



SENOIA RACEWAY HOSTS PEACH STATE CLASSIC

ANNA ROBERTS

Contributing Writer

Senoia Raceway hosted its second annual Peach State Classic event this past weekend, Nov. 11 and 12. Established in 1969, Senoia Raceway is a ¾ mile dirt oval track located in Senoia, Ga.

The Peach State Classic is the largest short-track event in the state of Georgia with a \$20,000-to-win pot for the Peach Bowl preliminary on Friday, Nov 11 and a \$53,053-to-win pot for the Peach State Classic Feature on Saturday, Nov 12.

Despite the constant rain, the Senoia Raceway team was very active in getting the track ready for the event. Not only did they spend the entirety of Thursday morning laying tarps all over the track, they also had a helicopter brought in to help speed up the drying process to get the track ready for the weekend's events.

"The track crew worked hard to try and maintain the track and keep the moisture off the corners," said track official Jacob O'Brien. "The tarps were to help us keep as much moisture off the track as possible, and it worked as well as it could have. Bringing the helicopter in really helped in drying that top section of the clay."

Fans were able to camp onsite to enjoy the weekend's festivities, with some arriving as early as Wednesday morning. The Senoia Raceway team had events happening all weekend, complete with food trucks and small merchandise vendors supporting racers.

While the events were a tad delayed, the night went on still as planned. Friday night was full of racing with brief intermissions for track prep to help continue keeping the drivers safe. They ended the night with Racer Kyle Bronson walking away as the 2022 Peach Bowl Winner and \$20,000 richer.

Saturday started early with the Senoia Raceway team on the track prepping

for the long day ahead. They provided a free luncheon for the Super Late Model Drivers and their team members, along with hosting a cornhole tournament for any drivers and fans who wanted to participate.

The stands opened for fans at noon as the team geared up for the big event later that evening. With the rain still persisting, and the temperature dropping, it created interesting conditions for the largest short-track event in the state of Georgia. Like the night before, the events were slightly delayed due to all of the rainfall they were receiving but the Senoia Raceway team pushed through and again got cars on the track. After lots of great racing, the Super Late Model Feature race began. The racers completed a full 75 laps around the track in 20 minutes and 20 seconds exactly with Racer Ricky Thornton Jr. walking away as the 2022 Peach State Classic Winner.

"We were thrown curveballs pretty much all week leading up to the events, but the track crew maintained composure and did all they could to make sure things went well, and the conditions stayed safe for all the drivers," said O'Brien. "We would really like to thank everyone who came out from all over the country and for being so supportive. It really means a lot to all of us."

The event was broadcasted by FloRacing, with live updates coming from the Senoia Raceway social media pages. For future events at Senoia Raceway and more information about next year's Peach State Classic follow them on Instagram @senoiaraceway_1969 or visit their website at www.senoiaraceway1969.com.



Image courtesy of Peach State Classic

ADAM JAMES DETERMINATION LEADS TO A SUCCESSFUL MARKETING CAREER

CHRISTIAN JAMES-LATTORE

Contributing Writer

Being successful in a career field is a long-term goal that doesn't happen overnight. No matter the job title, success in a particular field will always open up a door of opportunities. Better pay, a flexible schedule and paid traveling are benefits that Adam James obtained while making his way to becoming a marketing procurement production manager. The passion he has for his line of work is what makes his job enjoyable to him.

James works for a global marketing advertising firm called HH Global, under their beer, wine and spirits division. James started as an intern who did a lot of busy work for the company.

"I was answering phones and delivering mail throughout the office," said James. "From there on I fell in love with what I was doing and wanted to get my hands deeper into actual projects the company had going on."

James found that the internship phase was just the beginning of his newly found passion but also the most important phase of his career development. When anyone wants to make a job into a career they should ask themselves two questions—do I see myself doing this for the next 20 years and can I be around the

company's product for just as long? For James, his answer was an automatic yes.

"You can't be successful in your line of work without being a consumer of your product," said James. "I drink responsibly but I always loved alcoholic beverages. You need to be able to consume your product so you can understand how to market your product to people who may not be as knowledgeable."

Other than being a consumer of the company's product, James kept an open mind when talking to other employees in the company. For James, having an open mind and taking constructive criticism has allowed him to create different marketing designs that have helped earn the company money and new investors as well.

"You always want to be open to criticism whenever you make something," said James. "For me, criticism has led to an even better, more thoughtful marketing design and has opened up my thought process for future projects."

With criticism sometimes comes self doubt. Some people take criticism as a form of belittling or demeaning something they've made when in reality criticism should bring the best out.

"Being vocal is one of the most important aspects of my job," said James. "That is what marketing is. It's throwing everything at a wall and seeing what sticks. So if you have an idea, let the people around you know. Don't be afraid to share it."



Photo courtesy of Adam James

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AUTHOR AND UWG ALUMNA KAIA ALDERSON VISITS CAMPUS

ALEX AMOS

Contributing Writer

Author Kaia Alderson, an alumna of UWG, visited UWG on Nov. 7 to conduct a book signing event for her new release, *Sisters in Arms*, in the Campus Ballroom Center.

After speaking for the American Library Association last summer, Alderson received an invitation to return to the university from Professor and Head of Outreach & Assessment Anne Barnhart.

“Bless Anne and her patience because during the time I was promoting my book, I was getting started on writing a second book and getting back to her was difficult,” said Alderson. “It was her persistence that got me here earlier this week.”

Alderson’s book, *Sister in Arms*, was released on Aug 3, 2021. The book has since then garnered much attention and critical reviews with a rating of 4.4 on Amazon from over 400 people. Aside from the good reviews,

the story of *Sisters in Arms* was not the original idea for Alderson’s book.

“It was initially meant to be a romance but then I saw a picture of this 6888th Central Postal Directory Battalion marching in Europe and I’d never seen that before,” said Alderson “I was looking at the picture like that’s Europe, those look like WWII uniforms and those are black women, so I googled them and I immediately knew that I had to do soldier girl’s night in town before she ships off to war and to leave a guy behind story.

“This book is about black women giving everybody hell during a time and a situation that we usually would not hear about or wouldn’t expect,” continued Alderson.

Alderson did plenty of research on the women who served in the 6888th, finding every soldier’s experience in the process. After looking further into each woman’s life, she found herself inspired tremendously by their actions.

“Hopefully, people have the same experience reading the book that I had when I first saw that picture,” said Alderson. “It was inspiring for me to

learn that these women with more restrictions in their workplace were able to demand respect, do their work, and look past people who doubted them.”

Overall, Alderson hopes to impact the lives of people from younger generations who may be looking for confidence as she did once before.

“Their story is something that I wish I had known about back when I was just entering the workforce when I got out of college,” said Alderson. “I hope this story gives confidence, creativity and resilience to someone else who might need that.”

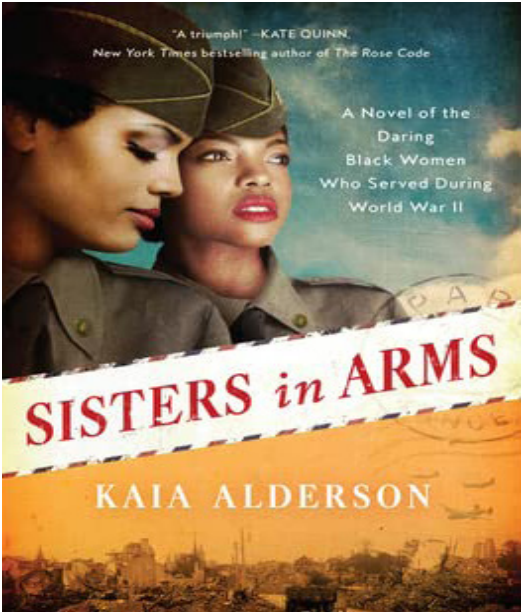


Image courtesy of Kaia Alderson

HOW TO APPLY FOR A SCFM EXCELLENCE AWARD

ALANNA KING

News Editor

The School of Communication, Film and Media are making excellence awards more accessible for students starting this semester.

Historically, The SCFM has awarded excellence awards to senior mass communication students once a year at Media Day, a networking event that takes place every spring. These awards are eligible for seniors who have outstanding experience in the field during their college careers. In order to invite more students to apply and be recognized, new criteria and processes have been established.

“We found that by doing it only once a year, we were missing some students,” said film professor Deon Kay. “There’s three graduation cycles so these awards will now be presented to graduating seniors at the end of the fall semester and then in the spring semester to students graduating in the spring and the summer to make sure we’re recognizing all the students who are doing outstanding work.”

The change in criteria has also

allowed students to tie the awards to their experiences that will carry them to their future careers. “The criteria are more tied to the curriculum that students [are learning] and also guided towards preparing them more streamlined and effective materials for them to take with them in the job market,” said Kay. The requirements are also more clearly defined, allowing students to tailor their applications towards these goals.

Applying for the awards is a straightforward process. When the application opens, there will be different application links for each concentration. All will have rubrics attached for the required materials.

“Understand the rubric, understand the expectations, understand the criteria and then refine your portfolio and your resume to suit these criteria with the hope

that it’s going to make your portfolio better when you’re applying for jobs down the line,” said Kay.

Like everything, the excellence awards are a work in progress that the SCFM is working hard to refine and make accessible to all students. “We do welcome feedback to the process but we also encourage everyone to engage with the process quite closely,” said Kay.

Ultimately, the excellence awards are another accessible way for students to prepare for their careers post-graduation.

While the fall application has already closed, the spring portal will open closer to May graduation. Seniors, keep your eyes on your inbox for the link.

“This is not something intended to be a one-off activity,” said Kay. “It’s career preparation.”



SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION, FILM, AND MEDIA

Image courtesy of The SCFM



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LIVING WEST

REGISTRATION WAITLISTS EXPLAINED

BRITTANY MERSFELDER
Editor-in-Chief

As of Spring 2022, University of West Georgia has implemented a waitlist system for registering for classes. Many students are having difficulty navigating through the new system; each student gets a ticket that opens on a specific date, at a specific time and does not close until the next semester. When the date and time arrives for the student, access will be granted for the student to begin registration for the following semester.

“The waitlist actually assists students,” said assistant registrar Ava Elefante. “If a course is full, you’re going to select that class that you want to enroll in.”

The student will then view the available classes and the corresponding sections. After the class is selected, the student can

click the “add” button which will add the course to their registration form. Once the class has been added to the student’s registration form, the student will automatically be added to the waitlist.

“It’s first come first serve,” said Elefante. “Let’s say a student is on the waitlist and somebody drops that class. That makes a space available. The student on the waitlist will get an email stating there is a spot available. They’re not automatically put in [to the class].”

Students have an 18-hour window to register for the class, should a spot become available.

“If they don’t register within that 18-hour period after the email is received, then [the spot] goes to the next person on the waitlist,” said Elefante.

The email will pass through each student based on where the student placed on the waitlist. Many waitlists for highly sought after classes have been filling quickly, causing students to wonder if they need to ask for

overrides. For classes that students are required to register for, there is an option to email a professor to ask for the override.

“Our professors tend to be very amenable,” said Elefante. “I would strongly encourage them to discuss [with the professor], especially if this is an upper level class and you’ve worked with that professor before. They may be able to get something worked out with you.”

If all else fails, students are encouraged to have a backup plan. Not all courses will begin pulling from the waitlist if the class is highly sought after and fills up quickly. The best option would be to check your Wolf Watch to see what other options are available to fill your requirement.

“We’re here to help and having that waitlist gives students more options,” said Elefante.

For further questions about registration or waitlists, do not hesitate to contact UWG registrar at registrar@westga.edu.

PROJECT REESE HOSTS CLOSET CLEAN-UP

ANNA ROBERTS
Contributing Writer

Project Reese is a local organization in Carrollton, Ga that has teamed up with 12 organizations at UWG to host a community-wide clothing drive during the entire month of November.

Donations will be accepted until Nov. 30 by any of the following organizations: Alpha Gamma Delta, Kappa Sigma, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc., NAACP, Kiwanis Club International, Iota Phi Theta Fraternity Inc., Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity Inc., S.H.I.F.T., NCNW, Lambda Theta Phi Fraternity Inc., Love Travels and Vogue Academy.

“We decided to partner with Project Reese in Closet Clean-Up because we hold value in helping the community in which we are placed,” said Haley Landry, Philanthropy Chair for Alpha Gamma Delta. “We want to help out the city of Carrollton any way we can. Especially now with it getting cold out it is so important to do what we can, and this was such a good opportunity for us to help where we can.”

They’re accepting donations of all clothing items including coats, blankets, socks, gloves, t-shirts, sweatpants, shoes and more. All sizes are welcome and appreciated. All they ask is that donations are in good condition only with minimal usage.

“With the weather getting colder and it being right before Christmas, it felt like the perfect time to host a clothing drive,” said Landry. “We all know how cold a Carrollton winter can be and I cannot imagine do-

ing it without a proper coat or clothing. We want to provide that to the people who do not have it, and help them stay safe, warm and healthy.”

All donations will be divided amongst local charities in Carrollton to be distributed to those in need.

Those looking to donate can find drop off locations at Alpha Gamma Delta, the Campus Center, and the Technology Learning Center (TLC) at UWG. Donors can also reach out to any of the partnering organizations to ask any questions.

“We just want to help keep Carrollton warm this winter,” said Landry. “We all have things shoved in the back of our closet that we don’t need or wear anymore and this is the perfect opportunity to free up some space while also doing good for the community. If you’re interested in donating, feel free to reach out to me by messaging @alphagamuwg on Instagram.”

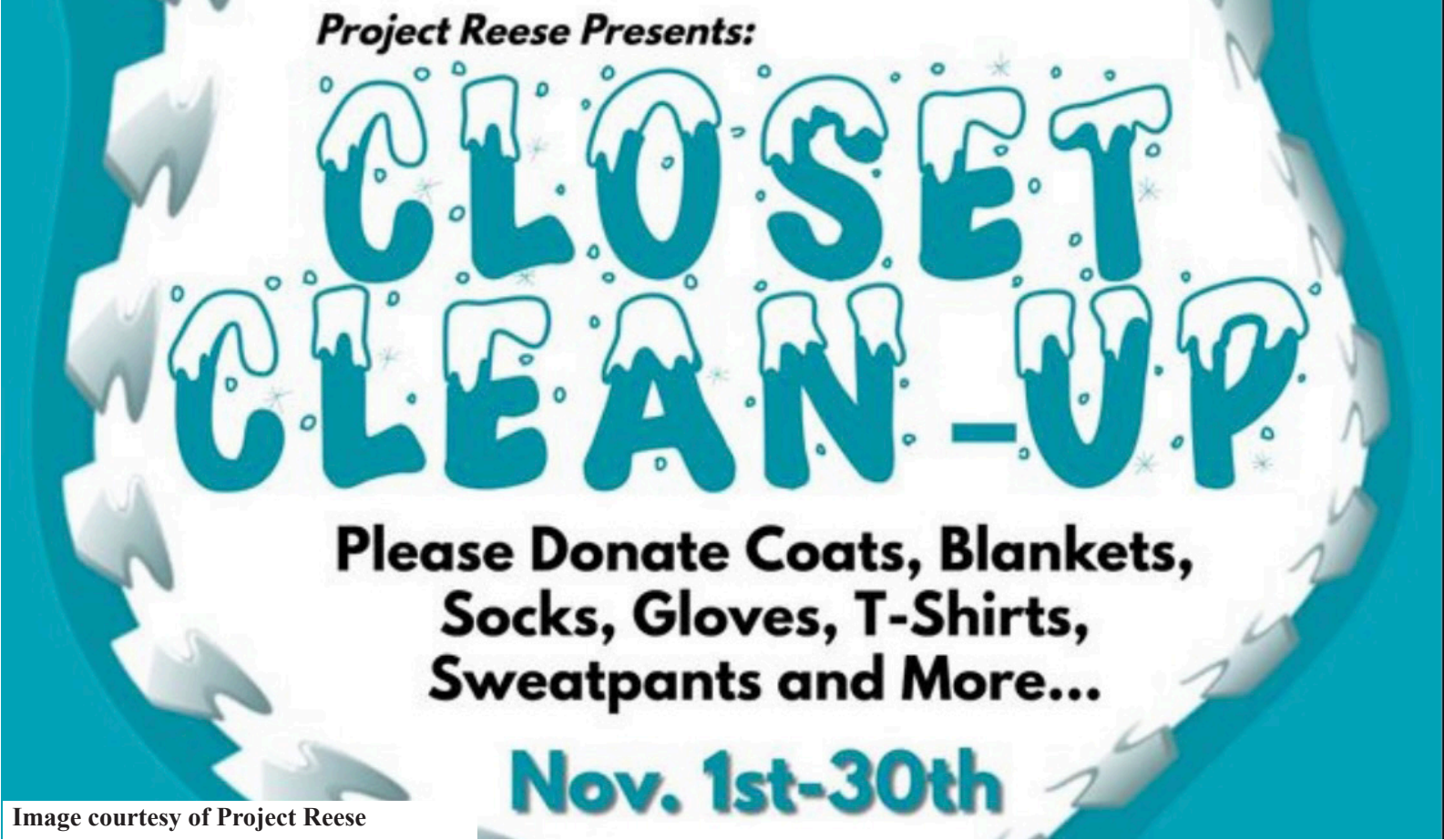


Image courtesy of Project Reese

LIVING WEST

THE RESPONSIBLE SEXUALITY COMMITTEE IS MAKING A COMEBACK

RACHAEL BROWN

Contributing Writer

The Responsible Sexuality Committee (RXCOM), an organization at UWG that aims to educate students about sexuality and sexual issues and to promote healthy decision-making regarding sexual behavior, is working to become more active and regrow its membership after its usual activities were postponed due to the pandemic.

“Specifically, through its work, the RXCOM attempts to reduce the incidence of unwanted pregnancies, abortions, sexually-transmitted diseases and date rape as well as other sexual, physical or emotional abuse between and among students,” said current Chair Dr. Betsy Dahms. “The RXCOM does this through educational programming.

“Although we have not done surveys on campus to determine how our programming might have reduced abortions, sexual assault, or other forms of harm that come to students from expression of their sexuality, we have evaluated each of our programs over about the past 35 years,” continued Dahms. “Student comments on these evaluations indicate that our programs

assisted students in taking greater responsibility for the expression of their sexuality, becoming more aware of ways in which harm could come to them or others and sharing things learned in our programs with friends, roommates, fellow classmates, etc. Also, because of the fact that the committee was comprised of persons in various units on campus (e.g., Health Education, Health Services, Counseling, Psychology, Sociology, Foreign Languages, Theatre, Residence Life, Education, Health and Wellness), the committee was always well-informed about problems that were surfacing on campus which resulted from lack of educational resources on particular topics.”

However, the pandemic has greatly affected the RXCOM and its ability to conduct business as usual.

“The RXCOM was very active before the pandemic,” said Dahms. “We have also lost members who have moved on to other institutions. We are currently in the process of rebuilding the committee membership.”

As part of the RXCOM’s efforts to rebuild its membership, it has been partnering with other student organizations and hosting fun and educational events both on and off campus.

“We hosted our signature ‘Let’s Talk about Sex’ panel on August 30, 2022 where students sub-

mitted anonymous questions about sex, gender and sexual health to a panel of health care professionals, faculty, staff and students,” said Dahms. “The Responsible Sexuality Committee collaborated with CSII and the Queer Student Alliance to host a National Coming Out Day ice cream giveaway on the grassy triangle on October 11, 2022 and ‘50 years of QSA’ birthday celebration on October 13, 2022. The Responsible Sexuality Committee also partnered with the Carrollton Rainbow Connection to host Carrollton’s second ever Pride celebration on October 14, 2022. Hundreds of community members and students filled 4am Coffee Roasters as they learned about community resources for the LGBTQ+ population and celebrated their individual identities. This educational and community-building event was followed by a 18+ Drag Show and Dance party.”

Unfortunately for the committee, the biggest issue it faces is telling students about its mission and events. In particular, the committee is currently looking for someone to help establish a social media presence and welcomes any volunteers who would like to join the committee.

“The biggest challenge we’re facing is publicity and marketing,” said Dahms. “We need help getting the word out.”

FORMER CS:GO ESPORTS PROFESSIONAL DAN HODEANU SHARES HIS EXPERIENCE IN THE PROFESSION

JANNETTE EMMERICK

Feature Editor

Dan Hodeanu received his first computer when he was six years old and began playing Counter Strike, a first person shooter game, unbeknownst at the time that he would end up playing video games competitively for a living a decade later.

“Fast forward to when I was eleven, I was going to local cafes, like internet cafes and playing in tournaments,” said Hodeanu. “They wouldn’t let me in because I was too young, so my parents had to stay beside me for them to even allow me in [the tournaments] and because [the other players] didn’t think I was even good at the game.”

When Counter Strike: Global Offensive (CS:GO) released in 2012, Hodeanu fell in love with the game and began climbing the competitive ladder, playing the best and worst of the best.

“I got into the [high ranks] where you play with the same people in different mixes,” said Hodeanu. “That’s basically how I got to meet my teammates at that time.”

Around age 16, Hodeanu became a player for a team called Team GreyFace, an inside joke about one of the emojis in CS:GO. In 2016, GreyFace were invited to a middle-tier LAN event in Sweden.

“We ended up being picked up for a certain tournament in Sweden. We had to go there and we had a boot camp, which is basically where they rented a house for us and we had a physical coach,” said Hodeanu. “In the morning he would pick us up for physical exercise and then we had to

play [CS:GO] for eight or nine hours. We had another session with a different coach and then a mental coach. And then we played more, then had the tournament.”

Team GreyFace was picked up by the top-ranking Swedish esports team Ninjas in Pyjamas (NiP). Hodeanu’s team would be considered an academy team which is a smaller team playing under a big name team.

Despite the growing popularity of tournaments and streaming, esports was still an ambiguous and even questionable career avenue.

“In the beginning, [my parents] didn’t quite understand it, because they thought it was just a form of entertainment,” said Hodeanu. “Then I was trying to tell them all the time, ‘look at DOTA, they’re getting international tournaments with millions of dollars. They can actually make money.’ After years of me pushing and pushing, they kind of understood that ‘oh, it’s an actual thing that he can do as a career.’

“I was also under 18 when I went to the [first] tournament in Sweden, so my mom flew with me because I couldn’t fly alone,” continued Hodeanu. “Even then, they were supportive about it.”

However, the industry was far from perfect.

“When I started, all the players that were playing in the same tournaments were getting like 500 euros (~519 USD) per month and the company would keep maybe 80% of the prize money, so you would get absolutely nothing,” said Hodeanu. “That was also one of the main reasons why I quit; because the companies back then, even in 2017, had these predatory contracts.”

For instance, players signed contracts for five years, which can be incredibly long compared to oth-

er sports especially for the teenagers and young adults. Companies took advantage of young players to farm their monetized viewership and winnings.

“Right now it’s better, in terms that you can see that it’s becoming a more mainstream [sport],” said Hodeanu. “Contracts are better, pay’s better. And now the company only keeps around 30% of the winnings, which is great.”

The pushback from both professional players and the community over the past few years forced companies to amend their exploitative contracts and provide better career platforms for their athletes including pay and health benefits.

“The reason I quit, is because at that time, it was still not very good in terms of ecosystem wise,” said Hodeanu. “I wouldn’t want to work in something that I’m not sure what’s gonna happen in ten years.”

“I think it was a good decision on my side,” continued Hodeanu. “If you look at statistics, not even 1% of the players make it to something that is going to be reliable. The average age of players retiring is around 28 in esports.”

In reflex focused games especially, older players are often outplayed by younger, usually teenaged, players. Additionally tendonitis, carpal tunnel syndrome or other injuries from playing can end a player’s career.

While esports can be a viable and rewarding career, the importance of a fallback career or degree is paramount for retired esports athletes.

Hodeanu graduated from Jönköping University with a Bachelor in Business Administration and currently works as the Junior SEO for the website JustWatch. Despite his career change, he still holds a passion for esports and anticipates growth of the industry.

LIVING WEST

DRAKE AND 21 SAVAGE RELEASE THE CONTROVERSIAL ALBUM “HER LOSS”

ALEX AMOS
Contributing Writer

Drake and 21 Savage released a collaborative album, *Her Loss*, on Nov 4; days after its initial release on Oct 28. The album featured artists such as Young Nudy and Birdman with a set list of all-new hip-hop and rap songs. The features on the album, however, were not the only topics buzzing around the release.

Throughout the album, many listeners noticed that Drake had dissed several black artists in some of the songs, sparking controversy on Twitter. Though 21 Savage and Drake had collaborated on the album, Drake was the most prominent voice featured in every song, placing most of the blame on him. One of the most controversial disses in the album came from the song “Circo Loco” in which Drake said, “This b**** lying ‘bout gettin’ shots, but she still a stallion.” The verse was a clear shot toward female rapper, Megan Thee Stallion when she claimed she was shot by another male artist, Tory Lanez. Many listeners were upset after hearing the verse because of the fact that Megan’s situation was such a fragile subject. To make matters worse, Drake had also dissed another female rapper, Ice Spice, in one of the lyrics in the song “BackOutsideBoyz”. According to Ice Spice, the two had met before on good terms, making the reasoning behind the diss even more confusing to listeners.

Moving onto the quality of the album, there were a few exciting tracks that gained the most notoriety overall. One of the songs, “Rich Flex,” became one of the most popular tracks on the album not only because of its lively beat and decent

vocals but also because of Drake’s lines toward 21 Savage. Several memes were made in light of Drake’s part in the song because many believed that he held a flirtatious tone with 21 Savage. Aside from the jokes, I do believe that “Rich Flex” served as a suitable opener to the rest of the album because of its high-energy tone.

Another song that I enjoyed was “Major Distribution” which began with a soft auto-tuned Drake and slow-tempo piano melody in the background. Though I believe that Drake would have sounded better without the tuning adjustment of his voice, I still liked the song’s introduction because of the piano addition. After Drake’s introduction, the song moves into a forceful beat, completely taking a turn. 21 Savage enters the song with a strong verse about a woman who lied to him. I loved this transition because I could feel the pain and anger in 21 Savage’s voice. “Major Distribution”

was my favorite track of the album because of the emotion put into the beat and vocals.

“Privileged Rappers” was also one of my favorite tracks featured on the album. I loved the aesthetic of the song’s beat. The song had hints of the 80s synth-pop in the beat, giving the song a nostalgic feel. The vocals were decent on the track from 21 and Drake but without the beat, I would not love the song nearly as much. There were a couple of clever lines in the song but mostly the lines were simple and easy to understand.

I thought the album was a simple release with several disses to gain quick traction on social media. There was a lot of untapped potential for the number of artists featured in the album. The 21 Savage and Drake duo could have done tremendously better without dissing several black artists for fame. However, I look forward to seeing what 21 Savage and Drake produce in the future.



Image courtesy of Republic Records

REVIEW: WAKANDA FOREVER: A MASTERPIECE MARVEL MOVIE

BRIANNA WELCH
Contributing Writer

“Black Panther: Wakanda Forever” is truly a beautiful film that perfectly displays how loved ones deal with grief in various ways.

The movie starts with a loving tribute to the late Chadwick Boseman, who passed away from colon cancer in Aug. 2020. The writers handled both the actor and character’s deaths in a noble way and it brought tears to many in the theater.

The film quickly moves onto the action scenes with incredibly choreographed fights, unforgettable character introductions, new powers and suits from pre-existing characters and an outstanding villain with an intriguing motive.

The movie also did well with its comedic timing, having many of the characters joke when the atmosphere was getting serious. Winston Duke’s character, M’Baku, was fantastic comedic relief and had some of the best lines in the film. I loved the jokes from the character Riri Williams. She is the secret identity of Ironheart and I cannot wait for her TV show that is being released sometime next year.

The most exceptional performances were from Letitia Wright, Angela Bassett and Lupita Nyong’o. The fascinating portrayal of Ramonda (Bassett) and Shuri (Wright) in the story showed how one must move on even if they lose everything, especially Shuri as she navigates towards the end of the movie. I was not shocked that their emotional performances felt authentic since I am aware the actors were impacted by the death of their co-star.

Nyong’o’s performance as Nakia was out of this world. She did an excellent job with her fight scenes and it was nice to see her character bond with the royal family again through grief so they can get stronger together.

The villains in this movie were unique and an interesting race of people called the Talokanil. The Talokanil scheme to destroy land people, hoping to get the help of the Wakandans by forcing them to join forces. The main villain, Namor, was extremely entertaining to watch since he was impossible to ignore due to his unique water stimulated powers and his winged feet. His scenes with Shuri and Ramonda kept me on my toes. The audience could sense the tension between them.

My favorite parts of the movie were the scenes spent with Riri, Shuri and Okoye. The

actresses’ chemistry with one another is fun to watch. The scene where Okoye and Shuri both meet Riri for the first time was hilarious and made me want more scenes with just the three of them.

The sole end credit scene had me yearning for more content and I cannot wait for the third installment. I would suggest to anyone who is interested in watching this movie to check it out in theaters so they can experience the thrill of watching this perfect movie on the big screen. “Black Panther: Wakanda Forever” is a work of art and one of Marvel’s best works to date. I am excited to see what future these characters have in store for them.



Image courtesy of Disney Studios

ENTERTAINMENT

REVIEW: THE RETURN OF LINDSAY LOHAN IN “FALLING FOR CHRISTMAS”

SAMIRA BARNETT

Contributing Writer

After years out of the limelight dealing with difficult times personally and professionally Lindsay Lohan has returned for a major role in “Falling for Christmas,” a Netflix romantic comedy, just in time for the holidays.

This holiday romance tells the story of a young, engaged heiress, Sierra Belmont (Lindsay Lohan), discovering herself days before Christmas after a skiing accident with her fiancé, Tad (George Young) and a bout of amnesia. With the help of Jake Russel (Chord Overstreet), North Star cabin owner, she goes through a series of events that help her figure out who she is outside of a wealthy world.

Sierra was set to take over as vice president of her father’s company. She knew she wasn’t ready but as an heiress, it was her duty. Tad, an obsessive social media influencer, constantly documents his daily life, so she was immersed in the life of fame and fortune.

Tad proposed to Sierra one morning while they were snowmobiling but the ring was too large and appeared to be mostly for show for his followers. A moment later, the ground rumbled as she accepted the proposal and the two were separated, with Sierra falling off the cliff and her new fiancé falling into another area of the forest.

She awoke in a hospital bed with no recollection of who she once was and Jake came to her rescue, changing her perception of what love and Christmas should be. During this time, she relearned basic tasks such as making a bed and doing laundry while staying at the North Star. She was not only rediscovering herself, she also became an important figure in Jake’s daughter’s life, Avy, as she had recently lost her mother.

Just as Jake helped Sierra find her way, she also returned the favor. The North Star was experiencing financial difficulties so she persuaded Jake to host a Christmas party in order to potentially receive donations. The party went well until Sierra was discovered by Tad and her father after days of not knowing where she was. This would be good news for her family but not for the growing love story between Jake and Sierra. When word got out that the famous Sierra Belmont was staying at the North Star, their business skyrocketed.

It was expected, as in many corny Christmas movies, for the couple to go through a stage where they hide their feelings for one another and one threatens to leave. However, at the end they eventually realize they are in love.

The realistic actions of the characters and how they affect real relationships set this film apart from others. Tad’s obsession with social media caused him to overlook what was right in front of him, just as Gen Z does today when they rely on social media.

“Falling for Christmas” takes a different approach to Christmas films

by using social media influencers and demonstrating how excessive this distraction can be. They reverse this notion throughout the film, presenting how Christmas should look and feel without the pressure of “followers.”

Sierra was able to distinguish between fame and the valuable things in life after being exposed to what the world had to offer outside of the media. From the Christmas lights to the music, this film embodied holiday spirit and joy.

This film was a great way for Lindsay Lohan to ease her way back into the public’s eye. It brought a unique perspective into Christmas films that may surprise other viewers. For those who enjoy romantic, sappy films, this is the holiday movie for you.



Image courtesy of Netflix

CITY TAVERN RESTAURANT REVIEW

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If you’re looking for an excellent craft burger and amazing smoked wings, then City Tavern is the place to be. The restaurant features a variety of foods and drinks that encompasses a local bar type vibe. City Tavern is over eight years old and has become quite the staple of Carrollton. Many locals have said that City Tavern is the most consistent restaurant in town due to its great service and their well prepared food.

I visited City Tavern last week with some friends to hangout and enjoy some food. For my appetizer, I started off with the grilled kielbasa sausage. The platter features kielbasa sausage, smoked cheddar cheese slices, crackers and a homemade dipping sauce. The dipping sauce is mustard based. I am not a huge fan of mustard and I did not use it. However, the platter did not necessarily need sauce. The kielbasa sausage was grilled to perfection, the cheddar cheese was immaculate with its smoky flavor and the crackers made for a great base to add a crunch to the whole appetizer.

City Tavern is well known for their immaculate craft burgers. For my main course I ordered the cow-

boy burger, a hamburger topped with cheddar cheese, bacon, BBQ sauce and fried pickles. The hamburger patty was cooked to an excellent medium well. The cheddar cheese just like my appetizer was smokey and flavorful. The BBQ sauce is a sweet and smokey sauce that covers every inch. Chewy bacon is always a great add to any burger. However, the fried pickles are what make this burger the best it can be. The fried pickles are breaded and seasoned with so much flavor. The pickles actually have some spice, which gives them an amazing kick. I could not get enough of them.

As much as City Tavern is known for the burgers, they are also known for their tater tots. They come in six different flavors. The tots by themselves are legendary but by

adding toppings makes them even more so. The tots are crispy and well seasoned. The bacon is juicy and adds a great compliment to the tots. The cheese is more of that amazing smokey cheddar that is like melted sprinkles all over the tots.

City Tavern overall is a good environment for good food and great times for everyone. The price is not all that bad for the regular college student coming in around \$15 – \$17 a meal. The service is great and the people are just as friendly. The food is always excellent every time and it is what I recommend to everyone that visits Carrollton because there is something on the menu for everyone. I give City Tavern a 9.5/10. The only issue I would change is adding more space to sit in the restaurant.



Image courtesy of City Tavern