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News In Briefs

- After copious student campaigning, NMC's mascot is finally being changed from the Hawk Owl to the Gray Squirrel. This news comes as a massive relief for many students, and proves once again that democracy has not failed this small community.
- The new traffic detours for project parkway are working exactly as MDOT intended.
- *White Pine Press* staffers completed their harrowing escape from the depths of dismal Detroit, Michigan after spending nearly 8 hours in the airport following a conference.

White Pine Press is Hiring

Are you a writer, editor, page designer, ad salesperson, or photographer? Looking for a job?

The *White Pine Press* would like to offer you the opportunity to join our staff. The *White Pine Press* is a bi-weekly newspaper published during the NMC school year that offers real-world experience while you do what you love. And we pay!

If you would like to learn more, contact faculty adviser Jacob Wheeler at jwheeler@nmc.edu or editor-in-chief Jacob Pszczolkowski at pszczoj@mail.nmc.edu

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The *White Pine Press* welcomes comments, suggestions, ideas for news stories and calendar items.

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EXCLUSIVE Look At MDOT's NEW Project Parkway Pinwheel

Emma Marion
Assistant Editor
Although Project Parkway has just launched to resounding critical reception, Traverse City has already started to think about the future of traffic. Due to increasing tourism, a lack of affordable housing, and a skyrocketing cost of living, the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) has laid out their next steps in making Traverse City "the most walkable city on planet Earth." The *White Pine Press* was shown an exclusive first look at these next steps from MDOT's secret underground bunker in an undisclosed location.

The solution? "A giant roundabout. The entire city will be a roundabout," says Chief Executive Officer of Planning, Distributing, and Deploying Traffic in the State of Michigan, Mike Traffic. Although the process of urban planning has evolved leaps and bounds over the past two decades, Traffic and his team like to keep things primitive and old school. Carvings of a giant circle are scribed into the surface of the bunker, which is furnished more like a cave than a government agency's headquarters. The early prototypes for what would become Project Parkway are still visible, dimly lit by the bouncing flame of a candle.

"The world is changing, and it's changing fast," Traffic said. "We like to resist that. Push against the grain a little bit and see what happens." The codename for the new plan is Project Pinwheel Parkway, and is set to launch as soon as the current Project Parkway ends. "We like to get things done, interrupt the day to day lives of as many people as possible. So we're planning on closing streets and deploying construction workers as early as next week. However, construction is likely to not start until 2027."

Traffic also pointed out the benefits of roundabouts, mentioning that "No one has done it on a scale like we're planning. No one has ever done this before, turned a city into a roundabout. It'll be a first, but it surely won't be a last."

In this fast-paced, high-octane world many of us find ourselves living in, it is always good to take a step back and appreciate the small things in life. Finding oneself lost in the wondrous world of traffic is one way to accomplish that.

Volunteers Join Project Parkway To Speed Up Construction

Aidan Pool
Staff Writer
Construction has begun in Traverse City and will continue for several months. The project is to fix the pothole-riddled mess that East Front Street has become. In an interesting turn of events, several NMC students have been volunteering to help make the project go quicker.

The effort is led by students who travel to the Great Lakes campus daily. One maritime student said, "My drive went from five minutes to fifteen minutes. I am not going to let this stay like this for the rest of the semester. They're saying it may even leak into next semester too. That is not happening on my watch."

"I used to be able to drive back home to take a nap and cuddle with my cat before I had to go to my next class. The fact that I'm being robbed of precious cat time is an actual crime," said another commuter.

"They are in fact not cooking," said a culinary instructor. Speaking of cooking, the culinary students have offered to make free meals for those that volunteer to help on the construction project. "It is the least we could do. I'm not going to actually throw my hat in that ring, but I will support them using what I'm best at."

The construction from East Front Street to Grandview is projected to last until the beginning of July. With the added manpower of the volunteers and incoming meals from Culinary, the updated projection is June 20. Not exactly the jump that you want to see from a project that takes up so much of the traffic flow of the area. "Perhaps when the summer tourist boom hits we will have even more volunteers to help push this project forward even more," said one of the lead construction managers.

Perhaps that's wishful thinking, but maybe there's some validity to it. Who likes sitting in traffic? You can't get away from the summer traffic with the main roads open. Calling all who will listen: if you have an ounce of free time, help us fix the roads.



Photo/ EMMA MARION

Deranged, Dismal Detroit

Eli Stallman
Staff Writer

On Mar. 10, tragedy struck in the midst of the *White Pine Press*' red-eye flight back to Traverse City after the 6 members had peacefully attended the Associated Collegiate Press (ACP) Conference in San Diego, California. *White Pine Press* staff had been trapped with in the prison-like confines of the Detroit airport for seemingly endless hours, allegedly not allowed to leave the enclosure. After a 3-hour layover and several additional denials of flight back to WPP headquarters, members could be seen desperately huddling together on the airport floor, stranded, demoralized, and completely unable to rest. "Desperate times call for desperate measures" says Emma Marion, the *White Pine*'s beloved Assistant Editor. As hours dwindled and hope was lost, she claims that "TSA pizza" was the only token of contentment left to keep the crew powering through.

Thankfully, after 32 hours without a place to sleep, the return to Traverse City was a success. Only one thing is clear as the dust settles; successful return to headquarters was merely another triumphant victory for the *White Pine Press* crew, leaving room for many successes to come.

Photos/ ELI STALLMAN



DNR's Invasive Species Solution Going Swimmingly

Julia Belden
Staff Writer

The Great Lakes are about to get a lot cuter.

One year ago, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources introduced a group of adorable Baikal seals (*Pusa sibirica*) into Grand Traverse Bay. The goal?

Reducing the population of invasive species through seal predation.

"This unique pilot program has been a resounding success," said John Whiskers, DNR Director of "Operation Blubber Ball." In just a few weeks, the DNR will remove the massive underwater gate that spans the mouth of the Bay, releasing the seals into Lake Michigan proper. The U.S. Coast Guard will air-drop additional seals in strategic locations across the other Great Lakes.

The seals are native to Lake Baikal in Russia. Whiskers said Lake Baikal's similarity to the Great Lakes helped the seals adjust.

"Both are large, cold, deep freshwater systems. The seals don't even realize they've been transported across the world – to them, Lake Michigan feels just like home."

Since their arrival in Grand Traverse Bay, the seals have gorged on invasive carp and sea lampreys, often growing to tremendous sizes. Some have become so fat that they cannot properly move, prompting the DNR to station interns at seal resting spots for mobility assists.

"They are enormous. We're rolling them around all day," said intern Sam Sweats. "The mornings are the worst—they want to go into the lake as soon as they wake up. Once they're in the water, they're fine, but getting them all there is a hell of a workout."

Sweats, who is also a student at NMC, remarked that despite the hard work, she adores her flippant furred charges: "They are, like, the cutest. It's impossible to be frustrated with them, even after they try to bite you. One look at those

huge dark eyes and you're in love."

Not all residents of the Bay share Sweats' sentiment. Richard Komplain owns a lakeside cottage north of Traverse City. He has pushed back against Operation Blubber Ball, claiming that the petulant pinnipeds are destroying his property.

"I used to be able to relax on my beach. Not anymore," he said during an interview on Thursday. He gestured to the pile of sleeping seals on his dock. "They're pooping everywhere. I've had to close my windows to avoid the stink."

Komplain also questioned the effectiveness of the gate containing the seals in Grand Traverse Bay.

"They just get up on land and scoot around the gate," he said. "I know a guy in the U.P., he found a seal in his yard last week."

Whiskers, the DNR Director, denied rumors of rogue seals outside the confines of the trial area.

"All seals are tagged and their locations are carefully monitored to ensure the success of the program," he said. "That being said, we'll be removing the gate in a few weeks, so it hardly matters if one or two individuals sneak out beforehand."

Whiskers and the DNR are looking ahead to the final phase of Operation Blubber Ball: eventually, the seals will complete their task and need to be removed from the Great Lakes before they start gobbling up native species.

"We're confident that we can scoop up most of the seals while they're asleep on the shore, but in case we have any stragglers, we're working with our Canadian counterparts to introduce a few polar bears to the area for some predatory assistance," said Whiskers, who added that bringing in the polar bears was "a fantastic idea" and that "nothing could possibly go wrong."

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Great Lakes Culinary Institute Introduces Doritos™-Based Certificate

Julia Belden
Copy Editor

This spring, NMC's award-winning Great Lakes Culinary Institute will graduate its first cohort of Doritos™ specialists.

"This is really going to jump-start my culinary career," said Alice Brie, one of the dozen or so students on track to earn the coveted new Doritos™ Cuisine Certificate. Brie, whose hands are now permanently encrusted in cheese dust, said she feels an intense connection with the triangular chip.

"Few foods are more entrenched in the American experience than the Dorito. BBQ, Flamin' Hot, Cool Ranch...there's a flavor for everyone. So many culinary opportunities!"

The new certificate program is the brainchild of Culinary Arts Instructor (and former Pepsico employee) Jack Colby.

"Doritos™ are the ultimate ingredient," Colby said. "You can crush them and make a delicious pie crust, layer them into Dorito lasagna, or dress them up with a vinaigrette. The simple complexity of the Dorito lends itself to innovation: for example, replace the lettuce in a salad with Doritos™ and you have a masterpiece in your mouth."

Despite the program's initial success, Colby admits that he's received some pushback from his peers.

"Several of my colleagues have expressed their disdain for Doritos™. 'A Dorito salad is just nachos,' they say. Absurd. These fools simply lack vision."

Students interested in bolstering their culinary horizons are encouraged to apply for the Fall 2024 semester. Classes include "Doritos™ Pastries", "Doritos™ Wine-Pairing", and "Doritos™ Clean-up: How to Get Cheese Dust Out of Your Linens."



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Photo/ EMMA MARION

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FARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Netflix to Shit Out Two More Seasons of *Avatar*

Jacob Pszczolkowski
Editor-in-Chief

Netflix seems to have caught live-action lightning again as their stellar directors and writers are about to shake up the second season of *Avatar: The Last Airbender*.

The first season of Netflix's live-action adaptation of the beloved cartoon dropped in Feb. to unanimous praise, and audiences adored how Netflix managed to thoroughly exposit and monologue all the necessary character and world information instead of showing and respecting the audience's intelligence like the original series. Following in the footsteps of critically-acclaimed projects *Death Note* and *Cowboy Bebop*, season two of *Avatar* is about to get a lot shittier.

In an interview with the *White Pine Press*, showrunner Albert Kim stated "There just isn't enough substance in the cartoon – how are we supposed to piece together Aang's internal conflict and fear if he doesn't look into the camera and say it aloud? Not to mention, the whole four elements thing is kind of overdone – that's why in season two, we're taking a bit of a departure from the source material and adding a fifth element for the avatar to master. We're all really proud of this one, the new element for Aang to learn – it's shit."

Kim continued, "in season two while the gang travels around the earth kingdom trying to teach Aang to earthbend, he's going to find a secret entrance to the long-lost Caca Country and learn the ancient art of poop bending where he takes poop from his butt and your butt and throws poop around".

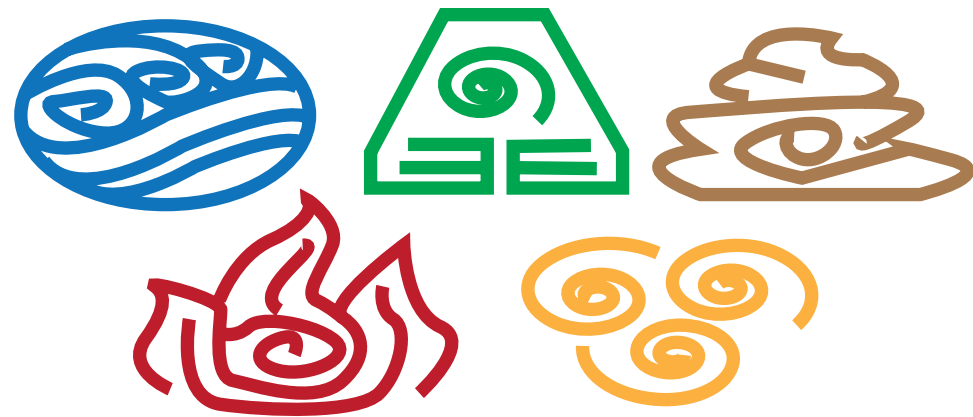
Original series creators Michael Dante DiMartino and Bryan Konietzko left the project in Aug. 2020, claiming that Netflix agreed publicly to follow their vision for the series, but broke their trust during production, leading to them

quitting the project. However, with the advent of poop bending, they seem to have changed their tune.

"We're begging to get back in on the project" said Konietzko. "I can't believe we never thought of it before – the one thing missing from the original series was loads of shit—it's genius."

DiMartino agreed, saying "We were wrong in thinking the audience could critically engage with the media we put out, and after I saw Gram Gram's exposition dump in the first episode I knew Netflix had the series' best interest in mind. Now that we see the whole vision, we want to be a part of this."

In addition to the introduction of poopbending, Kim teased that Gram Gram would return to deliver more frequent expository monologues, and episodes would now include cuts to confessionals for characters to articulate their thoughts and feelings directly.



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NMC's Best Bathrooms, Ranked

Dudley Dumper
Staff Writer

Third Place: Innovation Center, Library

Do you frequently feel the urge to defecate when surrounded by books? This is a real thing – it's called the Mariko Aoki phenomenon! Don't worry: NMC's library has you covered with peaceful, single-occupancy bathrooms.

Second Place: Beckett Building, Second Floor

The women's bathroom is spacious, with plenty of room for activities. The gentle lilac color of the stalls elevates the open floor plan.

First Place: Scholar's Hall, Basement

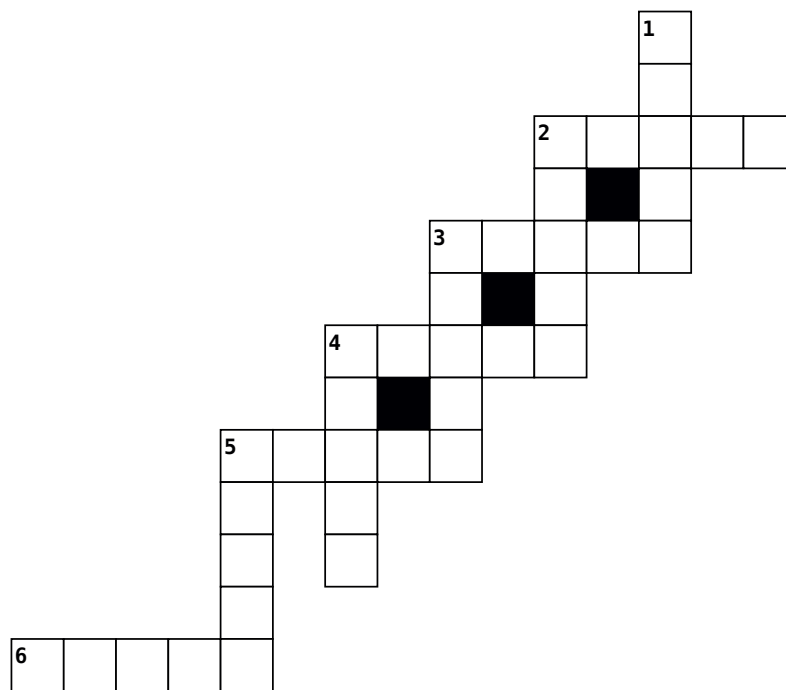
This little-known bathroom was cited by several *White Pine Press* staffers as a prime pooping location. Far from the hustle and bustle of the first floor of Scholar's Hall, this quiet, intimate bathroom will put your anus at ease.

If you or a loved one have suffered sleep paralysis, acute nosebleeds, auditory and visual hallucinations, loss of feeling in deep tissue, or disconnected movements in reflections as a result of root contact, you may be entitled to financial compensation.



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WORDS CROSSED



Across

- 2. objects easiest to roll
- 3. spherical shapes
- 4. the Be-alls, but not the end-alls
- 5. plural of items dodged, kicked, or basketed
- 6. an unfortunate location for blows to fall

Down

- 1. dropped during periods of growth
- 2. three-dimensional form of circles
- 3. round playground toys
- 4. items stored in a secret sack
- 5. the jewels of the summer swamp