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## Weekly Weather

Monday

51/35 - Cloudy



Tuesday

52/34 - Clouds

Wednesday

54/38 - Cloudy

Thursday

56/45 - Showers

Friday

57/46 - Showers

Saturday

61/46 - Showers

Sunday

68/47 - Cloudy

## Upcoming Events

April 5

SIAS Spring  
Open House  
West Coast Grocery  
11 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

April 6

Intro Fellowships  
& Scholarship  
DOU 101  
12:30 - 1:30 p.m.

# THE LEDGER

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON TACOMA

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## The graduation situation

All the information you need for your final quarter on campus.



ILLUSTRATION BY STEVIE ESTEBAN

Husky graduation is a mere few weeks away.

By **MADLINE HILLER**  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Spring quarter is officially underway, and I don't know about you, but senioritis is hitting hard. There is a strange combination of panic about post-degree life, stress regarding the to-do list the university graciously reminds me I have, and still trying to finish strong with classes. While that may not seem like a lot, it is a broad way of describing the existential dread that is your final quarter at UW Tacoma. My goal is to provide some assistance, no matter how small, to ease the stress looming over us for these next ten weeks.

The commencement ceremony for the Tacoma campus will take place at the Tacoma Dome on Friday, June 9, at 10 a.m. This gives us ten weeks to get our lives together and complete everything necessary to participate. To apply for graduation, you need to email your academic advisor so you can both double-check your degree progress and ensure you are indeed ready to graduate. This needs to be completed by April 14 to give ample time to all parties involved.

Let's say you completed the step mentioned above and you are found to be eligible to graduate. What do you do

next? This is where I started to stress because I didn't know what to do. The commencement website has several helpful links to help you accomplish everything you need to, but also several things I didn't even consider. For example, if you have a preferred name that you want in the program or if you don't like to be listed at all, you can request that. If you completed the application to graduate, your name the university has on record will automatically be listed in the program. This may not be ideal for you if you use a preferred name that is not your legal name. If so, you can request a "Commencement Program Name" by emailing [tcommenc@uw.edu](mailto:tcommenc@uw.edu) before April 14.

Applying for graduation and registering for graduation are two completely different things. You apply with your advisor but register with the university to further confirm your eligibility. You are not guaranteed to enter the ceremony if you apply but don't register by the due date. Registration opens on April 24 and is not the only graduation-related thing to begin that day. Registration closes on May 12, and if you register after that date, you will be charged a \$30 late fee.

Apparel orders also begin on April 24 and close on May 12. This is done by registering and ordering tickets for your friends and family. Gowns come in various sizes, regardless of your degree level. If you need to know what size you are, you can go to the Office of the Registrar in MAT 251 to try on a gown before you buy one. There is also the option of ordering more fun things like extra tassels, class rings and more through the Grad Shop on the UW Tacoma Commencement page. Grad Shop items can be ordered at any time.

You can also request up to ten tickets for friends and family who you want to attend your graduation. These complimentary tickets must be requested in the window of April 24 to May 12. If you request tickets late, you will receive a maximum of two.

This process seems like a lot to remember, but it is all done simultaneously through the three-step process online at <https://www.tacoma.uw.edu/commencement/commencement-checklist>. This is where you will find the commencement checklist, which will guide you through every step of the process but is summarized as follows: register to attend, order your free guest

tickets and order your apparel.

Stoles, honor cords, and tassel colors all vary based on the graduate. If you are part of a registered student organization (RSO), check with them to see if they have an approved stole design. If they do, you can order one and you're guaranteed to be allowed to wear it for graduation. Suppose you're part of an RSO that does not currently have an approved design. In that case, a student leader from your organization can design a stole and submit it for approval on behalf of the entire organization.

After reading all that, if you're still panicked or stressed about everything you need to get done or have questions, information sessions are held in person and online. Each meeting will present the same information, so you do not need to attend all three scheduled meetings. The in-person meeting happens on April 18, and the zoom sessions are on April 28 and May 2. Hopefully, this information helped you somehow, and congratulations on making it to this point in your life.



# Gen Z educates adults on using current slang

Pierce County youth ambassador shares tips and tricks to using Gen Z slang.

By **KATIE SCOTT**  
NEWS REPORTER

In changing times, one thing is consistent: the older you get the more out of touch with the newest slang you will probably become. In 2023, Gen Z has taken control of the internet and shown that they reign supreme in all things trending. From collective social movements to online fame, Gen Z has taken the internet by storm.

Being the first, and only, generation to completely live in an age where the internet has existed, Gen Z has created their own form of slang that is not only linguistically unique to their age group, but also unique in that the user must understand the culture of an internet generation to understand the context to their slang.

Youth ambassador, L. Reed, a Pierce County 8th grader and Middle School track district champion, has partnered with the old folks of the Ledger to educate us on the need-to-knows of Gen Z slang.

Reed has thirteen years of experience being a child and has spent the past three years deeply emerged in youth culture at the middle school level. Reed, mostly out of pity for adults trying to keep up with the changing times, has volunteered her expertise on modern-day teenage linguistics, to illuminate five of the most important words in the ever-elusive world of Gen Z slang.

“When adults use slang they sound goofy. Goofy is kind of like a dumb decision. (They sound) Silly. And like weird,” Reed said.

With that in mind, let’s get into it. Here are five of the most common Gen Z slang words and their meanings:

**Rizz**

Rizz is the essence of cool that an individual possesses when talking to someone they are attracted to. Millennials often refer to this as “game.” Rizz is achieving a level of charisma and attraction that evokes the interest of others.

Reed said “Rizz is like ‘W rizz. Or W moves. Or like they rizzed up to them, like they are cool and want to get with them.”

**W**

W, derived from the word win, is when someone has achieved success in a situation or interaction. It can be applied to many different contexts and is usually used as a signifier for the person or thing being referenced.

“W is like good. Like ‘I took the W. I took the win.’ I would say to someone ‘W fit. Like nice outfit!’” Reed said.

**The ick**

Just as it sounds, the ick is not a good thing. Explained as something that an individual does that makes you feel gross, uncomfortable, or simply makes you want to leave their presence.

Reed explains “if someone has an ick, it’s basically like they

have L rizz. Or, when someone gives you bad vibes. It’s like the feeling you get when someone is being cringe. When you’re just like....ew to something.”

**Fell off**

Fell off refers to the phenomenon when something or someone had high popularity but eventually became unimportant, or no longer relevant to popular culture.

“Like Kanye West. He fell off,” Reed said.

**I’m her/him**

This term is a way to celebrate oneself in being great or achieving high success in something. It refers to the subject being so skilled at a particular thing, that there is no other individual that can achieve the level of success they have achieved.

Reed says “ ‘I’m her’ or ‘I’m them’ is like I’m the best and no one can be on my level with this. I am the best at what I do.”

Older generations may not have grown up with the internet, smartphones or social media, but we were once cool in our own right. We asked Reed’s advice on what adults today can do if they are interested in using Gen Z slang to sound cool.

Reed’s response was simple. “Stop being interested.”

As a hopeful millennial, this reporter tried to clarify by asking Reed what is one way adults can use Gen Z slang and sound cool?

Reed simply said, “They can’t.”



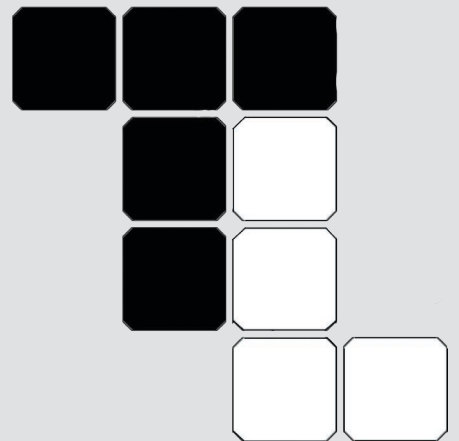
Reed shares her expertise on all things Gen Z slang.

PHOTO BY KATIE SCOTT

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# Complete the UWT National College Health Assessment any time in April

Holly Wetzel, ASUWT Director of Outreach and Madie Brown, MS, UWT Health Promotion Specialist



Dear Editor,

UW Tacoma Psychological and Wellness Services (PAWS) and Student Health are dedicated to supporting student's health and well-being needs through evidence-based prevention and intervention initiatives that are in line with best practices such as 24/7 access to a variety of free safer sex supplies, services such as victim advocacy, mental health therapy, Student Health Services, and more. The UW Tacoma understands the direct impact that well-being can have on academic performance and success, and seeks to elevate current health resources and initiatives by implementing a student survey to obtain baseline data on our students' specific health needs and concerns.

PAWS is implementing the UW Tacoma National College Health Assessment (NCHA) this spring quarter. The NCHA is a confidential, nationally recognized research survey that assists the UW Tacoma in collecting precise data about our students' unique health habits, behaviors, and percep-

Health Association on behalf of the UW Tacoma and asks a variety of health and well-being questions.

Institutions that assess student health and well-being needs through the NCHA data are able to better detect gaps in and enhance current campus services and resources, implement new and adjust current evidence-based and best practice programs, facilitate stronger campus partner connections and collaborations, and evaluate student well-being over time. UW Tacoma leadership, health professionals, faculty, and staff will use aggregate survey responses to inform decision making, policy and procedures, and the development of evidence-based health promotion and prevention initiatives.

By participating in the survey, students are actively contributing to the informed development of effective and comprehensive support networks on campus.

The NCHA survey opens Monday, April 3rd, and can be completed any time in April. Students will receive an email to their UW inbox with the NCHA survey invitation and a unique, personal survey link. Click the unique link in the email body to participate in the survey. Students who complete the survey will be entered to win one of five pairs of Apple AirPods.

names, email addresses, nor IP addresses with survey responses. This is done intentionally as the survey includes some questions around sensitive topics, such as substance use and mental health. Responses are in no way tied to any identifiable information about individual survey participants.

Aggregate responses to sensitive questions like these will be used to inform necessary steps to support student safety and well-being, such as implementing a NARCAN initiative on campus. NARCAN, a life-saving medication that can reverse the effects of an opioid overdose, which was recently approved by the FDA to be available over the counter. Making NARCAN accessible on campus is a preventive measure that can save lives and promote a culture of care.

NCHA by clicking on the unique survey invitation link sent to their UW email on Monday, April 3rd by the American College Health Association on behalf of the UW Tacoma. By taking a few moments to complete the survey, you will make a meaningful contribution to the enhancement of our campus environment and student well-being, as well as be entered to win a pair of Apple AirPods.

Visit [tacoma.uw.edu/sh/ncha](http://tacoma.uw.edu/sh/ncha) to learn more. Questions about the survey can be directed to the UW Tacoma Health Promotion Specialist, Madie Brown, MS, at [madieb@uw.edu](mailto:madieb@uw.edu).

For more information about the UWT National College Health Assessment contact: [madieb@uw.edu](mailto:madieb@uw.edu)

More information about Narcancan can be found in the previous Ledger article: NARCAN: a life-saving medication coming to a library near you by Ruth Ogden

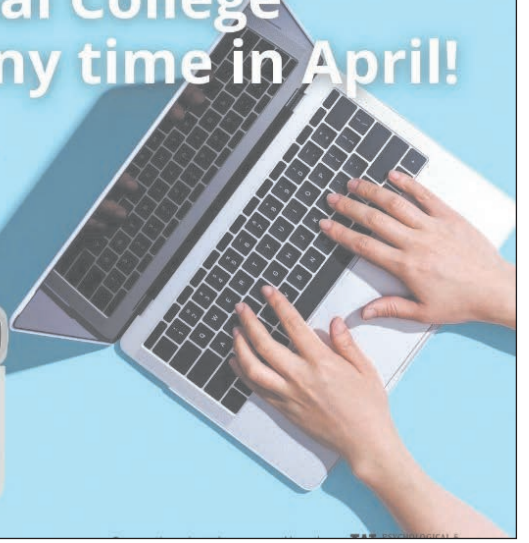
## Take the UWT National College Health Assessment any time in April!

You will get an email invitation containing a unique link from the American College Health Association to participate in this nationally-recognized, confidential health survey on April 3rd.

Learn more!



Complete the survey and be entered to win a pair of Apple AirPods Pro!



tions. The survey is conducted by the American College

The survey is confidential and does not collect students'

Students are encouraged to participate in the UWT

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Letters submitted to the Ledger may be published through both [TheTacomaLedger.com](http://TheTacomaLedger.com) and our print edition.





## Crybaby is Dead

Melanie Martinez has killed her iconic Crybaby era in the name of spiritual growth and emotional maturity.



PHOTO BY ATLANTIC RECORDS

Melanie Martinez in "Portals."

By HEIDI ORTIZ CANDELARIA  
OPINION COLUMNIST

After three years, Melanie Martinez is back and more ethereal than ever, or rather, back from the dead. Fans (like me) had been eagerly awaiting the return of the mastermind behind the sugary, tooth-aching "Cry Baby" universe. In her first works – the "Dollhouse" EP and the "Cry Baby" album – we are introduced to the persona that Melanie embodied throughout her entire professional musical career. Her name is Crybaby because well, she's a crybaby. A highly sensitive, empathetic girl who loves wholeheartedly and often finds herself getting made fun of for these attributes. These albums touch on topics such as bullying, domestic violence, grooming, mental illness and heartbreak.

After experiencing Crybaby's childhood through Melanie's music videos; we are then introduced to "K-12," Melanie's second album. This is where she explores Crybaby's formative years as a teenager and young adult. Here, Melanie took the liberty on tackling more current world issues such as eating disorders ("Orange Juice"), sexual harassment through toxic masculinity ("Strawberry Shortcake") and corrupt, conservative politicians ("The Principal" – we're looking at you Trump). For once, Crybaby manages to make friends, and they're all just as unique as her. They each have what we can assume to be psychic abilities, or insights that normal people don't have access to. Melanie later explained that these are simply more visual and literal interpretations to show the power of empaths and other spiritually heightened folk. The group go on throughout their school lives experiencing the turmoil of their teen years, being outcasted by adults and students alike, until they are met

with the goddess Lilith, who gives them the choice to leave that painful plane of existence and move on to a world that will allow them to be their true selves.

After the premiere of the "K-12" movie, Melanie immediately announced a coming project to follow this era, which would technically not continue in the chronological events of the film. It would instead focus on Crybaby's late teens (before she leaped through the Portal in the film). This EP would be titled "After School" and would contain even more existential subject matter that delved into spirituality, working in a capitalistic society and experiencing emotional neglect in romantic partners.

Finally, Melanie went on a hiatus after the release of this album, stating that she would be working on an even bigger project that would separate itself from the Crybaby character. Many fans assumed this would mean that Melanie would begin performing as herself rather than focusing on story-driven music projects. But after showing a few snippets of her songs, fans knew that Melanie would continue to create similar content. But what about?

On February 18 of this year, Melanie cleared out her entire Instagram account and uploaded a single video snippet. The camera pans to a giant mushroom and zooms in on a heart carved into its trunk, surrounding the words "RIP Crybaby." For the past two months, Melanie has been uploading short song teasers and video clips, slowly showing the full development of her new form; from embryo, to fetus, to egg and a hatchling. On March 24, we were shown her new form in all her glory: a faerie-like creature with four eyes, wings and pink skin born from the remains of Crybaby. Mushrooms, moss and

vines make up most of her clothes and even sprout from her skin, making this her most experimental album yet.

So far, her songs cover subjects revolving around depression and recovering from toxic relationships. Just with the few snippets we've been given, we can tell that Melanie's lyrics in this project are the most personal and close to her, for she had previously undergone a toxic relationship with a mediocre man-child rapper (I refuse to give him any recognition so I'm not disclosing his name). She is currently in a very healthy relationship, and she also wrote a song about this current partner, titled "Light Showers."

Honestly, I am over the moon with this album so far. I can tell this is going to be one of my favorite albums of all time, probably even more so than her previous ones. I felt – just like Melanie – on how throughout the span of five years we've evolved and matured so much. I was definitely a different person when "Cry Baby" first came out and I have to fully admit that it made up like 50% of my personality at that time. But the older I grew, the less I could relate to that moment in my life and the more I sought for other things that grew with me.

This album – so far – encapsulates so much of the sincerity I have towards who I used to be and the love I have for my current self. Not to mention the aesthetic makes my little earthy/hippie goth self so happy. Crybaby's death made so many fans upset, but I could not relate to this more. Melanie Martinez' new album is for that girl that used to consider herself a crybaby, died and was reborn into someone who embraces all her qualities and lets them shine through.

## "Smoke" by Ashlee Haze

A review of Ashlee Haze's poetry collection "Smoke."

By CELIA WILLIAMS  
OPINION EDITOR

With the spring quarter starting up, I've been thinking about the winter quarter and everything I've done so far this year. One of the most memorable parts of last quarter for me was the poetry reading hosted here at the University of Washington Tacoma. The author of "Smoke," Ashlee Haze, hosted a wonderful reading full of emotion and difficult topics. She used her writing to share the perspective of a black woman in America.

In "Smoke," there are a number of craft devices and techniques that Haze used during the reading in both her work and how she read the poems aloud. She used a lot of repetition which created emphasis and rhythm in her work. She also spoke louder or with a different tone or accent when certain

lines came up, which leads me to believe she might have also played around a bit with font, italics and breaks in her writing. The poems were heavy with figurative language and concrete detail and imagery that I found enhanced the poems and my understanding of them well.

As for the actual reading itself, I had a great time and found a new author to follow. There was a rather small audience, unfortunately, but this meant it was a very intimate reading of her book. She had merchandise available so I was actually able to purchase a sweatshirt and a signed copy of her book. Haze talked to the audience, cracked jokes, explained her poems and gave backstory. I felt like I was able to get to know her very well in the hour that I was with her. Haze had so much emotion behind her voice, it wasn't too fast or monotone. I felt her emo-

tions throughout the reading and she was able to change that with every new poem.

Haze talked about a lot of subjects throughout the many poems she read from "Smoke" during the reading. Her poems discussed love, loss, empowerment, who she was and where she came from. She talked about her journey as a poet and where she was before this. Her poem "Prodigal" talks about the struggle she had decided to pursue her dreams and write for a living, which she has done for a while now, I might add. I really related to this poem, as I struggle with being logical and planning everything out, which also applied to my career. I want my job to be practical, a job society would deem "good." Writing does not seem like it fits that requirement. "Prodigal" really spoke to me and also reassured me that it's okay to follow your dreams.

I had an amazing time at Ashlee Haze's reading of "Smoke," so much so that I bought a copy of the book. I would most definitely go to another one of her readings

and recommend everyone else do the same if they have the opportunity. I learned a lot about being a poet, craft devices and even found a bit of inspiration.



Cover of "Smoke" by Ashlee Haze

PHOTO BY CELIA WILLIAMS





PHOTO BY STEPH CARONNA

## NNAMDĪ wows at first ever Tacoma show

Chicago-based artists NNAMDĪ and Luke Titus played an intimate and energetic show at the McMenamins Spanish Ballroom.

By **STEPH CARONNA**  
NEWS REPORTER

At the end of each year, I tend to feel a sense of dread at the cavalcade of year-end album ranking lists. I should be excited to see what music my friends and the artists I follow enjoyed over the year, but I usually end up annoyed that I can't seem to settle on a favorite of my own. I don't want to have to rank the music I like, or to definitively say that one album was better than another.

I didn't feel that way at the end of 2022 because one artist released an album that, for me, couldn't compare to any others; that album was "Please Have A Seat" by NNAMDĪ.

"Please Have A Seat" has been playing on repeat in my headphones ever since its release in October 2022. The way that NNAMDĪ—the stage name of Chicago-based musician Nnamdi Ogbonnaya—is able to seamlessly blend elements of rock, hip hop, jazz and a nearly endless list of subgenres, captivates me. So when I saw that he was coming to Tacoma on his next tour, I couldn't resist the chance to

see one of my new favorite artists live for the first time.

The show was also my first time attending a show at the Spanish Ballroom within the McMenamins Elks Temple in Downtown Tacoma. After asking a helpful employee for directions (a tip for first-timers: if you don't have time to explore the building's labyrinthine interior before the show, you can take the outdoor stairs directly down to the Spanish Bar), I entered the ornate ballroom to discover small tables and chairs had been set up, giving the beautiful venue a chill, jazz club-like atmosphere.

This setup made it easy to relax and enjoy a beer while waiting for the opener, Luke Titus, to start playing. Other attendees were also ordering food, a neat feature of this being a McMenamins venue. It was probably the most comfortable I've ever been at a music venue, but it left me wondering if this setup would awkwardly contrast NNAMDĪ's usually high-energy music.

Luke Titus began playing promptly at 7 p.m. Leading the three-piece band from be-

hind his drum kit, Titus and his bandmates entertained us with his eclectic brand of jazz fusion, tinged with pop and R&B sensibilities. While most of the songs they played were fully instrumental, Titus showed off his impressive falsetto on the songs "Blue," "Pink" and "Gold." His drumming talents were indisputable, and it was doubly impressive to watch him keep up his intricate, often asymmetrical drum beats while singing.

Titus's bandmates were equally as talented: the bassist and the keyboardist worked together to create ethereal soundscapes that simultaneously soothed and excited me. This band's energetic unity provided the perfect tone to prepare us for the headlining act.

An hour later, the moment had arrived for NNAMDĪ to take the stage. To my relief, most of the audience rose from their seats and rushed to the space between the tables and stage. This was the right choice to make, as most NNAMDĪ songs are impossible not to dance along to.

I wasn't surprised at all to see Titus, as well as the bass-

ist who had played with him, return to the stage. They were both more than proficient enough to bring the sophisticated rhythms of NNAMDĪ's music to a live setting. Joined by a skilled, sunglasses-clad guitarist, with NNAMDĪ also intermittently picking up a guitar, this quartet impressed me with their ability to stay true to the recorded tracks while incorporating new elements into them.

Although the Spanish Ballroom has a 700-person capacity, the smaller audience made the show feel incredibly intimate. NNAMDĪ bantered with us between some songs, asking the audience for examples of fake swears before "Smartass" ("big stinker" and "crap" were the best the group could come up with) and stories about getting ghosted before "Benched" (one audience member recounted a date's flimsy excuse for leaving: "I need to go buy a Christmas tree"). He tumbled down from the stage into the audience a couple times, leading us in a call-and-response sing/scream-along for the motivational anthem "Dedication."

It might have felt like a DIY punk basement show if not for the grandiose setting.

After gracing us with nearly every track from "Please Have A Seat"—even "Sudafed," a bonus track from the recently released deluxe edition—NNAMDĪ and his band wrapped up the show with a selection of tracks from his 2020 release, "BRAT." They closed with the fittingly epic "Perfect In My Mind."

Witnessing artists like NNAMDĪ and Luke Titus live confirmed to me something that's been on my mind the last couple of years: the future of music is in blending genres, not endlessly subdividing into new ones. It's no wonder that Sooper Records, co-owned by Ogbonnaya, is known for being home to a diverse range of genres and artists. While some critics and listeners may struggle with trying to fit NNAMDĪ and artists like him into a box, I prefer to let the music speak for itself.



# Tacoma bar review:

From craft cocktails to dive bars.



PHOTO BY LESLEY MCLAM

The World Famous Bob's Java Jive

**By JOSEPHINE TRUBLOOD**  
MANAGING EDITOR

Tacoma is known for its bars, and in particular, its magnificent, gritty dive bar scene. While there are nearly too many good ones to count – Top of Tacoma, Zodiac Supper Club, The Valley – here is an incomplete guide to some of my personal favorite Tacoma jaunts.

#### Bob's Java Jive:

The world-famous Bob's Java Jive is currently in its Renaissance – after nearly 70 years, the

Jive recently obtained a liquor license. The 1927 teapot building is responsible for some of the most fabulous Tacoma lore, from live monkeys to countless iconic shows to serving as a filming location, the Java Jive is a South Tacoma must-see. The slightly-tiki dive bar vibe lives up to the Jive's storied reputation; the music is always good, you will consistently leave with at least four pictures of odd knick-knacks in your phone (my personal favorite is the beautiful old jukebox in the corner) and you somehow manage to run into at least two people you know.

Stop by for karaoke or jazz night and stay because you got too tipsy and had to sit in the outside seating area for a little while.

#### The Mule:

Black tuck & roll booths and gorgeous swag lamps: The Mule embraces dive-bar-chic and raises you house-made tonics, syrups and ginger beer. With arguably some of the best cocktails in Tacoma, The Mule has taken the classic South Tacoma Way bar to the next level. With a consistently good playlist, pool, wonderful bartenders, an outdoor patio and drag queen bingo, The Mule really has it all. Personal favorite spot: the sad clown corner, covered in hilarious and mildly-offputting vintage clown paintings, perfect for any outing with friends.

#### The Church Cantina:

It just so happens that you can get the best Cuban-inspired food in town at the local goth bar. The Church Cantina exemplifies all things dark with an impressive collection of Addams Family and goth pinball machines, gorgeous blood red lighting along with horror-themed decor and drinks. For such a spooky bar, be warned, their cocktails are definitely on the sweeter side. With amazing '80s song title references, including the impressive "Like A Vegan" menu, The Church always has a good mix, whether it be metal, industrial or darkwave. Hosting regular post-punk, goth and synthpop DJ nights, The Church has been consistently providing Tacoma with a killer dance floor,

which is a rare find. Check out the South Tacoma Way bar, and make sure you dress for the occasion!

#### The 1111:

Winning the best bar food award by a landslide, the Peterson Bros. "Eleven Eleven" is a Hilltop staple. Adorned with eclectic Tacoma memorabilia and hand-built, reclaimed wood fixtures, this Tacoma dive bar has quickly become a classic since their opening in 2012. At first glance, the 1111 is a total dude bar, covered in vintage Olympic and Rainier

Brewery iconography. Don't be fooled – 1111 is the hip spot to take all your vegan friends. Their extensive vegan menu is superb, and their regular menu is filled with delicious, elevated staples like their bacon mac + cheese – I have literally never had a subpar meal here. Stop by the Peterson Bros.' other venture, The Valley, where they often host live bands and yet another fantastic menu.



PHOTO BY JOSEPHINE TRUBLOOD

The Java Jive's eclectic decor



PHOTO BY LESLEY MCLAM

Sandwich and cider at The 1111



# 'John Wick: Chapter 4' should be the end - but it isn't

Not everything needs to be a cinematic universe.



LIONSGATE ENTERTAINMENT

"John Wick: Chapter 4" artist series poster by Oliver Barrett

By **EMILIA BELL**  
FILM CRITIC

"John Wick: Chapter 4" was released in theaters on March 24, and marks a hugely successful conclusion to the "John Wick" series— or so it would seem; Lionsgate doesn't want to let go just yet. The series began in 2014, starting as a modest twist on the

assassin-action genre. It quickly became a sensation and catapulted Keanu Reeves back into the limelight. Consecutively spurring three sequels, it has become a popular action series.

When things like this happen, studios are unlikely to stop milking it for money until it's thoroughly overstayed its welcome. Unfortunately, it seems "John

Wick" could be heading in this direction. After the box office success of the fourth film, Lionsgate has tentatively stated they are considering a fifth film.

Currently, the four films are considered practically flawless, with the latest installment boasting an impressive 95% on Rotten Tomatoes at the time of writing this article. It has already been

announced that a prequel spin-off series following the man who runs the hotel seen throughout all the films is in progress, and undoubtedly other prequels/spinoffs will follow. This is a good idea for the studio to capitalize on the well-liked universe that has been created, and no doubt audiences will flock to whatever project is put out next. But, is it a good idea

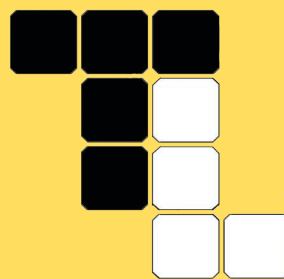
for the integrity of the story?

The films are John Wick's tale— focusing on his goal to live a peaceful and normal life while reluctantly fighting and killing those who would disrupt this — and the fourth film provides a satisfying conclusion. While further productions will likely not continue with Wick, they may include him and expand on lore. Narratively, this could be a mistake.

It would be more satisfying (and safer) to end it now on a high note before people are bored. This is not to generalize and say definitively that any prequels or spinoffs may be bad, but they need to be delicately considered. An entire fifth film within this storyline would be remarkably difficult to pull off. Wick's story arc is focused heavily on his search for closure and peace. Dragging the character out for money doesn't align with said storyline, even if it's a cameo, and simply risks soiling the character that has already had an appropriate journey and resolution.

Marvel is a cautionary tale of this type of mishap; too much media made too quickly has caused a steep decline in quality and engagement. The "John Wick" franchise is beloved, but it could meet the same end Marvel is edging close to, which would be a disservice to the films. Ending with the fourth film, and sticking with that, is the better option here. What made these films special was that they were unique and made with care, time, and precision.

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PHOTO BY SAKURA-CON

## Sakura-Con is back again in Seattle next week

Asia-Northwest Cultural Education Association's local anime and art convention returns.

By **COLE MARTIN**  
A&E COLUMNIST

Hello artists and anime fans! Sakura-Con, a local art and anime convention, held at the Seattle Convention Center, is coming around again April 7 through April 9!

Sakura-Con is an annual convention put together by the non-profit Asia-Northwest Cultural Education Association and has been going on since 1998.

Last year marked its triumphant return, as it was canceled in 2020 and 2021 due to the pandemic.

The three-day convention is bigger than ever before now, hosting a plethora of prolific people from the animation industry and larger anime community. From voice actors and directors to content creators and independent artists, you're guaranteed to find something that catches your eye.

One of the things Saku-

ra-Con is best known for, and hands down the main reason I personally want to attend, is the wonderful artist alley which hosts over 300 tables full of independent artists, all with their unique and varied merchandise. A majority of the tabling artists are PNW locals, and buying anything from them is a great way to support them in their craft.

Another staple of Sakura-Con is its cosplay scene; a large portion of attendees jump on the

opportunity to dress up as their favorite characters. There will also be a cosplay competition, with multiple categories to show off everyone's fantastic outfits.

It's good to know that it is a paid event, so if you're free this next weekend and are interested in attending, you can pre-register online for \$90 at sakuracon.org/registration, or pay at the door for \$100. Most everything else aside from artist merchandise is completely paid for, so you shouldn't

have to worry too much about tapping into your wallet.

They've got a wide schedule this year, with panels, premieres, and autographs from a variety of important folks. You can find the schedule at sakuracon.org/programming/schedule for more info on the guests and other events. I hope to see some of you there!

## The Ledger Coloring Corner

Every week the Ledger will release coloring pages for YOU to color. Send in your fully colored works of coloring page art and have a chance to see them in print in the next issue along with all submitted images being placed on our website! Completed coloring pages can be scanned or photographed and then submitted to ledger@uw.edu or through the Contact Us form on thetacomaledger.com.

Please include: First and Last Name, Email, and your Major. We can't wait to see your artwork and hope you have a fun time coloring!

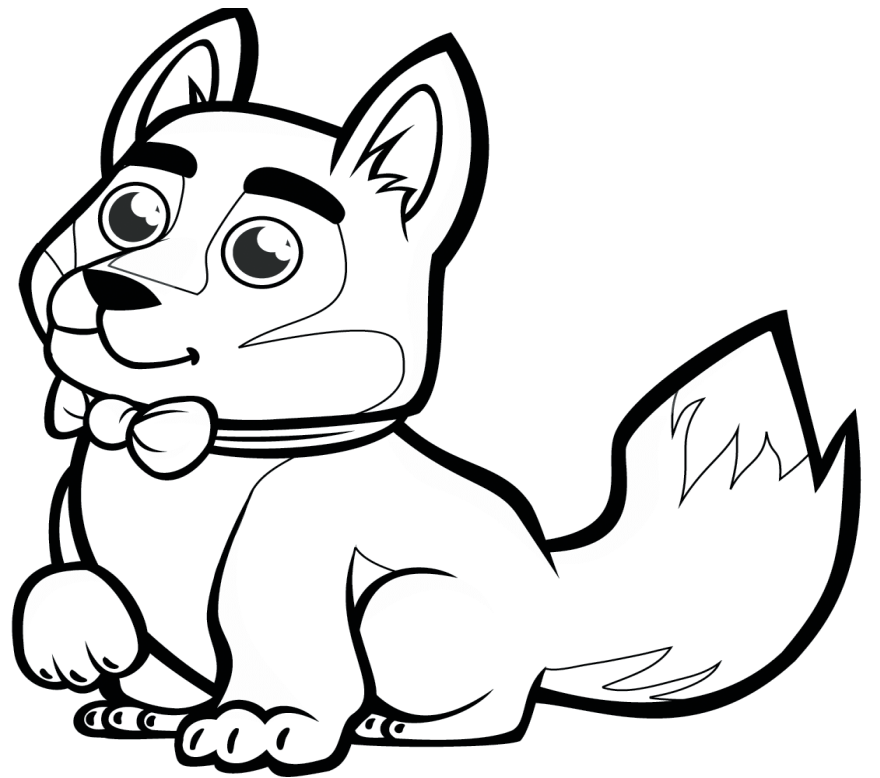


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## The Ledger Weekly Playlist

Good Times Here At Last

This Week's Playlist



The Ledger's Spotify



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