When you teach at Pensacola State College for 25 years, you’re considered a legend. Bill Clover did it for 52, passing away May 7, 2018.

“Bill Clover built the PSC ceramics department from the ground up,” Ben Twingley, PSC adjunct professor and a former student of Clover’s, said. “There were no kilns to fire student work, so he drove their pottery north of Pensacola near a brick manufacturer where the student work could be completed. Many times, that required him to stay overnight in his VW van before driving back to the college with the finished student work.”

Twingley met Clover in 2005 when he decided to get back into ceramics by auditing classes at PSC. “I was immediately drawn to him for his quick-witted sense of humor, his laugh and immense artistic abilities.

“He was a legend at PSC and Pensacola as a whole. After more than five decades of teaching, he celebrated the fact that some of his students were grandchildren of former students” and “was emulated often in students’ work.”

Edward Meadows, PSC President, describes Clover as a happy person, “with a quick wit and mischievousness…a love of helping students better their lives and doing good in the community, evidenced by the years and years of ‘Pick a Bowl and Fill a Bowl,’” for which he made many of the bowls himself.

For $30, which went to Manna Food Bank, people would receive a handmade bowl, which they would fill with soup from local vendors. Proceeds from each purchase would feed a person for five days.

DeDe Flounlacker, Executive Director at Manna Food Bank, said he was “a man of deeds, not words…For somebody to spend so much time [helping the hungry] is mind-boggling.” He was “dedicated not so much to a cause but dedicated to people.” Clover involved students, professors, and other artists from the community to use their talents to spread compassion.

“His legacy lives on,” Flounlacker said. "When he could no longer do as much, he recruited others to do it.

“The first time I met him, I thought that is one cool-looking Santa Claus.”

Maybe he was, and just a little bit more.

Clover received the U.S. President’s Volunteer Service Award for contributing more than 7,000 hours of volunteer service to Manna Food Pantries, as well as approximately 6,000 bowls.

He also made coffee mugs which the Art Department would sell to raise scholarship money for students.

PSC President, Edward Meadows, said, when Clover was teaching during the Vietnam conflict, a lady came up to him after class and started crying. “That tie disrespects my husband,” she said, referring to the American flag design that he [Clover] wore, to which he replied, “I’m wearing..."
As Clover worked with his hands, he told stories that enchanted even those whose disciplines did not include ceramics. Though he might not remember a former student’s name, he’d remember their face, for he sought to make connections with those he mentored.

Clover shapes the clay that made milestones in his career. His love for the craft was not limited to his own work, but extended to student work, which he sometimes bought to support scholarships.

Clover’s legacy includes his masterpieces, displayed in the Lamar Visual Arts building, for others to enjoy and learn from and be inspired by. DeDe Flounlacker, Executive Director at Manna Food Bank, still enjoys her breakfast in a signature “Cloverized” bowl—a dish that makes her think of his “artistic compassion.”

Clover celebrates his fortieth year at PSC, becoming an institution at PSC. He created a culture of positivity in the Art Department, and is remembered for his jokes and sense of humor.

Shaping history: Bill Clover makes art, feeds hungry, illuminates generations
this as a point of pride. I had no idea. I will never wear it again.”

And Clover was a man of his word.

“He had a very tender heart,” Meadows said.

“Kind-hearted” and “big-spirited” is how Dr. Erin Spicer, Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs, describes him. Several of his pieces adorn her office.

Krist Lien, PSC Visual Arts Department Chairman, said, “Clover taught at Pensacola Junior College and Pensacola State College for 52 years. He was probably the only person to ever be here that long. He was loved by all who knew him and will truly be missed this fall when classes start for the new year.”

“He had lots of good advice, was definitely a mentor to me,” Gretchen Scott, a former student of Clover’s, said. Clover was a master of the twisted handle which he would make for his mugs—a detail Scott referred to as “Cloverized.”

“He had a plethora of goofy jokes” and was “someone you loved to be around…you just loved to be in his presence. Clover was 76, but to Scott, “it was like he was brand new.”

Clover had a love of plants and blended that love for horticulture with his love for clay. He grew succulents, attracting the cochineal bug, which, when pinched, releases a juice used for dying. Sometimes he used it to color aprons, of which he had many, including one that looked like the inside of a human body and even one that said “Cloverized” across the top.

John Kusnerek, another former student, who graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC), had never done pottery until he “took his [Clover’s] class and never looked back.” Clover’s philosophy of no mistakes was all a part of the process—a confidence builder for Kusnerek. “He made clay fun” and “set me on the trajectory to be a ceramic artist.”

Kusnerek remembers a critique time with a “dreadful piece of pottery,” to which Clover said, “It ain’t sexy, but it’s got teeth.” Kusnerek credits Clover with helping him get to grad school.

Jimmy Rhea, sculpture instructor, was “always impressed by Clover’s work ethic.” Even after 30 years, Clover still making work and being passionate about his students gave Rhea hope that he will still have that in the future.

Clover taught that it was “okay to be an artist and to follow your passion.” He was a quiet mentor to me in that way...there was a lot of respect between us—we really appreciated one another...Our time was too short together,” Rhea said.

Warren Thompson, retired photography instructor, said he once turned Clover’s office into a dinosaur diorama with a dozen or more plastic dinosaurs and jungle music playing. It became “The Dinosaur Exhibit” to everyone on campus.

In retaliation, Clover took down the door to Thompson’s office and put up a brick wall (sans the mortar). Clover wanted to be cremated in his kiln. Since this is not possible, his friends plan to honor his wishes by throwing one of his aprons and a few other personal effects, into the fire.

During the spring semester, Meadows got a call from campus security, telling him that Bill was standing in front of the last remaining tree of the old shrubbery...a Japanese magnolia. Meadows went to the landscapers and said, “Nobody touches that tree. “Bill saved that tree.” And Clover’s tree will live on, just like his legacy.

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Art legend

*Continued from Page 1*

Bill “Cloverized” the campus ecologically, saving one of PSC’s natural treasures.

A video of Clover on YouTube captures the essence of the man who taught over 10,000 students how to make art, and how to appreciate it. The video can be enjoyed at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5LWYCjgjPE4
Day care costs more than college tuition

By Alana Dutson

While some Americans are deciding where to go on vacation, others are determining if they can afford to go back to college and have enough money to pay for day care.

The average cost of day care in Florida is $7,435, according to the Boston Globe. In comparison, the average tuition at Pensacola State College (PSC) is $4,000-$5,000 per year, not including supplies or housing, based on estimates from the PSC website.

Brittany Strong is a part-time PSC student in her final semester of the registered nursing (RN) program. Strong receives some financial aid but has to pay out-of-pocket for the rest of her tuition. On top of tuition costs, Strong has one child who is in care part-time and she pays for it herself.

The cost of his child care (part time, three days a week)…is actually the exact same as it was when she was a student at Pensacola State College, she said.

“Really works with me knowing I’m a student,” Strong said. “Mostly because I found a home provider who only goes when I have actual class. Not for other purposes.”

Photo by Tori Riggs

She has the convenience of attending a local campus as opposed to relocating to Gainesville. “Our city is a melting pot, which is great, but you can build community…can be difficult. Here, it’s nearly impossible without family,” she said.

Strong received financial aid in the form of a Pell Grant, but she pays for day care out of pocket. Roberts sends her daughter to day care three times per week.

“With careful budgeting and truly taking stock of our expenses, I was able to work out a way that I can achieve my goals, and my daughter can enjoy her own learning environment,” Roberts said.

As a single parent juggling school and day care, Roberts understands that not everyone may know the struggles she faces. “It is hard to understand the choices and sacrifices of those who truly come from a place of struggling financially if you haven’t experienced it,” Roberts said.

While day care is expensive, there are options for parents. According to Tina Isaacs, the director of Camp Fire, the day care center on campus, PSC students are given roughly $10,000 in discounts each year.

Additionally, students who are in need of financial assistance should stop by the Financial Aid office. All potential students are encouraged to fill out a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). This application will tell students if they are eligible for federal financial aid in the form of grants or loans. Students that are approved for a Pell Grant can receive up to $5,920 per year (this number changes from year to year).

Darcey Cooper, the associate director of the Financial Aid, Veterans Services and Scholarship Department, wants students to know that federal student aid isn’t the only aid out there.

“I would encourage all students to apply for financial aid, because even though they may not be eligible for [a] Pell Grant, they may be eligible for some of our other programs,” Cooper said. “Any student that does not apply is potentially missing out on financial aid!”

Cooper also mentions that students only need to fill out one application for scholarships, which opens the door to many different opportunities. Cooper has also seen a rise in non-traditional students applying for college, including parents.

“Over my years in financial aid, there is a trend with enrollment at institutions. Students are trending to be what is considered non-traditional,” Cooper said. “They are outside of that 18-24, they are veterans, they are parents or some other criteria that would not be thought of as the typical student.”

Cooper is also supportive of parents who wish to go back to school. “If you can raise a child, you can go to college,” Cooper said. “You can be successful. Life comes at you fast, and you get caught up in the day to day, but you can be successful, and PSC is a good place for that.”

There are also other departments on campus that can help students apply for college and pay for it. The Educational Opportunity Center (TRIO) helps students fill out FAFSA, and Student Job Services can help students find work-study.

“There are a lot of good resources and good people here who are dedicated to help ensuring that students are successful, not just in their coursework but when they leave PSC,” Cooper said.

Despite day care costing more than college tuition, there are many opportunities for students to explore that can help pay for the cost of college tuition and day care.

Education grows through UF, PSC partnership

By Tori Riggs

With 23 undergraduate majors and more than 50 areas of specialization, the University of Florida’s (UF) College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALS) offers both traditional and non-traditional tracks, from agricultural education to pre-med.

One of the most obvious areas can be found locally. With just a quick drive to the PSC Milton campus, you will find the UF branch. Here, the college specializes in areas of science with a key focus on natural resource conservation and plant science. Programs offered at UF are possible through the partnership with Pensacola State College (PSC) as well as other local schools.

“We have what we call a two-plus-two program. Students are in their education from PSC where they earn prerequisite credits. After they graduate from PSC with their A.A., they apply to UF after that, and we take them at UF,” said UF Academic Recruiter, Mark Long.

The UF Milton campus gives students the opportunity to earn a Bachelor of Science degree from a university with the convenience of attending a local campus as opposed to relocating to Gainesville.

Because the current number of students is roughly 50 people, students are able to receive their education in a much more intimate and individually-driven setting. “Our faculty advisor, Dr. Miller, encourages live attention,” Long said. “We offer scholarships for students whose degree can range anywhere from an undergrad to a Ph.D. UF is classified as a land-grant university. Meaning, in addition to educating their students, they also provide education information and assistance to the public.

The school has 3 missions: extension, teaching and research. We provide these services to make life better by helping agriculture. Because of research made at our facility in Jay County, for example, we are now working with an airliner that is being fueled by oil extracted from plants,” Long said.

Through extensions provided on campus and within the 12 research and education centers, UF can partner with the public and private sector to create an important link. The program provides information regarding sustainable agriculture, food and nutrition safety, leadership opportunities for youth and much more. Here, the average citizen can learn about aspects of agriculture, the environment or how to simply take care of your lawn and gardening.

Education of plant life come in various forms located in the panhandle. Coldwater Gardens, for example, is an eco-friendly campground and resort found in Milton. The gardens, or farm, as employees refer to it, are naturally grown food to the Milton and Pascua buildings.

“One fact about the garden portion of this project that may interest [some] is that Coldwater Gardens offers several work-study internships to UF students that count as credits toward their degree,” said Ashley Moore, Coldwater Gardens Agricultural Manager.

Moore is currently a student at UF. Prior to pursuing a degree in plant science from UF, she has worked at Coldwater Gardens on and off for the past six years.

“We usually need seasonal help at the farm, particularly in spring, which includes planting, weeding, natural pest control, plant and animal care, seed starting, planting and harvesting and market preparation,” Moore said.

“Students in the UF Plant Science program are required to complete a certain amount of work-study credits to graduate. Hands-on experience when learning to grow and market produce is absolutely necessary, so we have been able to facilitate this while at the same time gaining a seasonal worker who is learning the science behind plant cultivation.”

Mother nature surrounds us and can be taught by simply venturing down the road thanks to the communal advances made by UF, PSC, and partnering/local establishments.
**Student Nurses’ Association thrives at Warrington Campus**

By Rachel Giordano

Nursing Students Week, which ran from May 6 to May 12, was a time for Pensacola State College (PSC) to acknowledge the hard work and dedication it takes to become a nurse. Nurses contribute enormously to society, but the heavy load and stress that comes with schooling can be challenging. However, the Student Nurses’ Association (SNA) offers support and the determination to keep going.

SNA is a type of club that meets once a month. It is a chapter of the Florida Nursing Student Association and the National Student Nurses Association. It is a great opportunity to network with other students enrolled in the program and gives students a sense of how to prepare for their chosen field. Any student that has declared Pre-Nursing as their major can utilize this organization that proves to be beneficial to any RN student going through the program.

The purpose of SNA is to have an impact on the profession of nursing by working with others to promote change, scholarships, publications, grant opportunities, and networking. All RN nursing students are automatically members and are invited to participate.

“It is helpful to meet people that are a semester or two ahead of you to get a feel for what is helpful for studying and what is less helpful,” Donald Yeo, PSC nursing student said.

Susan Farthing, the club advisor for SNA states, “We are trying to get interest developed for more people to participate and show that it does have a benefit to them as nursing students,” McKay said.

Linda McKay, who teaches Adult Health 3, as well as clinical studies and Susan Farthing are co-facilitators working hard to get SNA established because of the benefits it provides for students.

“We are trying to get interest developed for more people to participate and show that it does have a benefit to them as nursing students,” McKay said.

Not only is the club beneficial for students, it also offers participation in community service, such as making Mother’s Day and Father’s Day cards for local nursing homes, as well as participation in Coastal Cleanup Day at Pensacola Beach.

SNA can be beneficial to students like Brandon Lauver, Adriana Sutton, and Kathryn Baggott who are currently enrolled in the Intro to Nursing program at the Warrington campus. After they complete the Intro to Nursing program and enter the Pre-Nursing program, SNA will be available to them and can serve as a great tool.

“There is really no way of preparing,” Lauver said about the program. “It can be super challenging but very rewarding. I believe that anybody can do it as long as you put your mind to it, and anybody thinking about it, just go for it.”

Adriana Sutton states, “Don’t be discouraged and think you cannot do it.”

Students enrolled at the Warrington campus feel as though they are one big team, and SNA offers that type of family support that gives the drive for students to push ahead.

Any student enrolled in the nursing programs who would like more information can contact Susan Farthing at 850-484-2202.

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**Shooting victim pursues RN degree**

By Rachel Giordano

Shawn Smith, a Pensacola native, was living in St. Petersburg, Fla. On Oct. 11, 2016, his neighbor stood at his door, armed with a Colt 9 mm, loaded with hollow point bullets, waiting for him to turn around.

He fired two shots, one hitting Smith’s stomach, the other, his neck.

The neighbor, 65-year-old Larry Hoad, was angry due to being served eviction papers that morning. About three hours later, Hoad went on a shooting rampage, targeting neighbors that he felt were involved in his eviction. Hoad was Smith’s neighbor for four years. During this time, Smith realized that Hoad caused drama amongst other neighbors, so Smith kept to himself and did not get involved.

When Smith was shot, he fell face first onto the pavement, landing on his stomach. The first officer on the scene realized that he had been shot and took action; if it had not been for the officer’s quick response, Smith would have died at the scene. The officer took his shirt off and shoved it inside the bullet wound in his stomach and plugged the neck wound with his finger in an effort to stop the bleeding.

“I was lying there thinking, ‘This can’t happen. I can’t die. My daughter can’t grow up without me. Just stay awake,’” Smith said.

Smith was in a coma for a month. When he finally awoke, he knew that he had been shot and could not speak, move or talk, and had a tracheal tube. The hollow point bullets caused massive damage to his stomach; so far, he has undergone 26 surgeries. He spent 10-and-a-half months in the hospital and was not able to see his 3-year-old daughter during that time, which proved to be challenging.

Five of those months were spent in physical therapy relearning how to walk, and during all of this, the nursing staff was there by his side every step of the way. He became good friends with all of the nurses and had to learn so much about his own care.

The life-changing event was the driving force behind his decision to enroll at Pensacola State College and pursue a nursing degree.

“I was lying in the hospital bed wondering what to do with my life,” Smith said.

Smith worked for Hilton in Tampa at the time as the Food and Beverage manager and was about to be promoted to Assistant Food and Beverage Director when the event occurred. He is considering an RN degree with a specialization in wound care. The nursing staff that cared for Smith was a tremendous inspiration.

“It just clicked in my mind. I wanted to do something with my life and help other people like they did,” Smith said. “Kind of pay it forward for everything that has happened to me.”
Teacher encourages social activism

By Sparrow Butler

Do you really know what it means to be a social activist? The growth of social media, fake news, and bias opinions integrating journalism is changing the way many people view social activism. This misunderstanding makes some students skeptical about being actively involved in their communities, and politics in general, but social activism, at its core, is not what it is often portrayed through the eyes of our media-drenched world.

Gloria Gasa, a premed student, explained people are often cynical about social activism. “I feel that protesters take up other people’s burdens without doing any research on it themselves and try to make it their own problem, when really they don’t have anything to do with the issue at hand,” Gasa said. “I think it is a really negative thing, in today’s society, because you see all the riots, walk-outs, and sit-ins that cause unnecessary disruptions in the classroom.”

Paul Swanson, is very aware of the decline in his students’ political involvement, and he believes it has a lot to do with a lack of awareness about how to be an active member in society.

Some students are scared that if they become politically active and sharing their views will come off as disrespectful to others. Gasa said, “You can try and make people see your side, but if you’re going to go about it by breaking rules and causing commotion, you’re just adding to the negativity.” For this reason, it is important that we first learn how to be respectful activists for what we believe in without just adding to the noise.

To help expose the truth about what activism really is, Professor Swanson dedicates a period of his Principles of Life Fitness class every semester to encourage his students to write down politicians’ phone numbers and email addresses. By doing this, he creates a learning environment where students can talk openly and collectively about the issues that concern them.

Talk with other students and don’t be afraid to talk with people who don’t agree with you. You’ve got to be able to have a civil conversation with people who think totally different than you,” Swanson said.

One of the most influential assets Americans have is their right to vote, but we must remember that it is not only a right but a responsibility. Professor Swanson stresses the importance of getting together with other like-minded people to make a difference through voting as a block and choosing how you spend your time.

“Use buying power to vote with your pocket book... if the environment is important to you, buy things that are organic. Your buying power will change politics. If you, as a group, buy organic, more stores will start providing it, and you’ll see the prices go down,” Swanson said.

In the midst of the midterm elections and various growing movements with America’s youth at the forefront, Pensacola State College (PSC) students are certainly not exempt. Social media has allowed students to stand their ground and create their own page in history.

The women’s suffrage movement began in 1848, and its purpose was to educate and spread awareness to the public about women’s long-endured pain and suffering. In 1913, women marched into Washington to show Congress how serious they were about equality with their male counterparts. It wasn’t until 1920 that the people voted on the Nineteenth Amendment and a year later it was ratified. It took over 60 years for the women’s voices to be heard and for actions to be implemented on their behalf.

In 1955. This act of defiance was one of the first usages of a nonviolent approach to activism. Social activism, by definition, is an intentional action with the goal of bringing about social change. Whether that means using your buying power to benefit our environment, sitting with the people who would generally be part of the “outcasts,” or using your voice to contact our politicians and ask for change is ultimately up to you.

So, fellow PSC students, get informed, read both sides of the story, vote whenever possible, and don’t be afraid to stand up as a social activist for the causes that concern you and future generations to come. Our time is now.
said. “Now, it’s very high profile with media and normal for college life.”

Not a believer in the theory that student activists are ignorant of their respective causes, Blackwell said, “I think they’re very serious. I think they’re looking at what older generations are doing, and they’re shocked and horrified and want to take the future into their own hands before there’s not a future to take.”

He also rejects the belief that activism goes no further than Trump. “People are looking at what’s going on and forming their own opinions. This generation’s protest movement is much more educated and not just protesting because the government is ‘evil man.’”

When we look back on PSC’s publication history from 1991, we find a case where the Corsair staff stapled condoms into some of the issues with the purpose of promoting safe sex. That was almost thirty years ago, when Pensacola was generally dominated by far-right ways of thinking, one of which was the belief that people should save sex for marriage.

We must take into consideration that PSC is a community college that caters to a wider age range than that of other traditional universities. It is not uncommon to see adult students who are also juggling a job (if not multiple), relationships and children, so it’s not puzzling to see nonexistent activism in Pensacola State’s own political history.

Concerning the younger crowd, some have been motivated by the cries of their peers to donate their time to activism while others have taken a more skeptical approach.

“I haven’t been inspired at all. Kids have reacted emotionally without using proper research when protesting against our government. What has resulted from this is just the rights of us young people being taken away without solving the issue,” said Philip O’Brien, a PSC student. “While I think anyone with an opinion who wants change should contact their representatives, I think it’s better to think logically when presenting your opinion.”

Philip O’Brien, is an advocate for personal liberty and small government and has worked for Congressman Matt Gaetz and Florida State Representative Mike Hill. He believes more young people should step up.

“They better start being serious and taking action,” O’Brien said. “As of right now senior citizens call all the shots...We better start getting out there and voting in order to take part in the same rights and privileges as every other adult American citizen. If it’s a trend, let’s hope it leads to young people making some serious decisions and going out there to vote.”

A common criticism of student activists is that the extent of their activity stems from strong feelings towards President Trump, with naysayers believing they will lose interest after his presidency.

O’Brien does not agree. “Many are passionate about Trump, and many have acted out of emotion without doing the proper research on the issue. But I do think that there is a possibility that many young people will gather an interest in politics even after the Trump administration unlocking a new focus on a certain voting demographic.”

PSC student Taylor Smith, is the president of the Santa Rosa Young Democrats, Precinct Committeewoman of the Santa Rosa Democratic Party, Co-Director for Unite Women of Florida and a local March for our Lives leader/organizer.

“It’s worth noting that some of our most successful social justice movements were sparked by the actions of the young. Some of the most recent include Black Lives Matter, Dreamers Fighting for Immigration Reform and a group of young Native Americans that started the Standing Rock movement in South Dakota,” Smith said. “Movements led by young folks have shaped the society we live in today.”

How to make an informed decision: 5 Tips

By Alana Denton and Sparrow Butler

In a world that is divided, how do you make an unbiased informed decision?

These five tips from Paul Swanson, an assistant professor at Pensacola State College, will help you to determine how to choose which stance you want to take in life.

1. Become an independent thinker

To make an unbiased decision you need to separate yourself from one-sided information.

“Most people vote because their families voted some way,” Swanson said.

2. Decide what you care about

What is important to you?

Do you know which issues you would like to support?

Without knowing what you are supporting and why, you cannot make an informed decision.

3. Know your representatives

Do you trust everyone else to choose who represents you?

Get to know who is speaking for you, your state and country.

4. Get politically involved, locally

“Not from the right or left but you’ve got to have a voice. You need to talk with other students. Don’t be afraid to talk to people who don’t agree with you.” Swanson said.

The first step is registering to vote. Next, be the voice you believe is not in the conversation.

5. Check it out.

“Find out what those people voted for?” Swanson said.

Don’t just take their word for it. Do your own research and find out what your representatives are voting for, why they are voting and how it impacts you.

Information by Jaylen Harrell/Illustration by Omar Forty
Support students’ right to be heard

By Anthony Sevilla

In the wake of a school shooting earlier this year in Parkland, Fla., students decided, “Hey, watching my classmates being murdered isn’t fun.” Following their reasoning, the Parkland teenagers have orchestrated overwhelmingly successful protests against gun violence. In the name of patriotism and the Constitution, some older millennials and baby boomers have decided that protesting is nonsense and teenagers aren’t qualified to talk about gun violence (almost like they weren’t directly affected by it).

Of course, this is expected. Coming out and protesting something as deeply woven into the American fabric as guns is like boycotting pizza and beer. However, those claiming that teenagers don’t have the knowledge or life experience to talk about gun violence don’t seem to realize that societal progression has rarely been accomplished with complacency. A Ph.D. isn’t needed to voice your opinions on a problem that has affected you and your community. African-American community didn’t win the fight against overt discrimination by being passive while injustice ran rampant. As a group, they decided enough was enough and compelled legislators to seriously examine and revise the laws.

Being able to stand up and fight for what you believe in is a vital American right. While we now see these rights as inalienable, protesters fighting for these same rights were met with violence from those who swore to uphold the law.

Even more recently, a school shooting in Santa Fe has killed 10. School shootings have been as consistent as death and taxes, yet almost no action has been taken. Those speaking out against the senseless tragedies that happen almost daily are proactively enacting the change they want to see in society.

Unless we decide as a society that these events are preventable, school shootings will never become an event of the past, and we will never move forward. Outrage against protests is almost mandatory for any productive protest because it means the protest is working; protests are meant to make people uncomfortable.

The Parkland students are effectively and powerfully exercising their First Amendment rights, and they are sending a powerful message to legislators: “We will vote you out.”

All students have a right to be heard, and everyone, regardless of their personal beliefs, should support that.

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May not exceed 350 words (longer letters may be posted online).

Letters must be submitted electronically to corsaireditorpsc@gmail.com

Include your name and phone number. The Corsair has the right to publish, distribute, archive and edit work submitted.

Works that contain profanity and/or personal disputes will not be used.

We reserve the right to publish, distribute or archive any work in print or online.

Supporting students’ right to be heard

By Alana Dutson

At Pensacola State College (PSC), out of 73 students surveyed, 78 percent of students do not identify themselves as a social activist. While this isn’t a big deal, it is a big deal that 66 percent of students cannot name a Florida senator or representative.

Personally, I do not identify as a social activist. I do not attend marches, rallies or protests (for either party). I do, however, know enough about politics to make an informed decision, or at least I hope I do.

Unfortunately, that is not the case for many PSC students. I find it shocking that only 34 percent of students can name a Florida senator or representative since most students at PSC should be eligible to vote. Are they just picking names off a page when they vote, do they know who they are voting for and why or do they even vote?

Again, our country is divided between the left and the right, Democrat vs. Republican. If you are a member of one party you are the enemy of the other and vice versa. I have to wonder, is it because we don’t understand politics or is it because we don’t want to?

Everyone seems to be more focused on the political parties they are associated with instead of the issues they care about. Where do your representatives stand on the important topics you are concerned with? Has everyone stuck their heads in the sand and left the deciding up to the 34 percent that know their representatives?

Have you ever told your parents you did something because everyone else was doing it? I know I did. Did you hear the same response? “Well, if everyone else was jumping off a bridge, would you do that too?” Do you trust someone else enough to make an important decision for you? I know I don’t.

Without knowing your representatives, you can’t know what they are voting for and why, or if they even support the causes you care about. Knowing their name and political party isn’t enough. Your political party doesn’t define you; your vote does.

Think of it this way: If you are allergic to peanuts, and I told you to choose between two candy bars based on the coating (white chocolate vs. dark), you would never know that both candy bars were filled with nuts and your decision could kill you.

Now, I’m not saying your vote can kill you, but that is just wrong and can be reversed. Where do you representatives stand on the important topics you are concerned with? This is why you should all take a step back and realize it’s important for everyone to dig down past the coating and find out what the ingredients are.

Activist or not, you should exercise your right to vote. Don’t let the 34 percent decide which causes you care about.
“Thank You for Your Service”, is a phrase often heard by veterans. Ideally, what honors a veterans’ service is to provide an atmosphere that helps to foster their honor. Veteran’s Upward Bound (VUB) with TRIO at Pensacola State College (PSC) has succeeded in fulfilling its vow to honor veterans and helping them realize their academic potential. VUB is a military subsidiary under the more national umbrella of TRIO that offers a variety of tools to local vets who are interested about re-entering the college scene. To polish off academic rust, non-credited, developmental classes are provided to help foster each veteran’s academic experience. “Vets like being around other vets. We like the comradery.” said Rob Gregg, Director of VUB. “I liken the [veteran] center to a church. If at any given time, there’s just a bunch of people standing around talking. And they just exchange stories.” Once the veteran has found their scholastic footing, TRIO takes on the role of advocate in assisting them further. “Our primary function is to serve as advising,” said Bill Tice, an advisor for the TRIO, Veteran Student Support Services branch. Veteran Student Support Services is the equivalent of Student Support Services. “We’re here to help remove obstacles.” Michele Coger swears by VUB/TRIO. “It’s definitely a 10. I think it gave me a lot of structure.” said the four year Navy veteran. “It got me ready for the college environment.” In addition to being one of the premiere military academic programs in the state of Florida, VUB has since joined the trend of expansions at PSC. This spring semester launched the VUB and TRIO grand opening. The event marked 10 years of assisting veterans and was made possible by federal funding to the sum of $1.2 million. “It’s an honor for us to be able to provide additional services to veterans.” said PSC President Ed Meadows. “Both of these programs do some of the same things but at different places in a veteran’s college careers.” Much of the excitement surrounding the recent grand opening is grounded in the reallocation of space within the halls of the program. The student lounge was relocated from the front office to far more spacious quarters towards the rear. The computer lab received significant upgrades as well. Joshua Tallant, a 22 year Air Force veteran who works closely with VUB said, “Veteran’s Upward Bound has helped me in major ways.” “Math wise, I wasn’t ready for school.” And don’t worry veterans who are in doubt about your math skills. “100% of veterans need the remedial math.” Much of the excitement surrounding the recent grand opening is grounded in the reallocation of space within the halls of the program. The student lounge was relocated from the front office to far more spacious quarters towards the rear. The computer lab received significant upgrades as well. Joshua Tallant, a 22 year Air Force veteran who works closely with VUB said, “Veteran’s Upward Bound has helped me in major ways.” “Math wise, I wasn’t ready for school.” And don’t worry veterans who are in doubt about your math skills. “100% of veterans need the remedial math.”}

By Josh McQueen

VUB/TRIO continues march of excellence

Robb Gregg, Chip Simmons, Patrick Dawson, Herb Wolf and Dorian Busby cut the ribbon at the VUB/TRIO opening.

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Sandy Sansing

Sandy Sansing

Photo by Josh McQueen

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By Josh McQueen

Victory Presbyterian Church

Victory Presbyterian Church

Photo by Josh McQueen
by letting art be your guide, you’ll be able to see nearly 140 of his paintings. That view of my travels, I have been able to view over 200 of his paintings across eight different countries. This summer, I’ll be visiting Auvers-sur-Oise, France where Vincent van Gogh died and is now buried.

Rachel Giordano, a PSC student who has visited Vincent van Gogh’s grave herself, feels that traveling can leave a lasting impact on a person’s perspective. “It made me appreciate art more being over there and going to all these great museums and seeing all the world-famous art,” Giordano said. “Traveling broadens your way of thinking. Seeing how other people live in other countries makes you appreciate your life more.”

If art is going to be a focus of your summer travels, you’ll want to buy a city pass for your destination of choice. City passes offer entrance into countless museums and parks, and sometimes even include forms of transportation like hop-on, hop-off buses or subway tickets. You can find these passes for sale at a discounted rate on Viator or on a city’s official tourism websites.

Next time you pass one of the captivating art pieces, take the time to stop and consider why it was created. Whether it’s in a good way or a bad way.

Michael Cole read his work about depression and anxiety, but assured the audience that he was okay. “I had to write about it to process it,” he said. “I’ve been through some pretty rough times.”

Abby Ophalenik used a Literary Roundtable prompt, where “we had to write about something really gross” (hers was necrophilia), signing off with the irony of “I need to see through the veil of it.”

“I find that art can help us to remember that the world is so much bigger than our campus; the work you are putting into your degree today could lead you leaving your own artistic mark on this crazy, beautiful, world.”

Whether you’re a painter, writer, musician or something totally unrelated to the arts, you probably have a piece of work that you deeply relate to, in one way or another.

A reputable art piece leaves its mark on many cultures rather than just the country it was created in. The cultural impact that art, of any form, leaves on the world can help society understand specific characteristics or challenges of the era it was made in or the direct mixture of joy and pain that generation felt.

For me, art has often directed my “travel compass.” Sometimes, when I’m not sure which city I want to visit next, I google where one of my favorite paintings is located and plan my trip around that excursion. It might sound a little unusual, but people have been throwing darts at a map to choose their destination for decades, right?

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Bats/Throws R/R

Pirate makes 1st Team All-Panhandle Conference

By Barron Demons

Alexis ’Guz’ Guzman shines in her first season as a college softball player and was voted on the First Team All-Panhandle Conference.

In what was arguably the most important game of the season during a play-in tournament and during the FCSAA (Florida College System Activities Association) Region 8 State Tournament, center fielder Natalie Sorensen came up big for the Pirates.

The freshman hails from Monticello, Fla., just outside of Tallahassee, Fla. She played at Aucilla Christian Academy [high school] before committing to play for the Pirates. Sorensen finished second on the team in home runs and had a .285 batting average during the regular season.

Most players usually perform better when playing at home. When playing away, however, Sorensen has had her better games.

She has a .320 batting average, 13 runs batted in (RBI) and three of her five home runs came when the Pirates played an away game.

One of those home runs came on Saturday April 21, when she belted a grand slam to center field. The four runs batted in by Sorensen were enough to hold off Gulf Coast State College (GCSC) and advance to the state tournament.

In Longwood, Fla., at the FCSAA Region 8 State Tournament, Sorensen hit another home run during an elimination game against Indiana River State College (IRSC). It was the only run scored during the team’s run for a state championship.

During the Pirates final five games, Sorensen had a hot bat. She contributed with two home runs, seven RBIs and five hits.

During the Pirates final five games, Sorensen had a hot bat. She contributed with two home runs, seven RBIs and five hits.

The Pirates season ended in a heartbreaking fashion during the final inning of their FCSAA Region 8 State Tournament game, but Sorensen will be returning for her sophomore year to continue to produce as a player, and to help the Pirates get back into the state tournament.

By Barron Demons

Alexis Guzman shines in her first season as a college softball player and was voted on the First Team All-Panhandle Conference.

First Team All-Panhandle Conference is an award given to some of the players who are considered the best in their conference after every season. Guzman is a freshman, Florida native and played at American Senior High School.

She averaged a jaw dropping .752 from the plate her senior season, proving to have what it takes to play at the next level. She has been a heavy contributor to the Pirate Softball Team this season. She plays both sides of the ball and multiple positions on defense including catcher and third base.

“Without my team, I wouldn’t be where I am today, and I wouldn’t have came close to making first team all conference.” During the regular season, she batted .343 which was good for third best on the team.

“I honestly couldn’t have done it without my coaches and teammates. They’ve been there for me through all the good and bad.”

The top two teams in their respective conference get a chance to compete in the FCSAA (Florida College System Activities Association) State Tournament.

Guzman stepped up and was one of the better players on the team during conference play. While playing conference opponents, she led the team in runs batted in (RBI) with 17, tied for home runs with 3, tied for second in hits with 17 and tied for first with six extra base hits.

At one point during the season, Guzman had a seven game hitting streak and tallied four RBIs in that span.

One of her best games came against conference opponent Tallahassee Community College (TCC). In a single game, she had two hits, two home runs and five RBIs.

“I went out there and had fun with my teammates. We all had confidence in one another and they just helped me build up my confidence.”

With another year of eligibility, Guzman has the opportunity to become an even better player and a chance to make First Team All-Panhandle Conference for a second year in a row.

“My goal for this upcoming season would be to get faster, stronger and smarter. I want to make First Team All-Conference as well as First Team All-State.”

Guzman will certainly be one of the more talented players on next year’s roster, and she will look to have another superb year entering her last season as a Pirate.

Photo by Barron Demons

Freshman Natalie Sorensen has come up big in critical moments for the Pirates.
Pirates punch ticket to state tournament

By Barron Demons

During conference play-in games against rivals Northwest Florida State College (NWFSC) and Gulf Coast State College (GCSC), the Pirates went undefeated and secured a spot in the state tournament. With the number one seed secured by Chipola College, there was a race for the number two seed and a spot to play in the Division one, Florida College System Activities Association (FCSAA) Softball State Tournament.

The Pirates traveled to Panama City on April 20 to take on NWFSC. The winner would advance to play GCSC in a best-of-three game series.

"I think we would all like to get there [state] and prove something, but honestly just with us being there, it has already been proven." -Shelby Thornsberry

PSC dominated NWFSC in the single-elimination game and shut out the Raiders 5-0. Shelby Griffin pitched a complete game only surrendering two hits. The Pirates cruised to victory and stared into the face of盖茨, who cracked a National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) top five national ranking in the beginning of the season.

Immediately following the shutout over the Raiders, PSC unleashed their batting power against GCSC. The Pirates combined for 17 hits and outlasted the Commodores 8-6. Alexis Guzman, Natalie Sorensen, Kaelen Koehler, Madison Marshall, Shelby Thornsberry and Danielle de Ruiter each had a run batted in (RBI). Savannah Foster pitched a complete game and finished with an astonishing 10 strikeouts to secure the victory for PSC.

The Pirates remained focused, and their strength showed in the second game on April 21, as complacency never settled into the minds of the Lady Pirates. With the bases loaded in the second inning and Natalie Sorensen up to bat, she found her pitch and unloaded a fierce swing, sending the ball towering over the center fielder's head and over the fence for a grand slam. The Pirates took a 4-0 lead and never looked back.

In the same inning, on the defensive side of the ball, Lia Johnson made a spectacular over the shoulder catch for the Pirates to end the inning as GCSC threatened to score. The Commodores eventually found their rhythm and got on the board in the fourth inning, making the score 4-2.

Kaelen Koehler was sent in as the new pitcher and shut out GCSC in the fifth and sixth inning. The seventh inning emerged, and the Commodores had one final chance to secure a spot in the state tournament to save their season. The Commodores were able to across another run in the seventh making the score 4-3. With two outs obtained, Koehler threw a connecting pitch, but Thornsberry made a diving catch to capture the third out.

"That play had a lot of heart in it," sophomore Alexandrea Verardi said. The spectacular catch was the final out, and the Pirates gathered on the field to celebrate that they officially secured a spot to make a run for a state championship.

"I wouldn't say it was my best catch, but it was definitely my most clutch," Thornsberry said. The Pirates won't change their approach for the state tournament games and will look to continue where they left off. The team is eager to continue their winning streak and prove they can compete with the best.

"I think we would all like to get there and prove something, but honestly just with us being there, it has already been proven," Thornsberry said.

The Lady Pirates are currently on a three game winning streak, but they now have the mindset that they want to chase a state and even possibly a NJCAA National Championship.

Seventh inning rally ends Lady Pirates season

By Barron Demons

The Pirate softball team made a spectacular run to place a bid for the FCSAA (Florida College System Activities Association) Region 8 State Tournament, but fell short against Indian River State College (IRSC) 2-1.

The Lady Pirates defeated conference opponents Northwest Florida State College (NWFSC) and Gulf Coast State College (GCSC) at the end of the regular season. The team placed in the state tournament, and the Lady Pirates induced the confidence that they could possibly earn a state championship.

The Pirates first game of the double-elimination series was against number one nationally ranked Florida Southwestern State College (FSSWC).

Southwestern defeated the Pirates 3-2 earlier this year in the first game of the season. The score would be different, but the outcome was the same as the Pirates couldn't push across any runs and were defeated 3-0.

On mound for the Pirates was Shelby Griffin and Savannah Foster. Griffin was the first pitcher and only pitched 2.1 innings. She surrendered three hits and two runs. Foster saw the mound in a relief situation and pitched 3.2 innings. She gave up one hit and one run. Both pitchers were able to strike out two batters.

However, the Pirates offense was a threat to score in the third inning.

Lia Johnson picked up a single and had a successful steal attempt to second base. She tried to score from second base when Kayla Leibman hit a ball in play. Unfortunately, with two outs, Johnson was tagged out heading to home plate ending the inning. Johnson, Leibman and Daniel de Ruiter each had a hit in the game.

Despite the loss, the Pirates had another chance to redeem themselves the next day to capture a win and move deeper into the tournament.

The Pirates next opponent was Indian River State College.

The Pirates lost the day before by the hands of Seminole State College. The two losing teams (PSC and IRSC) would then play an elimination game. PSC struck first in the second inning off the bat of Natalie Sorensen.

Sorensen took a pitch, and belted a homerun over right field putting the Pirates ahead early.

Sophomore pitcher Jensen Strickland was on the mound for the Pirates in game two. She pitched almost the entire game with 6.1 innings, six hits, two runs and six total strikeouts in her last stint as a Pirate.

The Pirates seemed to be in control much of the game until a heartbreaking seventh and final inning.

Indian River State rallied with a pair of singles and a sacrifice bunt to advance runners in scoring position. The next batter singled, and a run scored to tie the game 1-1.

Lia Johnson made a spectacular over the shoulder catch for PSC.

Foster entered the game and became the new pitcher to help the Pirates get out of the jam once again.

The first batter that Foster faced hit a single into right field and loaded the bases with only one out. Foster was able to get the next batter to pop out to secure the second out. The pressure now fell on the defense to get the last out to send the game into extra innings.

Ahead in the count 1-2, Foster’s pitch was hit to third baseman Caitlyn Yockey. Yockey attempted to secure the out, but the ball was tipped off her glove, and the winning run scored from third base. The Pioneers scored their only two runs in the final inning, but it was enough to defeat the Pirates and end their season.

The Pirates phenomenal season with a 28-24 record, and 10 sophomores will graduate and depart from the Pirate softball team. Those sophomores include: Caitlyn Yockey, Brittnay Rayfield, Danielle de Ruiter, Jensen Strickland, Madison Marshall, Shelby Thornsberry, Ashley Garoneal, Hayley Pelko, Lia Johnson and Alexandrea Verardi.

Congratulations on an outstanding year and good luck next season.