

HSU takes next step to bring students back

A glimpse at what the summer and next semester will bring students

by Poppy Cartledge
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Photo Courtesy of Humboldt State University
Students walk up and down stairs outside Founder’s Hall on HSU campus on Feb. 12 2020.

LGBTQ+ students celebrate Pride Month

The event’s likely return to normalcy

by Briane Beronilla

Pride Month is just around the corner and students are excited to celebrate. Each year in June, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ+) people are fully represented and celebrated.

Humboldt State has a club called Queer Student Union that welcomes all HSU students. Their mission is to create a safe, open and confidential atmosphere where persons of all sexual and gender identities can gather.

Bonnie Anthony is part of the Queer Club at HSU who’s not only celebrating Pride Month in June but also her birthday.

“I’m excited to meet up with some other queer (and vaccinated) friends during Pride Month,” Anthony said.

Gay pride is the promotion of the self-affirmation, dignity, equality, and increased visibility of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people as a social group. During the month of June, cities around the world celebrate gay

pride by holding events, parades and gatherings in honor of the LGBTQ+ community. Whether you consider yourself part of the community or just an ally, all genders and sexual identities come together to celebrate the equality and love for the gay community.

“I used to go to local pride events every year before COVID,” Anthony said. “I always had a good time and felt like it was an inclusive, chill environment to meet other people.”

Robin Brown is a member of the LGBTQ+ community who feels safer and overall happier when they are around other members.

“I love seeing so many different parts of the community all together at Pride, such as younger queer kids attending their first Pride or older queer couples who have been celebrating for years,” Brown said.

Brown’s relationship with their friends and family hasn’t always been super accepting, however, they are trying. They expressed how much the HSU community has made them feel more welcomed.

“The Queer Student Union Club has helped me during quarantine,” Brown said. “Things can get lonely not being able to see my in real life friends often, so it’s nice to be able to talk to people like me online.”

Miranda Asch is also excited about Pride Month and all of the festivities. She is looking forward to making lem-



Photo by Bonnie Anthony
Bonnie Anthony (she/they) (right) with their friend Bones Wiechecki (they/them) (left) at Sacramento Pride in 2017.

on bars which are the official dessert of bisexuality.

“I haven’t been to an actual parade but I’ve been to pride festivals, it’s pretty cool,” Asche said. “There are lots of booths set up with resources, giving out free stuff, and people bring their dogs and I get to pet them.”

Though there are still those who discriminate against the LGBTQ+ community, Asch has been fortunate enough to find acceptance from those around her.

“I’m lucky enough to live in a supportive environment where I could just come out casually by talking about a crush I had on a female video game character,” Asch said. “I feel like coming out to myself was the hardest part since I kinda just brushed off crushes I had on girls for years since I also got crushes on boys.”

With the progress made with the COVID-19 vaccine, Pride events this year are likely to return to some form of normalcy.

“My favorite thing about Pride Month is seeing all the passion from the community,” Asch said. “People make art of all kinds and it’s so exciting to see. Oh, and making homophobes mad.”

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THE LUMBERJACK

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Associated Students Presidential debate dives into important campus concerns

THE SINS OF GREENWASHING

KHSU plans to launch programming

THE SINS OF GREENWASHING

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HSU announces new guidelines for in person graduation ceremonies

Students will be allowed to bring two registered guests

by Ian Vargas

Humboldt State University has changed its rules around commencement ceremonies and will now allow students to bring two registered guests along with them.

Previously, the separate colleges had separate ceremonies and only students and faculty were allowed, with the ceremony being livestreamed for peoples families. Now, a couple of guests per student will be able to attend one of the multiple ceremonies that will be celebrating students’ graduation.

The change was made possible by the loosening of COVID-19 safety guidelines which are being seen across the country. As vaccines become more available, more counties are starting to move out of the most restrictive of threat tiers. While there are still significant risks, positive cases in California have fallen significantly and as a result, more campuses feel secure allowing for larger gatherings.

While people will be allowed to attend, according to Humboldt State University’s Communications specialist, Grant Scott-Goforth, there will still be significant safety precautions in place to ensure that students, staff, and family are protected from infection.

“There are still a lot of safety requirements the University and participants must follow, including conducting a wellness self check before attending, wearing a face covering at all times, maintaining six feet of social distancing, and more,” Scott-Goforth said. “We’re also filling Redwood Bowl to only about 10-15 percent of capacity, which is well within the guidelines. The timing of the decision coincided with the county moving to a less restrictive tier and our confidence in the fact that we were seeing lower disease transmis-



Graduating senior, Sheila Ramos, takes senior photos on April 30.

Image by Ian Vargas

sion across the state.”

The opportunity to bring in guests to the ceremony is a welcome bonus for a lot of students, many of whom are feeling worn down after the consecutive graduation years of restrictions and lock downs.

This move also comes not long after Humboldt State University has changed the rules regarding travel, allowing students who are living on campus to travel within the state without a 14 day quarantine period afterwards.

Graduating senior Jesus Flores said that he is happy with the school’s decision, and that this is something students really needed following the hard couple of semesters.

“I think that allowing two guests per person is amazing because many students have been struggling to stay motivated this past year and having that support from their family and cheering them on for their hard work,” Flores said. “This is what students need right

now and following CDC guidelines will ensure that students, like myself, are celebrated while doing it safely.”

While two guests is limiting, it still presents the opportunity for students to bring their parents who also want to commemorate their child’s achievements in person. With the restrictions on travel and guests, students living far away from their families lacked ways to come together and if they were living on campus may not have been able to see each other over the last winter break before the spring semester.

Graduating HSU senior, Jourden Lamar, said that he is happy that he and other graduating students will be able to walk and celebrate with their families.

“I’m very appreciative that we have the opportunity to walk in person and bring guests,” Lamar said. “I wish we could bring more than two people, but all around I’m happy that I get to spend this moment with my parents.”

Q&A: Looking forward to next semester with AS President

The Associated Students Elections come to an end

by Poppy Cartledge

Jeremiah Finley reflects on the past year and takes a look into the next steps he wants to take in his second term as AS President for the upcoming school year.

What are you most excited about for your second term as AS President?

The opportunity to continue to work on the projects that we have started. Oftentimes, the agenda of the Board changes year to year based on who is president. With this position maintaining continuity it aids in the overall continuation of the Board’s work from the previous year. We have a lot more to accomplish and now I feel as though we are in a place where we are truly set up for success, and that excites me!

What are you most proud of from your previous term as president?

When looking back at this year’s term, what brings me joy is being able to mobilize the AS Board of Directors to prioritize student employment, and ultimately get to a place where we were able to restore student wages and bring back employees into the Associated Students.

Where are some areas that you personally feel like you want to improve on going forward?

“To improve is to change; to be perfect is to change often.” The words of Churchill ring in my ear as I prepare to reassess this past year and take a look at where we can make improvements to make efforts to change our student government and student experience. One area that I’ll be devoting more attention to is having a more robust media presence and working with my staff members and new public relations officer to create an action plan around social media that allows for increased communication.

What key issues are of your highest priority to tackle at the start of this next school year/going into summer?

My first priority is to fill the Board of Directors, there are many unfilled seats and I’m hoping to have these seats filled by the beginning weeks of the next academic year. This is huge as a full-functioning board is needed to handle the amount of advocacy that is required of a student government. Subsequently, my hope is to have the AS Board of Directors orientated and prepare our collective priorities as we move into the first month of the next academic year.

What would you like to say to your fellow Lumberjacks as we wrap up the 2020-21 school year?

I would say thank you, it has been a long and hard year, and I am thankful to have served you all through it. I’m beyond excited as I prepare to serve you all a second time, hopefully through a more in-person environment. I would ask that you all continue to stay activated as we move into the summer months and into the next school year as your actions help a lot when myself and the Board of Directors are engaged in advocacy work for you all.



Courtesy of HSU

Jeremiah Finley is elected AS President for the second time for the 2021/22 school year.

RETURN

FROM PAGE 1

by Poppy Cartledge

Through a press release sent out on April 26, HSU announced their projected plans to gradually welcome employees back to campus over the next several months.

HSU said in the press release that the repopulation plan is still being finalized and will be released once the university receives more guidance on the CSU’s recent announcement to require immunization for the fall.

Plans to repopulate campuses across California comes in response to Governor Newsom’s April 6 press release where he announced that California will fully reopen its economy on June 15.

This is assuming that two criteria are met: vaccine supply is sufficient for California residents 16 years or older who want to be vaccinated, and hospitalization rates are stable and slow.

“With more than 20 million vaccines administered across the state, it is time to turn the page on our tier system and begin looking to fully reopen California’s economy,” Newsom said in the press release. “We will need to remain vigilant, but the light at the end of this tunnel has never been brighter.”

Although California aims to fully reopen in June and end California’s Blueprint for a Safer Economy, Newsom said that mask wearing indoors will remain, as well as testing and vaccination verification requirements in certain settings.

The light for HSU students also appears bright, especially for those who are a part of clubs or activities that have yet to return to an on campus setting.

“We do anticipate being able to offer more student activities in the fall,” HSU’s Communications Specialist, Grant-Scott Goforth, said. “What exactly that will entail isn’t known yet,



Image Courtesy of HSU

but we’ll be working with Clubs, CenterArts, Center Activities, the Cultural Centers, Rec Sports, and other groups to facilitate safe, in-person events.”

This will largely depend on the current state of the pandemic come fall, as well as the state and county guidelines at the time.

The president of HSU Volleyball Club, Raul Roman, said he’s stoked about the university’s decision to work with club sports for a gradual return this upcoming semester.

“I really didn’t have anything else to take my mind off school or personal issues,” Roman said about not being able to play sports this past year. “As my team practices late at night, it would motivate me to get through the day.”

He said that the return of club sports and activities could mean an increase in productivity within a lot of students. Many athletes felt upset, angry and confused that they weren’t able to play

their sport this past year.

Roman said that club sports have utilized their media platforms and sharing information regarding their sport with incoming high school students to recruit new members for their roster.

The Men’s Volleyball Club have found ways to stay connected with their current teammates by having monthly meetings that discuss club updates, uniforms/practice layout, as well as playing virtual games to bond as a team.

Next semester is looking to be a step in the right direction toward repopulation on campus, but Scott-Goforth said that the fall schedule is finalized, so there will not be any additional in-person classes added. There will also still be a 2-week period of all virtual classes at the beginning of the fall semester.

For the 2021-22 school year, classes will begin virtually on Aug. 23. In-person instruction will then begin on Sep. 7.

Bigfoot is a criminal

Hulu docuseries Sasquatch seeks to uncover truth

by Sophia Escudero



Photo by Sophia Escudero taken in Feb 6 in front of the Willow Creek bigfoot museum.

Hulu’s latest true crime documentary series, *Sasquatch*, was quite fittingly released April 20. The crime was a triple homicide in mid-1990s Laytonville. The victims? Three employees on a cannabis farm. The lead suspect? Bigfoot.

The mysterious ape committing a gruesome crime that left three dead is certainly not a claim anyone can ignore. Certainly not investigative journalist and viewpoint of the series David Holthouse, who was working at a Mendocino cannabis farm when a man came in the door in a state of disarray, claiming that “a Bigfoot” had brutally murdered and dismembered three field workers. Any person with an ounce of skepticism would have to look into such a claim, and Holthouse was no exception. Surely the man was lying about what he’d seen, or *Sasquatch* had been framed in some kind of R-rated Scooby Doo scheme involving Old Man Henderson in a rubber mask. While I won’t spoil the series, the results of the investigation, or even whether or not they find the Bigfoot that did it, it does lead into an interesting line of questioning. How common is sincere belief in folk legend, and what darker sides does such belief have?

Willow Creek’s own self-proclaimed Bigfoot agnostic, bookstore owner Steven Streufert, is an expert on Bigfoot, as well as the cults of fascination that develop around the creature. Streufert personally takes a more scientific view of cryptozoology than many, one focused on evidence before drawing conclusions.

“It’s kind of like there’s a competition, on one side, to be the most scientific and rational person you can be, and try and present yourself like you are a scientist,” Streufert said. “And most of them aren’t. Most of them are amateurs like me, I mean, I’m not a scientist. We, those of us in my group, try and conduct what we call citizen science, essentially treating it like studying wildlife in Bluff Creek. We have had trail cameras set up since 2012, recording 24/7 all year round, monitoring for Bigfoot, ostensibly. You know, we don’t get Bigfoot on those cameras. However many years it’s been, nine years this

year, we have not gotten a single concrete Bigfoot image.”

However, not all put proof before belief. True believers take an almost religious fervor to *Sasquatch* hunting.

“We’ve got a lot of blurry, weird things that if we were hoaxers or believers in magic we could put forth and say, ‘these are Bigfoot, well that’s a Bigfoot,’ like all you got to do is post the blurry weird ones on Facebook or whatever and suddenly you have a million people telling you you’re great, you’re special,” Streufert said. “And that’s almost more rewarding than the truth. Of course, on the other side of things, some people are just fucked up and crazy to begin with, or they’re drugged on the attention and fame it gets them and they start to believe the weird and magical. If you wrote a book on the weird and magical, it would outsell the book on the critical and rational a thousand to one. People want to believe in monsters and mysteries.”

Some Bigfoot believers are willing to bend the fabric of reality to accommodate their belief. To them, Bigfoot is not just meat and bone like any animal, but something of a legendary creature akin to a unicorn or dragon, or even an extraterrestrial or divine being. And why shouldn’t a mythical creature have mythical powers?

Streufert himself has something of a feud going with Bigfoot hunter and true believer Matthew Johnson. Johnson claims to be to Bigfoot what Dr. Jane Goodall is for chimpanzees, and reports numerous Bigfoot encounters around the Pacific Northwest. He and his followers believe that Bigfoot’s species is made up of highly advanced extradimensional beings that create portals to come through to Earth for short visits. Through his purported visits with what he calls “the Forest People,” Johnson has learned that their planet is dying and the Bigfoot spirits need help coming through to our world. Streufert has been a critic of these theories and has received death threats from adherents. He has even had shots fired at his bookstore.

No connection between the gunfire at Bigfoot Books and the Streufert/Johnson feud has been proven, and no

charges have been filed. Still, Streufert does not rule the possibility out.

People are willing to threaten and perhaps even act based on Bigfoot beliefs. The intra-community drama calls to mind the often violent disagreements between religious sects. Bigfoot belief is much closer to a faith than a genuine science. It is less about what you can prove than what you want to believe.

Assuming a strictly anthropological perspective, Bigfoot is unlikely to exist. Great apes diverged from monkeys around 30 million years ago, and hominins diverged from the great apes between 5 and 7 million— too late for a hominin or ancestral ape to appear in a Pangaea-era North America. If we imagine Bigfoot as closer to humans than chimpanzees, humanoid cousins such as Neanderthals only migrated as far as Europe and Asia before dying out approximately 40,000 years ago. Humans themselves only reached the Americas about 33,000 years ago. By all accounts, there is no way that another hominid could exist unknown in the Pacific Northwest without having been introduced as an invasive species within the past five centuries.

Despite knowing this, I do want Bigfoot to be real. Despite knowing logically that there is no way a dinosaur survived to modern times in a Scottish lake or that an enormous moth can predict bridge collapses in West Virginia, there is a part of my brain that wants magic to be real. I want to believe that people come back as ghosts when they die rather than accept that people are gone. I want to believe that disappearances are the result of an alien conspiracy to take us to the stars rather than face the brutal fact that those people are buried in a shallow ditch somewhere. I want to believe that not only is there a wild ape man living in the woods behind my home, but that he is kind, and intelligent, and he would never tear three people limb from limb. The truth is, though I very much wish I did, I don’t believe in magic. There are things we cannot explain, but the truth will never be as fantastic as we hope.

5 ways to relieve stress

by Whitney McCoy

The semester has officially come to a close. With 16 weeks under our belt, it’s time to release the anxieties, nerves and emotions that have inevitably been pent up inside of us. Stress does our bodies and our minds no favors and can create disease.

This is your non-doctor — but supportive nonetheless — student advice on how to combat stress while decompressing from the semester.

1. Get adequate sleep

What college student doesn’t love to hear the “S” word? Many of us have spent countless nights cramming for tests, writing papers or going down a rabbit hole of YouTube videos in an attempt to further procrastinate the homework assignment we’ve been putting off for far too long. Well, rest assured (pun intended) you can spend your mornings sleeping in and going to bed before midnight if that’s your fancy.

2. Yep, you guessed it... Exercise

Physical movement does wonders for the body and the brain. Making an effort to get your heart rate up daily will improve stress levels as it releases endorphins which can help improve symptoms of anxiety or depression. If you’re not keen on the whole exercise thing just yet, try starting with something gentle like yoga. It’s perfect for beginners and your body will love you all the same. Also, don’t underestimate walks in the forest. Especially after a fresh rain. Petrichor, am I right or am I right?

3. Binge a TV show

No, really. I think it’s okay to go out on a limb here and suggest finding a binge worthy tv series this summer. Stress relief doesn’t always have to be what we think it’s supposed to be. We love a good veg out on the couch with a good series as much as the next person. And guess what, it’s totally fine. Pick something light hearted, preferably funny and kick your feet up. Laughing truly is a kind of therapy after all.

4. Journaling

Putting thoughts to paper, especially anxiety ridden ones, can help us to move through the emotions surrounding those thoughts more easily. It doesn’t have to be any award-winning journaling or anything like that. The more we practice and get in a routine of sitting with our thoughts the easier it becomes to face them head on. Especially as they are presenting themselves to us.

5. Cut the caffeine

This one hurts, but that extra cup of cold brew isn’t doing us any favors. It’s beneficial to give our bodies a chance to rest and reset rather than further enabling it to be dependent on stimulants. This summer opt for iced teas if possible.

It’s important to address stressors in our lives and to know when our bodies are under distress. More importantly, we need to know how to calm it when it is. It’s no secret that long-term stress can lead to unwanted health conditions.



Photo by Whitney McCoy. McCoy relieves stress by enjoying a warm summer hike with her dog Marley. Taken in August 8 2020.



Photo by Chance Callahan HSU Grad Student Chance Callahan takes a moment to relieve stress by grounding taken in May 19 2019.

Finding a trace in whales

Discovering the good and bad trace minerals in whales.

by Elise Fero

Welcome to the Humboldt Coast, home of nudibranchs, crabs, and of course, whales. The water we know to be so cold is actually a large reason why the whales are here in the first place.

Claire Till from Humboldt State University’s Chemistry Department concentrates on the research of trace metals in marine environments and investigating their impact. She believes it’s important to realize our cold water has a purpose.

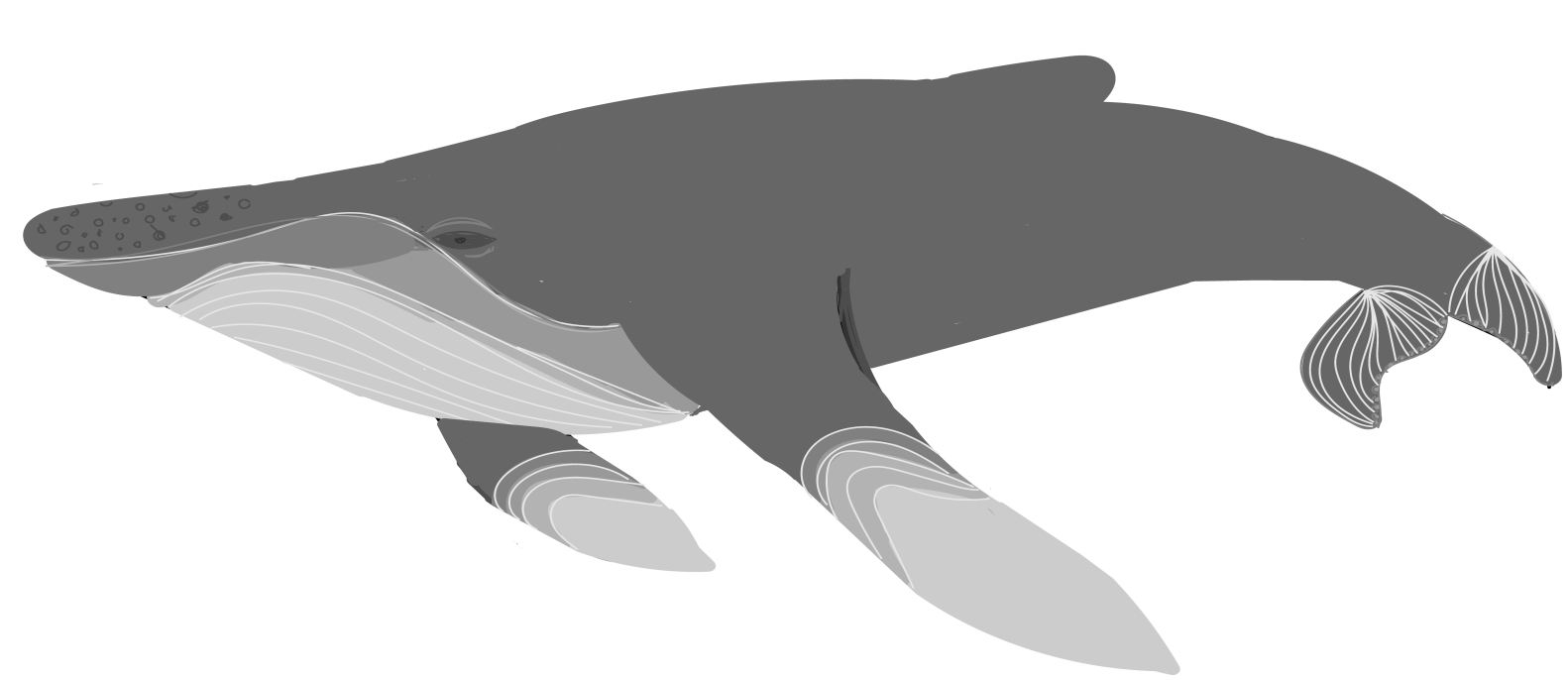
“We also get some really cold water that gets brought up from deep and with it, it often brings iron,” Till said. “And then when iron comes up to the surface, a bunch of phytoplankton start growing and then the whales have learned that there are going to be big phytoplankton blooms off our coast and they come by and eat. So the iron is really kind of the catalyst in a lot of places that lead to more phytoplankton growing and more whales.”

These elements in the food chain are extremely important to the ecosystem and its inhabitants. Without one, the ecosystem could change very quickly.

Matthew Hurst from HSU’s Chemistry Department studies trace metals and nutrient cycling in aquatic ecosystems. He believes climate change could have an affect on the good trace metals.

“The good trace metals, they are being affected by climate change because how the wind blows affects the way in which these metals can be brought up to the surface or it would perhaps change the pH of the ocean which would change the way these micronutrients can be acquired by biology,” said Hurst.

Till worries the whales will lack food



Graphic by Elise Fero

when climate change causes temperatures to rise.

“One of the big things I’m worried about with climate change and the ocean is there’s not going to be as much mixing of the ocean water because the surface water is going to be heated more than it is currently and that will make it stay on top of the ocean and be it less inclined to mix with deep water,” said Till. “Usually the nutrients are coming from deep... so if we aren’t having as much mixing we aren’t going to have as much nutrients coming to the surface ocean and we aren’t going to have as much phytoplankton and that could be a problem for whales not getting enough to eat.”

Not only are the whales not getting enough to eat, but they aren’t receiving enough nutrients either.

“Whales eat the phytoplankton and incorporate all kinds of elements including the iron into the whales bodies,” said Till.

On the other hand, there is such a thing as too much trace metals, which scientists refer to as heavy metals. One of the concerns is mercury.

“I would be most concerned with mercury,” said Hurst. “I would say although others exist and are present in the ocean, mercury is extremely toxic and bioaccumulates in the environment and given that whales are at the top of the food chain, they have elevated concentrations in their body and we probably don’t quite understand how it’s affecting them.”

Heavy metals are from pollution, mainly caused by human beings and coming from coal and other fossil fuels.

NOAA Fisheries reports pollution as one of the most common threats to whales, some including heavy metals.

“This pollution is in the runoff, it’s in the rivers going into the ocean, but it’s also deposited through the air,” said Hurst.

Now studies are being performed to understand what this means for whales and other marine mammals.

“When they do find whales that are dead, they measure the elemental content of their tissue and again, at least in terms of mercury, it’s extremely high given that it bioaccumulates,” said Hurst.

All around the globe whales are being found stranded with toxic heavy metals in their tissues, but research is still needed to understand the damage it does.

4 nice birdwatching spots in Humboldt

by Jen Kelly

1. The Arcata Marsh & Wildlife Sanctuary

The Arcata Marsh is one of the easiest places to walk around and see staggering amounts of birds. Birders have spotted over 300 species of birds in the Arcata Marsh. You’ll see geese, ducks, cormorants, and a large amount of those little birds that stick their bills into the mud. The marsh is good for biking, walking, jogging, or sitting in your warm car in the parking lot by Klopp Lake and watching those birds dig around in the mud while avoiding all real contact with the outside world.

2. Behind the Eureka Target

I swear this is a good place. The Eureka Waterfront Trail has a convenient entrance right by Target that leads out onto a series of walking bridges extending out over parts of the Humboldt Bay mudflats. The section of the trail between the Eureka Slough and Samoa Bridge is ideal for spotting herons and shorebirds. The trail also has a great view of the bay. On a nice day you’ll be able to see the Arcata Marsh on the opposite shore.



Shorebirds foraging on the Humboldt Bay mudflats at sunset on Dec. 1, 2020. | Photo by Jen Kelly.

3. Humboldt Bay National Wildlife Refuge

This one’s a bit of a drive from HSU. Just off the 101 and a bit south of College of the Redwoods is a network of paths, sloughs, and creeks that make up the southernmost tip of Humboldt bay. The refuge has a visitor center, boat trails, and a designated hunting area if that’s your thing. The day before writing this I saw egrets, osprey, and cormorants from the Hookton Slough Boat Launch on the south side of the refuge.

4. Wherever you currently are

If you’re in Humboldt County and you go outside, it won’t be long before you see a bird. There’s nothing wrong with sitting outside for a bit and waiting for the birds to come to you. Aside from the crows, gulls, and vultures you probably see all the time, you might get a glimpse of a hummingbird, chickadee, junco, goldfinch, or any number of birds hanging out of passing through Humboldt. The best part about this method is you can just look out of a window and stay warm.



A Greater Yellowlegs wades near the shore of Hookton Slough on May 3. | Photo by Jen Kelly.



An Osprey gliding above the Humboldt Bay National Wildlife Refuge on May 3. | Photo by Jen Kelly.

Author Bio: Jen is a Humboldt County local with a family more enthusiastic about local wildlife than they are about basic needs like eating and sleeping. After a childhood full of getting dragged out to cold places at unreasonable hours, Jen is sharing their hard won knowledge of how to experience nature in the least miserable way.

Rugby teams suspended for hazing

Second allegation in past week against an HSU athletic program

by Thomas Lal

Humboldt State University has sent out an email regarding possible hazing in the men’s and women’s rugby organizations. The announcement of both teams interim suspensions comes just eight days after the HSU softball team was also announced to have their season suspended due to a hazing investigation.

While the details will not be made public as stated in the email due to privacy laws, the investigation will be headed by the office of the dean of students who will also be working alongside intercollegiate athletics and recreational sports.

“The Director of Intercollegiate Athletics & Recreational Sports and the Dean of Students have placed the teams on interim suspension,” HSU wrote in the email. “All club-related sports activities will be postponed pending the results of the investigation.”

While at this time it is not clear exactly what may have occurred to cause the investigation, the university has once again reiterated that hazing violates the schools codes of conduct.

“Hazing is both illegal and violates HSU’s student and competitive sports club codes of conduct,” the school wrote. “HSU takes issues of hazing very seriously and the welfare of students is the priority at this time.”

The Lumberjack reached out to Humboldt State for additional comment but received no reply in time for publication.

Slick Vic and the basketball chronicles

HSU senior hooper Victor Mijas talks about his journey from São Paulo, Brazil to Arcata

by Jasmine Younger

Humboldt State University’s men’s basketball guard Victor Mijas, who some may know as Slick Vic, took on his senior year facing the challenges of COVID-19. The pandemic swept the nation by storm in 2019, leaving athletes across the world questioning whether or not they would be fortunate enough to see a 2020-2021 sports season. As luck would have it, they did - Humboldt State men’s basketball team was given the go-ahead to have a season.

This season, the Jacks endured extra precautions for COVID-19, they played every game away and overall went 4-5 for the season.

“When we started in August, we had to quarantine for 14 days before we started to get into the gym,” Mijas said. “In September, we actually started to get into the gym, but we were separated into pods of two groups of nine players for practice and when we were actually about to start scrimmaging and play against each other, Covid got really bad again and we all had to go back home. We practiced for two weeks and then started to play games, so it was hard for us to get in shape. Most of the teams we played were already playing a long time before us so their chemistry was better. And I think we could’ve been way better if we had more time to practice.”

However, the challenges presented by COVID-19 were not the only obstacles Mijas has had to overcome. When Mijas first started playing basketball at the age of six in Brazil, he was told that he would not make it far in the sport that he had such a deep love for.

“When I was young, a lot of people said to me that I would never go to the under 12, under 13, or under 17 team,” Mijas said. “But I knew what I was capable of and I never let those comments push me down.”

Mijas was devoted to the game and determined to make an impact on the sport itself and on others. He worked hard to make Brazil’s under 12, under 13, under 17, under 19 teams, and to pursue his collegiate career. He has had a powerful role in encouraging his teammates and exuberating confidence in the team that shows that they will come out stronger after a loss or any obstacle that comes their way.



Photos by Elliott Portillo | Victor Mijas during a game against visiting CSU San Marcos on January 24, 2019.



“Something I learned from Vic was to always trust myself in anything I do,” Sophomore forward Isaiah Hughes said of his teammate Mijas. “I once asked Victor how he shoots so well and he told me ‘I shoot every shot like I know it’s going in because I know I’ve made the same shot thousands of times.’”

Mijas has proven to not only be a confident, slick, great, and devoted athlete, but also a genuinely good person on and off the court. He has had the ability to create connections with every person who has crossed his path throughout his journey. One of the strong connections he created was with Humboldt State alum and former Jacks teammate, Zachariah Christian. Christian found great admiration for

him and his journey.

“What I admire most about Slick Vic is definitely his story - leaving his family and country at a young age to chase his basketball dream and to get to where he is now is really remarkable,” Christian said. “Vic is going to be a pro after his collegiate career ends and how far he has come is really admirable.”

Mijas started every game this season and wrapped up his senior year having 104 points with the Jacks. However, this was not the end of Mijas’ basketball journey, but simply a chapter within the chronicles.

“I plan to keep on playing basketball until I can’t,” Mijas said. “My passion is to keep playing basketball and achieve my goals and dreams.”

Track Jacks complete covid campaign

After closing their season in Corvallis, the squad wraps up it’s regular season

Photos and story by Elliott Portillo

Humboldt State Track & Field’s condensed regular season came to an end this Saturday with a flurry of season and personal bests at the OSU High Performance Meet on the Campus of Oregon State University in Corvallis.

In an HSU Athletic Department press release, Head Track & Field Coach Sarah Ingram praised her team’s individual performances.

“Across the board in all events, athletes achieved new personal bests time and time again,” Ingram said, “The different meets also offered a wide range of competitive experiences and very different levels of competition, offering lots of learning experiences for our mostly young team.”

Among the top Lumberjack competitors on the men’s side included freshmen Henry Hagen and Paul Domingue, as well as sophomore transfer Aris Valerio.

Among a field of high quality Division I schools, Hagen and Domingue held their own, with 5th and 4th place finishes in the men’s 110 meter-hurdles and triple jump events, respectively. In the middle distances, Valerio raced to a 14th place finish in the uber-competitive 800 meter run. Valerio’s time of 1:53.46 currently ranks him 9th among division II athletes in the West region and 71st nationally.

On the women’s side, sophomores Grace Kasberger and Joy Hano lead a young women’s squad in their respective events. Kasberger, a multi-event



Henry Hagen in the men’s high jump at an inter-squad meet at Redwood Bowl.

From left to right: Joy Hano, Christina Roberds, Lilyahna Engebretsen and Violeta Gutierrez race the 100 meter dash at an inter-squad meet at Redwood Bowl on Thursday, March 11.



Paul Domingue in the men’s triple jump at an inter-squad meet at Redwood Bowl.

specialist, raced to a personal best time in the 800 meter run with a 24th place finish. She followed it up with a 21st place finish in the high jump. Hano finished the 100 meter-hurdles in 13th place.

Ingram also praised her squad’s resiliency in the face of a unique road schedule, which saw no home meets and involved extended periods on the road.

“I am really proud of how our team

rose up to compete this year despite the many challenges they’ve had with COVID throughout the last year,” Ingram said. “This season has taught us all about resiliency and gratitude. We’ve all come away having learned more about each other and ourselves, and created invaluable team memories.”

The squad alternated its competitions at various sites in Oregon, traveling between Ashland, Salem and

Corvallis, rather than returning home and having to quarantine after each individual meet, as per county and state health guidelines.

“As a coach, I am so grateful for my talented and dedicated staff, our administration that’s supported us to make this happen, and of course the athletes. It’s all about the athletes, and it’s so fulfilling to see them come away with personal growth and team success,” Ingram said.

OPINION

California’s native elk need your help

An environmentalist’s perspective on the decimation of biodiversity in the state

by Gabrielle Sturm

This past year, an estimated 152 native Tule elk died at Point Reyes National Seashore. This was the result of the elk’s one predator: local ranchers. For an area that is home to some of the richest biodiversity in California, this is dangerous news for both the elk and the environment.

In Humboldt County, the Roosevelt elk roam free and plentiful throughout the Redwood National and State Parks. The largest of the seven herds of this subspecies in the park amounts to 250 elk – about the same amount as the entire population of Tule elk in all of Point Reyes. The large, healthy population of Roosevelt elk provides a stark contrast to the dwindling numbers of Tule elk. Even though the elk population of Humboldt County is not at risk, declines in endemic Tule elk are sure to affect the entirety of biodiversity in the state.

The Tule elk lived alongside the native Coast Miwok peoples for thousands of years until the late 1800s, when European settlers stole the land of the Coast Miwok and decimated the elk. The herd rapidly became endangered. In the 1970s, however, the Park Service were able to fully restore the native Tule elk herd to Point Reyes. Unfortunately, greed and carelessness reared their heads again about eight years ago when the local ranchers agreed to put up elk fences in the area. These fences block the elk from accessing food and water sources and have led to the deaths of nearly half the herd.

Laura Cunningham, the California director of the Western Watersheds Project, is a native grass ecologist whose organization was part of the original lawsuit to perform an Environmental Impact Statement on the ranches of Point Reyes. Cunningham explained the direct effect the fences have had on the Tule elk.

“The 8-foot-tall elk exclusion fence that traps Tule elk within a ‘zoo’ on Tomales Point to keep them out of cattle pastures, actually is contributing to a drought die-off of Tule elk,” Cunningham said. “They cannot migrate out to find water and better forage, and about 150 elk have already died, from a recent National Park Service survey. The park refuses to provide water or supplemental nutrition to these trapped elk on the narrow spit of land with poor water sources. Meanwhile, ranchers have been sinking new wells and pumping more water to their cows, to keep them from colicing of dehydration during this drought.”

Point Reyes is known for its pictur-

esque beaches, lagoons, marshes, estuaries, and forests and is the only National Seashore on the West Coast. One can visit the area and expect to see an abundance of wildlife, plantlife, and many, many cows, creating a glaringly obvious contrast between untouched nature and the destructive agriculture of the area. Behind this juxtaposition of nature and destruction is a long and sinister history between ranch expansion and the National Park Service.

Skyler Thomas, the creator of The Shame of Point Reyes film and blog, believes the National Park Service is not managing the park appropriately.

“At this stage the mismanagement of the park is so ludicrous that one can’t even claim they are struggling to balance the challenge of having ranching and wildlife in the same place,” Thomas said. “What we have been observing is an absolutely blatant bias in favor of the ranchers... Point Reyes could be a living classroom for scientists to observe firsthand how the Tule elk interact with the soil, plants, rocks, even other animals. No studies like that are taking place even with the non captive herd, which should tell you something about the mindset of the park staff. For the Tule elk themselves, being held captive is likely a drawn out death sentence for the herd.”

The war between ranching and the environment has only gotten worse. Last year, Point Reyes National Seashore released their General Land Management Plan. This plan grants 20-year leases to ranchers, allowing them to diversify their operations by expanding their ranches and adding new animals to their businesses. Most notably, the plan allows for the culling of native Tule elk. This means that the Park Service has agreed to kill a certain amount of the herd each year. “Protecting the natural world” is a slogan on the homepage of the National Park Service’s website. This statement reeks of hypocrisy.

Local environmental activist Ken Bouley believes the National Park Service has violated public trust.

“[Ranching] impoverishes the land, causes barren monocultures, invites invasive species, displaces habitat, and pollutes the waterways,” Bouley said. “It significantly reduces biodiversity. Ranching always does this, and if you hear any greenwashing about ‘regenerative ranching,’ ‘carbon farming,’ etc., reach for your wallet; it means don’t trust it. All they ever mean, as far as I can tell, is that it is possible to somewhat mitigate impact on



Photo by Gabrielle Sturm
Two elk photographed on April 14 in the Tule Elk Preserve at Tomales Point.

the land. The studies are usually from the agriculture industry, or universities who receive a lot of money from the agriculture industry.”

Point Reyes National Seashore is one of the most biodiverse regions in California – a state that’s already a biodiversity hotspot. According to the National Park Service’s website, “Over 45% of North American avian species and nearly 18% of California’s plant species are found in the park, due to the variety of habitat and uniqueness of the geology.” Within the seashore, there are around thirty federally-listed threatened or endangered animal species and six threatened or endangered plant species. A critical part of this intricate ecosystem are the Tule elk. The irony of the National Park Service preaching these facts online and then proceeding to commit this shameful act against the fragile ecosystem is striking.

Matthew Polvorosa Kline is a local wildlife photographer who has been documenting the Pierce Point Tule elk herd for the last twelve years.

“This [California coastal prairie] is the most species-rich grassland type in North America,” Polvorosa Kline said. “In Point Reyes, you can find remnants of this severely diminished habitat type in areas where cattle are prevented from going or restricted from heavy grazing, and where the invasive grasses that ranchers planted stop. I’m not the only one who believes that this endangered habitat type would be far, far better with native grazers like the Tule elk. Consider a key plant species like eelgrass or an ecosystem like marine eelgrass meadows and the incredible amount of biodiversity found within them. There are concerns that agriculture runoff is potentially affecting healthy eelgrass meadows through eutrophication of waterways.

Diana Oppenheim, founder of ForElk.org, an independent organization in support of saving the Tule elk, said it’s especially important to keep the elk alive in Point Reyes. An unfortunate irony lies in the fact that out of the twenty-two herds who exist throughout the state, the Point Reyes herd is the only one that is not allowed to be hunted.

“The National Park is some of the most protected land in the world,” Oppenheim said. “And there are supposed to be higher protections there for the elk. I think it is a really important thing to keep them alive in Point Reyes because this is the place where they should be safest, yet the Park Service is now planning on shooting them.”

Six thousand cattle graze in Point Reyes National Seashore. There are now less than three hundred Tule elk in that same area. Biodiversity is being ripped from the earth and in its place lies the decaying carcasses of elk. This ratio of agriculture to native wildlife represents a much larger existential threat at hand. The planet simply cannot afford the extinction of any more species.

“Extinction is forever,” Oppenheim said. “This is the Tule elk’s second chance. We should be protecting them at all costs, not shooting them to protect industry.”

OPINION

Friendship is integral to mental health

by Dakota Cox

If there’s one concept children have a stronger grasp on than adults, it’s friendship.

Before puberty, when the biggest problems in our lives were a dead Gameboy and the brussels sprouts we’d have to eat for dinner that night, friendship seemed to come naturally. With our narcissistic attitudes still perfectly intact, it was in our nature to show off anything and everything we deemed valuable in our lives. This inevitably led to those of us with a strong shared interest creating a bond that would likely go on to last years, if not decades. So, why does the simple practice become so challenging as the years add up?

In a society that’s become almost synonymous with social anxiety, many people reach a certain age and begin shutting themselves off to the world, only giving glimpses into the true content of their character. In a time when anything we do can become plastered permanently on the internet, and when we shape the behaviors of our lives based upon the filtered fragments we’re given of others’, it’s easy to understand what causes this behavior.

Despite what everyone else may see, we are each our own worst critic. As we become aware of our flaws and shortcomings, set against the gold standard lifestyle society shoves down our throats, many of us begin to bottle our entire identities inside, to avoid provoking scrutiny from people standing in the same pair of shoes as us. And when people are afraid to behave the way they feel inside, the chances of them attracting the kinds of people they want in their lives are dramatically reduced.

By the time we become adults, most of us will have developed many of the appetites and habits we’ll carry with us through the rest of our lives. Children, who still have so much of the world to experience, however, are much more open-minded creatures. Rather than waiting around for the specific type of person they’re best compatible with, most children are inclined to accept their circumstance and attempt to make lemonade from whatever fruit they can get their hands on.

The true spectacle of childhood friendships is the growth that’s shared as young minds develop and discover the world together. With a much more curious nature than adults, children are

far more likely to jump at the opportunity to experience something new. Because they’ve also likely never faced any responsibility or severe consequences for their actions, most children adopt an almost entirely carefree approach towards life. This combination creates the foundation for a bond between friends that tends to break down any barriers of judgment we may perceive from the world. As we grow together, we begin to rely on one another, and our presence in each other’s lives begins to influence the people we grow into.

It’s no wonder why most of us eventually become set in our ways. As we enter into adulthood, most of our lives begin to be consumed by work and eventually family – should we choose to settle down – leaving us with much less time for luxuries like friendship and fun. With what little precious time we have to do what we please, the obvious choice is to spend it doing the things we’ve come to enjoy most. Seeking comfort in the familiar, however, obviously comes at the cost of new experiences. Without a classroom providing easy opportunities to meet like-minded people, the odds of most adults creating new genuine friendships is limited almost exclu-

sively to the workplace. When it comes down to it, friendship is unfortunately something many of us will eventually outgrow and experience in significantly less frequent and spectacular fashion than when we were kids.

Friendship is an incredibly powerful connection when properly nurtured, with adequate time and energy coming from both sides. Having people in your life that you can trust to be the completely unfiltered version of yourself with allows you the incredibly valuable opportunity to experience happiness in its purest state. However, this kind of bond isn’t formed overnight, and it rarely lasts forever.

There’s no recreating the magical quality and unforgettable memories of childhood friendships, once you’ve crossed the threshold into adulthood. But that doesn’t mean your days of making friends have to come to an end. It’s true that friendship requires work. It’s also true, however, that authentic friendship delivers far more to be gained from than burdened by. So, channel your inner child and find some time to make another batch of lemonade from whatever fruit you can get your hands on, before you forget what it tastes like.

Ceramics provides students escape during the pandemic

Photos by Dakota Cox

Students in Annakatrin Kraus' advanced ceramics class spent the majority of the semester back in the studio, after working from home during the initial pre-spring break quarantine period. Having access to the studio grants students opportunities to work on projects that can't be accomplished within the comfort of a dorm room, like throwing pottery on a wheel.

