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Beyond the Stage: The Magic of Fourth Wall Theater Club

Jailyn Santiago
North Bureau Chief

The lights begin to dim, wrapping the audience into an eager silence. As the darkness begins to swallow the room, the curtain starts to rise. Inch by inch, a world they have never seen is unveiled before their eyes. For the next few hours, the audience will journey through this new world together with laughter and tears and leave with a newfound admiration for the power of theater. Fourth Wall, the theater club at Broward College, has put on amazing shows that never fail to captivate the entire crowd. "Our theater program is accredited by the National Association of Schools of Theater. That's a pretty big deal. I think only about seven or eight community college theater programs in the country have this distinction," said Mariah Reed, theater professor and director. She highlights how the college's program is able to separate itself from others with a passion and understanding of professional standards."Our theater professors are all working professionals in the business of theater and film."The program sets the students up for success and helps them get ready for the workforce by the time they graduate. They offer classes that allow students to work both on and off stage, including makeup, acting, and voice."When students leave our program, we hope that they've learned the value of working in collaboration with others on a team, the value of discipline,



The Foreigner play.
Photo courtesy of Broward College.

and an appreciation for the art of producing live theater."Under the leadership of Reed and fellow director Jenna Wyatt, they have produced outstanding shows that have drawn large audiences to their work. They both ensure that their actors, tech, and audiences feel welcome in every setting. The Fourth Wall also offers a variety of workshops on different topics and skills that can be applied when the students graduate BC. Those who attend are able to take what was done and apply it to their everyday life. Victoria Wolf, a freshman and member of Fourth Wall, speaks on how she applies what she has learned in theater to her everyday life. "Whether I'm on or off stage, I constantly want to be improving. Humans can never achieve perfection, but there is always room to grow. Broward College and Fourth Wall provide professors who inspire me to make new choices and embrace vulnerability."Behind every rehearsal and performance, there is a team of individuals who help create this magic off stage. The tech crew has a multitude of jobs, working quietly in the dark during the entire performance. Zi Haurie emphasizes how working tech is not as easy as it seems. "The technical crew is extremely important when bringing a production to life. [The technical crew] has the ability to immerse its audience within each scene and moment in a show. Without tech, you have no lights, set, or sound." Starting in tech is a fantastic way to find out your passion for theater. Some other jobs commonly found in technical theater include the stage management team, costume and wardrobe, and props. A lighting designer can make the same set go from eerie and sinister to joyous and warm with just one cue. In today's world, we search for something to distract us from the problems going on in the world. Yet, we seem to get caught in a loop between needing a distraction and then getting caught in a web of distractions. Within the calls of the college's Performing Cultural Arts Theater (PCAT), the actors take the time to warm up, put on their artist clothes, and work together to put on meaningful performances. More modern shows have found inventive ways to discuss hard topics through dialogue and song. The fall mainstage, The Foreigner by Larry Shue, covers topics of racism and xenophobia. The cast and director made a video presentation to inform audiences on the current issues and how we can all learn from one another regardless of where we are from. "Theater is a form of art where we tell stories of the past, present, and future. We are the ones that get to remind our society of current issues and how we can face these struggles", said Tommaso Randis, Vice president of Fourth Wall. "It's important to have that community and allow the space to ask these questions that do make you uncomfortable because that's when great things can come to life."As the actors take their bow and the curtain begins to come down, we see how theater chooses to memorialize humanity in our forever growing society. The Fourth Wall theater club voices these changes and current events with their performances. Take the time to support your local theater and explore the magic that theater creates.

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North Campus Social Science Club Visits Jewish Museum in Miami

Breannah Warrner
Staff Writer

Professor Dr. Mirsad Krijestorac recently took his Social Science Club students to the Jewish Museum of Florida-FIU in Miami. Once there, students had a chance to explore the story of Jewish communities in Florida, the issues they have faced, the contributions they have made to the regional development, and their beautiful artwork. The Museum is housed in a historic building from 1936 with stained-glass windows with intricate zodiac symbols decorating the walls. A beautiful art deco chandelier hung from the Moorish dome. The exterior walls were covered with brightly colored bas-relief panels. The building, which was originally the first synagogue in Miami Beach, was filled with artifacts revealing the history of the state: photographs, historic posters, religious objects, and antique dresses. The museum features the art of Steve Marcus. Using



Jewish Museum of Florida-FIU in Miami.
Photo by Breannah Warner/The Observer.

an underground comic style, the famous artist blended Jewish culture with hot rods and road trip aesthetics. Students have also had a chance to view the art of Eric Finzi, whose family was one of the few Italian Jews to escape the Holocaust for the United States. Perhaps the most interesting part of the current museum setting was a new exhibit on the history of Jews and cannabis. The museum curator explained to students that references to cannabis might have been made in the Hebrew Bible, and that Middle Eastern Jewish communities historically used cannabis for celebrations and festivities. The connection of cannabis with the Jewish community was so strong that President Nixon, who began the War on Drugs, complained about how many Jews promoted cannabis as one of the artifacts in the exhibit shows. Students learned about the large connections American Jews had with cannabis, from scientists like Carl Sagan to poets like Allen Ginsburg. Strong connections were also visible by the display of objects from Jewish marijuana companies, such as a Passover-themed rolling tray, a menorah-shaped bong, and a marijuana leaf kippah. The Jewish Museum is in the South Beach neighborhood of Miami, right next door to the Wolfsonian Museum, South Pointe Park, South Pointe Beach, and several eclectic restaurants and bars. Broward College students enjoyed the visit and appreciated the opportunity to learn about the most comprehensive history of South Florida's various communities. One of the students, Pierre Lucita, who studies physical therapy said, "I was so happy to learn how the Jewish community manages to overcome challenges and grew to become such an important part of South Florida diverse community."

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What's happening around campus



A head start on Thanksgiving with BC's Hawks-giving feast

Karisma Polly
Staff Writer

In our previous semester during the fall on Central Campus, Broward College students and staff gathered to enjoy a great meal, socialize, and listen to live music at the annual Hawks-giving feast.

The Hawks-giving feast was like a miniature Thanksgiving festival; it included live music, good food and was very well attended. According to Sabrina Bell, who is the coordinator of Student Life and one of the event organizers, she said "the purpose of the event is to engage students and faculty together so that everyone can mingle and have conversations and get to know each other on a different level." She added, "This is not the only event they have; Monday-Thursday Student Life has many events for students to engage in." And with the number of students and faculty that kept pouring in, and the sounds of people in conversation, that purpose was achieved.

Additionally, many of the students found the event welcoming. "I came to this event because it looked very interesting and nice to enjoy," said Julianna Mollak, a first-year student at Broward College. The Hawks-giving feast also gave students the chance to spend time with other students. "I came to this event because I thought it would be a great opportunity to bring my friends together and sit, eat and enjoy a meal," said student Amila Bartley.

Not only was it a welcoming event and gave students the opportunity to spend time with each other but it also gave staff members the opportunity to interact with other staff. "My favorite part of this event is seeing people you don't usually see in different departments all in one space," said Broward College staff member Sylivia Selva. The Hawks-giving feast also included many other elements which students and staff greatly enjoyed, such as the Broward College band.

Many of the students and staff loved the music and the food at the Hawks-giving feast. "I am really enjoying the music and food so far," said Chelsea Almonte. In fact, the music could be heard all across campus. "I heard the music all the way from building 5 and was like, wow," said Alex Orocco. There were also specific dishes that students enjoyed. "I liked the mac and cheese," said Justin Michels. Students also enjoyed the lasagna, turkey, jerk sauce, corn bread, chicken, and many of the students loved the stuffing as well.

Overall, The Hawks-giving feast was a great event that brought everyone together before the Thanksgiving break. It provided faculty and students a chance to indulge in a wonderful Thanksgiving meal and listen to amazing music played by the Broward College band.



Students enjoying their meal at the Hawksgiving Feast.

Photo by Karisma Polly/The Observer

Now, if you enjoyed this event there are many more events in January like the Welcome Back Bash on Jan.15, along with the Lunar New Year Party on Jan. 29. Try going to these events, they might just give you the same experience as the Hawks-giving feast.

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When in doubt, go to your library this semester

Valeria De Miguel Melo
Managing Editor

Ronald Weasley in the Harry Potter series once said that going to the library is just what Hermione Granger does. "When in doubt, go to the library," he said. This is especially true for college students working hard to excel in their classes and gather as much knowledge as they possibly can during their time on campus. After all, a library is the home to knowledge and experiences printed on paper and made available to the public eye.

But libraries are so much more than that. They are the place where sparks fly after a person discovers their new favorite book, the place where study groups gather to carry each other through testing week, the place where dreams begin and where hours of work are put into a goal to make it a reality, and they are the place reality and possibility merge into one.

For Broward College and its libraries, it is no different. With all its available resources, kind librarians, and study spaces, the libraries at Broward College slowly become the place where students hang out the most. Whether students are working hard, or having a laugh with their friends, the BC libraries are a home to anyone who passes through them.



Library on Central Campus.
Photo courtesy of Broward College.

Just like a home, the libraries at Broward College have many spaces accessible for students to spend their time in. There are study rooms students can rent out for some time to concentrate in solitude and power through their to-do list, or to bring a group of friends to study with, or just to hang out and have a laugh. These rooms let the outside world fade away, creating a space for focus—whether you're alone or with a group. The reference room at the Central Campus, with its comfortable couches and spacious tables, is ideal for group projects or study sessions. Soft conversation is always welcomed there, which permeates the air with slow, whispered conversations, and low laughs between friends and classmates which mix with the clicking of keyboards and the flipping of book pages to create an academic and quiet musical cacophony. This room also houses individual and cubicle–like tables that have electric sockets to charge students' electronics. This room is my personal favorite to study in by myself. With noise cancelling headphones blasting Taylor Swift, the ambiance in the reference room is scholarly but also light and friendly, which makes study time feel less like a task, and more like an activity. But this activity can be quite difficult to do if you don't have a laptop with you. However, the libraries at Broward College are equipped with computers; they are located all throughout the library: on the first floor in the main area, on the second floor, and in the Academic Success Center (ASC).

The ASC is a section of the libraries on campus that are specifically there to help students achieve academic excellence. They help in subjects like math, English, science, and so much more to make sure students are confident in their level of understanding of the topics they are viewing in class. If you're struggling with a subject or a topic, you can rest assured that the staff at the ASC will work tirelessly to help you. Even if you just want to review before a test, or need some objective perspective on an essay, you are always warmly welcomed at the Academic Success Center. There are different labs for each subject, and each one of them has an incredible and caring staff ready to help students with whatever they are having trouble with.

But the ASC isn't the only place in the library with helpful and kind employees. The librarians at the main desk in the lobby can help you navigate the online databases on the school website or direct you to any physical book you might need, as well as help you with research for papers. It is very heartwarming to know that every student at Broward College has a place to go and people to rely on, and the librarians deserve a lot of the credit for the warm ambiance of the libraries.

On campus, our libraries are homes for memories, hard work, and human connection. They spark new interests and hold students' hands through their academic lives. It is truly a privilege to have a building such as these in our daily lives in which information sits at our fingertips, possibilities permeate the air, and altruistic faces are all around you. It is my hope that every student passing through campus finds a place in the book–covered hallways and seeks support when they need it. And remember that if you ever have any doubts, make sure to head to the library.

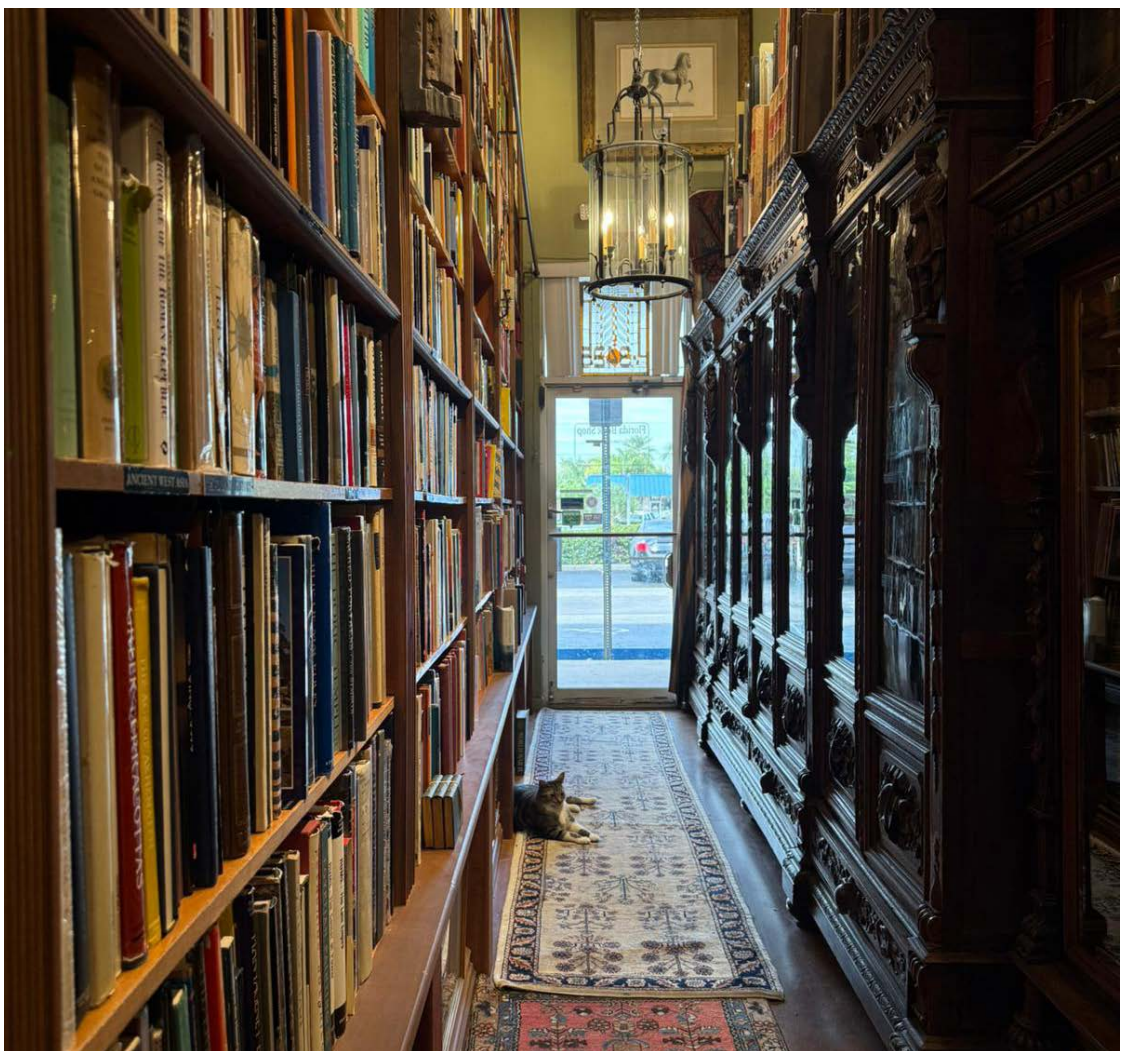
For more information and library hours, visit https://www.broward.edu/library/

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Exploring Nostalgia: A Visit to the Old Florida Bookshop

Paola Falquez
Social Media Editor

Nestled in Dania Beach, just a ten-minute drive from Broward College's Central Campus, lies a hidden treasure for book lovers, history buffs, and those seeking a quiet escape.



The Old Florida Bookshop. Photo by Paola Falquez/The Observer

The Old Florida Bookshop, with its rich history, eclectic collection, and cozy atmosphere, offers an experience unlike any chain bookstore or library.

Walking into the Old Florida Bookshop is like stepping into a time capsule. Broward College psychology student Can Altug describes the atmosphere vividly. "It smelled like old books, musty—what you would expect a bookstore or old library to smell like." The store's wooden shelves, antique furniture, and oriental rugs create an ambiance of nostalgia that lingers long after you have left. Adding to its charm is Peter the cat, a frequent sight lounging among the shelves.



Peter the library cat. Photo by Paola Falquez/The Observer

Altug, a student interviewed during a visit, shared his initial reaction: "From the outside, it looked like just another building, but inside, the depth and atmosphere took me by surprise." He noted that the store was not just about books — it featured vinyl records, vintage postcards, and even old newspapers, making it an exciting experience for collectors and history enthusiasts alike.

Unlike chain bookstores like Barnes & Noble, the Old Florida Bookshop offers a sense of authenticity and connection to the past. Altug explained, "It is a different vibe. The smell, the look, the atmosphere—it is all unique. There is no Starbucks here, but there is a cat on the floor. It is genuinely a bookstore, not a department store with books."

The shop's owner, William Chrisant, has cultivated this unique environment over decades. Chrisant's passion for books as artifacts began during his graduate studies and eventually led to the opening of his first bookshop in Akron, Ohio. Over the years, he expanded to various locations before settling in Florida in 2009. With over 50,000 items in its collection, the Old Florida Bookshop reflects Chrisant's lifelong dedication to preserving and celebrating literature and history.

For college students, the bookshop is more than just a store. Altug sees it as a resource for academics and a relaxing escape. "If you like reading or specific topics like philosophy or psychology, it is a great place to find unique books. The photography section is also perfect for students taking photography classes." John echoed this sentiment, highlighting the affordability and variety. "It is better to support a local bookstore than big online companies. The books are fairly priced, whether you are looking for rare finds or general reads." The shop's charm and unique offerings make it an excellent spot to unwind between classes or explore after a day on campus.

Beyond its books, the Old Florida Bookshop fosters a sense of community. Altug reflected on the discovery. "I have been at Broward College for almost four years and wish I had known about this place sooner. It is one of those spots I would recommend to friends looking for something cool to do." The bookshop's nostalgic atmosphere also resonates on a personal level. Altug described his visit as a trip down memory lane. "It reminded me of my mother's aunt's bookshelf. For me, it felt nostalgic, but everyone might experience it differently."

The Old Florida Bookshop's existence serves as a reminder of the importance of supporting local businesses. "If we don't support stores like this, they might not survive," Altug remarked. Independent bookstores like this one offer a distinctive touch and a curated selection that is hard to find elsewhere. By choosing to shop locally, customers contribute to preserving a piece of cultural history.

Whether you are a photographer searching for inspiration, a student hunting for a rare textbook, or simply someone who appreciates the feel of a musty old book in your hands, the Old Florida Bookshop is worth the trip. As Chrisant continues to share his passion for literature, visitors can look forward to discovering treasures that ignite their curiosity and love for the written word.

Make your next stop at the Old Florida Bookshop and immerse yourself in a world where history and stories come alive.

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The Old Library interior. Photo by Paola Falquez/The Observer

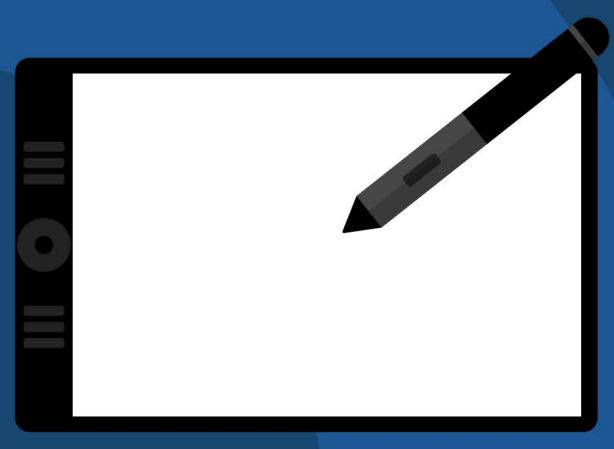
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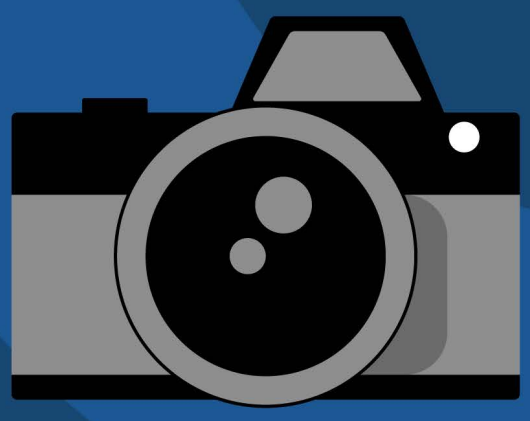
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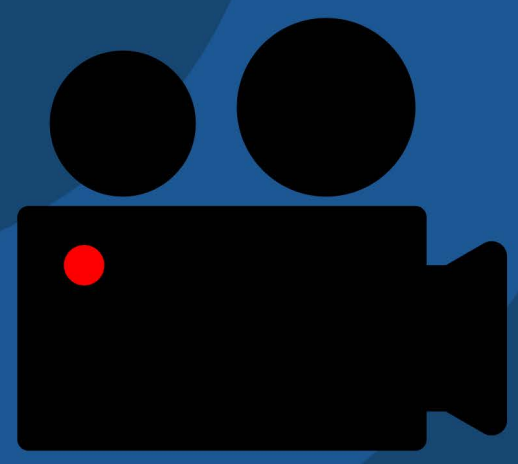
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The Most Popular Resolutions For The Upcoming New Year 2025

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These five resolutions are the most popular for the year 2025:

1. Improve Physical Health-
More physical activity, weight management, more healthy eating, adherence to a fitness program, etc.

2. Financial Goals-
To save money more, to pay down different debts and to spend less to become economically stable.

3. Focus on Mental Health and Self-Care-
Concentrate on the relief of stress, mindfulness, and the duration of leisure time as well as on relaxation.

4. Enhance Relationships-
Bonding with relatives and friends in addition to partners and family members. This might include devoting more quality time to each other or more quality to communication.

5. Personal Development-
Training a new ability, developing a creative pursuit, or pursuing professional development.



Designed by Matthew McDowell

NBA 2024-25 Season: News and Notes

Jordan Stephenson
South Bureau Chief

There have been many intriguing games, players, teams, and storylines this 2023-24 NBA season. Some of those storylines include the young rising teams, the young rising stars, the In Season Tournament second year hopefulness, the MVP race, the potential All-Star team voting, NBA parity, the unknown Rookie of the Year race, etc. All these things that I have highlighted above, has assuredly led to this extremely entertaining NBA season so far. Also, there are the championship and playoff contenders who are, underperforming to a certain degree and those who are meeting expectations, even with their current situation influx.

The top current young rising teams are the Cavaliers (31-4), the Thunder (30-5), the Magic (22-16) but mostly without Paolo Banchero and Franz Wagner with the same oblique injuries, the Rockets (23-12), the Grizzlies (24-13), the surprising Pistons who .500 or better for the first time in over a year (18-18), the Spurs also 18-18, etc. All these teams have exceeded most if not all expectations, have been playing great basketball since the beginning of the season. Also, most of them are way over .500 or better season record, especially the Thunder and Cavs surprisingly who are on a 15 and 10 game winning streak respectively. Both dominant teams meet in an epic battle on Jan. 8, on ESPN (this game was flexed in because of their dominant win streaks). The main thing that all these young rising teams have in common is that they each have a young rising star or superstar, combined with a great young core of solid players that are growing with each other. So, the top rising stars and superstars are Luka Doncic, Shai Gilgeous- Alexander, Ja Morant, Tyrese Haliburton, Anthony Edwards, LaMelo Ball, Alperen Sengun, Paola Banchero, Tyler Herro, Tyrese Maxey Cade Cunningham, Jalen Williams, Cam Thomas, Austin Reaves, Jalen Green, Jaren Jackson Jr.

Most of these young stars and superstars, who are mostly hybrid guards, are averaging over 22 points per game, and most of them are leading their respective teams in scoring; also, in other categories like rebounding and assists. All of these young stars and superstars are primed to make an All-Star team again, or even make their first All-Star team. I honestly believe most, if not all, these young stars and superstars, will make the All-Star team. They all have made this NBA season even much better, because of the many different spectacular games, plays, and moments that they provide on a daily game basis. Speaking of young and rising stars and superstars, Victor Wembanyama, Chet Holmgren and even Evan Mobley as second year (sophomores) and fourth year players respectively, are definitely stars right now and future superstars of the NBA, mainly because of their unique play styles as seven footers who are dominant defensively. They both are having monumental impacts or their respective teams, in the Spurs, Thunder and Cavs, especially defensively because all three are already top 10 in blocks per game, with Wemby leading the NBA again with 4.0 bpg , Holmgren again averaging 2.6 blocks per game, and Mobley averaging 1.7 bpg. As an aside, Dyson Daniel's leads the league in steals with 3.2 stls per game.

Most NBA analysts would agree with me that the implementation of the In Season Tournament last season was a huge success for players and the fans, so everyone hopes the second season of it will at least be as good or even better. The competition level was through the roof in every game, the special courts and jerseys were spectacular, and the fans enjoyed it for the most part. This season, the In Season Tournament officially started Nov. 12, and continued every Tuesday and Friday into December. first two featured national tv games will be, Mavericks vs Warriors which is Klay's first return to face his former team, and then the Knicks vs 76ers which is a rematch of their physical playoff series. The In Season Tournament was extremely entertaining as predicted, with the Bucks defeating the Thunder in a defensive stalwart game 97-81, to secure the second NBA Cup Championship, and with Giannis Antetokounmpo (Greek Freak) having a 26-point triple double which gave him tournament MVP. A couple weeks after those intense and competitive games, the Christmas Day special games were even more intense, competitive, and exciting clutch times, which surprisingly boosted the ratings of those pregame shows with Stephen A. Smith and obviously those competitive matchups.



The Cavs Dominance this season. Photo courtesy of ESPN.com

The top five current MVP candidates (with their points per game) are SGA (31.3 ppg) Nikola Jokic (31.5 ppg), Greek Freak (31.6 ppg), Jayson Tatum (28.1 ppg), Karl Anthony-Towns (KAT) (25.3 ppg), etc. Three out of the five players are averaging 30 + points per game, including Jokic who was averaging a triple-double but dropped to 9.7 assists recently. Also, the honorable mention for MVP is definitely Donovan Mitchell, who has the Cavs as basically the best team so far this season (31-4); while averaging 23.3 ppg. This MVP will definitely go down to the wire, like last season when Jokic won, and like the past few seasons.

Shams Charania (SHAMS) reported some extremely important NBA news the past couple weeks. Shams reported that Kawhi Leonard and Zion Williamson will return from their respective injuries this week. He also reported that Jonathan Kuminga is out at least three weeks with an ankle injury. He also reported that Doncic will be re-evaluated later this month with a calf injury on Christmas, and that Kyrie Irving will be out 1-2 weeks with a bulging disc in his back, which is extremely unfortunate timing for the Mavericks. The first trade Shams reported was the Warriors acquiring Dennis Schroder and a 2025 2nd round pick from the Nets, by sending De' Anthony Melton and three 2nd round picks to the Nets. The next trade Shams reported was the Lakers acquiring Dorian Finnsy-Smith and Shake Milton from the Nets, by sending D'Angelo Russell, Maxwell Lewis, and three 2nd round picks to the Nets. The Nets will for sure be one of the most active teams around the trade deadline, mainly because Cam Johnson is basically one of the sought darter wing players. Lastly, Shams has been reporting consistently on the Jimmy Butler trade situation the past few weeks; so last week he reported that Butler prefers to be traded from the Heat asap, and then that Butler was suspended 7 games by Pat Riley and the Heat for "multiple instances of conduct detrimental to the team." In my opinion, I think that was extremely excessive because it could've been 1-2 games, mainly because he didn't do anything to warrant that amount like Draymond Green did.

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Self-Perception: Stop Holding Yourself Back

Valeria De Miguel Melo
Managing Editor



https://skylum.com/blog/mirror-photography-ideas-and-tips

Our world is formed by perception; life is a mirror. How you see yourself is how the world sees you and how you see the world; self-perception ties into everything.

There is a term in psychology called selective attention. It is defined as "the ability to focus on a particular task or object while ignoring distracting or irrelevant information."

And this ability can either be your worst enemy or your best friend because it gives you the power to decide what you notice in the world. If when you look in the mirror, all you can see is the things that you lack, there will never be room to see every blessing around you.

And there is a huge difference between an insecure person and a person with insecurities. The former lets their "flaws" consume them and those "flaws" are all they can ever focus on. The person with insecurities puts effort into loving every part of themselves and decides to notice that they bring so many things to the table, which means that their insecurities are infinitely outweighed by their values, personality, and charisma.

How you perceive yourself is important because it'll determine what you can achieve in life. You see, if you spend your time obsessing over imperfection and how society views you, you will never take chances, because what if you fail? Even worse, what if you fail and everybody is there to watch?

The thing is that everyone has been conditioned to care what other people think, and unless that endless cycle of worrying about how you look to others is broken, you will never have the strength to chase after your dreams. Because everyone can dream, but who can actually accomplish? Only those who wholeheartedly believe they can do anything. A person who has insecurities, as opposed to an insecure person, will decide to view themselves differently than the people around them. In a world full of no, they'll be a yes. In a world full of insecurities, they'll be confident. But how can everyone achieve this?

You have to realize that who you were five years ago is not who you are today. We all have a past, and mistakes we've made, or things we've said that we believe should not have been said. But instead of letting that define us, we need to let it be the thing that builds who we will become.

When I was little, a person whom I admired very much told me I was not skinny enough or pretty enough to be loved. And I believed them. I took that belief and carried it throughout my life, which led me to choose the wrong friends because I thought I was not deserving of any loving relationship, and to dismiss compliments because I didn't think my looks could ever be worthy of notice.

I spent years hating my body, my appearance, and even the way I acted, and I spent every second of every day trying to prove myself to those around me. It was only when I realized that the only person who had to be proud of me is me that I was able to finally love myself again.

If I take a second to admire how far I am from that little girl who was told she was not loved, I am able to build a new sense of self. And I get to create everything about this new version of me, which means I can decide what she is capable of. And so can you. But you need to stop associating yourself with the person who made that one mistake you keep punishing yourself for and decide who you want to be now.

You need to fully believe that this new version of you is capable of anything. If you do, your dreams will seem closer and more achievable, and

Liron Carin
Graphic Designer

now it's just a matter of taking action. You will decide to look for the opportunities around you that will help get you to where you want to go, instead of noticing whatever you once thought held you down.

You can take advantage of resources around you, including self-love influencers like Tam Kaur and Spencer Barbosa, and podcasts like the It's Not Personal Podcast on Spotify, which focuses on self-love and self-development, to propel you forward instead of comparing yourself and your life to someone else's.

It seems silly that all we need is one tiny shift in our perspective to change our entire self-image and our ability to reach any goal we set for ourselves. It seems even sillier that not many people talk about how our self-perception affects us, or how loving yourself is a choice.

But hopefully you've realized by now that all the power is within you, and how you choose to view the world. Because if you focus on the things that bring happiness into your life, you will never have to look at the things you once believed you lack ever again.

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A Glistening Goodbye: Dancing With the Stars Season 33 Finale

London Dernis
Online Editor

Season 33 of Dancing with The Stars (DWTS) came to its conclusion in a dazzling three-hour finale. Airing on Nov. 26, the night was full of shocking scores, friendly faces, and of course, new mirrorball champions. The finale featured five couples, deviating from the usual four. It included Chandler Kinney and Brandon Armstrong, Joey Graziadei and Jenna Johnson, Ilona Maher and Alan Bersten, Danny Amendola and Witney Carson, and Stephen Nedoroscik and Rylee Arnold. The scores from the previous week were carried into the week's scores. These scores would then be joined by scores from each pair's redemption and freestyle dance. Like every week, the DWTS finale kicked off with a stunning opening number before getting into the redemption dances. Redeeming their quickstep, Stephen and Rylee scored a 29/30. With yet another perfect score, Joey and Jenna got a 30/30 for their redemption cha cha. Danny and Whitney left the stage with straight 9s after a redemption tango. Similarly, Ilona and Alan took home a 27 with a fun redemption jive. Chandler and Brandon maintained their spot at the top of the leaderboard with another perfect score for their "APT" redemption jive. While they don't need to redeem themselves, season 32 champions Xochitl Gomez and Val Chmerkovskiy returned to the stage with a stunning dance to Chappell Roan's "Pink Pony Club." Then, head judge Derek Hough surprised everyone when he got out of his seat and onto the stage with former DWTS pro Mark Ballas for an Argentine tango. The pairs were now ready to showcase their freestyle dances. Freestyle is a fan favorite as it has no categorical boundaries and is meant to showcase all that was learned over the season. A standout freestyle of the night went to Stephen and Rylee. The couple got their first perfect score to "Viva La Vida" by Coldplay. The dance featured Stephen's Olympic teammates and captured Stephen's Superman moment.With their freestyle, Joey and Jenna were one point away from a perfect score on their final dance (thanks, Carrie Ann).



Courtesy of abc7ny.com.

They danced in honor of Joey's love for tennis, full of racket swings and neon lights. While many have left Barbie behind in 2023, Ken is still here in the form of Danny Amendola. Danny and Whitney's fun dance was full of fun references to Barbie characters and showed how much growth Danny has had since episode 1. They received a score of 29/30. Ilona, alongside Alan, made her mark as a true "Feminonenon" with her freestyle to Chappell Roan. This memorable dance was glistening in progress, jokes, and an all-around good time. The obvious hard work was worth it when the pair received their first perfect score. Chandler and Brandon's dance was one for the history books as the first Black duo to make it to the show's finale. Their freestyle was a celebration and acknowledgement of this, featuring the show's first ensemble cast of all Black dancers. Their dance received yet another perfect score. After dancing their hearts out, all five pairs lined up to receive their final placings. In fifth place was Ken (Danny). Fourth went to Superman (Stephen) himself. Chandler, after leading the majority of the weekly leaderboards by judge votes, ended in third. This proves just how important audience votes are when it comes to deciding the winner. After Chandler's surprising departure, the victory came down to Ilona and Joey. But first, a commercial break had to commence. In the words of Alfonso, "Thanks Julianne." That 2-minute break felt like ages, but upon return, the wait was up. At the end of the night, it was season 32 winner Val Chmercovsky who got to pass the title down to his own wife. That's right, Joey Graziadei and Jenna Johnson have been crowned the season 33 Mirrorball Champions. But fear not fellow fans, the show's not over yet. In its off-season, DWTS will be going on tour. All the pros will be coming along except for Val Chmerkovsky, Jenna Johnson, and Sasha Farber. Additionally, three celebrities will dazzle the stage with their appearances. First and foremost, Stephen is joining the tour as the co-host alongside Pro Emma Slater. Chandler Kinner, Ilona Maher, and the new Mirrorball Champion, Joey Graziadei, will join the crew at specific dates. Tickets are going fast so make sure to check if the DWTS tour is coming to a city near you.

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EDC Orlando: Three Days of Music and Memories

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Staff Writer



courtesy of https://www.insomniac.com/photos/2024-11-08-09-10-edc-orlando/

Originally from Los Angeles, EDC, short for Electric Daisy Carnival, is a 3-day long music festival. EDC Orlando takes place at Tinker Field, Orlando. More than 300,000 people from all over the country attend the festival to see their favorite performer and have a magical experience. Like other music festivals, EDC offers multiple artists and stages, with a variety of electronic music genres. At the heart of the festival is the main set KineticGrounds, where many of the artists perform. Separate from the main set is NeonGarden, curated by Factory 93 Records focusing on House and Techno. The second biggest stage is Circuit Grounds, curated by Bassrush. This stage focuses mainly on D&B (Drum and Bass), but also includes dubstep. Another set that can be found at EDC is stereoBLOOM, featuring House and Trance, this stage is curated by Dreamstate. The last stage is CASA BACARDI, a stage that has a few performers and a much smaller setup has a great atmosphere for pictures and serves specialty cocktails.

The Lineup

EDC offers the opportunity to experience top-tier artists like Tiesto, Illenium, John Summit, Alison Wonderland, Eric Prydz, Dimitri Vegas, Steve Aoki, Zeds Dead, Alesso, Slander, Diplo, Dillon Francis, and many more emerging and local artists that perform over 3 days. Faith Bondarevsky, a student at BC, mentioned that her favorite artist at the event was Beltran, whom she has seen a few times before but still said was thus far the best set she has been to. To keep in mind, the lineup for EDC changes every year.

A Breathtaking Experience

Everything at EDC is meticulously planned from the stages to the rides. The festival has a multitude of attractions from ferris wheels and more. The event staff often dress up into different costumes that elevate the whole experience. Bondarevsky, who is attending the festival for the second time, describes it as "a really beautiful" and "interactive experience" where "everyone was super nice. And there were a lot of funny moments."

The Downsides

Attendance can be crowded, seeing that there are over 300,000 fans. Especially on Saturday, which had the most participation. Bondarevsky mentioned that "it was hard to get from stage to stage," but that it didn't bother her. An inconvenience to keep in mind are the extensive lines to access water and portable restrooms. For those who purchased the general dmission tickets the only option was the porta potties, which were often bottlenecked with long wait lines.

Headliner Advice

Bondarevsky advises not to overthink what you're wearing and just wear whatever is comfortable and to bring sunglasses. On a personal note, I second this, as you will be standing for hours. It is important that you wear clothes and shoes that are fit for the event. It is very important that you wear hearing protection to not damage your eardrums and avoid tinnitus at the end of every night. Furthermore, be mindful of your belongings, it might come in handy to carry a small bag and don't forget to hydrate. The most important of them all, have fun, enjoy the music, make new friends.

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The Mind of a Perfectionist

Melissa Eugene

Staff Writer

For a period of my life, I was a perfectionist, I had the "perfect" morning routine, the "perfect" night routine, I had scheduled screen time breaks. I had the "perfect" gym routine. My everyday routine from the moment I opened my eyes to the moment I closed them was "perfect." And for a little while it felt good. There were times when I didn't want to do those things, but I reminded myself that doing these things were for the greater good. Doing these things will lead me to a better life and abundance until it didn't.

Before I share my side of the story on how being a perfectionist didn't lead me to happiness, I first want to say even though I experienced unhappiness for a while when I was doing these things, they still have meaning towards a better life. While I was doing everything in the book to better my life, I still felt unhappy. I didn't feel closer to my goal and that was because while doing these things I didn't have the right intentions. I wasn't doing my "perfect" morning routine because I wanted better for myself, and I knew I deserved to feed my mind the right words of affirmations before I picked up my phone. I was doing my morning routine to get a certain outcome; I was doing it to attract a certain thing. I wasn't doing my perfect gym routine because I knew it was a gift to move my body to improve muscle tone, to have stronger bones, so I won't have to walk with a cane by the time I turn 50. I wasn't doing it to improve my sleep or my mood. I was doing it to have a more attractive body, not for me but for others.

Likewise, I wasn't taking schedule screen time breaks to improve my mental focus or to do something creative with my time. I was doing it because at the time being on my phone while a certain someone neglected to text me back for hours and even days brought me anxiety and sadness to the point where I avoided my phone. So, it isn't about what you're doing sometimes, it's mostly about why you're doing it and how you feel after you do that thing.

Reading the book Meditations for Mortals by Oliver Burkman brought me this clarity and understanding, there are two paragraphs from the book that I want to focus on. "The greatest achievements often involve remaining open to serendipity, seizing unplanned opportunities, or riding an unexpected burst of motivation." Reading that one paragraph gave me so much clarity to the things I was going through, and I will go more in detail shortly after pulling another quote from the book. "To be delighted by another person or moved by a landscape or a work of art requires not being in full control. At the same time, a good life clearly isn't about giving up all hope of influencing reality."

Looking back at the events in my life that I was proud of, and my greatest achievements didn't come when I was doing those "perfect" routines. It came when I had the right intention that I deserve that event to happen in my life. My greatest achievements came from me

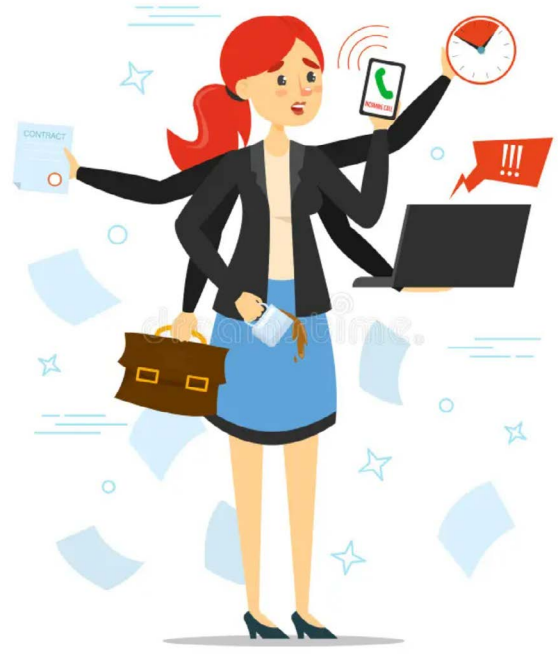


Photo courtesy of Dreamstime.com

removing the burden of it not happening and knowing that I'll be okay. So, I stopped. I was done being a perfectionist. I was done planning every little detail of my life to get a certain outcome. However, I still don't look at my phone the first thing in the morning because I know that I first need to give myself words of affirmation to have a clear mentality for the rest of the day. I still go to the gym, however the kinds of exercises I do changed to me now doing exercises that make me feel good. The kind of exercises I do consist of the benefits that it will be given to me internally, not externally. And the great part about that is now that I focus on the internal aspect of an exercise, the external part naturally happens without me fixating on it. Moral of the story: I let go the need to control everything. I let go the need of getting a certain outcome. I put my intentions in the right place and life began to blossom.

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Celebration of Holidays on South Campus

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