



## FROM THE POLITY

### Bike Path: The NIMBY Mentality Needs to Stop

Friends, Johnnies, countrymen, lend me your ears. I have a bike-related bone to pick with you. The college recently held a forum about the proposed city bike path which would cross a portion of our campus by College Creek. I was surprised to hear students expressing negative sentiments not only about the project itself, but also about the city of Annapolis and its relationship to the College. I'd like to address this broader issue: the prevailing Johnnie attitude towards outsiders calls for a re-evaluation.

It concerns me to hear students voicing fears about strangers coming onto campus from the bike trail, as if this isn't already the biggest public green space in town. This seemingly reasonless distrust of the city of Annapolis and its individual residents doesn't sit right with me.

It saddens me to hear students talk about this city as if we are at war with it. I've heard things like, "We're surrounded by Annapolis on three sides already. We can't let them have the fourth, too."

We are not besieged. We are in a location. It surrounds us, in a spatial manner, as locations tend to do. This location happens to be the city of Annapolis.

(In fact, I hate to break it to you, but they already have the fourth side, too. It's a public waterway.)

There are lots of good reasons to consider rejecting the bike path proposal (e.g. maintenance and security costs, pollution concerns, crew and sailing safety issues). But the vague, isolationist sentiments I've heard in recent days have no place in such a discussion. Let's talk about real things and stop worrying about hoi polloi encroaching on our oasis. It would be a shame if we obstructed the city's attempt at community (and shoreline) improvement for no better reason than our fear of the outside world.

Let's take a break from being the most contrarian college in America, please, for just a moment. We don't need to live in opposition to everything around us. Let's look over our hedges and acknowledge our neighbors. Let's at least ask ourselves— to what degree should we consider our responsibility to the greater community we belong to, beyond the private interests of our college? St. John's does not and should not exist in a vacuum. To operate under such a (*cont. on page 2.*)

## FORUM HELD ON PROPOSED PATH ON COLLEGE CREEK

### New Plan for College Creek Connector Presented, Discussed by Students, Faculty and Staff

In 2021, the City of Annapolis first approached St. John's College with a proposal to build a bike path across back campus. That proposal, Ally Gontang, the College's Vice President for Finance and Operations explained at a forum this week, involved having the path run along the access road that lies parallel to the creek. However, concerns from the Campus Planning Committee prompted the city to return with a new plan that would have the path run on a boardwalk off of the College's property, in the creek. However, as this would cut off the College's water access, and be more expensive for the city, a third proposal was made, which was the subject of a forum hosted by Assistant Dean Robert Abbott.

"It's a critical link between two other funded trail projects to connect Annapolis to Anne Arundel County and beyond," explained Eric Leshinsky, Chief of Comprehensive Planning at the City of Annapolis who has been responsible for some of the planning work. Currently, Annapolis has a gap between trails running through the northeastern part of Anne Arundel County like the B&A Trail and proposed expansions to trails running in the northwestern part of the county, and this trail would make Annapolis more bike friendly and accessible by connecting to these regional networks.

Additionally, the trail was proposed as part of a wider goal to improve public water access in the City. "College Creek is one of our least publicly accessible creeks and yet one of our most important natural resources," said Leshinsky. While other creeks are surrounded by private development, College Creek is mostly surrounded by public semi-wild land, making it a rare amenity for city residents that has the potential to be more accessible.

The forum was held at a stage when the plan is very much still in the early planning stages. Gontang emphasized that "nothing is set in stone," saying that student perspectives are still very valuable at this stage, as it is not yet clear whether the College will agree to the plan, or what conditions it might attach to potential agreement. Leshinsky said that the plan "is at a conceptual design phase... The conceptual design for any project we do is informed by community input and we work to get as much support as possible from adjacent communities. We've already met with Bloomsbury Square residents and St. Anne's Parish,

and they are very supportive."

The current plan for back campus involves a boardwalk running along College Creek, with the path then crossing onto land about halfway down the College's shoreline and continuing on land behind the boathouse. The construction would involve improvements to native plants on the living shoreline, construction of a "boat pavilion" to shelter kayaks and canoes currently stored outside, improvements to the floating dock and renovations to the boathouse focusing on accessibility. "It doesn't obstruct the boathouse at all or any college activities along the waterfront. That's really the big thing, explained Leshinsky. "We're also adding some improvements to the campus around the boathouse that address existing College needs including a fully ADA-accessible path around the boathouse."

At the forum, concerns were raised about the view of the creek, environmental impacts of construction, practical ability of the sailing team to practice on the creek, safety concerns and damage to the character of back campus, as well as the fear of strangers coming onto campus. Suggestions were raised such as the creation of a bicycle rental program like the one in Santa Fe, and of ways to make the project be either more secure or less intrusive. Leshinsky said that feedback from the College's leadership at this stage is very valuable. "Right now we are in a bit of a holding pattern as we wait for more input from the college on how to proceed... We've been listening at every stage to make sure it works for the college... this project won't be successful unless it has a benefit to the college."

Many of the conversations focused on whether or not the College should engage more with the Annapolis community, and make its campus accessible to more people, with students arguing both in favor of more isolation and of more community involvement. Leshinsky noted that he finds this kind of conversation promising. "There is a certain segment of the student body that I know is interested in connecting with the city and working with it... the college can be more public facing and connected to the city and not lose its ethos. I don't think this trail will change the ethos of the College. It will improve the campus experience and connect it to the city and county, but it won't fundamentally change the college."

*El'ad Nichols-Kaufman*

## This Week in Seminar

### Freshman:

- 2/8: Plato: Timaeus, beginning-57
- 2/12: Aristotle: Nicomachean Ethics, Book I

### Sophomores:

- 2/8: Chaucer: Canterbury Tales; General Prologue, Knight's Tale
- 2/12: Chaucer: Canterbury Tales; Miller's Prologue and Tale, Reeve's Prologue and Tale

### Juniors:

- 2/8: Kant: Critique of Pure Reason (see official list for selections)
- 2/12: Kant: Critique of Pure Reason (see official list for selections)

### Seniors:

- 2/8: Nietzsche: Use and Disadvantage of History for Life
- 2/12: Nietzsche: Beyond Good and Evil, Books 1, 2, 3

### Friday Night Lecture:

Leslie Kay: Are brains computers? A smelly challenge to assumptions. FSK, 7:30 pm

## Upcoming Events:

### Saturday, 2/10

- Lunar New Year
- 9 pm, Mellon Lobby: Pangaea Lunar New Years Party

### Sunday 2/11

- 3 pm, Mitchell Museum: Sampling a Sampler Sampling tour with Jenny Cawood.

### Wednesday 2/14

- Valentine's Day
- 4 pm, Mitchell Museum: Why do we need third spaces? Conversation with Manual Reyes Restrepo and Maria Del Carmen Montoya

# NONE KILLED, AT LEAST 0 INJURED BY BLAZE ON MARYLAND AVENUE: Fusebox in Ruins

On Monday, February 5, a fire broke out on the northwest side of Maryland Avenue between Prince and King Georges Streets. The blaze was largely contained to a fuse box on a utility pole, where it is believed to have originated.

Rachel Hauben (A25) and Peter Quinn (A25) were walking past when they noticed the inferno and notified the authorities. "We were walking down Prince George Street and saw an orange and yellow column wrapping itself around the fuse box," said Ms. Hauben, adding that the flames were "not terribly significant." She estimated the 911 call was made sometime between 5:30 and 5:56 P.M. EST.

Mr. Quinn tells a different story when it comes to the size of the conflagration. When questioned he said, "Oh it was incredibly large. We saw a fire and I figured there was a department for that."

The fire crew apparently had some trouble locating the combustion and, in fact, missed the site of the immolation before being shown where it was by Ms.

Hauben and Mr. Quinn.

In the midst of the confusion following such an incineration, one thing is certain: the fire department was called, had cordoned off the site, and would not respond to a request for comment by the time this reporter arrived on the scene.

*Caleb Briggs*

## THEOLOGICAL DEBATE: A Retort to "The Most Essential Question"

The honorable scholar and learned doctor Bennettus Scotticus has proposed a new proposition to our perpetually pondering polity. He proposes that more than one angel should fit on the head of a pin. I take him to be an utter fool, and a man hardly worthy of

the titles he claims. He has clearly not taken into account the nature of the pin. I will grant him the truth that pins are things with heads, but that is not all they are. They are intimately related, and often interchanged with needles, both in description<sup>1</sup> and in use. Doctor Scotticus' omission of the relationship between pins and needles calls into question the veracity of his findings. A pin may be a thing with a head, but a needle is a thing with an eye. Just as, quite significantly, an angel is supposed to. If the good Doctor is correct in his statement that an "angel is a thing with eyes" therefore it may well be that a needle is an angel. And if a needle, so commonly interchanged with a pin, is an angel, then it may be said that a pin is an angel in and of itself. And if a pin is an angel, then it remains to be asked first a foremost—a necessary prerequisite before one can question how many angels fit on the head of a pin—whether two angels can occupy the same space, one upon the other as they must be for one to fit upon the head of the other. To think a man so learned as Doctor Scotticus would overlook such an important principal question truly calls one to question the deservedness of his reputation and the worth that he brings to our fine institution. Such is the beginning of a great learning to be done by Doctor Scotticus, and I await his humble return to the chalkboard.

*The Esteemed Barrister Andronicus Manifold*

## LETTER OF APPRECIATION FOR COLLEGE CREEK

In downtown Annapolis, I have found it difficult to find many places of rest. Most areas in the vicinity that are calm require a bit of a walk, which I have no problem taking if I have the time, though sometimes, and especially late at night, I do not want to spend this walk. This, then, is the primary significance that College Creek has to me: it is a little place of quietude, far away from the clamor of Upper Campus, and is always within reach. Countless nights having been spent on your docks, myriad waves seen roll by: here's a little letter of appreciation to you, College Creek, related in my wonted sentimental manner.

I love your wine-dark water, and its salty taste is a little sweet to me, I admit. Translucent in the day and obscure at night, it is shallow enough to wade in but deep enough to swim in.

I love your residents, the fish and crabs and birds and spiders, each of them tucked away in their proper place, and reliably found—the crabs on the pier-posts, the fish rising up and falling away like the tide, the spiders hanging on the railing and from the light, and the heron taking up his perch upon the dock.

I love your coldness: refreshing in the summertime, potent in the winter.

I love your voice, which has no sound—but I think there are some sort of words about you, since I always seem to be in dialogue around you.

I love your ears, how they listen eagerly whenever I sing to you.

I love the sky above you, which you so faithfully reflect on your face. I love the stars above you at sunrise, and the clouds over you at sunset.

I hope this small epigram of love will encourage the

Reader to reflect a little on this quiet corner of Campus and what it means to them. As someone who has long had a profound fascination with natural bodies of water, I for one have found such a beautiful connection to this brook. I think it's easy to overlook a spot that doesn't usually have much going on around it, but that is really what makes it so special.

*Tarik Mahmud*

### Bike Path (cont. from page 1)

delusion, in my opinion, would endanger much of what the college stands for. We spend so much time here discussing man as a "political animal," in Aristotle's words. From the Republic to Politics to Locke, Rousseau, and Hobbes, the program compels us to be interested in the human community. The very word "polity," which we use to describe ourselves, asks that we examine what it means to be a citizen. Upon graduation, we will each enter communities of our own. I believe that part of the St. John's education is learning how to participate in such a community— a πόλις— wherever that may be.

So, please, discuss the bike path proposal all you want. Take whichever side you prefer; there are reasons for both. I only ask that we consider the broader citizenship of our institution. Yes, we are members of the St. John's polity. But St. John's itself is a member of the Annapolis polity, and therefore so are we. Do we act like it?

*Helen Wagner*

### Pensee of the Week

*A man pointed a gun to another man, trying to force him to do something. He responded by saying "I will not obey you, and now you are forced by me to shoot." Who has more power?*

## ABOUT THE ST. JOHN'S COLLEGIAN

The St. John's Collegian is the weekly newspaper of St. John's College Annapolis. We work to bring quick and timely coverage of important events going on, to help develop a more informed student body. If you're searching for more in-depth investigations and reporting, as well as essays, art and culture, check out the Gadfly, our affiliated publication, which is published once every three weeks.

Want to submit an article? We always need more writers, whether for opinion or reporting! Submissions for news articles should be between 400-600 words, while opinion should be kept short at 400 words. A longer, journalistic piece may be up to 1,200 words. Just email [enicholskaufman@sjc.edu](mailto:enicholskaufman@sjc.edu) with your article, and we will work to get it in print! Longer form articles and more in-depth exploration of ideas should go to the Gadfly, which accepts submissions at [lbriner@sjc.edu](mailto:lbriner@sjc.edu).

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## CLASSIFIEDS

### INFORMATION WANTED

Everyone keeps talking about this guy, I think his name is Herschel? Last name starts with R. Junior, SF transfer, music assistant. I just want to figure out who he is and why everybody seems to know him. If you have any info, email me! (befuddledjohnnie@gmail.com)

