

THE ADVOCATE

William Aberhart High School
June 5, 2025



MOSTLY UN-AMERICAN: THE NEW POPE'S ROLE IN CONTEMPORARY GEOPOLITICS

by: Sophia Lee

The beginning of May saw the election of the new pope of the Catholic Church—Robert Prevost, known as Pope Leo XIV. Many are questioning whether his election will bring a new era of change into society, and how he will compare to former Pope, Pope Francis.

Pope Francis passed away on April 21, 2025, on Easter Monday. The Vatican confirmed it was due to a stroke. His death saw many countries giving their condolences, including the United States, Canada, and his home country, Argentina. Canadians in particular remembered him for his 2022 visit to Canada, where he apologized for the Catholic Church's role in residential schools.

Pope Francis' death also stirred a new issue: who would be the next pope? The election of a new pope, following either their death or resignation, is referred to as a conclave. It is held by cardinals, who are bishops and Vatican officials appointed by the pope. The role of these cardinals is typically to hold congregations in the Vatican, where they discuss the global challenges impacting the Church.

Candidates for the conclave are selected from all over the world. Standout candidates for this conclave included Pietro Parolin, Luis Antonio Gokim Tagle, and Robert Prevost. The conclave itself takes place through four rounds of ballot voting each day, until a two-thirds majority vote is achieved. Cardinals under 80 are allowed to vote, with rules in place for cardinals who find themselves ill. The vote takes place in the Sistine Chapel, which seals its doors during the procession. All cardinal electors are sworn to an oath of secrecy.

At the end of each day, if no candidate has achieved the two-thirds vote necessary to win, the ballots are burned with a chemical that emits black smoke from the chimney of the Sistine Chapel. This chimney, typically disabled in order to preserve Michelangelo's famous frescoes,

signifies to onlookers whether the decision has been made or not.

If the two-thirds vote is achieved, the ballots are burned with a different chemical to emit white smoke -- a sign to the world that the new pope is about to be announced. The elected candidate is taken to the Room of Tears, where he chooses his papal name and wears the papal vestments for the first time. French Cardinal Dominique Mamberti, Prefect of the Supreme Tribunal of the Apostolic Signatura, precedes the pope onto the balcony of St. Peter's Basilica, where he proclaims "Habemus Papam," which translates roughly to "we have a pope." The pope is then able to proceed out to the balcony and give his first address.

For Pope Leo XIV, formally elected on May 8, 2025, this speech focused on emphasizing the importance of peace. "Peace be with you all!" the pope stated, in both Italian and Spanish. "I, too, would like this greeting of peace to enter your hearts, to reach your families, to all people, wherever they are, to all peoples, to the whole earth. Peace be with you!"

He went on to mention the deceased Pope Francis. "This is the peace of the Risen Christ, a disarmed peace and a disarming, humble and persevering peace. It comes from God, God who loves us all unconditionally. We still keep in our ears that weak but always courageous voice of Pope Francis blessing Rome."

Dubbed the first American pope, Pope Leo XIV was born in Chicago in 1955 and ordained in 1982. However, many also consider him a South American cardinal because of his work in Peru and Peruvian nationality. In 2014, he became the Bishop of Chiclayo, Peru. He also served as the prefect of the Dicastery for Bishops, which selects and supervises bishops. In 2023, he became archbishop and was promptly appointed as a cardinal.

"I was born in the United States... But my grandparents were all immigrants, French, Spanish... I was raised in a very Catholic family, both of my parents were very engaged in the parish," the pope stated.

All eyes have been on the pontiff in his first month of papacy to see what kind of direction he aims to bring to the Church, and he seems not to disappoint. He has already spoken out on topics including climate change, women's involvement in the Church, and workers' rights, continuing Pope Francis' legacy.

Additionally, he has not shied away from commenting on the rise of artificial intelligence. "[AI] has immense potential," he stated in his first speech to the press. However, he emphasized the importance of "ensur[ing] that it can be used for the good of all," along with recognizing the risk it poses to "human dignity, justice and labour."

AI also played a significant role in how he chose his papal name, Leo XIV. He revealed that it was inspired by a previous

The Advocate

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pope, Leo XII, "who was pontiff at a time of epic upheaval in the world, the time of the industrial revolution, the beginning of Marxism, and widespread immigration."

He stated he wanted to emulate the same strong leadership during a time when AI has threatened the same kind of upheaval as the Industrial Revolution, aiming to protect the rights of the working class.

Along with AI, the Pope has also addressed the current conflict between Palestine and Israel, where he called for a complete ceasefire. "In the Gaza Strip, the intense cries are reaching Heaven more and more from mothers and fathers who hold tightly to the bodies of their dead children," he said. "To those responsible, I renew my appeal: stop the fighting. Liberate all the hostages. Completely respect humanitarian law."

Many have conflicting opinions about the role the new pope will play in global politics, particularly as an American. "What both Francis and then Cardinal Prevost were doing was being bishops — teaching the Gospel, and reminding us the Gospel always is on the side of the poor, the afflicted, the suffering," stated Steven Millies, director of The Bernardin Centre at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago.

Others seem to agree. "I try not to play the politicisation of the Pope game," said American Vice President JD Vance. "I'm sure he's going to say a lot of things that I love. I'm sure he'll say some things that I disagree with, but I'll continue to pray for him and the Church despite it all and



through it all, and that'll be the way that I handle it."

However, some argue that he could play a crucial role in the cultural landscape of today. "I'm happy that someone could even further the reforms that Pope Francis started," shared Carol, a Catholic woman from Ecuador living in the United States. "I was concerned that some extremist from the right or traditionalist could be chosen."

Indigenous communities in Canada echo this sentiment. "A lot of people always don't understand that reconciliation is an ongoing process," stated Mason, an Indigenous advocate based in Winnipeg. "It was decades and generations of damage done towards our people. It's going to be decades and generations to really come to restoration and healing towards Indigenous peoples and the rest of society. I hope the important work continues," he stated.



Raul Zegarra, assistant professor of Roman Catholic theological studies at Harvard Divinity School, believes this reveals a trend towards the influence the pope can have on current issues. "All of this points to a pope that understands global leadership through dialogue instead of isolation, who understands power through service, instead of domination," he said. "It is hard to imagine a sharper contrast with the current administration in the U.S."

The pope and President Donald Trump now find themselves as two of the most powerful Americans in the world, leaving many to wonder how they will interact with each other. Trump himself expressed his congratulations to Pope Leo XIV when he was elected, posting, "It is such an honour to realize that he is the first American Pope. What excitement, and what a great honour for our Country. I look forward to meeting Pope Leo XIV. It will be a very meaningful moment!" The President was unable to keep out of the conclave, interrupting the mourning of Pope Francis with an AI-generated image of himself clad in papal attire. He later denied that this image was posted, stating that "the Catholics loved it."

However, many believe this civility will be short-lived. "I know he's not happy with what's going on with immigration," John Prevost, the pope's brother, said. "I know that for a fact. How far he'll go with it is only one's guess, but he won't just sit back. I don't think he'll be the silent one."

The pope is known to be against the Trump administration's heavy-handed stance on immigration, with parents who are immigrants themselves. Before he was elected, an account in his name criticized JD Vance in a social media post. This was in response to a statement Vance had made claiming, "there is a Christian concept that you love your family and then you love your neighbour, and then you love your community, and then you love your fellow citizens, and then after that, prioritize the rest of the world."

"JD Vance is wrong: Jesus doesn't ask us to rank our love for others," the post announced. The account also shared a post criticizing Trump for his deportation of a US resident to El Salvador.

The cardinal electors deny electing Pope Leo XIV with concerns about Trump in mind. "I don't think at all my brother cardinals would have thought of him as a counterweight to any one person," commented Cardinal Timothy Dolan, archbishop of New York.

"Even though it is factually true that Leo is the first US-born pope, it makes more sense to think about him as the second pope of the Americas," Zegarra claimed, referring to the pontiff's connection to Peru." This challenges 'America first' approaches and imagines the region more holistically, as Pope Francis did first, with its centre of gravity in the global south."

This seems to be explained by who the cardinal electors were in this conclave. Among 133 cardinals voting, 80% have been appointed by Pope Francis, lending itself to the prediction that the elected pope would share his more progressive views. Additionally, less than half of the cardinal electors are European, something that has not happened in the past.

"It's not that the world should fear a US-born pope. Quite the reverse: As 'the least American of the Americans,' he is untainted by our recent politics and may seem safer even as, still, he is an American intimately familiar with this nation's better angels," Millies added.

This serves to assuage fears that the US will dominate the world, particularly during a time when Trump's tariffs already pose a threat to the global economy. The Catholic Church has long since avoided electing an American pope, given

concerns about an imbalance of American power in geopolitics.

"The irony of Leo's election is that many in the rest of the world will view it as a sign of hope—as an American who can speak for them rather than act against them," said David Gibson, director of Fordham University's Centre on Religion and Culture.

However, the pope has yet to speak on a few key and divisive issues -- including his stance on the LGBTQ+ community and abortion. Many claim that his stance is less progressive than Francis'. As a bishop in Peru, he was against gender teaching in school, stating that "The promotion of gender ideology is confusing, because it seeks to create genders that don't exist." He also criticized Western news media for inciting "sympathy" towards "alternative families comprised of same-sex partners and their adopted children."

However, he had recently demonstrated support for Francis' declaration to allow blessings for same-sex couples. He has not released any clear statement demonstrating his stance.

In general, the Catholic Church stands

against reproductive care, including abortion, in vitro fertilization, contraception, or surrogacy. Pope Francis avoided speaking on these matters, but proved to be against surrogacy and IVF. Pope Leo XIV has followed a similar route, not mentioning any of these topics during his appearance. This is during a time when women's rights and access to reproductive healthcare remain precarious in the United States.

Additionally, there are concerns over his handling of sexual abuse cases as the Bishop of Chiclayo. In 2022, three Peruvian women accused him of failing to investigate and punish a priest who allegedly sexually abused them.

Church officials stated that an investigation was opened, but it was closed in 2023 after a prosecutor claimed there was insufficient evidence to support the accusation. Some are concerned that this points to a larger trend of covering up sexual abuse and misconduct in the Church.

As Pope Leo XIV continues to navigate the geopolitical terrain of today, it remains to be seen what kind of impact he will have on the world.

"IT'S A VULNERABILITY WE CAN ALL FEEL": ABE SHOWS ITS HEART IN RAISING OVER \$8000 FOR ROCK YOUR LOCKS CHARITY

by: Ryan Li

As Aberhart begins to unwind into summer, our school finished the year with a bang through one last event: the Rock Your Locks charity fundraiser for Kids Cancer Care Foundation. This Wednesday, our annual shave event took place in the gym, where many students and staff stepped up and volunteered to shave or dye their hair in order to raise funds for the charity.

In preparation for the event, Leadership has held numerous fundraising initiatives such as bake sales and Tape a Teacher to the Wall, all to support the foundation, which directly helps families impacted by cancer.



Amy Kirkland, one of the Leadership representatives, emphasized the collective effort needed to push an event like this each year. "When you hear people's stories, it reminds you how much impact this horrific disease has on everybody in some shape or form," stated Amy. "As painful as it is, I think it's beautiful how we can come together to take a stand against it. Kids supporting kids; people helping people."

The charity itself is an organization based in Alberta, dedicated to supporting

families through funding cancer research as well as lifestyle-based programs. Unlike most foundations, Kids Cancer Care holds summer camps for kids affected by cancer and education programs that seek to help families every step of the way.

When a family has to grapple with the devastation of a child's cancer diagnosis, there is never enough time and resources to deal with the long-term repercussions, much less plan for the future beyond immediate treatment. While many organizations focus on alleviating the burden of medical fees, the gap between hospital treatments and social support available makes it difficult for a family to manage their well-being. "How is my child going to keep up with school?"

“What does navigating the future look like beyond the hospital?”

Kid's Cancer Care's PEER therapeutic and learning programs aim to fight this discrepancy; with physiotherapy and specialized tutors to support families, children are able to regain more independence while seeking medical care, without having to set aside their education. As well, the foundation offers year-round camps and counselling sessions designed to aid families holistically throughout the treatment process.

“There is a vulnerability, I think, [that] can be felt by everyone,” said Mr. Gingrich, one of the volunteers who participated in the shave event. “Looking at our school, you can see the ways a community has been able to uplift one another for such a worthy cause.”

As the band director, Mr. Gingrich

mentioned how music has also played a role in bringing together a community. Years back, our symphonic band performed the piece “Song for Hope”, a composition by Peter Meechan dedicated to his late friend Ryan Anthony, a trumpet player diagnosed with multiple myeloma, and Anthony's charity, Cancer Blows. His foundation raises awareness and money for cancer research, largely through musical concerts. “Music itself is a language that I think can connect people in ways words cannot,” stated Mr. Gingrich.

One goal of this year's campaign was to encourage more participation from the school. Another Leadership representative, Sophia Lee, noted that “the tremendous success in this year's event relied a lot on Aberhart's enthusiasm and willingness to help out. From getting the word out, to running around selling donuts, I was pleasantly surprised how well our student body engaged with this!”

Last year, the final count displayed around a whopping \$8000 raised. So far, our donations have well surpassed that milestone with almost 10k reached! The online fundraiser for this year will still be open for a few days; to donate, you can scan the QR code below.

Thank you to all students, staff and community members for making this happen—thanks, Aberhart, for Rocking Your Locks!



“IT IS IN UTMOST DIFFICULTY DO WE DEFINE OURSELVES”: A SPEECH FROM TATUM NOVAK, VALEDICTORIAN OF CLASS OF 2025

Greetings, Salutations,

I would like to take a moment to thank and acknowledge all of the teachers, faculty, parents, guardians and loved ones, both present and not, for all of the dedication, love and care that you have shown us. To my family and loved ones, I remember all of those times that you believed in me, you believed in my flicker of imagination and allowed it to flourish. Thank you for continuing to guide and support me along my journey.

To all of the students here today, I ask you to remember and cherish all of the memories that have brought you to this moment. The loved ones who put you on their shoulders and cared for you. Teachers, parents and guardians, without you, none of this would be possible. You have held our hands through all the ups and downs, the calm and the storm, and I am grateful to be representing our class to express our gratitude on this special



occasion. Nous sommes ici pour célébrer le travail acharné, la persévérence et les réalisations exemplaires de la classe 2025 de l'école William Aberhart. We are here to celebrate the hard work, perseverance and exemplary achievements of the graduating class of 2025 at William Aberhart High School.

High school was filled with many highs;

the first win in an Abe jersey, that high grade that you didn't expect, listening to ridiculous stories told by friends, seeing the craziest outfits on filthy Fridays, and of course, the sound of the bell when the school day was done. Over the past three years, we have made new friends, laughed and cried together, all while being there to comfort one another along the way. Our journey has been supported by the kindness of our friends and the help of our incredible teachers here at Abe, and it all started on that first day.

Walking into a brand-new school for the first time is a moment filled with nervous excitement. That first day is full of countless questions: “What will my classes be like?” “Where am I going?” “Will they give lots of homework?” “What? A pop quiz!?” and “What does my future entail?”. Some of these questions remain uncertain, but many have been answered in flying colours. The classes were filled with compassionate souls and caring staff. Yes, we may have gotten lost, but we

found our way around. And yes, there was homework, which everyone did, for the most part.

All of those initial feelings of nervousness and incertitude turned into something incredible. These wavering feelings leave room for a hidden joy and beauty that cannot be seen by the naked eye. The class that you walked into and knew no one turned into something you shared with friends. Friends who brought the best of times through all of the ups and downs that life throws at you.

Challenges are present throughout life in all ways, shapes, and forms, whether it's work, relationships, family or high school, but it is in moments of the utmost difficulty that we define ourselves. Whether we succumb to the storm or learn to dance in the rain is our choice.

Each and every person is brought face to face with decisions and hard times, and yes, we will fail; we are all human. We breathe the same air, walk the same earth, sleep under the same stars, and no single person is perfect. It is in our togetherness that we find strength, and with that, it is essential to understand that no matter where you are, at that moment when you feel truly alone, there is always somebody

who will stand by your side. Someone who loves you, someone who cares about you or someone who is fighting their own battle. Let's not let the darkness be too much.

Even the smallest flame has the power to overcome the darkness. Let's nurture the sparks that are our hopes and dreams, and set our hearts ablaze. Let's look forward to every sunrise and every sunset. Let's appreciate the beauty in every single moment.

Chaque jour est un nouveau chapitre; each day is a new chapter, one filled with twists and turns. Our journey through High school may be coming to a close,

but a vast future lies ahead of us all. As the author Vivien Greene said, "Life isn't about waiting for the storm to pass. It's about learning how to dance in the rain." The future may present similar feelings of nervousness, anxiety and fear of the unknown, but we have all been through storms before. It's time to dance in the rain. And while you're at it...

...why not splash in some puddles!

Merci, thank you!

Tatum Novak



CENSORSHIP OR PROTECTION? ALBERTA'S BOOK POLICY SPARKS BACKLASH

by: Addison Carr

On May 26, 2025, Demetrios Nicolaides, Alberta's Minister of Education and Childcare, sparked controversy among Albertans regarding newly proposed age-appropriate content restrictions in K-12 school libraries. The move follows an investigation by his office, which identified several graphic novels, many centred on LGBTQ2+ themes and coming-of-age stories, in Calgary and Edmonton schools as containing material considered inappropriate for students.

In response, the province plans to launch public engagement efforts to gather feedback on new standards aimed at

ensuring library content aligns with age-appropriateness in educational settings.

Addressing the balance between educational freedom and age-appropriate content, Education Minister Demetrios Nicolaides emphasized that access to information is a fundamental right, and it must be approached with care in the school system. "Anybody should be able to explore information on any topic that's of interest to them," he stated, underscoring the importance of intellectual curiosity.

However, he drew a clear distinction between open access and responsible curation for young audiences, adding,

"There's a line there between age-appropriate material that provides children and students with information about topics versus inappropriate material." His comments reflect the government's attempt to navigate the complex intersection of educational rights and content suitability in Alberta's schools. This is alongside the difficulty of enforcing one-size-fits-all policies across culturally and religiously diverse schools, rather than permitting each board to create guidelines that reflect their unique communities.

Although the Alberta government currently lacks the direct authority to



ban books from school libraries, it is seeking to shape library standards through its existing power to set educational policies. Nicolaides clarified that while there is no initiative for new legislation to grant book banning authority yet, they are actively seeking to influence which materials are deemed appropriate through the development of new widespread provincial standards.

The target is to create widespread policies overseeing all school boards, including public, separate, francophone, charter and independent institutions. However, these policies will not be enforced upon non-school libraries, such as the 55 municipal branches located within school buildings. This sparks controversial questions as to how effective these future regulations will actually prove to be.

Alberta's recent push to implement age-appropriate standards mirrors broader cultural trends within the United States of America. Since President Donald Trump's impeachment in January 2025, he has actively and publicly amplified efforts to increase "parental rights" in education. A following wave of book bans and curriculum restrictions across republican states has surged conservative movements beyond U.S borders, including Alberta.

While Alberta's approach remains less aggressive and seemingly more focused on public opinions rather than outright bans,

it reflects an ideological consensus with American priorities, particularly regarding LGBTQ2+ and gender-themed content, further marginalizing minority groups yet providing space for a more neutralized education for developing children.

According to the PEN America website, "In the 2023-2024 school year, [it was found that] more than 10,000 book bans affecting more than 4,000 unique titles, with about 45 per cent of the bans occurring in Florida and 36 per cent in Iowa." In contrast, as of February 2025, Albertans have filed complaints regarding ninety-seven titles found in Alberta schools, amplifying a sense of compliance within the Alberta government.

Out of these ninety-seven titles only four are currently in review, the four include; Gender Queer, a memoir and graphic novel by Maia Kobabe, Blankets, a graphic novel by Craig Thompson, Flamer, a novel by Mike Curato and lastly Fun Home, by Alison Bechdel.

The outcome of Alberta's proposed school library standards is still unclear and will be expectantly shaped by public input, as the province has launched an online survey open until June 6, allowing Albertans to voice their views on what should be considered age-appropriate content in school libraries (see the QR code below).

As Alberta advances towards the implementation of new school library standards, the province finds itself at the center of larger cultural crossroads. The question at hand: censorship or protection? This question has sparked passionate debate from parents, educators, advocacy groups, and students alike.

While the proposed changes aim to ensure age-appropriate content in schools, critics warn of the risks of silencing diverse perspectives, particularly those reflecting LGBTQ2+ and coming-of-age experiences. Supporters, on the other hand, argue that schools must safeguard children from content they believe is unsuitable.

With public consultation underway until June 6, Albertans have been given a direct role in shaping how these standards unfold. The outcome will not just determine what books remain on shelves—it will define how Alberta balances educational freedom, parental input, and student protection in an increasingly polarized landscape.

As students, your voices matter more than you might think. By filling out the online survey (open until June 6), you have the chance to share your perspective on what stories, themes, and books should be available to students like us!



SCAN TO
TAKE THE
SURVEY!

MOON-TIME BAGS: REDUCING PERIOD POVERTY WITHIN HOMELESSNESS

by: Lauren Schultz

The Leadership/Social Action Club here at Aberhart are once again taking action to support a meaningful cause. This project, the creation of "Moon-time Bags", was started by Alycia Two Bears almost two years ago. She makes care packages to support bleeding bodies; they include pads, liners, tampons, underwear, chocolate, tea, lip balm, and sage smudge.

"When I smudge, it's a practice of gratitude and love, and my prayers go to ancestors", Alycia states. The students here at Aberhart are given the opportunity to support the cause by making their own "Moon-time bags" and then dropping them off in boxes around the school to be donated to women in need.

Every Friday night in the downtown area, a patrol gathers to give out the bags. "I wanted to remind people who don't have access to the washroom and they are bleeding involuntarily once a month: 'We got you, we still love you, we see you, you



are going to be taken care of," Two Bears said.

Robin Raweater is a long-time volunteer of the cause, and said that the people she connects with are so grateful for the care packages. "The moon is the most sacred time a woman goes through, her cycle, and we need to remind these women at their lowest time they are still sacred, they are still loved," Raweater said. Students and teachers are encouraged to donate and

to spread the word to others. The hope is that one day soon, they won't have to provide these basic necessities, but until the government finally steps up for feminism and they're widely available, Two Bears will graciously accept donations.

You can reach her at goodwomanmedi-cine@gmail.com. Additionally, the Moss Bag Project accepts donations. Countries such as Scotland and Catalonia offer free period products to women, and Canada must be urged to do the same.

Toilet paper is free in all washrooms, so why do period products come with a price? This is a huge element of sexism that is still prevalent today. The "Moon-Time Bags" project recognizes this and is passionate about making positive change. This is a beautiful cause created by Two Bears and supported full-heartedly by Aberhart. Let's all contribute to making the change for good!

ABE TEACHER MONTHLY: MR. WIEBE

by: Ruby Tovich

Tell us a little bit about yourself: hobbies, music, where you grew up, etc.

I grew up in Swift Current, Saskatchewan. I've been to university in a few places, and landed in Calgary for work, so I only came here once I became a teacher. Of course, I would say my big things are doing art, you know that makes sense. Art really just is always in my mind at all times. That, and then running, and snowboarding. I normally go to Fernie and Nakiska. Calgary was as close to a job as I could get to the mountains.

How did you end up at Aberhart?

As a teacher, you hear about other schools. You know I live not too far from here in Varsity, so it is quite close to me. I have some friends from Calgary who graduated from here, so I knew about it from them, and I had worked with Mr Sagriotis in the



past before either of us came to Abe.

Do you have any fond memories from high school?

One of them was taking woodshop. Wood-shop was one of my best memories, just

like the class itself and everything about it. And then the soccer team—being on a sports team was such a fun experience. Since Swift Current only had one high school, we had to play schools from other towns. In any away game we had, we rode these buses or these giant vans to all the other small towns for our games. Those bus rides were filled with so many fun bonding moments.

Do you play any other sports?

I stopped playing soccer after high school, and I shifted into ultimate, so now that would be like the team sport I play. But I also like solo sports like snowboarding and running. Sports where it's just you, you know?

Best live music performance you've been to?

The Darkness. The show was like right after COVID, so they had a tour booked, and they got cancelled due to the pandemic. They're a rock band out of the UK and they've had some big hits, like a while back.

They've played arena shows and stadiums, like in Wembley Stadium and all this stuff, and after their tour was cancelled right at the tail end of COVID, they started down in the States, where stuff was opening the earliest. Then the band would book one show ahead and slowly make their way North. I heard they were coming to Calgary, and venues had just opened like a week before—it might've even been the first weekend.

The venue was at half capacity, so this band that normally plays in huge arenas and stadiums had this little 200-person concert, and it was just phenomenal. It's so cool being right up close to the stage rather than being so far back in a crowd.

What do you like to do over summer break?

I like to spend time relaxing; my parents have a cabin on a lake in Saskatchewan, so I go back home to spend some time there, and then I'm usually training for running. I got an ultramarathon lined up for September right at the beginning of the school year, so summer is when I really focus on training.

What is a fun or little-known fact about you?

I changed my middle name in grade six, from Andrew to Jacob, and it was because I didn't like the name Andrew. I petitioned my parents to change my middle name!

Favourite cuisine?

Probably Vietnamese. I'm celiac, so I find that there are more rice-based options like noodles and things of that sort.

Do you watch sports on TV, and which teams do you cheer for?

I watch the NHL the most, even though I've never played a ton of organized hock-

ey, just shinny at the rink. I cheer for the Oilers, though.

If the Aberhart staff were in the Hunger Games, who would you want to make an alliance with/team up with? And why?

My first draft pick would be Mr. Crawley. I feel like he knows everything that's going on, and obviously, his skills from the shop are great. Then my second pick would be Ms. Vryenhoek—I think she'd be pretty cutthroat.

If you were stuck having to teach a different subject than the ones you teach right now, which one would you want to teach?

I'd wanna teach woodshop.

Do you have a favourite visual artist?

I do, yes. My favourite artists are those who do art that's very different from myself, like stuff that I could never do. I think my favourite is Ai Weiwei, a Chinese artist. His new stuff is very large-scale; he has quite a few conceptual pieces, and it's pretty political too.

What is your favourite art medium?

I like mixed media. Oftentimes, you'll find me collaging in class. So I'd say drawing, collage, painting, all together.

Do you have a least favourite art medium?

Yeah. Watercolour.

What's your go-to morning beverage?

Just coffee, but pour over. I have a bit of a ritual, you know, boil the water, grind it, do all that.

What is your favourite movie?

Probably John Wick, to be honest. I really like action movies, martial arts and everything.

When you were a kid, what did you want to be when you grew up?

I wanted to be an architect. I mentioned being into woodshop, so you can probably make the connection there. I had kind of thought that being an architect would be that creative outlet, but with a hands-on aspect. That had been the plan until I went to art school, and then art was just too much fun on its own.

Any media (movies, shows, music, artists, etc) recommendations for Aberhart students?

Well, I've mentioned The Darkness, but for movies and shows, on the spot, I'm not sure. It's one of those questions where I'm asked, and I freeze up trying to think of a good answer. Otherwise, I would say the band Wintersleep. It's just the right level between being able to listen to it while doing other things, but it's still engaging, you know what I mean? It's like rock—Canadian rock, but fuzzier than that.

Do you have any closing remarks that you would like to share, or any messages that you'd like to broadcast for the month of June?

I can't think of any smart or witty things to say to close, but I'm happy I got to be interviewed, though, it feels pretty good being called up. I still feel like I don't know the school yet. It's only my second here here so I feel like I don't know everything yet. So I don't have any insight, nothing like that.



SENSITIVE SKIN: SECRETS TO SKINCARE

by: Lauren Schultz

Many people struggle with sensitive skin, a skin type that is affected by a depleted moisture barrier and a reduced tolerance to the application of cosmetics and skincare products. My own wake-up call to this was when I was little, putting on sunscreen before going to the beach, and then developing a severe rash. The sunscreen had fragrance in it. I avoided those types of products and switched to all-natural, mineral sunscreen. This had worked for many years, but then I became a teenager, and with that came the use of skincare and cosmetics. After using makeup without checking the ingredient list for things such as fragrance, I had skin irritations for a long time, not knowing why.

I thought that I had taken good care of my skin by spending so much money on trending skincare and makeup products, and by buying what was on the shelves at the drugstore. But I still wondered, why is my skin like this? Around 50% of women and 40% of men report having sensitive skin, so why isn't it being more talked about?

Many people do not read the fine print on what they buy, and that's where the harsh ingredients present themselves before they appear on your skin. Things such as sulphates, parabens, and especially fragrance, which is often hidden in the majority of makeup products and skincare, can cause skin irritation, redness, or allergic reactions. Substances like these are especially rough for individuals with sensitive skin or conditions like eczema and rosacea.



Fragrance disrupts the skin barrier, leading to increased skin dryness or sensitivity over time. When you pick up a new product and notice that it smells really nice, like a Bath & Body Works lotion or a L'Oréal concealer, ask yourself, Is it really worth it? Fragrance is a chemical, and that is what most brands put in all of their products. This is why checking the fine print is so important. Cosmetics and Skincare brands such as Clinique, PUR, Versed, Cocokind, and Bioderma are great options for those with sensitive skin or those who are looking to use more natural and ingredient-conscious products.

Because these specific brands use dermatological testing and ethically sourced vegan ingredients, they are on the expensive side of the cosmetic and skincare product lines. For cheaper versions, some products from ELF and NYX cosmetics are safe

for sensitive skin, but you must check the fine print. Make sure to look for things on the packaging that state "dermatologically tested", "made for sensitive skin", and "fragrance free".

An issue with this, though, is that some brands, such as the Hello deodorant brand, do claim to be "dermatologically tested" and say to have "clean ingredients," yet still contain fragrance in them. I tried this brand, thinking it would be safe for my skin as the labels seemed to convince me, but it ultimately gave me red bumps on my underarm. By switching to a fragrance-free deodorant, such as Tom's, my skin has been happy and healthy with no redness.

A quote that resonates with many dermatologists about sensitive skin is, "Your skin is an organ – you would never harm your heart or lungs in order to approve them. The same goes for skin," stated by Dr Dennis Gross. This is why reading the fine print as well as the front labels is so important for people who struggle with sensitive skin.

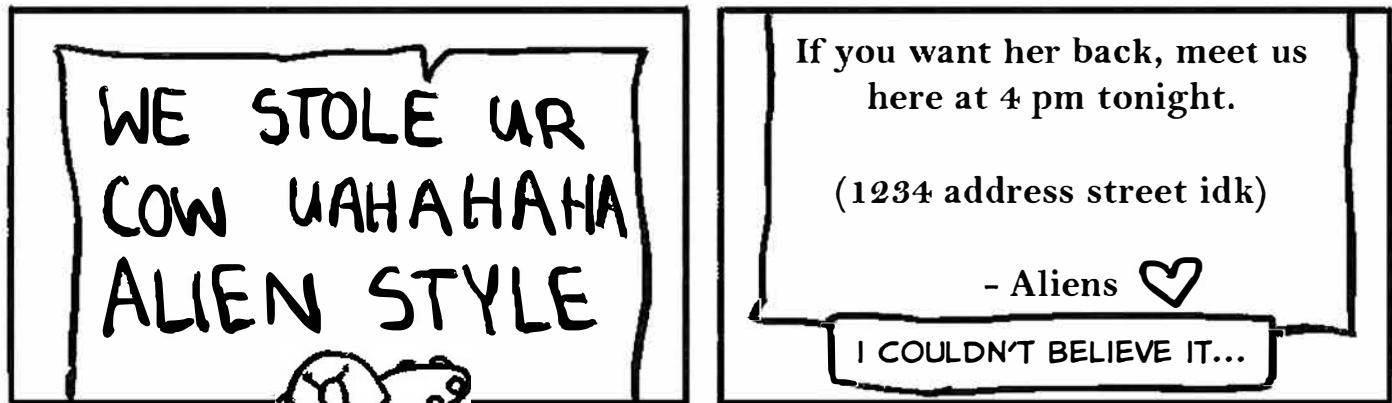
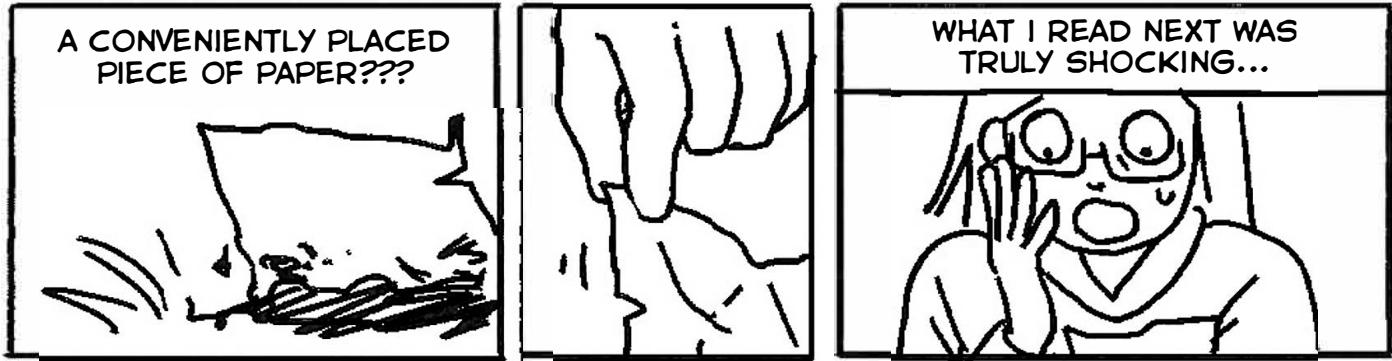
However, some products don't even list their ingredients on the product, so make sure to look up the brand online to see their ingredient list on the company's website. That way, you can prevent breakouts and therefore keep your skin looking happy and healthy.

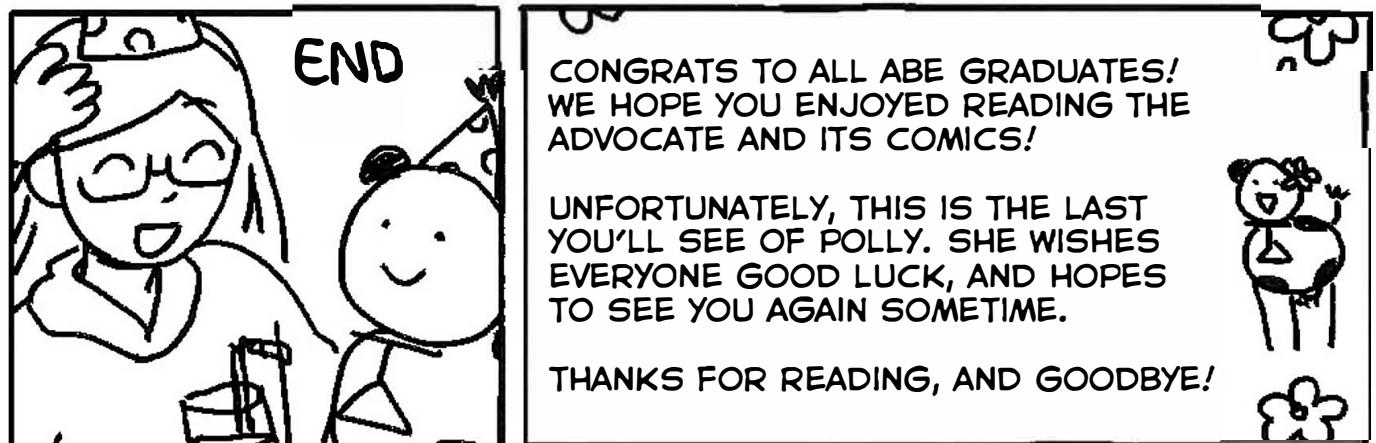
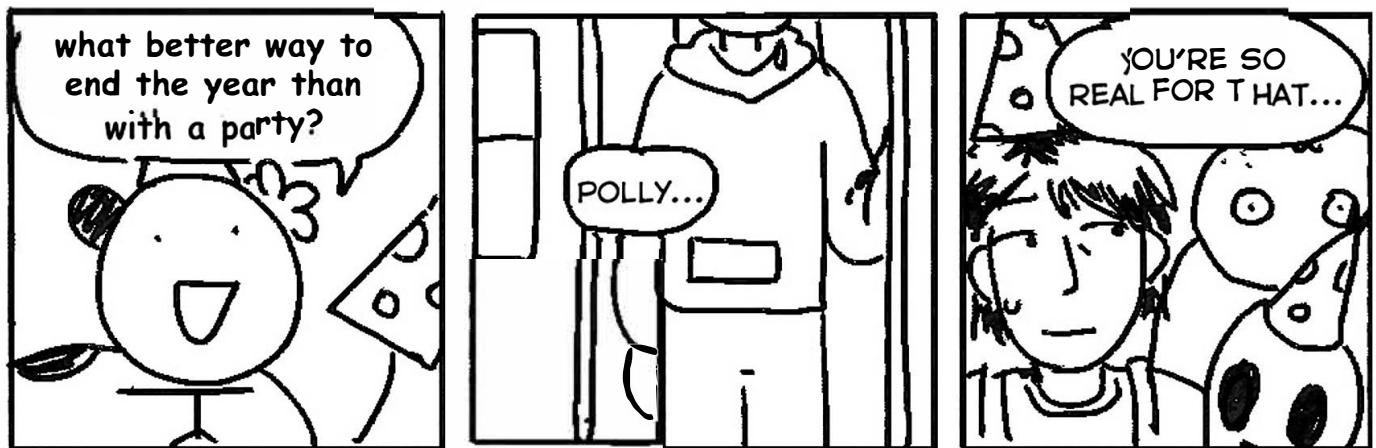
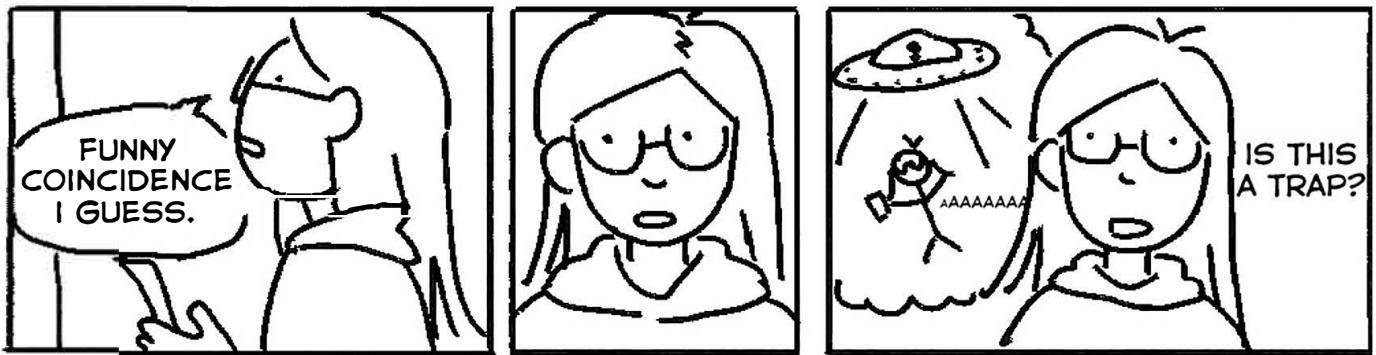


JUNE'S COMIC FINALE: DISASTER STRIKES! THE VANISHING OF POLLY THE COW

by: Catherine Ang







BOARD GAME OR SPORT? SURVEY RESULTS INCONCLUSIVE

by: Ruby Tovich

In previous editions of The Advocate, articles such as “Why Chess Is Undeniably a Sport” by Veronika Huisson and “Why Chess is Undoubtedly NOT a Sport” by Addison Carr have sparked some controversy in our school.

To determine how Aberhart actually feels on the matter, the last release of the Advocate contained a survey to help draw some more quantitative results. Our team hypothesized that more people would agree that chess is not a sport, given Aberhart’s strong athletics program.

Method:

A QR code was printed alongside “Why Chess is Undoubtedly NOT a Sport” by Addison Carr in May’s edition of the Advocate. The QR code led to a survey with questions regarding if chess undeniably is or is not a sport, if the respondent is an avid player of chess, and if the respondent plays any organized sports.

Respondents were incentivized to complete the survey with a chance to win a free hot meal from the cafeteria.

Results:

With a whopping sample size of 14 individuals, 8 individuals (57%) agreed that

chess is undeniably a sport (Cohort A), and 6 individuals (43%) agreed otherwise, that chess is undeniably NOT a sport (Cohort B) (Figure 1). Unsurprisingly, there was a 100% correlation between avid chess players believing chess is a sport, and non chess players believing chess is not a sport.

Out of Cohort A, 2 individuals (25%) did not play organized sports, while in Cohort B, only one individual did not play organized sports (17%) (Figure 2).

Discussion:

While a slight majority of respondents (57%) agree that chess is considered a sport, we are unable to draw definitive conclusions or evaluate significant analysis due to the small sample size (14 respondents, representing only 1% of Aberhart’s study body).

More than half of the surveyed individuals are avid chess players, however, the estimated percentage of avid chess players at Abe is only about 1% (approx. 15-20 members of Chess Club, via Mr. Paredes).

Needless to say, we assume that chess players will think chess is a sport, based on the 100% correlation in our data. This strongly suggests a disproportionate amount of pro-chess individuals participated in this

Figure 2: Proportion of organized sport players in survey results

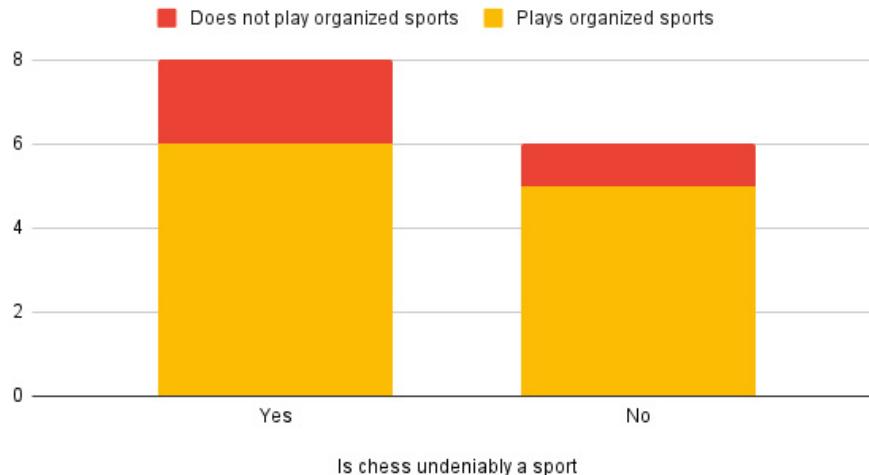
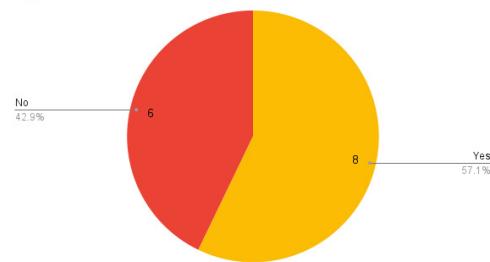


Figure 1: Is chess undeniably a sport?



study; demonstrating potential sampling bias which would skew the results towards the pro-chess narrative.

Our results are not congruent with other studies to date. In a 2023 United Kingdom YouGov study, over 2000 respondents were polled and concluded that most people (50%) agree that chess should not be recognized as a sport, 25% of people agree that chess should be recognized as a sport, and 25% of people that didn’t know.

If a more established survey was able to conclude that only roughly a quarter of people consider chess a sport, and our survey results determined that more than half of people think that chess is a sport, it’s not unreasonable to reject the Aberhart survey results. It is highly unlikely that out of the whole school (about 1300 individuals), 57% would consider chess a sport. Because of this, we are unable to reject our hypothesis.

Our study provides only preliminary results, and for this discussion to continue in our school, future studies should make their surveys accessible to a larger number of students at Aberhart. This could be achieved by posting QR codes in the hallways, making announcements to encourage participation, or even promoting the study during homeroom.

It is unfortunate that this experiment did not yield any results, however there is one result that is certain: Josiah A. has won one free lunch from the cafeteria, paid for by the Advocate!

SPRINGTIME WALKS ON COBBLED STREETS

by: Laura Zitkova



The old woman walked down the street as she did every morning, purse tucked under her arm, an overcoat hiding her dress from the breeze. The businessman, at just as early of an hour, walked promptly, his black briefcase in one hand, his smiling schoolgirl daughter clutching the other. The young man never paid much attention to anyone except for the dog, who bounded up and down the streets, greeting anyone and everyone who was out on the fresh day.

I watched from my window at the lives below. Some passed by on occasion, like the dog walker, and others, such as the old woman, I saw every day. She had carried a cane before, though as the mornings warmed around us, I started seeing less and less of it. It was as if her legs strengthened in those days, no longer in need of the extra support. I understood, I supposed. I craved the warm weather as much as anyone after the incessant winter months. In fact, it was evident in everyone's faces just how much they craved spring's arrival. There had been days of

snowstorms so raging that I couldn't see anything beyond my own two feet, much less the streets. Now I felt stronger, as if the winter had covered my bones in frost that only the sun itself could heal.

Today was like any other day. The businessman smiled as his daughter told a joke only a child could possibly understand. The young man fed the panting dog a treat he'd fished out of his pocket. And I watched my street unfold below me, observing as each person went about their day.

However, the woman strayed from her path. An old birch tree that shaded my window in the warmer months (once it grew enough leaves to do so) stood before a bench where I watched her sit, wrapping her long coat around her. She clutched her purse and looked up through the branches, eyes landing on the bright blue sky above. Spring was coming. It was around the corner now, and I would be walking the very streets that had been frozen for so many months.

A flurry of feathers landed around her as I noticed what the woman had been clutching her purse for. Birdseed. One after another, dozens of birds appeared, with no sign of fear amongst any of them. A sparrow pecked at her feet. A few chickadees hopped around the bench legs. The red underbelly of a robin caught my eye. It was so small, yet fearlessly perched on the woman's shoulder as it pecked seeds from her outstretched palm. It seemed to me that this tiny creature knew as much as I did about the brewing of spring, anticipating just like anyone else.

She sat there for what seemed like hours, watching and feeding the birds from the contents of her purse. Birds of all colours that I had never even seen before crowded around her, singing a song that drifted through the breeze, right up to the window of my bedroom.

Only a bird who knew that spring was in the air would call out such a song. After all, they had come to this woman, and she knew it just as well. Spring would come. Winter would creep back in, as it always did, but for now it was spring, and the air was warm and welcome as it wafted in through my window, dancing around my bedroom.

The birds erupted in a flutter of wings, dispersing into the bright blue sky above. I glanced below at the empty bench, at the woman who was already halfway down the cobbled street. It was only after she turned the corner out of sight that I noticed the leaves budding from the old birch, and a smile spread across my face.



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Need help with **tough classes**?
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Whatever help you need, we have it.

Trying to find a way to make a difference in your community?

The Abe Environment Club

Join us in spreading awareness and interest about environmental issues in our school and community. Help us make meaningful changes.

Meetings:
Lunch time on Thursdays in room 318



UNTIL THE NEXT ORANGE BLOSSOMS: AN ADVOCATE WRAP UP

by: Sophia Lee and Ryan Li

With the end of the school year on the horizon, the Advocate prepares to sign off from a vivacious year of news telling. There was laughter, tears shed over unadulterated headlines, and grieving over impending deadlines, and yet we finished this year with something special—stories to call our own. As the Editor-In-Chief and Managing Editor, we'd like to revisit some highlights from this year. Here is our very own The Advocate Wrapped!

September

Our team started off the year with high hopes and a higher turnout. The club was established with no HR, under promises that the workload wouldn't be "too heavy." Judge for yourselves whether that was true. *(Author's note: Maybe this was foreshadowing?)*

October

Here's a haiku to encapsulate the uncertainty that shrouded our first edition of the school year:

Team members, now halved
Autumn's leaves basked in orange
Oh dear, Advocate...

November

The letters to the editor inbox remains empty and dismal. We'd be uncertain whether people are actually reading the paper, if not for the free juice boxes the cafeteria continues to give out for the completed puzzles. *(Thanks, Max!)*

December

This month saw a heated argument over who would cover Turkeyfest -- mostly because nobody knew what it was. Luckily, our team was graced by Mr. Beland's exuberant holiday spirit, which enlightened us on the matter.

January

Final exams and diplomas approached,

meaning our team had a break from endless editing and layout. However, the presence of The Advocate still lingered like a well-meaning yet menacing ghost. *(Nothing much to see here.)*

February

Our journalists had a rich and diverse array of topics to choose from, including: Trump tariffs, Trump deportations, Trump invasion of Canada...

March

Small intermission for our briefest issue yet; we considered featuring a teacher gossip column to bulk up the edition. *(You can thank Ruby for all those teacher interviews!)*

April

Mr. Colautti was shunned yet again by the staff at Aberhart. One can only assume that his survivability in the Hunger Games diminished after his dodgeball incident last year. *(Stay safe out there, Mr. C!)*
Editor's Note- Mr. Colautti

SUCCESSFULLY CAUGHT a ball while
banging his head on the ground. He
survived the catch, and continued his
working day with no ill effects. Some would
call that heroism...

May

The layout team played a game of last one

standing. The winner's prize was laying out every single article in the issue until 2 am. ("To sleep—perchance to dream: ay, there's the rub!")

June

At last, the journey is over -- until next year! If you've made it this far, call 587-348-8000 for a chance to win the rights to our company (*don't actually*.)

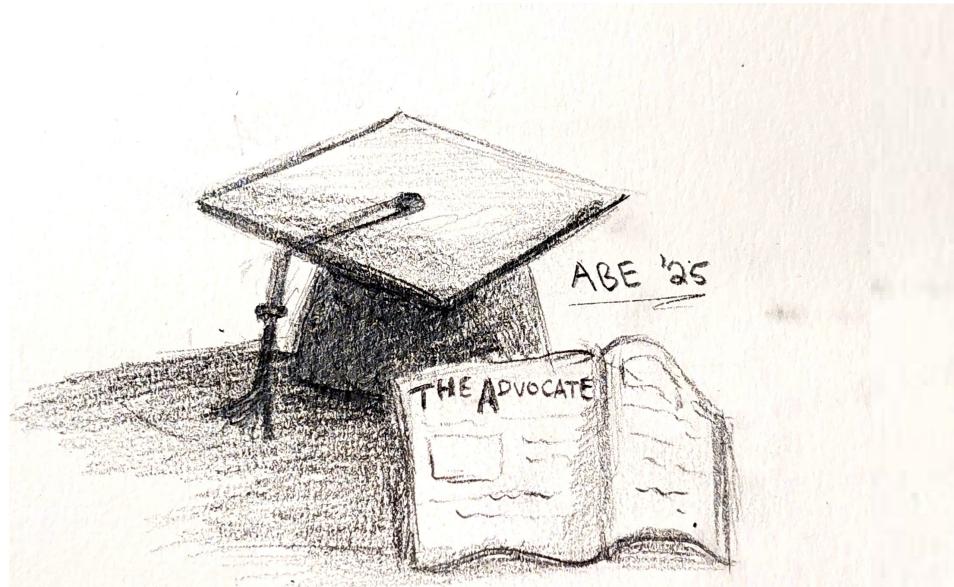
We write this last article with heavy hearts and heavier cloud storage. We want to extend a huge thank you to all Advocate members, including our incredible journalists, editors, artists, layout team, and cover artists. Of course, we can't forget Mr. Colautti and Ms. George. As well, special shoutout to Mr. Paddock for lending us his room every month. Without all of you, none of the amazing stories and art that forms the heart of this paper would exist. We've created a legacy at Abe!

Now, we are passing the torch to next year's Advocate leaders: Laura, Addy, and Ruby. We're certain the newspaper remains in good hands (*good luck, grade 11s!*).

And to the readers, thank you for tagging along with us. You are truly the heart of our community. Remember to keep reading, keep writing, and keep advocating.

Signing off,

Sophia and Ryan



HOROSCOPES

by: Lauren Schultz



Aries (March 21 - April 19)

A This June, the cosmos brings a wave of stability and calm to your life. This month promises to be a tranquil period where you feel grounded and centered. There are no significant astrological indications suggesting that anything will disturb your inner peace or throw you off balance. Embrace this harmonious energy and allow it to permeate every aspect of your life.

Taurus (April 20 - May 20)

T This month, energies are aligning to bring you a wealth of opportunities to significantly improve your standing in life. This month is ripe with potential, but it's important to recognize that these rewards won't come without effort. If you're hoping for shortcuts or the easy way out, you might find yourself disappointed. However, if you're willing to put in the hard work, the fruits of your labor will be plentiful and deeply satisfying.

Gemini (May 21 - June 20)

G June brings a dynamic mix of experiences that may feel like a rollercoaster ride at times, but rest assured, any challenges you encounter will be fleeting and ultimately serve your greater good. The key to navigating this period successfully lies in understanding the flow of this phase. With patience, adaptability, and an open mind, you'll emerge even stronger and wiser.

Cancer (June 21 - July 22)

C As a Cancer, you might find yourself entering this month feeling out of sorts or not quite in your usual upbeat mood. Perhaps the lingering stresses from the previous months are weighing on you, or uncertainty about the future is causing some unease. It's perfectly normal to experience these emotional ebbs and flows—after all, you're known for your deep sensitivity and intuition. Luckily, though, this initial gloominess won't last long. In fact, things are set to turn around more swiftly than you might expect.

Leo (July 23 - August 22)

L You may find that this month of June doesn't bring as much luck as you might have hoped. But take heart—there's absolutely no reason to worry or feel disheartened. Not every period in life can be filled with success and momentum. In fact, this month offers a unique opportunity for personal growth that is far more valuable than any temporary streak of good fortune.

Virgo (August 23 - Sept 22)

M This month of June is poised to bring a myriad of exciting opportunities and developments for you. However, to truly capitalize on the potential of this vibrant time, it's essential to establish the right priorities from the very outset. If you let the early days slip by without clear direction, the abundance of positivity awaiting you may dissipate before you have a chance to seize it. Think more and act less! While this may seem counterintuitive for your typically proactive nature, a deeper exploration may reveal its wisdom.

Libra (Sept 23 - Oct 22)

L June is shaping up to be a truly restorative month. Although the calendar may appear smooth at first glance, it's wise not to assume that the month will be entirely uneventful. Sure, you might encounter a few bumps along the road, but any challenges will likely be brief and superficial—more like passing ripples than disruptive waves. According to the stars, you possess the ability to manage any difficulties with poise and confidence.

Scorpio (Oct 23 - Nov 21)

S A month of exciting opportunities and localized success that align closely with your core interests await you this month. While the victories may not encompass every area of your life, they will shine brightly in the sectors that are truly important. This will allow you to focus on your priorities and let the less significant aspects of your life fade into the background.

The Advocate's Policy on Letters to the Editor

The Advocate encourages signed letters to the editor and prints both positive and negative comments.

Anonymous letters may be published if appropriate.

Letters to the editor are published as written by the author.

Spelling and grammar are not corrected.

Occasionally, letters will be edited for length and/or inappropriate language.

Editorial responses are not printed.

*We reserve the right not to print letters that do not bring new light to an issue.
Please send your letters to lauraz6@educbe.ca.*

Sagittarius (Nov 22 - Dec 21)

S This June is set to be a transformative time defined by successes that, while not necessarily widespread, are critically focused and highly significant to your life. These successes will primarily manifest in areas that hold genuine importance to you, allowing you to invest your energy where it matters most. The less important aspects of your life will gracefully fall to the wayside, providing you with the perfect opportunity to reassess and realign your priorities. Now may be a pivotal time to bring clarity and purpose to your life's goals.

Capricorn (Dec 22 - Jan 19)

C Capricorns can look forward to a stable and successful stretch during this period, though some challenges might stir up doubts. As the month unfolds, it's important to maintain a balanced approach to life's opportunities. Exercising moderation will be essential for achieving your goals. At this time, the opinions of your loved ones should not be overlooked, as they can provide valuable insights and wisdom. Moreover, exercise caution with acquaintances or individuals you don't know well, as their intentions may not be pure.

Aquarius (Jan 20 - Feb 18)

A For Aquarius, June may bring a unique sensation of feeling unfulfilled or incomplete. This probably stems from the fact that you've successfully wrapped up many of your current commitments and projects by this time. The universe is nudging you to explore new interests, hobbies, and aspirations that can enrich your life even further. You'll find that opportunities abound, inviting you to embark on new adventures and expand your horizons.

Pisces (Feb 19 - March 20)

P This month promises to be an exciting and transformative month for Pisces, as the currents of your life will begin to flow in perfect harmony with your deepest desires. As things start to fall miraculously into place, you'll be pleasantly surprised by how effortlessly your dreams begin to manifest. However, it's crucial to maintain balance and not get carried away in the excitement of it all.

