvers does. She constantly reminds Mrs. DeWinter about how beautiful Rebecca was and how well she interacted with house staff. Mrs. DeWinter did not have one ounce of royal background or wealth. She wasn't used to the parties, fancy food or basic mannerisms that came with being a royal wife. Mrs. Danvers never hesitated to flaunt Rebecca's possessions and ultimately remind Mrs. DeWinter of what she was not. It's hard living up to a name when you had no idea what you were getting into in the first place.

As Mrs. DeWinter settles into her new married life, she attempts to get Maxim to

open up about Rebecca. Each attempt of her attempts however are met with swift declines and subject changes from Maxim. Mrs. DeWinter accepts this at first, but gradually becomes more frustrated with not knowing the truth about Maxim's past. As she grows more relentless, Maxim slowly lets his guard down and begins revealing what actually happened.

Unbeknownst to Maxim, Rebecca had ovarian cancer that was too advanced to guarantee her survival. But instead of actually telling Maxim, Rebecca tells him instead that she is pregnant and that Maxim isn't the father. Rebecca continues her lie and tells him that she became pregnant as a result from an outside affair she had. She then forces Maxim to shoot and kill her to avoid the long, painful death that the cancer would've caused. For Maxim, however, it was to avoid public shame of getting a divorce. Law enforcement realized that the body Maxim identified as Rebecca was not actually her, resulting in Maxim being charged with murder.

Mrs. DeWinter is forced to fight to prove Maxim is innocent of any wrongdoing. This is where the issue falls in. For the sake of the film, we will call this true love. In reality, however, this was a train wreck waiting to happen.

Beyond the fact that they got married in a huge rush, they did not know each other one bit. Mrs. DeWinter asked important questions on several occasions, but she made the deadly mistake of constantly accepting Maxim's secretive acts. That isn't healthy or smart. Also, being that she was later made aware of the actual circumstances surrounding Rebecca's death, she could have easily been charged with being an accessory to a crime. Is love really worth all that? Not to mention, Mrs. Danvers made it her life mission to ensure that Maxim was sentenced.

This film spins the circumstances of Maxim and Mrs. DeWinter and projects it as romantic, but it really isn't at all. The amount of secrets being kept and lack of communication caused so much unnecessary turmoil. Considering that most viewers like some sort of action and drama, Rebecca is overflowing in that department.