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INTERVIEW

Former Union director interviewed

Brookelyn Parslow
Senior Reporter

Former Director of the Union Rick Hartt '70 spoke about his experiences at Rensselaer on Sunday, October 29 in a phone interview with Brookelyn Parslow, a reporter for The Polytechnic.

Following are excerpts from their conversation, which have been lightly edited for clarity, and omit several off-the-record comments and asides.

HARTT: The hiring of a number of staff had occurred during my tenure. The students would develop questions, and then we would kinda sit and work out scripting the questions. So, you know, you ask the right beginning question, you ask the right middle questions, you ask the right end questions, so the students get the answers they wanted.

The same thing would happen with the staff. Staff in the Union would also interview individuals and give their opinion, whether it was for a director position in student activities, or an assistant director, or whatever those positions were. Then usually, someone from the campus would be involved, and depending on the position it might be somebody from the Dean of Students Office.

If it was a position in the Mueller Center, it might be somebody from

the athletic department who would also be involved in that interview process.

PARSLOW: So, after the interviews were done, did that group of students make a recommendation to the Executive Board?

HARTT: Yes.

PARSLOW: Okay. Then did the Executive Board vote to approve them?

HARTT: The Executive Board would vote to either approve or disapprove the recommendation. Now, there would be a number of people from student government who would be involved in that process. A lot of Executive Board members would be involved in that process, and those individuals who were involved would make that presentation to the Executive Board.

PARSLOW: Were there any instances in which this group of decided that none of these candidates were suitable for the position, and they started over?

HARTT: Well, you're asking for thirty years...

[cross talk]

HARTT: I don't recall that occurring. What I recall, though, was usually what would occur is that there would be such a good review of the resumes of the individuals to whittle it down to three or four or five candidates before they got to the interview



The Polytechnic

RICK HARTT '70 WAS the director of the Union for 33 years. (file photo)

process. I don't recall the Board ever saying they can't recommend anyone. I don't recall that. But I think that's because the process was so student-driven from the get-go...

PARSLOW: You couldn't really get to that point.

HARTT: Yeah, you didn't get to that point because there had been a lot of screening done before.

When I was hired as director of the Union, there were interviews with at least five other individuals. The interview committee had really whittled it down to make sure that the individuals coming in were at least qualified, then you kinda went from there. You asked about the budget piece...

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TOWN MEETING

Many questions for Jackson, cabinet

Tyler Carney
Staff Reporter
Brookelyn Parslow
Senior Reporter

PRESIDENT SHIRLEY ANN JACKSON "DISPENSE[D] with a formal presentation" at the annual Fall Town Meeting on November 2. She took barely over 10 minutes to speak and show a short video that was also played at the capital campaign launch event before opening up to questions.

Jackson reiterated the three pillars of the capital campaign (poly.rpi.edu/s/21eip). She also explained that she has been conducting, and is almost finished with, a "listening tour," which will include visiting every department in every school. The purpose has been to "find out how [departments] see themselves positioned" and to figure out "what they really feel they want to be known for," while also trying to "identify gaps."

Jackson ended her speaking portion, and microphones were then brought around the concert hall so that members of the audience could ask questions.

"As you know, the director of the Union is funded by the students through a self-imposed tax—" began one audience member. Jackson interjected, "It's funded by the university. Any money that is charged to matriculating students is money the university is charging them. That's the legal thing. So, and when they have their

proposed fees, those fees are reviewed through the finance office, so they go through a review and approval process, like the budgets for all other parts of the university. So, I think it's very important that you understand that."

The student thanked Jackson for clarification, and continued, "Why do the students not have a say in the job description in the performance management tool for the director of the Union position, and why aren't students formally involved in the process of performance reviews?" Jackson referred to statements made in the question as "patently false" and then deferred to Vice President for Human Resources Curtis Powell for explanation.

"The Union's just like a reality show, and I feel like I'm a part of it," began Powell. He affirmed that the president of the Union has worked on the performance management tool, or PMT, and that president of the Union and the grand marshal have been involved in the process for finding a director of the Union. "In fact, we had 10 really viable candidates. Because of the press behind this, we've lost eight candidates," explained Powell, before an audience member stated that was not true. Powell ignored the interruption, and stated that the Union Executive Board is involved in the process and will be interviewing the two remaining candidates when they are brought back to campus.

Johns, a member of the Human Resources Inter-

view Committee, then expressed that the committee was only presented with two candidates, and that those eight candidates dropped out before students were involved in the process. Johns was also part of the group that reviewed the PMT, and "to [his] understanding, all of the reviews that students made were actually rejected."

Powell denied that statement, and called on President of the Union Matthew Rand '19 for verification. Rand expressed that suggestions to the PMT were made, and "not all of the edits [they] suggested were accepted, but a number of them were."

When *The Poly* inquired about the changes that required the increased security measures for the event, Jackson attributed them to "very vile, focused, threatening emails that [she's] gotten because of the Union issue."

"In 2014, [RPI's Standard and Poor's bond rating] fell to an A-, and in 2017, it fell to a BBB+. S&P has specifically cited the institute's high debt burden and low available resources as the reason for this. What is RPI doing to improve its bond rating, and what in general is the plan going forward with that?" asked Johns.

Jackson said that there is more than one bond rating, and the one that determines what borrowing costs are is from Moody's Investor Service, where RPI holds an A3 credit rating.

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Serving the Rensselaer community since 1885

Town: Director hiring process questioned

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This A3 rating is the seventh highest rating Moody's provides; their rating symbols and definitions are outlined at poly.rpi.edu/s/t0vhr. It indicates that RPI is in the lower end of the A rank, which is judged to be upper-medium grade subject to low credit risk. Jackson attributed RPI's decrease to S&P's changing its factors for calculating ratings.

"It is true that Rensselaer has a fair amount of debt, but that debt occurs in two ways, and I think it's something that people fully need to understand," stated Jackson. The first is debt incurred for carrying out the Rensselaer Plan, which was supplemented by a previous capital campaign. "We've spent over \$1.3 billion to upgrade the campus, to hire faculty, to make any number of changes. But that being said, we borrowed for Rensselaer Plan initiatives, for upgrades that needed to be made to the campus, and so on. But, about a \$150 plus million of the debt relates to funding of a legacy defined-benefit pension plan that a number of people depend upon," she explained. "Prior to the time I came to Rensselaer, for a decade before I came, no payments were made into that plan."

Since Jackson has been at Rensselaer, over \$215 million has been put into that payment plan. "So certainly, we have borrowed for that," she said. "So, if you subtract that from our actual debt, long-term debt, what's left is actually less than the endowment. So, if we didn't have that additional debt, there would not—this probably would never have come up." She claimed that RPI is on the path to the "cross-over," where the long-term debt and the endowment will meet, and cross, each other.

"During Reunion & Homecoming Weekend, a wall was erected around a large portion of the academic campus. Students and alumni have stated that the administration's intent was to prevent student protesters from being visible to potential donors. The administration has claimed it was an event barrier for fireworks safety. If this was in fact the case, would you please explain why [the Division of Strategic Communications and External Relations] had previously advertised the lawn adjacent to the [Voorhees Computing Center] as the best viewing location and announced that student groups would line a transformative walkway to the event, both of which were changed? I would also like to add that classes within this fenced-in barrier had to be cancelled after 2 pm on Friday," inquired Mary Clare Crochiere '19.

"There are things that we do whenever there are major events and when things happen, in a certain venue, so this is no different than that. To my knowledge, it was not a wall," responded Jackson. She did not address the Strategic Communications advertisement, transformative walkway, or class cancellations specifically.

"Many people I know, and myself, and 5,363 members, specifically members of the RPI community and counting, have signed a petition in support of student-run Union. For a university that can't even get that many Twitter followers, or that many people to show up to Reunion & Homecoming in any given year, isn't that clearly indicating something the RPI community feels very strongly about supporting?" asked one audience member.

"Well, that reaffirms our support for the Union," responded Jackson. "If you look today and ask how the Union runs versus how the Union ran two years ago or five years ago, nothing has changed. And so, the Union has always been a part of Rensselaer, and the director of the Union has always been an employee of Rensselaer." She later expanded on how she expects the director to be an "advocate, a supporter, a coach, [and] a mentor." "A student group does not have the legal authority to hire an employee of the university. And so, you know, we go through the processes we've discussed, and we do these things because we are very supportive of the Union. And so, the Union's not about to disappear, and it's not about to disappear as a student-run entity," she explained.

Graduate student Michael Gardner expressed concern to Jackson about the hiring of a director of the Union, particularly the case where there is a candidate to which the "students say no, and then you say yes." Gardner then elaborated, "And to follow that, students asked, you said of course, you're responsible, I always believe in the students, I would never go—"

"No, I said I would take very seriously the student input," interrupted Jackson.

Gardner asked Jackson that, if she takes student input so seriously, what prevents her from having, in writing, her commitment to agreeing with students unless there is some "grave error." Jackson said that she planned on leaving it to the judgment of those who "have the responsibility for hiring," as these people have experience in this regard that students do not. Additionally, creating such a document would create inconsistencies between the Union's and other hiring processes that take place on campus.

An audience member referred to CLASS as "a program created with good intent" that can often help students form communities, but expressed the concern that "lately it's being used in such a fashion, perhaps unintentionally, to dismantle organically formed communities." The speaker specified Ground Zero and the Rensselaer Science Fiction and Anime Association, also known as ARDA. Both of these organizations have recently been moved to new locations.

Assistant Vice President and Dean of Students Travis Apgar responded by saying that "we probably are giving those two organizations more support than maybe we have in the past," including as a new space in a newer building for Ground Zero,

and ARDA's move to Blitman Residence Commons. "There's maybe a perception of we've moved these folks, but yes we have. But, we've actually given them better spaces than they had previously and we continue to support them," continued Apgar.

"Do you think if I asked members of those organizations, they would agree that it's better? Because what I understand is that they've now moved to more outskirts locations on campus, and they were centralized in Warren and Nugent, now Blitman and I'm not sure," responded the audience member.

Jackson stepped in and added that, "At any time that there's a change, and people are accustomed to being in a certain space, it's always difficult for people to contemplate moving." She gave an example with the creation of the Center for Biotechnology and Interdisciplinary Studies, and expressed that "the answer can't be that one space stays what it is forever and ever."

Dean of Student Living & Learning Cary Drescher expanded on how the move to Blitman has given ARDA more space for showing their films and having meetings, and that conversion of a jacket room has also given them a larger, nicer library. "We've actually only received positive comments from them," expressed Drescher. The comments on Ground Zero were similar; Drescher said that he meets with them about twice a month and has received positive feedback.

Apgar then added that interests on campus fluctuate, and that they are working with the Student Life Committee of the Student Senate and the Resident Student Association to send out surveys to determine what students would like to see. "It's not to say that we don't support those groups that have been here, but we also want to make sure that we're paying attention to what students today and students tomorrow are looking for."

The audience member that posed the question responded, "What I want to see is actually less of that, and more of you letting students build their own space." She elaborated more on this, and Apgar clarified that "students are telling us that this is what they're looking for, so we're supporting them in that search. So we're trying to do exactly what you're describing."

Vice President for Administration Claude Rounds added, "There's a great effort that goes on, working with the student communities and student clubs to provide space. And it's true that students sometimes like to build their own space, but in the particular case of Ground Zero, what's not being discussed here is that Ground Zero was in the basement of Nugent, and the space that the students had built for themselves became a significant concern from a safety and security perspective." He continued by saying that safety was the primary reason the space was vacated.

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CAMPUS EVENT

Kolbert addresses climate change issues

Nicholas Luczak
Senior Reporter

ONE OF THE MOST PRESSING CHALLENGES that faces our global community is the self-imposed destruction of our planet's ecosystem, according to Elizabeth Kolbert, a journalist and the author of the world-renowned book *The Sixth Extinction: An Unnatural History*. In the main theater of the Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center on Thursday, November 2, Kolbert made an effort to challenge the Rensselaer student body with this issue.

Kolbert utilizes her background as an environmentalist and journalist to investigate the mass extinction caused by modern globalization. In *The Sixth Extinction*, she portrays examples of both exotic and familiar ecosystems in an effort to show that global human proliferation and modernization has caused countless species to suffer or become entirely extinct. Kolbert hypothesizes that modern society has created "The New Pangea," and that increasingly interconnected global trade, the ease with which people and goods cross borders,

invasive species, and worsening environmental conditions have devastated global ecosystems.

Kolbert responded to a few questions posed by Interim Vice President for Student Life LeNorman Strong, and ended by answering student's questions in an open session. She explained that her inspiration for writing *The Sixth Extinction* was rooted in a belief that it was her duty to cover this preeminent story from her position as a journalist. A lot of the questions during the talk revolved around two prominent themes: the effects that humans have already caused, and what could be done to repair the damage.

When posed with the question of what a planet without humans would look like, the suggested differences were profound. These ranged from the extinction of the mastodons and large amount of fauna and flora, to the acidification and increased temperature of the oceans resulting in coral reefs around the globe being bleached of their exquisite colors. She mentioned the drastic decrease in bee populations, and the catastrophic effects that could arise from their total extinction. Kolbert emphasized that these ecosystems

might have passed the point of being salvageable.

After these stories of permanent environmental damage, students seemed curious about what, if anything, could be done. Questions were largely delineated into two categories: the efficacy of social initiatives, and hopes for engineering or science to address the issue.

Kolbert made it very clear that she was concerned with the current American administration's stance on environmental issues; from the decision to leave the Paris climate accord, the repeal of the Clean Power Plan, and the opening of public parks and the Arctic for oil drilling, she is not hopeful for meaningful action in the right direction.

When asked whether humans could possibly engineer their way out of the issue, Kolbert was once again pessimistic; she elaborated on how, while it certainly wouldn't be impossible, it would be arrogant to think that we could simply invent something that would solve this highly complex and interconnected issue. The prospect of making tailor-made changes to species' genetic composition was discussed



Nicholas Luczak/The Polytechnic

STUDENTS APPLAUD Elizabeth Kolbert after an informative Q&A.

as a possible solution to the issue of decreasing diversity in global animal populations, but Kolbert warned that these technologies must be used with massive caution; they could unintentionally make the situation worse.

Kolbert stated that an issue of this magnitude would, more than

anything, require a concerted social change of massive proportions. In her opinion, the most important thing scientists can do to contribute to this social change is to explain its importance to the average person, and the extent to which their lives will be altered if action isn't taken. ♦

Meeting: Infrastructure concerns voiced

From **Page 2**

Another question was asked by Steven Sperazza '18, on behalf of his mother, about Rensselaer being in the news regarding the recent Foundation for Individual Rights in Education articles—most notably regarding the “red-light” rating given to RPI. Secretary of the Institute and General Counsel Craig Cook responded to this, explaining that two policies were given the “red-light” rating. According to Cook, the first was part of the sexual misconduct policy, which has “prohibitions on harassing, intimidating, sexual innuendo—those sorts of things.”

Cook explained that “[FIRE’s] view, if you look at it carefully, is that that’s something that goes beyond protected—that should be protected speech.” He elaborated on the importance of these policies, and that RPI stands “very firmly behind” them in order to protect students. The other policy concerned cyber security, which states that people “cannot use RPI assets to harass or intimidate.” Cook then reaffirmed the commitment to protecting students, and explained that he doesn’t “put a lot of faith in their quote ratings of those policies in terms of protected speech.”

After Cook’s response, Gardner attempted to clarify the previous question. “I think his mother is probably referring to more of the recent articles about the protests being denied in the past couple years, and then I understand that the Dean of Students Office has their reasons for that, but the optics are bad. And I think his mother was also probably looking for a comment about that, as well as just my mother.”

Apgar responded and reiterated the focus on safety in the process of considering an application for a peaceful demonstration. With the most recent application, they “determined early on, weeks before, that [they] were going to be very hard pressed to be able to do any other large event, including a demonstration.” That particular demonstration was denied for its “very specific time period.” According to Apgar, the applicant was invited to talk about alternatives, and “that person refused to do that.”

“We do a lot to try to allow our students to have that freedom of speech and be able to demonstrate.” Apgar then briefly elaborated on RPI’s policies, comparing them to the restrictions many campuses, including some public universities, place on freedom of speech locations. “So when you look at our policy and our practices overall, I would say that we’re actually very flexible. I do understand some of the feedback we’ve received, but again—invited folks in to have



Nicholas Luczak/The Polytechnic

PRESIDENT SHIRLEY ANN JACKSON SPENT very little time on her presentation, opting to open the floor to questions from attendees.

a conversation about what alternatives may happen, and didn’t have any opportunity to interact with those folks based on their choices,” he continued.

Bryan Johns '19, the applicant referenced by Apgar, then introduced himself and provided his perspective. “I told [your secretary] that because there were to be no demonstrations at all that weekend, that I would no longer be pursuing my application, and she told me that you wished to meet with me regardless. I did not know why you still wanted to meet if I was not following with the application, so I asked her and she told me that you didn’t tell her and that she didn’t know. I stated to her that I would be happy to come in some other time, but that I am busy today; I have some commitments. She wished me a good weekend and I never heard back.”

“Well, thanks. I appreciate that. That’s not exactly what I had in terms of the response that you gave to her. Too bad we didn’t connect. But, it’s nice to finally meet you face-to-face. I did also kind of put it out there publicly that I would be happy to meet with anybody who’s interested. The only person who showed up was a recent alum, and actually did not even bring a proposal for an alternative. So, hopefully in the future, what I would suggest is that anybody who is interested, please do follow up,” responded Apgar.

“One of the pillars of the new capital campaign is to bring Rensselaer into the third century,” began an audience member. “I think a lot of parts of campus are still struggling to be in the second century, and I think ECAV doesn’t

really need expanding when parts of campus are missing air conditioning, or, more importantly, accessibility access,” she later continued.

Jackson responded, stating that whenever major upgrades and renovations occur, they do also provide handicap accessibility. “I personally walk around campus to look for where there are opportunities to strengthen handicap accessibility,” she added. After elaborating on accessibility changes to the website and the “huge change” that has occurred since she got to Rensselaer, she deferred to Rounds.

Rounds spoke about how, over the next few years, “several million dollars” will be invested in preparing classrooms and dorms for the Arch, which will include air conditioning. According to Rounds, about \$58 million has been spent on deferred maintenance, about \$16 million has been spent on classrooms, and \$500,000 to \$1 million are spent per year to address accessibility requirements. In the past two years, \$2 to \$3 million a year have been spent on classroom upgrades to accommodate the expansion in enrollment, and this will continue as part of the “capital plan.”

One audience member addressed how Rensselaer decided not to participate in the Excelsior Scholarship—which provides a tuition-free college education to New York residents—while one of the pillars of the capital campaign is to bridge the gap of student need.

“Well, it turns out that, you know, we looked at that, and there are a lot of, you know, interesting things about the Excelsior Scholarships that most people

don’t understand,” Jackson responded. They determined that the requirements attached to the program would not be beneficial to Rensselaer as a whole, and that they would rather better their financial aid independently of the scholarship. Jackson expanded on these efforts, stating that approximately \$20 to \$25 million has been added to the financial aid pool over the years, and that 95 percent of current students receive financial aid.

In response to a question about the lack of scholarship opportunities for international students, Jackson said that international undergraduate students aren’t given much financial aid because RPI doesn’t get much support from international alumni. However, the entire graduate population, of which about half are international students, gets support from Rensselaer in some way, she added.

A full recording of the event is available from RPI TV at poly.rpi.edu/s/t11cc. ♦

Correction

On page 6 of the November 1 issue of *The Polytechnic*, in the article titled “LGBT professional networking club approved,” it was stated that the Executive Board would be leading the remaining interviews with the director of the Union candidates. In actuality, the Human Resources Interview Committee would lead the interviews, with the E-Board also present.

EXECUTIVE BOARD

Dance Team uniform reallocation approved

Sidney Kochman
Senior Reporter

DURING THE E-BOARD’S LAST MEETING, THE RPI DANCE TEAM received money to finance their uniforms, the Alpha Delta Phi Society was given a room in the ’87 Gym, and President of the Union Matthew Rand ’19 gave an update on director of the Union candidate interviews.

RPI Dance Team requested \$1,055.25 for an additional part of its uniform. The team is going to the National Dance Alliance’s championship and aims to make a good impression and represent RPI with a uniform appearance. It budgeted for the tops last year, but the price increased since then, necessitating a visit to the E-Board. Dance Team Captain Louis Caponi ’20 said that there would be no additional costs to the Union going forward, as any member who damages the uniform has to pay out of pocket for repairs. The Board passed a motion to reallocate \$1,055.25 from the club contingencies fund to the Dance Team budget 16-0-0.

The Alpha Delta Phi Society, a Greek organization and “literary society,” according to their website, presented a proposal for their own space in the ’87 Gym. ADPS cultivates “a more artistic and musical environment on a heavily STEM

campus,” according to Vice President Andie Dolan ’19. Room 116, which is currently unused, would be allocated to the organization so that it could hold meetings, store materials, and have weekly workshops without needing to reserve space in the Union or transport its supplies regularly.

Some members of the Board were concerned about allocating space to a Greek organization. Alpha Phi Omega currently occupies an office on the third floor of the Union, from which it operates a back test library and lost and found service for the benefit of the community. Member at Large Jared Segal ’19 asked if non-affiliated people can make use of the space. Dolan said that ADPS will hold office hours where students can come in to talk about and improve their writing, run workshops on drawing, and be a space where people can “have a break from STEM.” Historically, she said, ADPS has had up to 20 people attend their events. Representative Brookelyn Parslow ’20 said that ADPS should make an effort to publicize its events and availability online so that students who are interested in a space like this could find out about it. She volunteered to work with ADPS to do this. A motion to assign room 116 of the ’87 Gym to the Alpha Delta Phi Society passed 14-1-0, pending the approval of RPI Athletics, which has authority over the building.

Chairperson of the Union Annual Report Committee Joseph Venusto ’18 shared that the committee is making good progress on the report. He anticipates that a draft of the report will be ready by finals week, which begins on December 18.

Rand said that interviews of two candidates for the director of the Union will continue with E-Board involvement. One occurred on Tuesday, November 7, and another will occur on Friday, November 10. Students participating in the process are required to sign a confidentiality agreement, he said, and the questions created by the Human Resources Interview Committee will be reviewed by the Division of Human Resources. He hopes for a recommendation to come before the Board on Thursday. Additionally, Rand said that interviews for the position of assistant director for student activities have been completed, and he expects a candidate to be proposed on Thursday.

Business Administrator Martha McElligott shared an update on the Union’s finances. She said that the Union’s budget is on target with what was forecasted. Some adjustments were made, however, to return about \$150,000 in salary and benefits for unfilled positions. ♦

STUDENT SENATE

WebTech presents Shuttle Tracker updates



Jonathan Caicedo/The Polytechnic

JOSEPH LYON '20 PRESENTED new Shuttle Tracker web interface updates to the Senate.

Darby Burns
Senior Reporter

THE WEB TECHNOLOGIES GROUP PRESENTED THE CURRENT STATUS OF THE SHUTTLE TRACKER on Monday, November 6 at the weekly meeting of the 48th Student Senate. Chairperson of the group Sidney Kochman '19 and project lead Joseph Lyon '20 discussed specific progress made on the tracker, the updates and changes to the admin interface, the analytics they have received, and some features they have planned for the future.

Kochman started things off with introductions and a brief rundown of the new workflow system WebTech has been using for this semester, but soon yielded the floor to Lyon to talk about progress that has been made on the front end of the Shuttle Tracker itself. Lyon mentioned changes that were made regarding new map tiles and layout, the shuttle icon, a new menu that was added to link schedules, and the ability for the user's location to be displayed directly on the map. He then went on to talk about progress that has been made regarding the admin interface, which includes a new format and layout, and several changes that allow for the easier editing of routes, stops, and vehicles that will appear on the tracker.

Next, Kochman discussed analytics that WebTech has been receiving since late September, which show that, on average, 450–500 people use the Shuttle Tracker per day—a number that continues to increase—and that the majority, 94 percent, of people use the tracker on their phones. In the future, WebTech hopes to generate better shuttle update messages, improve the flow of the admin interface, and design and implement stop prediction.

You can find the shuttle tracker at <https://shuttles.rpi.edu>. On Monday, the Senate will meet again in the Shelnut Gallery. ♦

Interview: Union director role discussed

From **Page 1**

PARSLOW: Yeah, did you ever have a budgeting authority or a veto power over the E-Board?

HARTT: I never perceived that I had a veto power. I did perceive that, ultimately, if there was a problem—let's just say the auditor came in and said, "Well what's occurring here, why is it occurring this way?" Ultimately, as the paid, professional staff person, I would be held accountable for inappropriate expenditures. Ultimately, the director of the Union was gonna be held responsible.

The Board had responsibility for reviewing expenditures and making sure that they conformed to good business practice and procedure. There was a pretty extensive handbook that had been developed by the Board about what was appropriate and what wasn't appropriate. The Board had a level of responsibility to ensure.

I'm gonna use an example. I recall this one because it was very controversial. This should've been in the mid-1980s. There was a person who was on the Board who made an expenditure for a club that that person was involved in that was not an appropriate or approved expenditure. The Board basically said, and I totally agreed with it, you are responsible for this expenditure. This is the mid-1980s, and the expenditure was over a thousand dollars. That was a pretty hefty expenditure. But, the Board took responsibility in that way. Now, on the other hand, if that expenditure had been allowed, I'm sure that I would've been held accountable in some form, in some way. I would've been held accountable by RPI's purchasing office.

PARSLOW: But were you ever worried that the Board would make irresponsible decisions like that?

HARTT: No. I think my relationship with the Board, as an adviser and as a mentor, and understanding that Rensselaer students are analytical and understand policy and understand procedure—I really never felt that. I never felt that the Board would make decisions that were inappropriate decisions, or decisions against policy, without an understanding.

PARSLOW: You never felt like you needed to have a veto power? There are other ways to go about it, where you could just prevent it, as opposed to having to override a decision that they made?

HARTT: I can't recall overriding a deci-

sion. I can recall having very, very good discussions with the Board at its meetings, with the president of the Union, with the grand marshal. I really don't recall ever overriding a decision. Now, the responsibilities—let me just see if I can find something here. The way that the position, if you look in the *Union Constitution*. If the Union director makes an inappropriate financial decision, let's just say...

PARSLOW: The majority of the Executive Board may bring charges against the director? HARTT: Right.

PARSLOW: Yeah.

HARTT: Yeah. That was certainly a reasonable way to state that.

PARSLOW: Do you think that is still appropriate?

HARTT: Yep. I think so.

PARSLOW: Did you think, "I shouldn't be making decisions where they should bring charges against me, so this shouldn't be an issue. But, if I do make these kinds of decisions, I should be held accountable for them?" HARTT: Yes.

PARSLOW: That's interesting, because there has been talk about that maybe being out of line with current-day practices.

HARTT: Well, I don't know what has occurred. I retired in 2011.

PARSLOW: Right.

HARTT: I really don't know what has occurred since that, in the interim.

PARSLOW: So, I know this is a very broad question, but if there are a couple things that stand out to you—what to you makes the Union student run?

HARTT: What do I think makes the Union student run?

PARSLOW: At what point can the administration assume certain responsibilities and powers, and at what point is it no longer student run? Do you think there's a distinct point?

HARTT: I think when student decisions are overturned, or student decisions are negated in the running of the Union without significant discussion, that's when the Union becomes something other than student run.

The role in the *Union Constitution* that was approved in 1970 talks about the Union uniting its members, expanding extracurricular life, coordinating all student organizations, acting as a medium through which student opinion can be expressed, and working with members of

the Rensselaer community to encourage student initiatives and lead student actions in all interests that serve the welfare and betterment of Rensselaer. I think that when the student decision making process becomes secondary to the way the Union is run is when you lose its being a student run Union.

PARSLOW: If the administration confirms that part about the E-Board only getting to recommend, and then say the E-Board doesn't approve a candidate for the director of the Union, but that person is hired anyway, would you see that as overstepping those boundaries?

HARTT: I see it as indicating that its not a student-run Union. If a recommendation is to not hire an individual, and that person is hired anyway, then that's when you realize that it's not a student-run Union anymore.

PARSLOW: So we won't really be able to tell if this resolution has changed the student run nature of the Union until something like that happens?

HARTT: Yeah. I think once you have decisions that overturn student decisions, that's when you begin to know that things have really changed.

PARSLOW: You wouldn't say that it was your job to manage the budget, the multimillion dollar budget of the Union? Or would you?

HARTT: The Executive Board of the Union managed, or proposed the policy, process, and procedure for the million dollar budget. The management that I exhibited was reviewing to make sure that, as was called for, that expenditures were being made in the way the budget had been proposed. The budget was approved by the student Executive Board.

PARSLOW: There was a lot of upset in December of 2016, when there was a job description posted for a director of the Union, and it included things like "manage an operating budget of three million dollars." There was upset about that, and that language was changed. But, in that leaked memo that I mentioned, they noticed the language outlining the director's role of advising the bodies was changed to directing them, which to some people may be a small difference, but...

HARTT: Well there's a huge difference.

PARSLOW: That was never changed back. In the current posting that was used for this

hiring process that's happening right now, the language specifying direction is still there.

HARTT: There's a big difference, I mean the word direct versus advise, I mean they're two very different actions.

PARSLOW: So, also, I was thinking about it. I'm only a sophomore, so I've never experienced having a director of the Union. I'm on E-Board, and as an E-Board member I've never experienced having a director of the Union, and a lot of students haven't. So, do you think it's something that would make a difference, like I would feel a difference on campus and actively working in the Union if there were a good a director of the Union here? HARTT: I'd love to say, "Oh I think it would make a great difference."

[laughter]

HARTT: But, I think if you look at what the role of the director of the Union is supposed to be with students, that's gonna give you a sense and idea of what that role could be.

PARSLOW: It seems like it would be very helpful to have someone to consult on these types of things, but then I think there's also the fact that we could have a bad director of the Union. Since there's so many questions that have been raised about the hiring process that's been going on, that feels like a possibility.

HARTT: I think if you have a bad director of the Union, the Executive Board acts on that, in consultation with the vice president, and works through. And, I mean, here is a human resource process, you can't just go up and fire somebody, but there is a process in any workplace. Talk about from a learning experience, the students would have a learning experience in terms of going through that process.

If you have a director of the Union, you have somebody who can advise, and mentor, and be a role model. And that's probably one of the most important things, I think in terms of what that role can be. That person should have a good understanding of finance, should have a good understanding of activities, and should have a broad base of experience so that they can advise in a way that enhances the student leadership experience.

The full transcript can be viewed online at poly.rpi.edu/s/54zkl.

**Bikes are pretty neat,
join RPI Cycling**



EMPAC EVENT

Microsoft shares HoloLens with students

Tyler Carney
Senior Reviewer

WHEN I FIRST SAW THE HOLOLENS UNVEILING in January 2015, I was blown away. It was the first time I had seen anything related to augmented reality or AR, and I could not wait to get to experience it myself. I finally got the chance to do that on November 1, at the Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center, almost three years after I first saw the HoloLens.

My expectations going into the event were somewhat high. I have experienced virtual reality headsets like the HTC Vive and AR through my iPhone, so I knew a little bit about what to expect. I had hoped that the HoloLens would surpass the VR and AR I have tried but, unfortunately, it fell flat. Especially since the device costs \$3,500, I was hoping for more.

The demo I tried was a simple one. The first scene was a slowly rotating Earth that I was able to walk around and view from different angles. The next scene was of our solar system. Each planet was labeled, and it was here that I saw a major annoyance with the device. If my head was stationary, the picture was fairly crisp. When I moved my head, as if I were turning to talk to somebody, the entire picture stuttered. This was especially noticeable with the words on screen stuttering as I moved. The final scene was the Milky Way galaxy, which while pretty, was not mind blowing.

It was at this point that I made my own path with the HoloLens. I somehow exited the demo and was greeted with a set of tiles similar to the Windows 10 start menu. I then launched Microsoft Edge. This brought up a floating pane that I was able to place, so I placed it on the wall. This



Nicholas Luczak/The Polytechnic

LAST WEDNESDAY, MICROSOFT BROUGHT several HoloLens systems to RPI, giving students a taste of augmented reality at EMPAC.

pane stayed on the wall even when I looked away and looked back. Unfortunately, the HoloLens was not connected to the internet, so I was not able to do any browsing.

This aspect of the hardware is intriguing—to be able to place a TV screen that takes up my entire wall is an appealing concept, though the current hardware just is not up to the challenge. The viewing angle is too small, and the resolution is nowhere near high enough to compete with current TVs. Also, there was some level of transparency to the objects shown

through the HoloLens, which does not lend itself well to some possible uses.

I attended the talk with Kayla Kinnunen, which was all right. It was a series of videos of how the HoloLens is currently being used, and potential uses for similar devices in the near future. The scenarios provided were interesting, but it all seemed like the technology was still too new to have a big effect on how I currently live. This problem is not limited just to the HoloLens though; current AR and VR can be gimmicky, also.

The technology, both software and hardware, that goes into the HoloLens is impressive. It is just that it is not mature enough yet. Kinnunen said in her talk that she hopes that, within the next decade, devices like HoloLens will be ubiquitous. During this decade, I expect the technology to jump leaps and bounds, just as smartphones did, and computers before them. I think that it will be an exciting thing to experience. ♦



Ecology Minor Department of Biological Sciences

Ecology is the branch of Biology that studies the relations of organisms to one another and to their environment. Rensselaer has a substantial depth in Ecological research and faculty expertise, as well as Institute-Wide Initiatives such as the Jefferson Project.



Possible Electives*

- Lake George BLUE (BIOL 4870)
- Human Population (BIOL 4961)
- Microbiology (BIOL 4310)
- Environmental Economics (ECON 4230)
- Environmental and Resource Economics (ECON 4260)
- Chemistry of the Environment (CHEM 4810)
- Sustainability Problems (STSS 4270)
- Environmental Politics and Policy (STSS 4370)
- Environmental Measurements (ERTH 4190)
- Earth's Climate: Past, Present and Future (ERTH 4500)

Minor in Lighting

Department of Biological Sciences
and Lighting Research Center
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

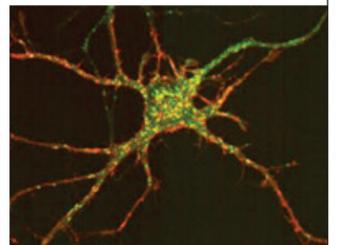


Light-dark patterns that reach the back of our eyes set the timing of the biological clock, and tell our bodies to do "the right thing at the right time." A global lighting revolution is taking place because of the awareness of how profound the impact of light is in our daily lives. Humans and most terrestrial species perceive the time of day because of their internal biological, or circadian clock. This circadian clock is a network of genes and proteins that regulates daily oscillations such as sleep, hormone release, rise and fall of blood pressure and body temperature as well as other cellular functions and physiological responses. Because of this tight regulation, a disrupted circadian clock can be detrimental to daily function and human health, as evidenced by the increased rates of disease in nightshift workers and submariners, known to experience circadian disruption. Tailored lighting intervention, on the other hand, helps adolescents fall asleep earlier, premature infants be discharged from the hospital sooner, Alzheimer's disease patients sleep better, and cancer patients experience less fatigue. Because the light we are exposed to can have a profound impact on the proper timing of our circadian clocks, it is important to effectively specify, measure and apply lighting in the built environment. It is also important to understand how various species (human, mammals and plants) respond to light. This minor will provide the foundation to understand the basic principles of how to specify, measure, and apply light to positively impact various species, and to work side-by-side with leading experts in the field in a professional project. This minor requires four courses with a minimum of 15 credits.

Required courses:

- LGHT 4840 Human Factors in Lighting, 3 CR
- LGHT 4870 Light and Health, 4 CR
- LGHT 4830 Physics of Light, 4 CR
- LGHT 4940 Advanced Individual Projects 4 CR

Any other LGHT course may be substituted for LGHT 4940 or a BIOL/BCBP elective course with permission of the Lighting Program Director.



Learn more:
<http://www.lrc.rpi.edu/programs/lightHealth/index.asp>
<https://science.rpi.edu/biology>

or contact:
Drs. Jennifer Hurley (hurlej2@rpi.edu) or Susan P. Gilbert (sgilbert@rpi.edu), Department of Biological Sciences; Daniel Frering (frerid@rpi.edu), Lighting Research Center

Lighting
Research Center

Biological Sciences at Rensselaer



Minor Course Requirements: 4 Courses : Minimum of 16 credits

Principles of Ecology (BIOL 4850)	The Global Environment (BIOL 4880)	Research (BIOL 4970 or 4990)	Elective*

Learn More:

<http://science.rpi.edu/biology>

Or Contact:

Dr. Kevin Rose rosek4@rpi.edu

Sports

Wednesday, November 8, 2017

FOOTBALL

Rensselaer dominates Rochester Yellowjackets



Brookelyn Parslow/The Polytechnic

THE RENSSELAER ENGINEERS CRUSHED the Yellowjackets in a game this past weekend, bringing their season record to 7-2.

Jacob Kaplan
Senior Reporter

RENSSELAER WON 63-14 AGAINST the University of Rochester at home on Saturday, November 4. The game took place on Senior Day and Military Appreciation Day. The victory puts the Engineers at 7-2 for the season and 3-1 in the Liberty League.

The Engineers got on the scoreboard immediately. In the first play of the game, quarterback George Marinopoulos '21 found wide receiver Conor Davies '19 in the right flat. Davies took the ball 87 yards to the end zone, breaking several tackles. Defensive back John Sadak '20 intercepted the Yellowjackets' next possession. The Engineers

made 36 yards on two plays and running back Mike Tivinis '18 made a 29-yard run for the team's second touchdown. Toward the end of the first, defensive back Bryan Hayes '18 intercepted a pass during the Yellowjackets' next possession, forcing their second turnover. The Engineers made 61 yards on 11 plays. Marinopoulos found running back

Marc Meislahn '19 30 yards out from the end zone, for a score of 21-0 at the end of the first quarter.

In the first minute of the second quarter, defensive line Malik Joseph '18 recovered a fumble for another Yellowjacket turnover. Marinopoulos found wide receiver Danny Calabro '19 in the end zone from 15 yards out, giving the Engineers another

touchdown. Running back Malik Kelly '19 blocked a Rochester punt on their 11-yard line, giving Tivinis the opportunity to rush 11 yards for Rensselaer's fifth touchdown. Wide receiver Keaton Ackermann '19 ended the second quarter with another touchdown after a pass from Marinopoulos 8 yards out, putting the score at a 42-0.

Running back Nick Cella '19 made a one and five-yard runs, in the third quarter, increasing the Engineers' lead. Rochester failed to make any successful drives, leaving the score at 56-0 at the end of third quarter.

The Yellowjackets finally reduced the score gap in the last quarter of the game, driving 75 yards on 10 plays and making a three-yard run. Running back Delano Munoz Whatts '20 made a four-yard run, followed by a kick, for another seven points for the Engineers. The Yellowjackets were the last to score after recovering a fumble and making a run from a yard out. The final score was 63-14, the highest Rensselaer has scored in nineteen years.

The victory puts the Engineers in a good place for the season. If they win this Saturday's away game against Union College, they will earn a place in the NCAA playoffs. ♦

WOMEN'S SOCCER

Engineers lose Liberty League

Jacob Kaplan
Senior Reporter

RENSSELAER LOST 6-0 AGAINST St. Lawrence University last Tuesday, October 31. The Halloween game was part of the first round of the Liberty League playoffs. The loss pushed the Engineers out of the playoffs, ending their season at 8-8-2.

The Saints took the lead early, scoring in the eighth minute of the game. They maintained a strong offense, scoring again in the 32nd minute, again seven minutes later with a rebound kick, and once more in the last minute of the first half.

Although the Engineers made several attempts at narrowing the score gap, the 4-0 lead was too much ground to make up in the sec-

ond half. Dali Alarian '18, Stephanie May '18, and Jen Nestor '18 all had several shot attempts. Alarian had seven attempts, three on goal. May had four attempts, three on goal. Nestor had three attempts, two on goal. Emily Dunn '19 had two attempts, one on goal. The Saints added two more goals in the middle of the second half, putting the game at 6-0 and ensuring the game was theirs.

Despite their loss, the Engineers had a shot advantage of 30-12 at the end of the game, 13-8 on goal, and 7-2 in corners. Goalie Joey Lyons '20 had one save. The game ends the Engineers' impressive season of 8-8-2 overall, 4-4-1 in the Liberty League, and 7-2-0 for home games. ♦

SWIMMING AND DIVING

Washout for swim

Joseph Lyon
Senior Reporter

RPI MEN AND WOMEN'S SWIM AND DIVE TEAMS HAD mixed meets at WPI last weekend. The women's team defeated both WPI and Simmons College in two dual meets, beating WPI 204-96 and crushing Simmons College 225-75. The men's team lost, ending a 19-meet winning streak, losing for the first time since the 2015-2016 season.

The women's team had two simultaneous dual meets, opening the day with a crushing performance in the first event of the day, the 400-met relay. Amanda Wang '19, Caitlyn Gardiner '19, Shanny Lin '18 and Jessica Sauve '18 came in first with a time of 4:04.27, a full nine seconds ahead of the competition. Especially impressive was Gardiner's breaststroke split, at 1:10.26. Later on, Gardiner won the 100-yard breaststroke with a time of 1:11.69. Rensselaer also managed the top three in event seven, with Wang pulling in first place at a time of 1:00.93, just 0.7 seconds slower than her seed time.

The men's team saw several impressive performances, including that of Jesse Rotering '19 who finished first in diving, and that of Noah Pan '19 who finished first in the 200-yard backstroke. Extremely damaging to the Engineers finish was the disqualification of all swimmers in the 200-yard freestyle, which prevented the Engineers from scoring for the entirety of the event. ♦

Scores from the Week

Friday, November 3

Women's hockey at University of Connecticut 1-4

Men's Hockey at Clarkson 0-6

Saturday, November 4

Football vs. University of Rochester 63-14

Women's swimming at Simmons 225-75

Women's swimming at WPI 204-95

Men's swimming at WPI 129-171

Women's hockey at University of Connecticut 0-0

Men's hockey at St. Lawrence University 4-4

Correction

On page 8 of the November 1 issue of *The Polytechnic*, the hockey article should have been credited to Joseph Lyon.

Editorial

Wednesday, November 8, 2017

EDITORIAL NOTEBOOKS

Over the college grind

Looking forward to a relaxing final semester

I AM READY FOR THIS SEMESTER TO BE finished. I am currently in my last difficult semester at RPI and I am looking forward to being done with it.



Tyler Carney
Senior Managing Editor

I am bored of the college grind. Test studying, group projects, homework, lectures—it has all become monotonous at this point. I have gotten “good” at college. I know how to study and what to expect, so nothing is exciting anymore. Of course, the courses are still challenging content wise, but they are challenges I have already tackled before in previous classes. It also does not help that, of my five classes this semester, I hope I never have to use three of them in the future. I simply do not enjoy their content.

Fortunately, next semester, which is my last one at RPI, is looking great. I have four courses that I have to worry about, but I am interested in all of them. I have the ability to pass/no credit two of them, so if I am feeling lazy, I can add that designation and lessen my workload even further. My role as report edi-

tor on Design/Build/Fly will wrap up at the end of February, leaving me with free time.

With all this free time, my plan is to enjoy my last semester. I will be able to play the backlog of games I have without feeling guilty about doing something more productive. I can binge watch new shows when they come out. I will not be tied up with classes all the time. I will be able to go skiing multiple times every week. I can devote that extra time to whatever I want, whenever I want, and that will be a great thing to have.

There is one thing that is looming over my head currently, and may well continue into next semester: getting a job. I hope that I can land one before this semester ends, so next semester I have one less thing to worry about.

I am done with the college grind, but I’m not done with college just yet. My last semester here will be a nice cap to my college experience before I head off into the world. ♦

Spooky Steam games played, recommended

Post-Halloween suggestions for horror games

I HOPE YOU ALL HAD A FUN AND GREAT HALLOWEEN WEEK. I DON’T KNOW HOW YOU SPENT YOUR time, but I think there must have been candies, fancy costumes, and parties. Besides these joyful and exciting activities, Halloween sales also add the sense of happiness and fulfillment at the same time. For me, I bought some spooky games from Steam, and



Nicole Chen
Associate Photo Editor

most of them were even as cheap as the Thanksgiving sale. In this notebook, I will recommend some awesome horror games.

The first game is *Beholder*. It won many awards throughout 2016 and 2017. It is a dystopian game paying homage to George Orwell’s *1984*. The player acts as a spy working for the government. The job is to monitor residents in their apartments and to report them if they have subversive likes or disobey the state. The protagonist is also facing his own family problems: his wife is obviously extremely dissatisfied with the current situation, his son’s speech continues to become westernized, and his young daughter is suffering from a serious disease at the same time. What would you do in that case? Sacrifice your whole life for the government or help liberate residents’ life due to conscience?

The second game is *Sally Face*. There are five chapters altogether with a season pass. According to its description, it is a dark adventure about Sally, who has a prosthetic face and a mysterious past. In episode one, Sally moves to a new home, but the neighborhood seems a little strange. One of his neighbors dies after Sally moves in, but he doesn’t know who the killer is. Is it a monster in the apartment? A person who has a bloody pony doll in his room? Why is Sally arrested as a murderer? There are so many problems unsolved, waiting for you to explore the following episodes and find out the truth.

The last one is *Fran Bow*. It is a dark fairy tale style adventure game. I’ve played two full chapters and part of the third chapter, and there are five chapters, which will take more than five hours to finish. The story is about a human girl called Fran finding her only friend Mr. Midnight, a little black cat, after Fran’s parents are killed by the devil. According to the game, it seems that when Fran has red pills from a prescription, the world she sees is full of blood, viscera, shadows, and monsters. Is the terrible world an illusion or another reality? Maybe reality is simply limitless layers of time. There are many characters throughout the adventure, and who is right? Doctor, Aunt, Devil, or Mr. Midnight? Can you believe anyone? Telling you too many details about the story might reduce your interest, but it is definitely a marvelous game worth considering. Although I haven’t finished the whole game, I choose the sentence someone posted in the end: I still don’t know many things, but one thing I do know is that between guilt and fear, I choose happiness... ♦

STAFF EDITORIAL

Understand, exercise your student rights

THE POLY IS CURRENTLY AWARE OF MULTIPLE INSTANCES OF STUDENTS BEING CONTACTED by administrators to meet and discuss their involvement in the demonstration on Friday, October 13. We did not have adequate time to prepare a news article on this topic for this issue, but we feel that it is necessary to share that this is happening with the Rensselaer community.

We would also like to encourage students to understand their rights, especially if they have been contacted or plan to meet with any administrators about the protest. Students are not, by any means, required to answer any direct, targeted questions in an informal meeting. These questions should be left to the process of a judicial inquiry, as outlined in the *Rensselaer Handbook of Student Rights and Responsibilities*. Even then, a student has the “right to refuse to answer specific questions only if the student’s responses would tend to incriminate him or her.”

It is also within students’ rights to view judicial documents used as evidence against them, if they are requested. We strongly encourage any students in the process of a judicial inquiry to request this evidence so that they may fully understand the scope of their case.

Even if you don’t want to get directly involved in current happenings, the least you should do is educate yourself on your rights. A full outline of the Rensselaer student judicial system can be seen in the *Student Handbook* from pages 10 to 16. ♦

the polytechnic

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Views expressed in opinion columns provide differing viewpoints to help balance the newspaper and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Editorial Board. These opinion columns, other than those granted to certain student government organizations, are granted on a semesterly or yearly basis by the Editorial Board. Those interested in starting a column should email edop@poly.rpi.edu for details.

Editorial and Business offices are located in Room 3418 of the Rensselaer Union, Troy, New York, 12180-3590. Subscription and advertising rates can be forwarded upon request. Subscriptions are sent via first class mail. Address correction requested.

Veterans Day is on Saturday, November 11.
Take some time to thank a veteran!

TOP HAT

Codified student roles could resolve concerns

IMAGINE YOU WERE IN CHARGE OF BUDGETING FOR A PERSON'S salary, but had no decision-making say in the job responsibilities that person was expected to uphold or in how that person was to be evaluated each year. This is the current situation in the Rensselaer Union.

Students in charge of building and approving a budget for the Union—including salaries for its administrative staff—no longer have the ability to ensure that the terms and conditions of the director of the Union position align with the responsibilities outlined in the *Union Constitution*; this ability plays a core, irreplaceable role in classifying our Union as student-run. In the past, grand marshals and presidents of the Union have played fundamental roles in the annual performance reviews of the position aimed to be their advocate.

There have been attempts to reinstate the student voice in the performance review process, but we have only been

granted the opportunity to suggest edits to job descriptions and the management tool for performance reviews. Students are elected and appointed each year—by the consent of the student body—to voice concerns and oversee the Union. The students must be able to continue to have a voice in the oversight of the employees of the Union to resume its tenure as student-run.

This forms the basis for what could resolve the concerns involving the Union: establishing codified opportunities for the student government to play fundamental roles in creating and approving the job description and performance evaluation tools for Union administrative staff. These would allow the students to ensure that the Union continues under the framework necessary for a student-run Union, with the grand marshal serving as the leader of the Union, the president of the Union leading the finances of the Union, the student government leading the operations and

policies of the Union, and the director fulfilling a vital role that is outlined in the *Union Constitution*.

The decline of student involvement across the board has been concerning. The electorate by proxy of its officials cannot afford to lose its voice at such a critical time in our Union's history. Meetings and communications, without opportunities for negotiation, do not satisfy the student body's need for involvement and support. I believe this schematic will be able to restore our beloved and universally-admired tradition of a student-run Union, enshrining student voice for years to come.

As always, if you'd like to share your voice, your thoughts, your concerns, or your ideas, you can reach me at gm@rpi.edu.



Justin Etzine
Grand Marshal

Justin Etzine
152nd Grand Marshal

DERBY

Clarification on Union director interview

RECENTLY, A DOCUMENT THAT WAS SENT TO members of the Executive Board was leaked via Reddit. This document was a pledge of confidentiality that members of the Board were asked to sign prior to participating in interviews for the director of the Union position. From my understanding, this document was intended to ensure that the integrity of the search and that the identities of the candidates would not be compromised.

It was noted that the original recipient list for the email containing the pledge did not include the Grand Marshal Justin Etzine '18 or the Interim Chairperson of the Human Resources Interview Committee Michael Cuzzo '17. To clarify this point, this email was sent primarily to the Executive Board detailing information regarding effective interview training hosted by the Division of Human Resources, so that the Board could be trained in the same way the committee was trained. The committee already participated in that training earlier this semester, and thus did not need to be retrained, which is why some members of the committee were not included in the email.

Now, some members of the committee were included in that email, but not everyone. The reason for this is because the training did not apply to the committee. Why some individuals from the committee were included and some were not is not certain, but after pointing out this discrepancy to Deputy to the Vice President for Human Resources Jackie Turner, all of the members that were not originally included were

updated on the training and told that their attendance was not required, but they were more than welcome to participate.

The director of the Union process is set to move forward in the coming weeks. The members of the Executive Board have been trained on effective interview techniques, and will act as observers in a second round of interviews that the Human Resources Interview Committee will conduct at the request of the students. The questions for the interviews were created solely by the committee, in conjunction with feedback from the Executive Board. The interviews will be concluded by Friday, November 10. Before the Thanksgiving break, the Executive Board plans to hear a proposal from the Human Resources Interview



Matthew Rand
President of the Union

Committee regarding the search. Once that process has concluded, the results of the Executive Board's vote on the Human Resources Interview Committee's proposal will be made public and sent along to the parties responsible for the next steps in the hiring process.

Throughout this semester, the Executive Board continues with its daily business of managing the funds and operations of the Union. We have accomplished much—from officially opening the Student Veterans Lounge, to revamping our social media efforts, to exploring how clubs will continue to operate during the Arch Summer Semester, and even to working with over 30 prospective clubs to expand the variety of organizational offerings the Union provides. Our efforts have

not halted, and will not, especially with the approach of budgeting season.

As I have made clear previously this semester, I stand by Etzine and the Student Senate in advocating for our students and accurately representing the student voice. As the chief representative and legislative body of the Union, it is their job to represent the student voice. This responsibility includes making edits to the *Union Constitution* as they see fit. My role is to support their efforts and, primarily, to ensure that the Union still operates each day. However, my role is not to speak on behalf of students, unless it pertains directly to the finances and operations of the Union. That role lies with the chief representative body of the Union, the Student Senate.

Now, in light of the Board of Trustees resolution, I understand that it opens the door for the operations of the Union to be fundamentally altered. However, the Student Senate is working hard to ensure that, should any changes be necessary, the student voice will not be diminished. Until the time comes for our *Constitution* to be finalized, we will continue to operate as we always have. The student body has voiced its stance in quite a public fashion, and I have faith that the Student Senate will continue to advocate for the student body and what they believe in, as well as work with the administration to maintain the sanctity of the Union.

The Executive Board will continue with their day-to-day operations as currently outlined in the *Union Constitution* as the Senate works on any necessary changes. I will continue to work with Etzine to support the Student Senate and to advocate for the student body, as it pertains to the

operations of the Union.

I want to leave you all with a thought, the same thought I left an administrator with a few days ago. We all love Rensselaer, and we want to see our institution prosper. However, multiple students have expressed that they no longer feel this is true. They feel as though the Union is still student-operated, as the Executive Board still manages the finances and operations of the Union, but it is no longer the student-run entity that it once was. So the thought I would like to leave is this: if our Union is to continue to be student-run, then the student voice can't just be a part of the equation. To truly be student-run, the student voice needs to continue to be a deciding factor in all of our operations. As long as we, as a community, can say that the student voice is not just a part, but a deterministic factor in any process pertaining to our Union, we can say that our Union is student-run.

I truly believe that the student government and the administration will continue to work together to ensure that everyone comes to a place where we can continue to proudly say that the Rensselaer Union is student-run, and we can look to spread the model we are perfecting to the rest of the nation. One day, Rensselaer will not be the last holdout for the student-run model, but the beacon on the hill that becomes the model for excellence across the country.

Matthew Rand
128th President of the Union

MY VIEW

Calling for better financial transparency

TO THE RPI COMMUNITY:

Given the pending changes in reporting and authority for the director of the Union position, the last vestige of shared governance at RPI appears to be in its final days. When implemented, this action will complete the transition of RPI's administration to a top-down corporate governance model, in the stated interest of a so-called "transformation."

For this type of governance model to be successful over the long-term, it requires two key elements: transparency and accountability for results. In my opinion, there is a need to improve both of these elements at RPI, in addition to Institute governance.

Did you know that RPI produces an Annual Report and Audited Consolidated Financial Statement for each fiscal year, ending June 30th, files them with the Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board at the end of October, and the MSRB posts these reports to its free public website at poly.rpi.edu/s/vfhfi?

When reviewed and analyzed, the financial statements reveal a very clear picture of RPI's operating results and financial condition. The reports are also rich with information that is not found in IRS 990 reports, thus providing insights that every stakeholder at RPI (alumni, faculty, staff, and students) would likely want to have. Moreover, these reports are delivered on a very timely basis and, when viewed over several years, reveal a narrative of what is working well and what is not.

The SEC and bond investors require all of this information to be disclosed in a timely manner to improve an investor's ability to monitor risks and make informed investment decisions with respect to RPI's outstanding bonds. Yet, if an alumnus calls the Division of Finance and requests these reports (which I have done in the past), you will be told that they do not make them available.

So, I recommend that every alumnus who has been, or is considering, giving hard-earned money to the Institute go to the MSRB website and read these reports. When you have financial facts, you can make more informed and timely decisions regarding financial participation and, if desired, hold RPI's leadership accountable for its results. This is the same information that enables the credit rating agencies, bond investors, and bank lenders to hold the Institute accountable for its financial results.

Considering the broader issue of RPI's governance and accountability to alumni donors, when you give, you become a financial stakeholder. Some donations are very large, some are medium, and some are small. Yet, only the very largest donors are ever considered for a seat on RPI's Board of Trustees. Along with weak financial transparency and minimal accountability to stakeholders, there is no representation on the Board for mid-sized and small alumni donors who, in aggregate, contribute a substantial amount to the Institute every year.

I urge all faithful and supportive alumni who have given, or plan to give, to the Institute to demand improved financial transparency and accountability for results from RPI's leadership. Furthermore, if you feel RPI's system of governance is in need of improvement, please consider supporting the platform of ten changes espoused by Renew Rensselaer, a growing alumni group of which I am a part. That platform is now available on our Facebook page.

Any transformation at RPI should include improvements that will enhance alumni interest in providing the necessary financial support for the benefit of the Institute. I firmly believe that some level of Board representation for all alumni donors would help stimulate alumni financial participation at all levels, both in terms of total dollars and participation rate—a statistic now well below the level of our peer institutions.

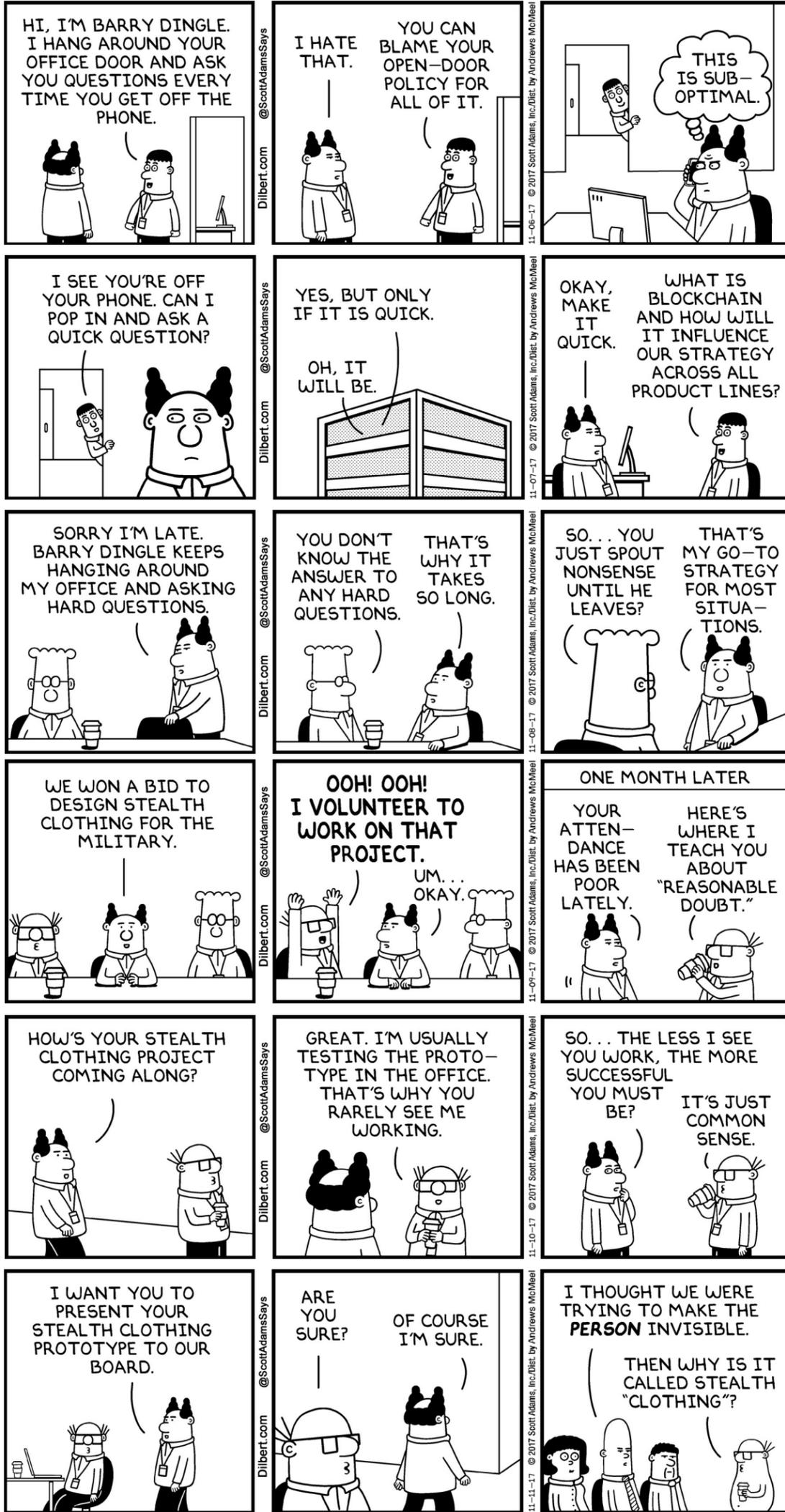
With sincere loyalty to RPI and greater financial participation, a united alumni base can fuel the type of transformation we all want for the Institute: to regain proper standing as a world-class technological institution. Serious improvements to transparency, accountability and governance are an integral part of making that transformation possible.

John A. Krob '78

DILBERT

by Scott Adams

TOP TEN LIST



- # Trees
10. Oak
 9. Tree of Life
 8. Family
 7. Factorization
 6. Common Ash
 5. Red and Black
 4. Eucalyptus
 3. Ternary
 2. Binary
 1. Rooted full binary

MONDAY PUNDAY by Matthew Broussard



SUDOKU

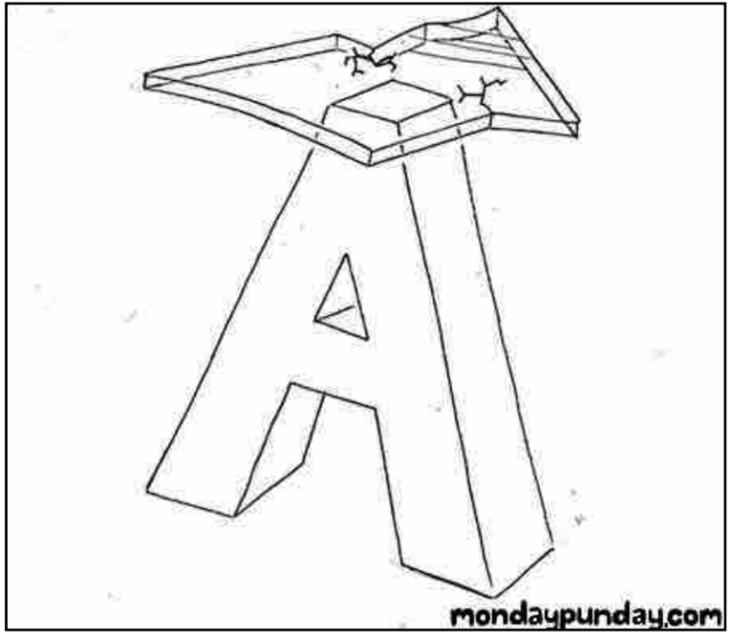
1		9	3	8		
	6		1			
		9		4	7	
8			9	6		
5						9
		5	2			8
		3	1		9	
			8		4	
		6	2	7		1

Instructions

Fill in the grid so that each row, column, and 3-by-3 subsquare contains exactly one occurrence of the numbers 1 through 9.

Last Week's Answers

5	1	8	2	9	4	3	6	7
9	6	7	8	3	5	4	2	1
2	3	4	7	1	6	8	9	5
3	7	2	6	5	1	9	4	8
6	4	9	3	7	8	1	5	2
1	8	5	9	4	2	7	3	6
7	5	3	1	6	9	2	8	4
4	2	1	5	8	3	6	7	9
8	9	6	4	2	7	5	1	3



CRYPTOQUOTE

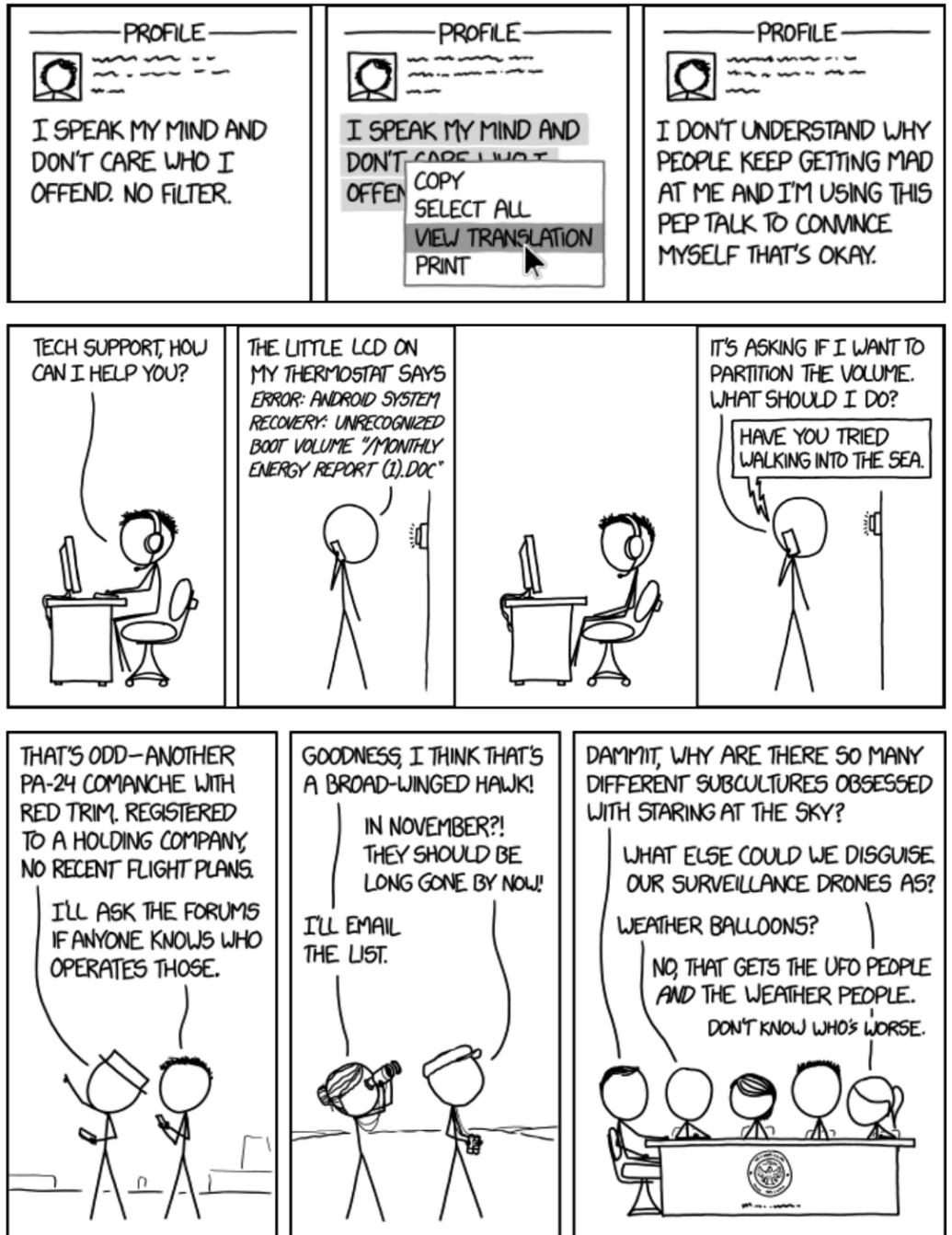
A Cryptoquote is a simple substitution code where each letter that appears may stand for a different letter. The substitutions are consistent throughout the puzzle. Punctuation is not translated. For example: SIVOISSWC = ENGINEERS

“Kg K aqknl gmq rmw, rmw sld rmwq xmlr. Rmw dlhh xl vjlql vl idcqd, vjlql vl’ql smkts, vjlql vl’ql smkts cgdllqvcqai. K sknl rmw gknl xktwdli vjlt vl sld djlql. Ctrdjks jcfflti kt djcd gknl xktwdli cta k’x rmwqi. Tm xcddlq vjcd. Ctrdjks c xktwdl mt lkdjllq ikal mg djcd cta rmw’ql mt rmwq mvt. K amt’d ikd kt vjkhll rmw’ql qwttkts kd amvt. K amt’d ocqqr c swt. K aqknl.”

- Aqknlq,
Aqknl

XKCD

by Randall Munroe



Features

Wednesday, November 8, 2017

CONCERT REVIEW

Shane & Emily charm with original music

Crystal Vejar
Senior Reviewer

THIS PAST SATURDAY, AS PART OF UPAC Concerts' Fall Concert Series, Shane & Emily performed in Mother's Wine Emporium from 8 to 9:30 pm. The charming couple played a wide range of music, with lots of covers and originals. Their sound is pop, acoustic, and folk with a lot of voice harmonization that fits perfectly. They gave off positive vibes, as well as a sort of sweet, romantic vibe that is accentuated by the way they act on stage. Their performance was full of cute back stories to their relationship, lots of dad jokes, and jokes about their future babies. However, the main attraction was really how well their voices harmonized together and their ability to put their own spin on songs that the audience requested through an app.

Shane & Emily are very open to connecting with their fans, and one of their most unique traits as a duo is their ability to engage an audience. Like I mentioned before, they opened up part of their show to suggestions for covers from the audience. In a short interview prior to the show, I was able to ask them a few more in-depth questions to further get to know them, and there I saw how easygoing and open they really are.

The first question I asked was to sort of get a feel for how they grew up and if there was a background to their talent. Shane answered my question of "Is your family musical?" with, "My parents sing, and my sister does as well. She's also a really good drummer." So, right from the start I could tell music is pretty important to them.

Music really is a huge part of their lives. Shane and Emily live in their RV with their two cats and travel the



Crystal Vejar/The Polytechnic

TRAVELING THE COUNTRY IN THEIR RV, SHANE & EMILY PERFORM at college campuses and bring acoustic music and a sense of humor.

United States to perform. They've performed at over 100 colleges and universities and also have had gigs at Walt Disney World, and have opened for artists such as Echosmith, Robin Zander of Cheap Trick, Jonny Craig, Caroline Kole, and others. According to Emily, they never say no to a gig, which allows them to spend a lot of their time traveling, sometimes in a not-so-orderly fashion, bouncing from place to place, sharing their music with the world.

When I asked if they ever miss living in a house, Shane automatically replied, "never!" Their lifestyle com-

pletely revolves around their passion for singing and performing, and they really wouldn't have it any other way. Emily commented that she doesn't mind living in an RV, but sometimes misses being in one city for more than a day, which tied into her answer for the next question. I asked Emily what their main goal as performers is, as Shane continued sound checking and working on their set up he jokingly shouted, "To become massive famous!" Emily explained that while that may have been their goal at some point, ever since they started talking about having kids, their real goal is

to be able to stay in a different city for as long as they want and still have people come to their shows. "Kind of like the Civil Wars, you know? People will come to their concerts no matter where they are when they hear they're performing. We just want to have followers, not really be massive famous, just to be able to make money and spend more time in each city!"

When I asked what they like to do outside of music, Emily laughed and commented that really 99 percent of their time is focused on music, but they did start getting into reading, especially the classics.

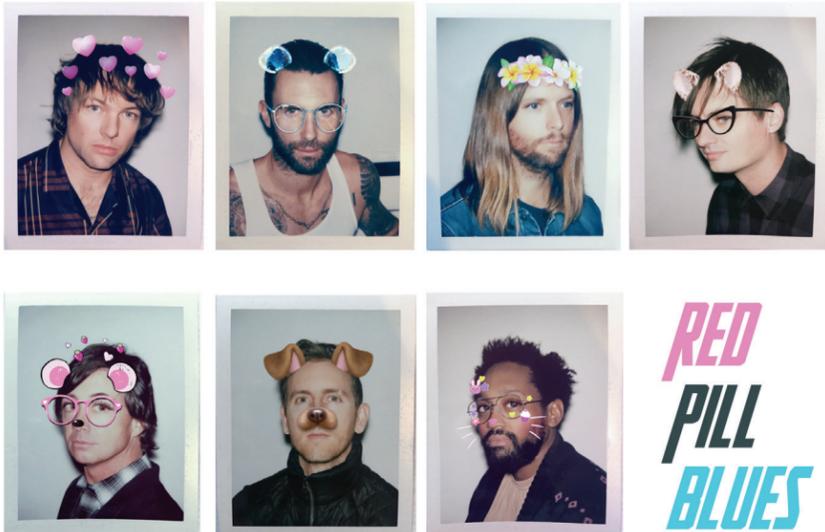
"When you're married, you should share your partner's passions, so when Shane got really into reading classics like *To Kill a Mockingbird* and *Moby Dick*, I decided I should start reading too. Apart from that, we really like camping and being outdoors in nice, tranquil places."

Shane & Emily are an overall happy duo, and that really shines through in their music. They currently have one album out and are working on a second. To find out more about them, find their music, or see their concert schedule, check out their website at poly.rpi.edu/s/8uv0i. ♦

ALBUM REVIEW

Band experiences revival with new album

MAROON 5



Courtesy of 222 and Interscope Records

THE RED PILL BLUES ALBUM COVER FEATURES band members with Snapchat filters.

Anahit Hovhannisyan
Senior Reviewer

ON NOVEMBER 3, MAROON 5 RELEASED ITS SIXTH studio album, delivering the band's latest sound wrapped in a quirky album cover and album name featuring references to the 1999 sci-fi action film *The Matrix*. *Red Pill Blues* plays with the idea of deciding between a blue pill or a red pill: a safe option permitting obliviousness, or a risk permitting truth. As a result, the album title may hint at the consequences of knowledge, or "blues," as most tracks on the album have gloomy titles like "Help Me Out" and "Cold." Regardless, it is no doubt that Maroon 5 has evolved into a whole new animal.

Maroon 5 is possibly best known for its album *Songs About Jane*, which is a classic album featuring popular songs such as "She Will Be Loved" and "Sunday Morning." Ever since the widespread recognition they earned since the success of their debut album, Maroon 5 has hinted at producing another similar album. The band has, however, decided to pursue a different sound altogether—one that coincides with electronic and pop beats often heard in trending pop songs.

Red Pill Blues samples a variety of genres with numerous featured artists such as Kendrick Lamar, Julia Michaels, and Future. For example, "Visions" carries a reggae beat with its bounce and base to add layers. On the other hand, "Who I Am," featuring LunchMoney Lewis, incorporates a catchy melody with a pop beat and a music production controller to add fun sound effects while introducing the old Maroon 5 sound with a bassline, guitar snippets, and smooth vocals.

If you yearn for the old Maroon 5, I would recommend listening to "Denim Jacket." It adds layers of bass, drums, keyboard, and Adam Levine's classic ballad vocals. Similarly, the most memorable song on the album is "Closure," lasting a total of 11 minutes and 29 seconds. This track has the most layered sound from start to finish. The first third of the song has witty lyrics and blends in with the rest of the album. However, at the three minute mark, the song transforms into a jam session with guitar, bass, drums, and saxophone.

Ultimately, *Red Pill Blues* is Maroon 5's newest experiment. It's worth a listen if you're interested in a refreshing spin on modern pop music. ♦