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Parent PLUS Loans capped



JONAH LAGRANGE/THE CREIGHTONIAN

The Office of Financial Aid on the first floor of the Harper Center informs students about new federal Parent PLUS loan caps beginning in the 2026–27 academic year and works with families to understand how the changes may affect college affordability and financing options.

LILIAN GARDNER
News Editor

Changes to federal student loan programs under the One Big Beautiful Bill will place new limits on Parent PLUS loans, potentially affecting how families finance higher education beginning in the 2026–27 academic year.

Creighton’s Office of Financial Aid notified students of the changes in a letter sent Jan. 30, outlining new federal limits on Parent PLUS loans and explaining which students may qualify under a legacy provision.

Parent PLUS loans currently allow parents of dependent undergraduate students to borrow up to the full cost of attendance. Under the new policy, Parent PLUS borrowing will be capped starting July 1, 2026, unless students meet specific eligibility requirements under the legacy provision.

According to the letter, students who received a federal subsidized or unsubsidized loan that disbursed before July 1, 2026, will remain eligible for Parent PLUS borrowing without changes to annual limits for up to three additional years or until their academic program ends, provided they remain continuously enrolled.

“For your awareness, beginning July 1, 2026, students who do not fall under the legacy provision will experience new federal limits to Parent PLUS loans: Parent PLUS loans will be capped at \$20,000 per student per academic year. A \$65,000 lifetime limit

will apply per dependent student,” Creighton Student Financial Aid said in a letter.

The changes have raised concerns among students about college affordability and access.

“I think it’s very sinister that the cost of college is going up at the same time that the ability to get loans is going down so much not just for undergrad, but also for professional schools,” Madeleine Dore, a sophomore in the College of Arts and Sciences, said. “The cost of college is not something that you can pay for with just a summer job anymore.”

“There’s a misconception that students are just unwilling to work jobs, but the reality is that what students can realistically earn while in school doesn’t come close to covering the cost of college.”

**-Madeleine Dore
College of Arts and Science
2028**

Dore said she worries the changes could further restrict who is able to pursue higher education.

“I worry it will create a further divide in

terms of who can access education,” Dore said. “There’s a misconception that students are just unwilling to work jobs, but the reality is that what students can realistically earn while in school doesn’t come close to covering the cost of college.”

Dore also criticized broader rhetoric surrounding access to education.

“I think it’s really interesting that a lot of the conservative talking points tend to be so focused on the idea of pulling yourself up by your bootstraps and bettering yourself, but that they are consistently taking away opportunities to do so through education by hobbling loans.”

Dore added that limiting borrowing options does not address rising tuition costs.

“The cost of college cannot be covered by the amount that you make as a student,” she said.

In the Jan. 30 letter, Creighton’s Office of Financial Aid encouraged students and families to review how the changes may apply to their individual financial situations.

“Our Student Financial Services team is available to discuss how these new limits may apply to your individual situation and to help explore alternative financing options if needed,” Creighton Student Financial Aid said in a letter.

Students with questions about Parent PLUS eligibility or future borrowing limits are encouraged to contact their assigned financial aid counselor.

Honoring a beloved CU Law professor

ELIZABETH JONES
News Reporter

Creighton Law Professor Kent Neumeister, J.D., tragically passed away, the Rev. Daniel Hendrickson, S.J., the university’s president, announced in a campus-wide email.

“My sympathies go out to all of Prof. Neumeister’s students, his colleagues in the School of Law and all those who learned from his expertise and worked alongside him for more than 50 years of service to Creighton,” Hendrickson said in his email.

Neumeister, who died unexpectedly on Feb. 6, dedicated 51 years to Creighton. He taught classes including Advanced Constitutional Law, Criminal Law and Land Use Law in addition to other courses on topics like civil rights law and antitrust law. During his time at the School of Law, he also served on the curriculum committee, assisted in organizing law lectures and special events, worked as a co-advisor for the Moot Court and was on the President’s Council on Cultural Diversity from 1998 to 2001.

In 1994, he was even awarded the honor of the law school’s “Outstanding Faculty Member” by the Student Bar Association.

“My sympathies go out to all of Prof. Neumeister’s students, his colleagues... and all those who learned from his expertise and worked alongside him...”

**-the Rev. Daniel Hendrickson, S.J.,
Creighton President**

At 81 years old and after teaching at Creighton for over five decades, Neumeister was set to retire at the end of this semester.

Before coming to Creighton, he served in the United States Army from 1966 to 1969 as a second lieutenant. He then worked at a private law firm in Boston. In 1973, he started at Creighton.

Throughout his decades-long career, he also did work with the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Federalist Society and the Association of American Law Schools.

“Please also join me in offering prayers to his family and loved ones,” Hendrickson’s email said. “May their memories together serve to support them during this difficult time.”

Buc-ee's coming to Nebraska

PARKER LUND
News Reporter

There's a mascot hanging around campus. He's a sticker on the surface of computers. He's a thermos sticking out of the pocket of a backpack. He's worn on t-shirts and hats. His name starts with a B, and his open-mouthed smile brings joy to Creighton students wherever he goes.

His name is Buc-ee the Beaver, and he's officially coming to Gretna, Neb.

Founded in 1982 in Texas, the Buc-ee's chain of gas stations has since grown to include 11 other states besides the Lone Star State itself. And now, the Buc-ee's corporation is looking to turn that number up to 12.

"Buc-ee's is so much more than a gas station," according to Creighton student Evan Miller, a self-proclaimed "Buc-ee's enthusiast."

"It's just like one of those big cultural kind[s] of staples. Like, if you're going to go on a road trip somewhere, you're going to stop at a Buc-ee's," he said.

Miller is from Dallas, Texas, and he and his dad have made a point to go to Buc-ee's whenever they could, using the excuse of cheaper gas to sneak away from the rest of their family. Once they arrive at the store, Miller said that the first thing he heads towards is the barbecue section in the back.

"The last time I was at Buc-ee's, I kind of

ate like three of their barbecue sandwiches before even leaving the parking lot," he said.

Buc-ee's has more than just southern cuisine, however. Sweatshirts, water bottles and plushies of Buc-ee himself are woven between stacks of high-calorie trail mix and energy drinks that would otherwise make Buc-ee's a regular truck stop.



Miller said he's gotten a few pairs of pajamas during his many trips to the "Disney World of gas stations."

All of that is what Creighton students have

to look forward to when the Buc-ee's corporation officially opens its most northern location – in Gretna, Neb. – although right now, that opening is pretty far down the line.

Gretna Mayor Mike Evans was the first one to break the news that Buc-ee's was coming to his city. Over email, he elaborated more on how much progress has been made in that regard. Right now, they have the land they want to build under contract and are currently confirming that everything is ready to begin.

Mayor Evans said that the process is going very well.

"We expect they will likely have all the information they need and close on the property this spring or early summer," he wrote.

From there, they can begin construction on the whole project, which Evans estimated that they will complete in the next 18 months after they close.

According to Evans, this isn't the first time that Buc-ee's and Nebraska had been in conversation.

"A couple developers had reach[ed] out to Buc-ee's about locating in Nebraska as early as 2023. Those talks were ultimately not productive, and Buc-ee's moved on to opening stores in other states."

Those other states include Ohio, where Bucc-ee's is opening a location in Huber Heights in April of this year.

Part of the reason why previous talks fell through was that Buc-ee's wasn't prioritizing Nebraska, or even "had any intention to locate in our state anytime soon," wrote Evans. But that all changed in 2024 when legislation was passed to allow for the designation of a Good Life District in Gretna.

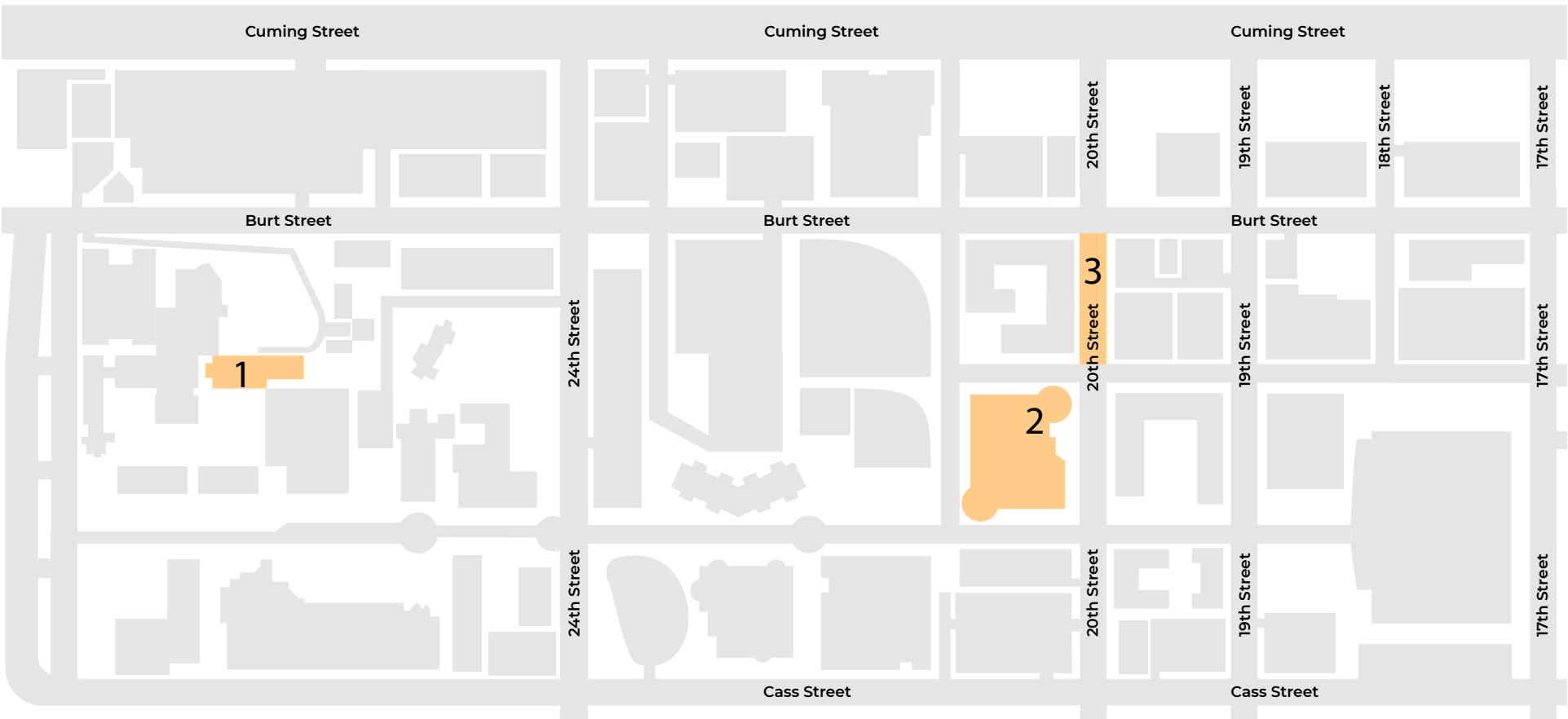
Good Life Districts are simple. They're designated zones across the state where the cities that they encompass can keep 50% of the sales tax revenue to reinvest in local infrastructure.

Their explicit goal, according to the city of Gretna website, is to promote "unique Nebraska projects that will attract new industries and employment opportunities and further grow and strengthen Nebraska's retail, entertainment and tourism industries."

Besides Buc-ee's, the Good Life District in Gretna has attracted other large tourism-oriented projects, including Woodsonia Real Estates' plan for a 125-million-dollar outdoor amphitheater.

Once the Good Life District legislation was explained to the Buc-ee's corporation, they became interested, according to Evans.

"Even more than the incentives, Buc-ee's [was] very impressed with the metropolitan Omaha area and the potential this location offered them ... [even though] a lot of people have an inaccurate idea of what Omaha and Nebraska have to offer," wrote Evans.



Weekly Campus Safety Report

This is a selection of incidents chosen by the Editor in Chief and is not a comprehensive weekly report. The full report is compiled in the Daily Crime Log which anyone can access in the Public Safety office located at 2222 Burt St.

1 January 23 - 6:52 p.m.
A faculty member reported finding someone using offices in the Eppley building that were originally locked earlier in the day.

2 January 27 - 1:32 p.m.
A student reported his North Face coat missing after leaving it inside the Hixson Lied Auditorium located in the Haper Center.

3 February 1 - 10:30 a.m.
Student reported vehicle was hit while parked on 20th Street next to Davis.

4 February 5 - 6:20 p.m.
Public Safety assisted a student who reported being followed by another vehicle while driving her car from parking lot 75 to Kenefick Hall (Not Pictured).

Creightonian

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Omaha honors CU Dentists

Alumni and faculty recognized for excellence and service

ISABELLA DIZONA
News Reporter

Several Creighton University School of Dentistry alumni were recently recognized in Omaha Magazine’s 2026 Top Dentists list, highlighting the impact of Creighton-trained dentists across the Omaha community.

Among those recognized is Dr. Terry Lanphier, associate professor and chair of the Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery Department at Creighton. A three-time Creighton graduate, Lanphier earned his bachelor’s degree, dental degree and later returned to earn his MBA after more than 30 years in private practice.

For Lanphier, the recognition reflects more than individual achievements, but the values Creighton instills in its graduates: service, clinical excellence and care for the whole person.

“One of the things I tell students is that all we can give them is opportunity,” Lanphier said. “We have plenty of patients, which some schools don’t. We have a wide and diverse patient base, so there’s plenty of experience that they can get.”

Lanphier emphasized that Creighton’s location in Omaha allows students to gain hands-on clinical experience early and often, which sets Creighton’s school of dentistry apart. Students participate in outreach programs that expose them to specialized care and underserved populations.

“We have outreach programs where students can go to smaller towns or work in specialty areas like pediatric dentistry,” Lanphier said. “If that’s something they want to do, they’ll get more experience with it.”

Service dentistry plays a central role in Creighton’s mission. Lanphier highlighted several initiatives designed to serve the Omaha community while also shaping students into compassionate professionals. One of

those is Heart Ministry Dental Clinic, located near 24th and Binney Streets, where faculty and students have been providing care for the past three years.

“We rotate through there with students,” Lanphier said. “That’s been a great opportunity to serve.”

Another key initiative is Creighton’s After-Hours Clinic, an emergency room diversion program that operates on Tuesday and Thursday evenings.

“Patients were going to the emergency room with toothaches, and there really wasn’t much the ER could do,” Lanphier explained. “Now they’re referred to us. It’s lower cost and mostly an extraction clinic.”

Lanphier also pointed to the KIRA Clinic, which operates one Thursday each month to provide affordable care to underserved patients through a flat-fee service model.

Beyond clinical training, Lanphier believes his years in private practice have shaped his approach as an educator and mentor. After practicing dentistry for more than 30 years, he returned to Creighton to earn a master’s degree in business administration. It was a decision that allowed him to guide students not only clinically, but professionally.

“I’ve seen many things,” Lanphier said. “I try to be approachable to the students. On the business side, I can help them with contracts and different types of practice.”

Lanphier also emphasized the importance of listening to students during the challenges of dental school.

“Dental school can be difficult,” he said. “I try to be there for them — whether it’s something personal or school-related. If I can listen and help get them to the right person, I’ll do that.”

When asked what he is most proud of in his career, Lanphier pointed first to clinical excellence.

“Clinically, in the oral surgery department,” he said. “That will always be my first love: the clinic.”

In addition to Lanphier, several other Creighton School of Dentistry alumni were named to Omaha Magazine’s 2026 Top Dentists list, including Dr. Hardeep Chehal (DDS’15), Dr. Jeffry Cherek (BSMTH’90, DDS’96), Dr. Jerome Gradoville (BA’84, DDS’88), Dr. Jose Ibarrola (DDS’91), Dr. Carol Murdock (DDS’84, MBA’14), Dr. Scott Radniecki (BS’08, DDS’12) and Dr.



JONAH LAGRANGE/THE CREIGHTONIAN

Some Creighton University School of Dentistry alumni and faculty are recognized among Omaha’s 2026 Top Dentists. The honor highlighted their impact across the community and reinforced Creighton’s reputation for producing skilled, compassionate dental professionals.

Frank Sleder, Sr. (DDS’84). Dr. Anne Aiello, associate professor in Creighton’s pediatric dentistry department, was also recognized on the list.

The recognition of Creighton alumni and faculty in Omaha Magazine’s Top Dentists list underscores the University’s long-standing reputation for producing skilled, service-driven professionals who continue to give back to their communities — both inside and outside the classroom.

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Marty Supreme’s toxic crawl to success

CHARLOTTE THAISETTHAWATKUL
Scene Reporter

Depending on which side of the internet you’re on, you either found out about Marty Supreme from the Nahmias x Marty Supreme jackets, an event for which hundreds of fans and fashion enthusiasts camped outside the New York City pop-up shop for hours, from star Timothee Chalamet standing on the Las Vegas sphere with his newly-shaved head or from his return as “Timmy Tim” on an Es-deekid “4 Raws” remix. In the weeks prior to the film’s release, it seemed like Chalamet was everywhere, frantically waving his arms around, shirtless on a pogo stick, trying to get the public to watch his orange ping-pong movie. Everywhere you went, the four words were repeated like a mantra: Marty Supreme Christmas Day.

I wasn’t doing anything on Christmas, or the day after, so I found myself heading down to the Dundee Theater to catch a 7 p.m. showing of the Josh Safdie sports drama. Two and a half hours later, I walked out of the cinema with a half-empty bucket of popcorn and an even emptier brain. I wasn’t entirely sure what I was expecting — but certainly not

whatever I had witnessed.

The film is set in 1950s New York, where Chalamet plays “Certified Worst Guy Ever,” aka Marty Mauser, a cocky shoe salesman who wants to make it as the American ping-pong champion. After Marty gets beaten by Koto Endo, a deaf Japanese ping-pong player (played by actual deaf Japanese ping-pong player, Koto Kawaguchi), he spends the rest of the movie trying to scrounge up enough money to fly to Japan and play in the world championship.

The film is mainly about the insane journey Marty takes, juggling his (married) girlfriend, Rachel (Odessa D’Azion), who suddenly becoming pregnant, making promises he can’t keep and dragging everyone around him into ruin, all in his relentless pursuit of greatness.

The film moves at a rapid speed, like rapidly swiping through a brain-rotted kid’s Instagram Reels page. One moment Marty is arguing with his friend Wally (Tyler, The Creator) about whether Rachel’s child is his, and in another second, the bathtub he’s sitting in crashes through the floor, leaving a naked Chalamet to scramble out of the tub, water spraying everywhere.

The film leaves you with no room to

breathe. Just when you think things couldn’t get worse, they do — all within the span of a couple of seconds.

Some might find the film’s speed and frantic energy exhilarating, but sometimes it leads the train to crash. For instance, the film sets up the importance of these orange ping-pong balls Marty asks his friend to make — the orange balls are introduced in the beginning, and then are reintroduced halfway through the film, just for the balls to get (literally) thrown out the window and never mentioned again.

“He has access to like, a hundred ping pong players who would benefit from the orange ping pong balls,” said College of Arts and Sciences junior, Kyle Trimino, who came with me on my second watch of the film.

“Selling the balls was never floated as an idea. It’s like if Chekhov’s gun was introduced, reinforced, Chekhov gets in a knife fight, and then he throws the gun out the window.”

The first time around, the movie felt like a quirky and polarizing rollercoaster. The second time, it felt more like a nauseating headache. The novelty had worn off, and the movie’s frenetic pace made me carsick rather than excited.

The film sometimes feels aimless in its high energy and with the edgy pointed dialogue. There’s lots of scenes of people yelling over each other, which at times just gave me a headache.

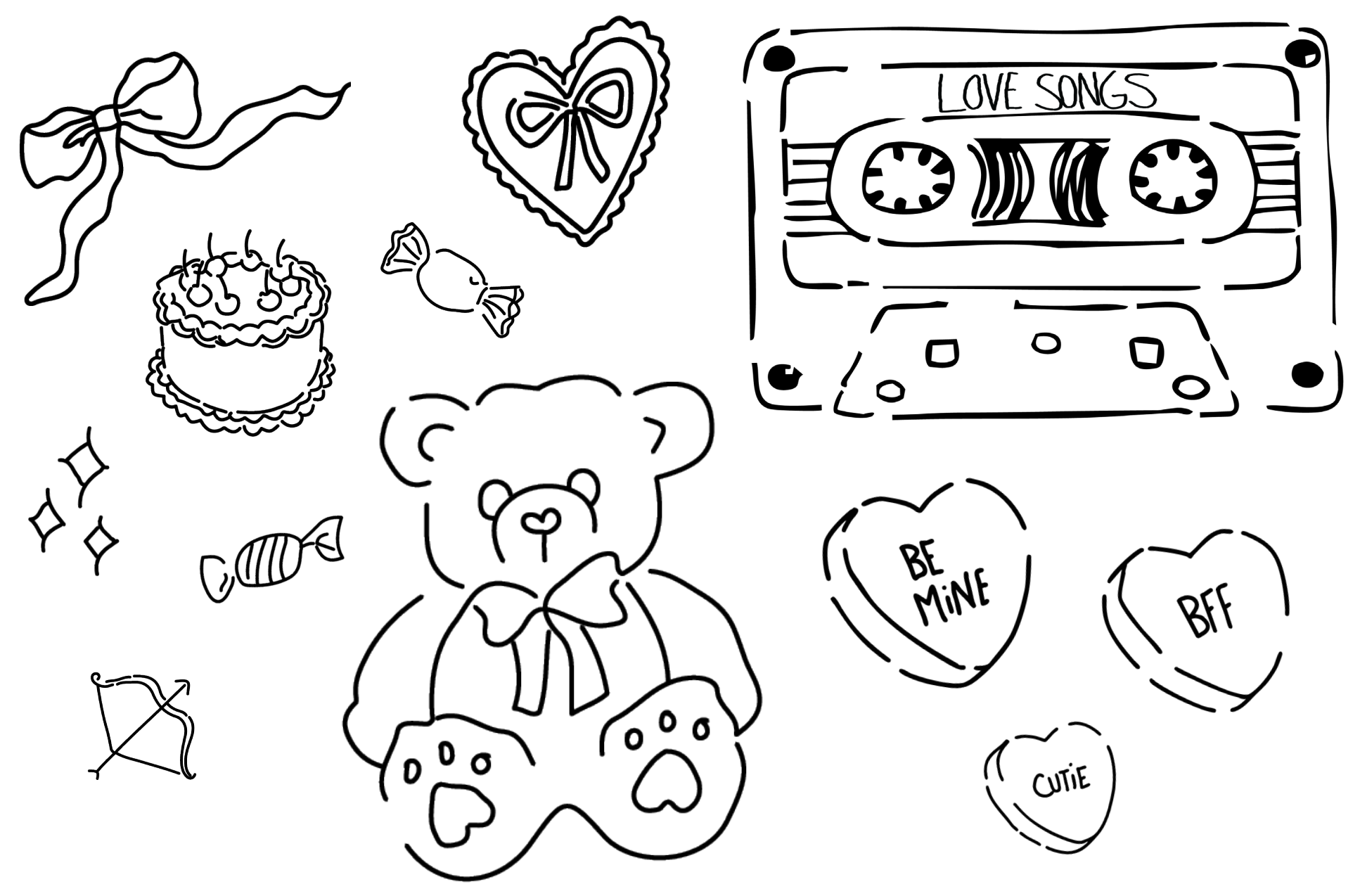
“You immediately forget this takes place in the ‘50s since the dialogue and the accents don’t fit in with the time period,” said Trimino.

Indeed, the dialogue sounds very modern. Everyone who speaks in this film talks like they’ve held a smartphone before. Marty is the worst case of this. His cadence is almost identical to the way Jake Paul would speak in a boxing press conference.

In my opinion, Marty Supreme wanted to be something great, but ended up falling flat on its face, becoming another run-of-the-mill “A Man Strives for Greatness but There Are Consequences” Oscar-bait movie.

The movie leaves you on the edge of the seat at times, but in others, it drops the ball and fails to deliver. Perhaps if the film was as compelling as the marketing, we wouldn’t be hoping for anything more.

VALENTINE'S COLORING



Bad Bunny’s ode to love and unity

CHLOE CARRILLO
Scene Editor

Super Bowl 60 happened on Feb. 8, with yet another iconic — and sentimental — halftime show performance.

Fresh off his three Grammy wins on Feb. 1, Bad Bunny took to the Apple Music stage at Levi’s Stadium in Santa Clara, Calif. He was the first solo Latino artist to headline the Super Bowl, and his performance was the first Super Bowl performance to be almost entirely in Spanish.

The show began with a farm worker in a field, presumed to represent the historical sugar cane fields in Puerto Rico, where Bad Bunny is from. The farm worker exclaims, “Qué rico es ser Latino. ¡Hoy se bebel!” Translating to: “How rich/great it is to be Latino. Tonight, we’re drinking!” This sets the tone for the performance.

After the intro, the performance goes directly into the instrumental of “Tití Me Preguntó,” with Bad Bunny walking through farmers in the sugar cane field. He sports a jersey with Ocasio, his last name, and the number 64, a tribute to his late uncle who taught him about the NFL, according to a statement from Bad Bunny to USA Today. Throughout the fields, there were scattered pieces of Latino and Puerto Rican culture, including a Pi-raguas cart, an outside grill for tacos, several grandparents playing dominoes, girls getting their nails done and even a jeweler stand.

The scene then transitions to Bad Bunny’s iconic “Casita,” a set piece that’s commonly utilized on his residency tour where he notoriously features dancing celebrities. The Super Bowl was certainly no exception, with appearances from Cardi B, Jessica Alba, Alix Earle, Young Miko, Karol G and even Pedro Pascal. The choreography from the dancers surrounding the Casita was electric and nothing short of what one would expect from a Bad Bunny performance.

After this, Bad Bunny shifts to a shortened version of his song “Party,” remixed with “VOY A LLeVARTE PA PR.” He then falls through his Casita into the middle of a family dinner, dusts himself off, smiles, then kicks the door down to the beat drop of his song “EoO.” The song is remixed with various Latin-music hits, including “Pa’ Que Retozen,” “Dale Don Dale,” “Noche de travesura,” and “Gasolina.” This element was straight out of a club-style music video, with dancers and sure-to-be legendary choreography. The scene cuts to Bad Bunny on top of a truck surrounded by dancers, singing and dancing to the song.

From there, the camera pans to violinists playing the intro to “MONACO,” in which Bad Bunny delivers a heartfelt message to the audience: “Mi nombre es Benito Antonio Martínez Ocasio, y si hoy estoy aquí en el Super Bowl 60, es porque nunca, nunca dejé de creer en mí. Tú también deberías de creer en ti. Vales más de lo que piensas. Confía en mí,” which translates to, “My name is Benito Antonio Martínez Ocasio, and if I’m here today at Super Bowl 60, it’s because I never, ever stopped believing in myself. You should also believe in yourself. You’re worth more than you think. Trust me,” according to Forbes.

It was a message to everyone watching to always believe in yourself, and to never count yourself out, because in that very moment, Benito himself was achieving his dreams and breaking boundaries.

Then, there seems to be a wedding scene — which was later revealed to be a real marriage that Bad Bunny was invited to — and in turn, he invited the couple to get married during the Super Bowl, with Benito himself as a witness. The wedding scene then revealed

Lady Gaga, wearing a modern flamenco dress and a Flor de Maga — Puerto Rico’s national flower. She burst into a salsa version of her pop-hit “Die with a Smile,” and proceeded to dance with Bad Bunny to his song “BAILE INoLVIDABLE” with the wedding party. An iconic moment emerged when Bad Bunny started dancing with a little girl and woke up a child from a make-shift bed out of wedding chairs — a situation that many, including myself, are familiar with if they had ever been to a Latino wedding.

Bad Bunny then falls off his Casita and into the arms of more of his dancers, cuing the intro to his song “NUEVAYoL.” The scene was in front of “La Marqueta,” a replica of a Bodega, Bar and Grill and a Barber shop, paying homage to the “Nuyorican” lifestyle (a Puerto Rican individual who lives in New York), which is in line with the song.

In a break from the song, Bad Bunny’s Grammy speech is being watched by a family on an old-school television, when Bad Bunny brings his Album of the Year Grammy award to a young boy who was watching with his parents. Some have speculated this represents Bad Bunny himself as a child, while some have speculated it is for future generations. Either way, the impact and inspiration of the scene cannot be denied. Bad Bunny was sending a message to any Latino kid — or anyone, for that matter — that they must be resilient and confident.

A rendition of “LO QUE LE PASÓ A HA-WAii,” was then performed by Ricky Martin, a true icon in the Latin music industry. The message about modern-day colonialism in the song cannot be denied and shows the audience the importance of remembering one’s culture, with a spin only Ricky Martin’s voice could portray.

The show then transitions to Bad Bunny holding a Puerto Rican Flag in front of flickering telephone poles — a representation of the many blackouts Puerto Rico has experienced due to natural disasters. This is all to the tune of “El Apagón,” which is an ode to Puerto Rican pride.

The song then remixes with “CAFé CON RON,” which is another song that highlights Puerto Rican identity. The scene switches to a plethora of flag-runners, holding Latin, Central and South American flags, as well as flags for Canada and the United States. Bad Bunny then says his first English words of the show: “God Bless America,” and proceeds to name each country whose flag was presented, leaving Puerto Rico for last, saying, “and my motherland, mi barrio (my neighborhood), Puerto Rico, seguimos aquí (we are still here),” while holding a football that says “TOGETHER, WE ARE AMERICA.”

To conclude the exhilarating performance, the giant screens at Levi’s Stadium read “THE ONLY THING MORE POWERFUL THAN HATE IS LOVE,” as Bad Bunny jumped, danced and shouted to “DtMF.”

Overall, Bad Bunny left a legacy of Latino excellence on the Super Bowl field. The representation of his heritage, attention to detail, and scenery of the show can be felt throughout the entire performance. Bad Bunny utilized his spotlight to highlight his home, celebrate culture and emphasize the need for love, which cannot be discredited.

February 13
Friday

- Smoothie Bike BYOB: Build Your Own Bowl**
12:00-1:30 PM
KFC Spine
- Fresh Fruit Friday**
1:00-2:00 PM
KFC Spine
- Sun Salutation**
1:30-3:30 PM
Mind + Body KFC 148

February 14
Saturday

- Love Compassion & Meditation**
11:00 AM-12:00 PM
Mind + Body KFC 148

February 15
Sunday

- Volunteering at Ronald McDonald House**
3:00-4:00 PM
Ronald McDonald House

February 16
Monday

- Cookies and Conversations**
2:30-4:30 PM
Skutt Student Center
- Celebración de Carnava**
6:00-7:00 PM
Skutt Room 105
- Day of Remembrance**
7:00-8:30 PM
Harper 2057/2058

February 17
Tuesday

- SNAHP Mardi Gras Bake Sale**
11:00 AM-2:00 PM
Skutt Student Center
- Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner**
6:00-8:00 PM
Lower St. John’s

February 18
Wednesday

- Wednesdays After Class (WAC)**
1:30-3:30 PM
Skutt Student Center
- Blender Bike**
2:00-3:30 PM
KFC Spine
- Drop-in Spanish Tutoring**
5:00-6:00 PM
Hitchcock 108
- Entrepreneurship Club General Meeting**
5:30-6:30 PM
Harper 2079

February 19
Thursday

- Survivor’s Circle Support Group**
2:00-3:00 PM
VIP Center Rise Room
- Black Excellence Celebration**
6:00-7:00 PM
Harper 4068/69
- Late Night: Lego Night**
7:00-9:00 PM
Skutt 104/105

A love letter to heartbreak

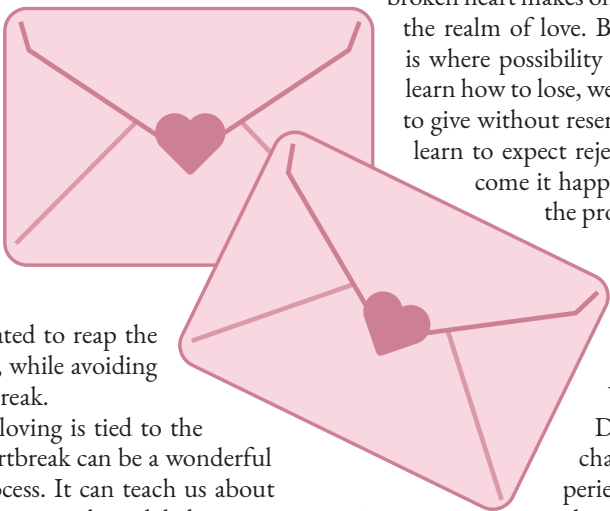
ELIZABETH GRAVELINE
Opinion Editor

Last year, I experienced loss – and a lot of it – for some of the first times in my life. The deaths of my grandfather and my treasured childhood pet and the end of a long-time friendship sent my world spinning. This Valentine’s Day, I can’t help but think about the love I am going without. But love and loss are two sides of the same coin. So, in order to honor Valentine’s Day for what it is – a celebration of love – we need to treasure all the stages of love, both beautiful and painful. In order to celebrate real love, we have to summon all our courage and invite heartbreak to pull up a chair. Each of my losses last year came with its

own grieving process, but all of them brought me indescribable pain. The force of the blow was unexpected. I was completely unprepared to transition from feeling secure and loved, to hurt and lost. Each time, I felt as if I was moving through a fog; my mind could not comprehend day-to-day activities. Studies show that heartbreak is a real condition and the physical symptoms of grief are serious: sleep loss, stress, anxiety and a compromised immune system. These intense feelings of grief give us the opportunity to reach a new level of feeling; to experience a deeper-than-usual range of emotions. Though grief is an unusually deep emotion, it is also a universal one. Rejection and heartbreak come from men, women, friends, enemies, strangers, potential employers and, often, ourselves. Rejection – ro-

matic, professional or otherwise – will hit all of us eventually, and likely at many points in our lives. In a world of dating apps, we can create a loveable image of ourselves. We have created a science of attracting love (or at least what looks like love), rather than learning how to love. The appetite for validation is insatiable, and our system is created to reap the rewards of “love”, while avoiding the pain of heartbreak. But the art of loving is tied to the art of losing. Heartbreak can be a wonderful and beautiful process. It can teach us about ourselves, facilitate growth and help us to love more bravely in the future. We define ourselves by our relationships, and our self-image is shaped by what others show us about ourselves. Grief is a harsh, but

necessary teacher, stripping our false realities away and forcing us to reckon with the reality of ourselves: who am I without this person who was so deeply a part of me? The tendency after loss is to be careful. A broken heart makes one risk-averse in the realm of love. But uncertainty is where possibility lives. Once we learn how to lose, we can learn how to give without reservation; we can learn to expect rejection and welcome it happily, as a part of the process. To all those feeling unloved, left behind and forgotten this Valentine’s Day, accept the challenge to experience deeper and explore yourself. Focus on loving instead of focusing on who isn’t loving you. As the saying goes, “it is better to have loved and lost than to have never loved at all.”



Opinions on the Mall

Question: Who (or what) is your Valentine?

“Baseball.”

Tim Kappel, Sophomore

“Buttered toast and an orange.”

Brigid Keran, Freshman

“All DJs.”

Lauren Pennington, Freshman

“My organic chemistry textbook.”

Lauren Moore, Sophomore

“Sam Darnold.”

Josh Wember, Sophomore

“Brandeis coffee.”

Brendan Perkins, Sophomore

“The Wuthering Heights movie.”

Grace Updike, Senior

“Red pandas.”

Luke Hardy, Sophomore

“Natalie.”

Yoshiko Nguyen, Freshman

“Yoshiko.”

Natalie McLearn, Freshman

The best thing about Feb. 14

MOLLY STARKLE
Opinion Writer

Valentine’s is out. Galentine’s is in. Now, before getting upset and rolling your eyes, give me the chance to explain myself. My intention is not to shame those celebrating Valentine’s this year with their significant other (although I could do that ... I mean Vogue did say having a boyfriend is embarrassing), but rather to express why friendship deserves intentional celebration. Historically, Valentine’s Day was not a holiday just for romantic connections; it was a day to celebrate love in all forms. It was an opportunity for us to express the love and appreciation we have for those in our lives. All year long, we celebrate various life moments like birthdays, career advancements, holidays and the little milestones in between. These occasions are all focused on either one specific person, accomplishment or a religious or historical event. Most of the time, there is an overlap in the people attending. I find that many of these occasions are rooted in friendship, but friendship is not the sole purpose of the celebration. This is exactly why Galentine’s stands out.

Over the past six or so years, I have celebrated Galentine’s with my friends. This typically includes making pizzas, serving fun drinks, setting out a platter of treats and wearing our pajamas. We plop down on couches and reminisce on all the memories we’ve made together, sharing in laughter and gratitude. The food doesn’t matter. The activities don’t matter. The people do. We enjoy the company of one another while celebrating something so simple: the fact that somehow, in some way, the world has brought us together so that we don’t have to do life alone. I find friendships to be one of the most special parts of life. They deserve a day dedicated to their celebration. For me, that is exactly what Galentine’s has been. Romantic relationships, on the other hand, are celebrated with anniversaries. Valentine’s Day is just an additional day to celebrate the same thing. Fun and festive, sure, but I would argue not quite as necessary as taking just one day to celebrate the people who make life what it is. After all, when romantic relationships go south, your friends are the ones who stick by you. This year, make celebrating your friendships a priority, whether that be with a Galentine’s gathering or another way. Friendships deserve to be celebrated too.

The short shelf life of modern slang

CECE SLADOVNIK
Assistant Opinion Editor

I have recently developed an intolerance to the word “whimsy.” I can’t say when it started, but I know I can’t stand hearing it. This word became popular near the end of 2025 and was circulated in many New Year’s resolutions. While I love the spirit behind whimsy (we should definitely make an effort to make our lives more fun), every time I hear the word I can’t help but cringe. Words have ever-decreasing shelf lives in

our modern culture. Due to rapid trend cycles proliferated by social media, we are constantly popularizing, overusing and eventually abandoning new words. I saw this firsthand throughout the length of my finance class last semester. From August through October, whenever our professor happened to say the numbers six and seven, the boys in front of me would snicker and look at their friends. By November, only one or two of them would react, while their buddies pretended not to notice. Finally, by the time we had gotten back from Thanksgiving break, I could tell

the bit was completely dead. While we have recently been rotating through words at a rapid pace, there are some slang words that have stood the test of time. “Fire,” “GOAT” and “sus” seem here to stay, and words like “cool” and “legit” have been around so long, I forget that they are considered slang. So, what makes a word live longer? What separates the “LOLs” from the “yeets”? Why are we going to fade “fade” soon, but “vibe” is still the vibe? I think a word loses its meaning when it fails to slip into our common language with-

out effort. If I tried to explain six-seven to my parents, we would be there all night. However, if I offhandedly say dinner was fire, I don’t think they’d bat an eye. The reason “whimsy” rubs me the wrong way is because it feels forced. I can’t envision a world where people are still saying, “that’s so whimsical” in two years, or even six months. I am so in support of making our everyday lives extraordinary, that hearing this idea compressed into a fad word makes me sad. I know “whimsy” will die, and the idea behind the word will be gone with it.

Bluejays steal Pirates' loot

Graves' buzzer-beater caps emotional comeback

ABBIE GALLANT
Sports Reporter

Some wins don't come easy, but they come when a team most needs it. That's what happened in Creighton's thrilling 69-68 victory over Seton Hall at CHI Health Center on Feb. 7.

After trailing by nine with 1:27 left on the clock, and on the ropes for most of the second half, the Creighton men's basketball team pulled together a comeback on their home floor, delivering a spectacle of a final two minutes that ended with a buzzer-beater 3-pointer from senior guard Nik Graves.

But when the buzzer went off, the members of the crowd began to filter out of their seats and the jumbotron turned off for the night, the winning feeling in the locker room was a little different, a little heavier. This win was more than just a nail-biter that ended Creighton's three-game losing streak. It was a statement of solidarity, a representation of the unbreakable bond that glues the 16 Bluejays together as one unit, even as a sobering truth knocked the wind out of them just days before.

On Wednesday, Feb. 4, senior guard Josh Dix lost his mom to cancer. Then, just three days later, Dix and his teammates returned home and powered through for a win in dramatic fashion.

"You couldn't draw it up better, because ... it's been a really hard week on a level I've never experienced before as a coach," head coach Greg McDermott said. "Many of them [the players] dealt with something they've never had to deal with before and not knowing what to say to a teammate, not being able to help somebody you really care about. They were there for Josh, and I couldn't be happier for them because ... they've navigated it like the true character that they all possess."

But that unity was present long before the final minutes, beginning with junior forward Isaac Traudt jumpstarting the Creighton offense from the opening possessions.

The sharpshooting Omaha native scored 12 of Creighton's first 13 points, all from range, in the first five minutes of the half. Over the course of Traudt's 25 minutes, he scored a team-high 18 points on 6-10 from the field, with all six of his successful shots from the 3-point line.

"I'm really proud of Isaac," McDermott said. "He stuck with himself, his teammates have stuck with him. ... It was good to see the basketball go in for him tonight."

Though 15 points in eight minutes — all 3-pointers — sounded like a recipe for a comfortable lead throughout the first half, the Seton Hall Pirates weren't going to make it easy.

After the Bluejays took an early 7-2 lead, the Pirates countered 30 seconds later with two quick shots to knot up the score at seven apiece.

Then, when Creighton reached a seven-point lead, 22-15, two untimely turnovers for Creighton gave the Pirates the opportunity to close the gap again just two minutes later.

This push and pull continued late into the half, but while one story of the first 20 minutes was Traudt's dagger shooting, the other story was Creighton's troubles with the pressure in the back court.

By the 6:30 mark in the first half, Creighton already collected seven turnovers.

"We certainly weren't our best. We had some turnovers that were very uncharacteristic for us," McDermott said.

It was, in part, due to these unfavorable turnovers — 12 by the end of the half — that

the Pirates held a slight 34-32 lead over the Bluejays at halftime. Those 12 turnovers resulted in 14 points.

Despite the turnovers, Creighton stayed close behind, with seven of its 12 first-half makes coming from deep as the defense struggled to slow Seton Hall.

Seton Hall shot 48.28% from the field and 71.43% from beyond the arc in the first half. Meanwhile, Creighton shot 44.4% from the field and 43.75% from the 3-point line.

Traudt led the team with 15 points, while Dix's steady presence once again graced the floor at CHI Health Center, providing his team with 10 critical points on 4-of-7 from the field after three games scoring under 10 points.

Opening second half scoring was Traudt, who got his sixth and final triple of the night, giving his team the lead back, 35-34, thanks to an assist from Dix. Then, the senior guard followed the dish with two made triples with 16:33 left to play.

But just three minutes later, helped by a three-minute scoring drought from Creighton, Seton Hall pulled together a 10-0 run over two minutes for a 48-41 lead.

Fast forward five minutes and nearly the same thing happened, as Creighton clawed its way back within three just to have a 7-0 run for Seton Hall create another 10-point lead.

By the time the clock ticked below seven minutes, Seton Hall amassed a 57-47 lead.

When the clock hit 1:27, Creighton trailed 67-58.

It seemed that any time the Bluejays would get close, the Pirates would sink just one more shot to keep the game firmly in their hands.

"We were trailing by ... maybe nine or so with like three minutes to go [and then one minute to go]. It's easy to just fall apart at that moment [and] give up, but I think we're a bunch of guys that are always going to fight until that clock says zero," Graves said.

The 1:27 showing on the clock was no match for that mentality, which fueled yet another fast-paced comeback at CHI Health Center, the third one in the building this season.

With time running low, the Bluejays cued the 8-0 run.

First, Zugic sank a triple with 1:26 to go on a dish from Dix, putting the Jays within striking distance, 67-61.

Then, Seton Hall's Adam Clark missed his jumper attempt. Dix missed his triple, but Green was ready for the put-back, tipping the ball in for the score.

With 32 seconds remaining, the Pirates' lead was just four, 67-64.

On the next play, Seton Hall lost the ball, and a scramble on the Bluejays' end of the floor ended with the ball in Nik Graves' hands, who found Zugic for another 3-pointer.

Only 17.2 seconds shone on the clock, but the Bluejays were in the game, trailing by just one, 67-66.

Creighton's only choice was to foul the Pirates. With students and fans reaching fever pitch, Pirates guard Trey Parker stepped up to the charity stripe, and hit just one of his two free throws, pushing the lead to 68-66.

"The crowd was a huge boost, especially late. It was really good to get CHI rocking again. It was really fun, especially when they were shooting free throws, that place was really loud," Traudt said.

Ripping down the rebound, the next 14 seconds of the game seemed to unfold in slow motion.

"I was supposed to get a handoff — [I was] trying to get a paint touch really — and look



ALLY SEEVERS/THE CREIGHTONIAN

Sophomore Blake Harper and freshman Hudson Greer run to senior Nik Graves in excitement after Graves sinks a go-ahead 3-pointer with three seconds remaining to upset Seton Hall.

for anybody coming off screens, stuff like that. But they [the Pirates] ended up blowing it up a little bit and we got a little scrambled. [I] saw the shot clock at like six and ... instincts kicked in a little bit," Graves said.

Seeing no open looks at the basket, Graves stepped back on the left side, letting it fly and swishing the triple with three seconds remaining.

The Bluejays went ahead 69-68. Seton Hall looked to get up the last-second shot, but it didn't fall, and CHI Health Center erupted in cheers. The Bluejays pulled out the win, 69-68.

"Wow," McDermott said in the postgame press conference. "We've got some interesting finishes in this building and that one certainly takes the cake."

In the game of basketball, one shot can change a lot in the game of basketball. In some, it means the difference between a win and a loss. In some, it means a career night for a player. But for the Bluejays on Feb. 7, it meant a light in what has been a dark week.

"That was pretty awesome, what just happened there, especially with what we went through this week. One of our brothers obviously lost his mom and that was one of the hardest days of my life and I can't imagine what he was going through," Traudt said. "For [Dix] to still play that game and play today and keep practicing and being with us, I don't know if I've ever respected somebody so much. To win that game today was absolutely huge for us."

By the end of the night, Dix logged 38 minutes on the floor and scored 16 points, draining four triples to pair with 6-of-10 shooting from the field and three assists.

"He had one of the best games he's had in this building," McDermott said of Dix. "[To]

play 38 minutes [tonight] when he was out with the flu Monday, Tuesday and then you take Wednesday's events and he didn't practice Thursday ... [and then not] turn it over against that pressure, I mean, come on. That's superhuman stuff given what he's had to go through this week."

With Dix's presence despite everything he carried, and the group united around him, that moment sparked belief that this team could build something moving forward.

"Hopefully this provides a little momentum and lifts their shoulders, lifts their chins a little bit," McDermott said. "Maybe they can smile a little bit. There hadn't been many smiles since Wednesday morning because it's tough to celebrate stuff in practice and outside of practice when reality slaps you in the face like that."

That belief carried into the locker room.

"I think [the shot] can be a change in momentum for us," Graves said of his buzzer-beater. "Coach Mac mentioned before that I think tonight we had an angel watching over us. ... We've been through a lot ... this past week, so just coming together, fighting hard, playing together, I think we can build off of that."

After facing the DePaul Blue Demons on the road, the Bluejays return to their nest to take on visiting Villanova, tomorrow at 1:30 p.m.

Jays edge Marquette in OT win



ALLY SEEVERS/THE CREIGHTONIAN

Freshman Kendall McGee and senior Kennedy Townsend embrace as the Creighton women’s basketball team celebrates following their 80-74 overtime comeback win over the Golden Eagles.

GRETA WALLER
Assistant Sports Editor

Creighton’s women’s basketball team refused to let a late-game deficit decide the outcome, rallying from behind to beat Marquette 80-74 in overtime Sunday, Feb. 8. The victory came on head coach Jim Flanery’s birthday. The Bluejays matched Marquette’s physical style, powered by freshman guard Ava Zediker and senior forward Grace Boffeli.

“I just thought we had great resolve ... We played from behind most of the game, and I think that’s easier to do at home, but it’s hard to do with a young team,” Flanery said. “I just can’t say enough about grinding that thing out and how much we’ve improved in terms of just being able to find ways to win.”

“I just can’t say enough about grinding that thing out and how much we’ve improved in terms of just being able to find ways to win.”

-Jim Flanery
Women’s Basketball
Head Coach

The Bluejays opened the game with aggressive interior play. Boffeli drew contact in the paint and made a free throw for the first points of the contest. Zediker added a 3-pointer that banked off the backboard, then drove through traffic, getting fouled and sinking two more free throws. Senior Kennedy Townsend, freshmen Neleigh Gessert and Kendall McGee rotated into the lineup and helped play more physical defense. Sophomore Allison Heathcock took a heavy collision near the basket but still finished her layup, drawing a cheer from the crowd.

Marquette began to stretch its lead in the second quarter with fast drives and open looks. Creighton responded with a strong layup by McGee, followed by Boffeli scoring off a feed from Townsend after a timeout. Heathcock connected on a deep 3-pointer, and Ne. Gessert scored with a clean jump shot, keeping the Bluejays within two points. Zediker attacked quickly after a turnover, drawing a foul and sinking a free throw to maintain momentum.

Marquette regained a slight lead in the third quarter, with Volker hitting a 3-pointer and the Golden Eagles completing an alley-oop to stretch the lead to 10. Creighton responded with Zediker slicing through traffic for a contested basket and a free throw. After Boffeli’s shot bounced off the rim, Townsend grabbed it and finished at the basket. The Bluejays’ defense soon began to force Marquette into difficult passes and tough shots.

The fourth quarter became a back-and-forth battle. Zediker started with a quick 3-pointer, and Boffeli pushed through contact to score in the paint. Creighton’s defense caused turnovers, and Heathcock added another 3-pointer after stepping into a gap. Zediker drove again, drawing contact and converting free throws, while Townsend finished a fast-break sequence with a layup. By the final minute, Creighton had narrowed the gap, and the crowd’s energy swelled.

With just over 17 seconds left in regulation, Neleigh Gessert tipped a loose pass and moved into space to shoot, sinking a 3-pointer to tie the game at 67 and send it to overtime.

“It just shows that Neleigh didn’t have the best night shooting, but she just had confidence in herself, and we had confidence in her to hit that huge three to send us into overtime,” Boffeli said.

In the extra period, Boffeli immediately scored the first seven points with strong inside moves off rebounds. Zediker continued to drive, drawing defenders, finding open

teammates and finishing difficult shots herself. Free throws and decisive defensive stops allowed the Bluejays to pull ahead. Zediker then got her 25th point of the night with a basket through traffic. Creighton finished the overtime period with Boffeli sinking her final free throws, giving the Bluejays a six-point lead.

“I thought for 40 minutes plus overtime, we just stayed together and stayed connected. This is an amazing win,” Boffeli said.

Zediker, whose efforts earned her Big East Freshman of the Week honors, said strong defensive decisions sparked the offense.

“I think it just all started on the defensive end, just getting after those loose balls, getting big stops on defense, and I think that just kind of carried on to the offensive end, which helped get us going.”

She also praised Boffeli’s leadership as the most veteran player on a young Bluejay squad.

“She’s always talking and telling us what to do or what to look for,” the freshman noted. “She’s been great at that, but also, just down low, her presence, and then on offense, just her post ups and just owning the paint.”

Flanery credited communication and ball pressure late in the game.

“I just thought we were determined,” he said. “It started with Ava’s ball pressure and maybe just a little bit better early communication ... I thought we stayed ahead of the play a little bit more.”

The 80-74 victory marked the Bluejays’ fourth-straight win, including third over teams with a better standing in conference play. After a matchup with the nation’s top team in Connecticut, Creighton returns home to host Villanova Sunday, Feb. 15 at D.J. Sokol Arena. The Bluejays will honor the program’s three seniors –Boffeli, Townsend, and Kiani Lockett –following the conclusion of the game. Tip is set for 4 p.m.

