

THE WEST GEORGIAN

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“I AM PROUD OF MYSELF FOR PUTTING IN THE WORK AND DOING WHAT I LOVE, WHICH IS WRITING.”

CELEBRATING OUR EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

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Living West

Coweta County Animal Services is Hosting Paws and Claus This Holiday Season

Courtney Bixby
Contributing Writer



Photo Courtesy of Cowetta County Animal Services

On Saturday Dec. 7, Coweta County Animal Services will be partnering with Coweta County Parks and Recreation to host the third annual Paws and Claus. Paws and Claus is an annual event that allows for pet owners to get a picture of Santa Claus and their animals.

All animals are welcome as long as they are well behaved on a leash and with other animals. This includes dogs, cats, guinea pigs, etc. The event is located at Madras Park in Newnan, Ga. The event requires a donation in order to register for a picture with Santa, and all products and money raised benefits the Coweta County Animal Services.

Donations to the shelter can include

towels, canned dog food, canned cat food, dog leashes, laundry soap, stainless steel food and water bowls and bleach. The event will be a drop in from 11:45 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. During this time there will be breakfast, crafts, games and Coweta County Animal Services will present available pets for adoption, hoping to find their forever home.

Animal Services will also have information available for adoption and adoption support. The event was created in 2022, with the goal of placing as many homeless animals as possible. Each family that attends will receive one printed photo and the remainder photos may be shared via email.

Coweta County Animal Services has put out several urgent lists throughout the 2024 year of animals that must find homes by certain dates due to overpopulation. The shelter has held events and partnered with foster parents and humane societies to save as many animals as possible.

According to Best Friends Animal Society, an organization that helps animals find a forever home, overpopulation has become increasingly common in Georgia. In the 2023 year, Georgia rescues and shelters took in 6.5 million cats and dogs. You can find more information on Coweta County Animal Services on their Facebook or website.

Petsmart will also be hosting pictures with Santa for pets on Dec. 14 and 15 from 2 to 6 p.m. Each reservation is for a 30 minute session. These photos will be offered at all petsmart locations at no cost to the family. Santa will also be visiting the Carroll County Humane Society Dec. 7 and 8 as well as Dec. 14 and 15 located at Carroll County Humane Society (CCHS) located on Tuggle St.

CCHS will be offering photos from 12 to 4 p.m. with no appointments necessary, and all pets are welcome. The sessions will support the humane society with a single photo in a cardboard frame costing \$5 and a USB will all photos from the individual session for \$12, or a combo package for both for \$15.

UWG Offers Ways to Help Students Deal With the Stress of Upcoming Finals

Abbie Klein
Feature Editor

UWG works hard to provide opportunities for students to take a break and de-stress during finals week. Helpful tools like tutoring and study supplies are available along with relaxation tools like massage therapy and late night breakfast. On Dec. 2, UWG's University Recreation offered a Finals Flow Yoga Night session for students to take a breather and relocate their stress to a healthier outlet.

Brae Mooney, a UWG student preparing for finals attended the session to help her relieve stress from the week.

"I really felt like I was able to de-stress from finals and focus on something else for a little bit," said Mooney.

The session went from 6 to 8 p.m. and helped about 20 students relax and recharge. The class started with an ice-breaker where students were able to introduce themselves by sharing what exams they had coming up in an attempt to release stress vocally before starting the session.

"There were a lot of breathing and stretching exercises," said Mooney. "The class was mainly focused on calming and grounding techniques."

The University Recreation offers yoga year round with weekly beginner level yoga classes and also special events like this one. In the past students have attended events like Candlelight Yoga and Glow in the Dark Yoga but this one was planned specifically to use techniques to deal with stress. Even the music played during the session was meant to create a stress free sensation.

"There was a good mix of mediation music and chill

R&B, which I really liked, that made it a very calming atmosphere," said Mooney.

No matter the difficulty level, yoga has proven to have positive emotional benefits. It releases dopamine and serotonin and is shown to improve energy and positivity. Despite their slow moving and controlled movements, yoga also increases heart rate giving physical benefits as well as emotional. Following proper yoga techniques can show results similar to ones medications can give, and oftentimes is a much more healthy outlet than market medications.

One of the most helpful techniques used during the session was a breathing exercise done with a candle that focused on dealing with stress through a healthier outlet.

"The instructor brought little artificial candles for us to hold when we did meditation to make it

feel like we were sparing our mentality towards finals into the candle instead of exams while taking deep breaths," said Mooney.

UWG has many more opportunities this week to help prepare students for finals week and make it seem less daunting through Operation Pass Finals. For more detailed information on events visit the UWG website to see the events calendar.

"I'd definitely look into going to more events like this," said Mooney. "I feel a lot better about my exams coming up after this class."

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Celebrating our Editor-In-Chief

Breanna Tillie
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The writers and editors of The West Georgian work diligently, both in their academic pursuits and in their dedication to creating quality content for those who tune in to The West Georgian. It is important to The West Georgian that we honor those who have served the organization faithfully.

Emma Swales, current editor-in-chief for The West Georgian, will be graduating Dec. 14, 2024.

“My work in the paper has allowed me to gain experience in my field,” said Swales. “Being able to gather a solid portfolio before graduating college has allowed me to network and form important connections in the journalism field that I would not have had without my experience at the West Georgian.”

Journalism requires reaching out to individuals, conducting interviews to collect information, then using that information to tell a story. This process helped nurture the passion of Swales and allowed her to find the area of journalism she learned she had been called to.

“My favorite story so far was one of my very first. When I first became editor in chief, I got the opportunity to write an article for Bre Kennedy, a popular singer who played at Eddie’s

Attic in Atlanta,” continued Swales. “When I went to the show and interviewed her, I realized that writing feature stories about bands that play in Atlanta was going to be my focus. I love music, meeting new people and writing about artists. I was able to find my niche.”

Along with being editor-in-chief, Swales has accomplished outstanding academic success within the UWG School of Communication, Film and Media.

“I am most proud of graduating as an Ingram Scholar in the top 2% of all undergraduates. I am graduating summa cum laude with a degree in journalism,” said Swales. “I am proud of myself for putting in the work and doing what I love, which is writing. I was also honored to receive the Excellence Award as a journalism major in SCFM.”

Swales says she could not have achieved the success that she has without the support, guidance and encouragement of professors and mentors.

“I would like to personally thank my professor and mentor Dr. Sewell. He has been my biggest supporter in my pursuit of journalism,” said Swales. “Without his help and support, I would not be where I am today. He believed



Photo courtesy of Devin Stroud in me from the start and helped me become a better writer. I will never forget the massive impact that he has had on my career and time at West Georgia.”

Swales encourages all students to take advantage of all the opportunities UWG offers in preparing students for the working world.

“I want to encourage all SCFM students to get out there and find ways to get involved on campus,” said Swales. “UWG is so welcoming and I have made so many friends and gained crucial experience by getting involved.”

Arts and Entertainment

Jean Dawson’s Glimmer of God: An Indie Triumph

Kaden Carr
Copy Editor



Jean Dawson is a rising star in the experimental pop scene. His past two studio albums, 2020’s Pixel Bath and 2022’s CHAOS NOW*, have painted him as a singer songwriter who isn’t afraid to break genre conventions and branch out into bold musical directions. Dawson’s striking mix of pop, rap and brash punk rock has earned him a dedicated cult following and the chance to tour across the world with major artists like Brockhampton.

Following his recent breakout successes, Dawson released his third studio album this October, a 15 track project called ‘Glimmer of God.’

Being teased all the way back in Nov. 2023, the record serves as a bit of a shakeup for his longtime fans. On top of featuring the rap rock fusion they’re accustomed to, Dawson experiments further into a cornucopia of varied genres, each song having its own distinct feel, tone and sound. The

musical variation is so great that you could be mistaken for thinking that the tracks were created by different artists entirely, let alone all be in the same album.

While to some this may seem unfocused, the fact that it all fits together so well is a testament to the flexibility and talent of Dawson.

Right out of the gate, you’re hit with “Darlin’,” a heartfelt and melancholic track about the nature of devotion with Dawson’s particular flair. Its nature as the album’s opener paints the rest of it as a more subversive, introspective piece that contrasts his past bombastic releases.

The momentum is carried with standout songs like “Houston,” a track that uses a more retro synth type soundscape that would make fans of The Weeknd feel right at home. Its uplifting, catchy chorus and spacy instrumentation make it the perfect

track to roll your windows down and cruise to.

The pacing of Glimmer of God seemingly never misses a beat, its sheer variety making every new song feel like a fresh new experience to the ears. Right after the bass heavy rap track “Slow Heavy Ecstasy,” Dawson hits you with the beautiful and delicate “The Boy and The Swan.” Its inclusion following the previous song almost feels like a mid-album palette cleanser, one that expands upon his previous acoustic work with what sounds like a full orchestra.

As a long time fan of Dawson’s work, the amount of high profile features in the record was a welcome surprise. Each feature effortlessly fit the vibe that the given song was going for. Standouts include Lil Yachty’s verse in “Die For Me,” and the Bones feature in “P4IN.” The track being a tribute to the cloud rap scene, it felt more than fitting to include an artist that helped popularize it in the first place.

While it’s important to note that not all of the musical experimentation in the album is necessarily a breakout success, it’s made up for with the overwhelming creativity and boldness on display. Glimmer of God no doubt marks a major turning point in the up and coming artist’s career, and a piece that I’d consider emblematic of his potential as a singer songwriter.

The record can be streamed on Spotify, Apple Music, Soundcloud and Bandcamp.

Indie Pop Band Boycott Releases Sophomore Album After Nine Years of Silence

Emma Swales
Editor-In-Chief

After almost ten years, Nashville-based indie pop band Boycott released *Spellbound*, its highly anticipated sophomore album, on Oct. 16. The new album features 10 new songs filled with bedroom pop melodies reflecting the soothing sounds of ocean waves and road trips with old friends.

Boycott, the indie project fronted by singer and guitarist Scott Hermo, has steadily built a devoted following, amassing over 70 million streams of its debut album, *Goose Bumps*. Hermo wrote and produced this record during his time in college at Belmont University in Nashville, Tenn., in 2015, starting what would become Boycott. His music blends the introspective aspects of alternative icons like Modest Mouse, Death Cab for Cutie, and Vampire Weekend with a fresh, breezy twist. By incorporating smooth, mellow riffs and sun-kissed melodies, Boycott has crafted an effortlessly captivating sound that combines indie rock with a laid-back, beachy pop vibe.

Since its start almost ten years ago, Hermo has since recruited guitarist and backup singer Emma Willer, bassist Davey Alaimo, and drummer Noah Dardaris. Together, they established a pop four-piece band and have steadily toured the United States and parts of Canada to sustain the growth of the band.

Boycott's sophomore album *Spellbound* builds on the breezy, beachy vibes of its debut, but the addition of a full

band elevates the experience far beyond expectations. The record opens powerfully with "Rocky Road," setting the tone with Hermo's mellow yet captivating guitar riff—a perfect introduction to the journey that *Spellbound* takes its listeners on. Willer's backing vocals add depth and emotion, creating a rich, layered sound that was missing in *Goose Bumps*. The chemistry among the band members is undeniable; all four artists come together effortlessly to craft a seamless beach-pop anthem that captures the essence of the album.

The lyrics of "Rocky Road" capture the band's journey of pursuing a career in music, reflecting on the waves of emotions they experienced during their first ever tour together. Hermo's heartfelt vocals delve into the fear and excitement of trusting your instincts and stepping into the unknown. This track is the perfect opener for the album, serving as an ode to the band's beginnings and their evolution over the years. Through themes of friendship, struggle, and adventure, "Rocky Road" beautifully celebrates what sparked Boycott's formation and marks their triumphant return after nine long years.

As the album progresses, Boycott deepens its signature indie-pop vibe, delivering a collection of tracks that are worthy of repeating. *Spellbound* is tailor-made for a spot on any summer hits playlist, with its sunny melodies and infectious energy.

Although released in the fall, this record has all the makings of a sleeper hit, destined to gain momentum and become a summer staple by the time the warmer months roll around.

The sixth track on the record, "After Dark," stands out as the most influential song on the new release. Its lyrics beautifully narrate the story of two people meeting in a park at night, gazing at the sky, and savoring the moment, not wanting to part ways. Hermo's voice and guitar picking complement the storytelling flawlessly, creating an introspective atmosphere that adds layers of emotion to the already moving narrative. The melody's reflective tone deepens the song's impact, making it a standout moment on the album. Positioned perfectly at the midpoint of the album, "After Dark" provides a soothing interlude between the other more upbeat tracks. I believe this song has the potential to become the band's biggest hit, resonating deeply with listeners and leaving a lasting impression.

The album's closing track, "Orca," serves as a fitting end. At just 49 seconds, this instrumental piece delivers a breezy, beach-pop guitar riff that's undeniably captivating. Its effortless tone left me longing for more, as I couldn't help but imagine how the addition of Hermo's vocals and lyrics could have elevated the track even further. The band had the opportunity to expand on this beautiful foundation of a song, potentially creating something truly remarkable.

Despite its brevity, "Orca" is a short but sweet conclusion to the long-awaited album. It feels like a subtle hint of what's to come, leaving listeners eager for the band's future works.

Overall, Boycott's long-awaited return has far exceeded my expectations. Given the nine-year gap since their 2015 debut album, *Goose Bumps*, I wondered if their new release could measure up to such a beloved classic. Bands often undergo significant changes over time—whether in lyrics, genre, or lineup—making it difficult to predict what to expect. However, I was pleasantly surprised to find that Hermo has effortlessly preserved the essence of summer and beachside nostalgia in his music. With *Spellbound*, Boycott has delivered a timeless and deeply influential album—a remarkable feat that few artists achieve after such a long hiatus.

I believe *Spellbound* will go down in music history. It's not every day that a band can remain inactive for years and still make such an impact with a new release. I was truly blown away by the soothing indie-pop grooves, which the band blended together effortlessly. From the first track to the last, there wasn't a single song worth skipping. *Spellbound* marks a major milestone for Boycott, and I'm hopeful it will propel the band forward, inspiring them to continue writing, recording, and sharing new music with the world.



Photo courtesy of Mishi Mode