



# A T H E N I A N

T H E L A S T I S S U E

# Editor's Note

All good things must come to an end. Coincidentally, The Athenian is ending too. To be honest, I never expected to have to wrap things up so soon, but I suppose that, eventually, every Editor in chief must make like an executioner and head off. Sadly, dear readers, this means that several prominent storylines will have to be left unanswered. Will Mahima finally quit the magazine? Has anyone seen my Kindle? And how will Aquene and JP make it through mayhem, fights, laughs, family trouble, romantic entanglements, tears and surprise as they learn what it truly means to be a friend? Still, it's not quite over yet—and I have one more tale to tell.

It was a snowy April morning as I entered the Media Board office. Following the stunning success of our April Fools' Issue (with which we had fooled many into thinking that we were WRUW) it felt like we were on top of the world. Thus, it was particularly jarring to immediately duck under a table which slammed into the door where my head was moments prior.

I looked around the room. David was furiously shredding documents, copies of The Observer and, judging by the pile of wrent computer parts and fabric fragments surrounding him, whatever else was in reach. Michael and Erin, in a heartwarming show of teamwork, were alternatively setting our financial records on fire and pushing them out the window.

The source of the aforementioned flying furniture was Jasmine who was currently flipping over our tables and screaming, "How the tables have turned!"

"Nice weather we're having," I commented to Anastazia, who was standing in a mound of detergent bubbles and sopping dollar bills. "I take it that the money laundering didn't go as planned?" She glared at me, angrier than Sean Spicer on a typical day of work.

"This is no time for wry yet accurate commentary," she stated bitterly. "I see that you haven't heard yet. Case just announced that our mascot is the Spartans."

"That can't be," I exclaimed, horrified. "Why would any university choose a Spartan as a mascot? What about Spartie? Surely, he can clear this all up."

"You don't get it," she exclaimed. "Think about how Spartie never stops talking about the Partition of Triparadisus, or how Spartie itself is an anagram for 'spear it,' the chief armament of the hoplites. It was in front of us all along. Spartie is a Spartan!"

"B-b-b-ut then..." I stuttered, more heartbroken than a patient undergoing triple bypass. I came to swift realization and decided to make an announcement: "Take note everyone. The Athenian doesn't make any sense if the school mascot is actually a Spartan. We'll have to make like Enron and shut down in a way that's devastating both fiscally

and personally to our employees."

Anastazia shook her head solemnly in agreement. Just then, I noticed Shounak in the corner, studiously jotting down my commentary which triggered an idea. "Shounak, I've noticed you in the corner and your notes have triggered an idea," I announced. "What do you all think about putting our writing skills to use as reporters of real news instead?"

Everyone booed. "Great!" I said. "But we need a new name, something that's objective and perceptive. Something that observes our observational skills...."

"How about 'The Perceiver,'" suggested Ashley. We all nodded our heads in agreement.

"Well, if that's settled, then there's only one more thing for The Athenian to do," I declared. "Let's take our most outrageous or pointless articles, the things that get cut in brainstorming month after month, and shove them all in one final issue. We can call it ... The Last Issue!" I cheered while the others shrugged and got to work on the magazine you now hold in your hands.

Thus, I implore you: if you'd like to get involved with our publication, email both [athenian@case.edu](mailto:athenian@case.edu) and [perceiver@case.edu](mailto:perceiver@case.edu). And for the very last time, I ask that if anything we publish is offensive or inaccurate, send complaints to [observer@case.edu](mailto:observer@case.edu).

Goodbye CWRU,  
Tejas Joshi, Editor in chief

# Final countdown ends, everyone stunned

**Alaina Lisanti**

The myriad of guests at The Jolly Scholar's '80s Night cheered in excitement as the opening chords to Europe's classic "The Final Countdown" rang through the restaurant this past Thursday. A select few, both sober and not-so-sober alike, set their food and drinks aside and took to the floor to dance in a display of enthusiasm, though most simply sat alert.

A sense of impatience hung in the air as the song progressed, many on the edge of their seats as the minutes counted down to the highly-anticipated climax. The anthemic chorus, powerful instrumentals and tone of urgency in the

lead singer's voice assured listeners that this was, indeed, an important matter: the final countdown.

"It was thrilling to be a part of such a momentous, once-in-a-lifetime occasion," said one patron. "I had just come to Jolly for some wings and a beer. I wasn't expecting something like this."

The guitar solo invigorated all in attendance, as if signifying that this countdown would terminate in something extremely important. However, as the song faded out and a good five seconds of silence followed, everyone was left baffled. Even the opening bars of Rick Astley's "Never Gonna Give You

Up" did little to satisfy the crowd. A stillness seemed to cover The Jolly Scholar, and people were left with wide-eyed, puzzled looks on their faces.

"That was it?" another bargoer wondered. "A five-minute countdown just ... ended with nothing? Were they trying to fool us or something?"

Most were left speechless, while some voiced their opinions.

"Well, it was exciting while it lasted," pondered another. "But that was it. Final. There's not gonna be another countdown and I was lucky to have experienced it, even if the end was a bit underwhelming."



# Strong, independent woman refuses to change last name, changes first name instead

Staff Reporter

Independent woman Marsha Dover is to be married next Saturday. Dover, being a strong woman, took a special trip down to Shaker Heights Municipal Court on Friday to forcefully inform the clerk that she would not be changing her last name and conforming to traditional gender roles.

The clerk was unable to be reached for comment, but anonymous sources state that he was thrilled to assist during his lunch break.

While Dover made it clear that she “did not need no man” (by sharing that she celebrates her empowered

decision to singlehandedly secede from British rule and its associated stigma on an annual basis), she understands that sacrifices sometimes

“She would not be changing her last name and conforming to traditional gender roles”

need to be made. However, her vow to take a stand against the patriarchy will not be broken; in lieu of adopting her husband-to-be’s last name,

Dover is changing her first name instead. Marsha Dover’s new name will be Ben Dover, fully satisfying her dedication to the feminist cause.

After a friend advised that she could include both her maiden and married name, Dover briefly considered hyphenating her last name. However she strongly decided that she was far too independent to have half of her surname supported by another man. Additionally, “Ben Dover-Formi” seemed too long.

At press time, Ben was preparing (independently) for her wedding and was looking forward to proudly telling the clerk her new name.

## Mom just learned the word “hashtag”

David Pendergast

CLEVELAND—Startling the family with her new usage of social networking terminology, 46-year-old mother of two Kathryn Cutters has reportedly started weaving the word “hashtag” into everyday conversation.

“It all started on Monday, when she asked me to please take out the ‘hashtag trash,’” reports Bryan, 12, adding that her attempts seem to be increasing in frequency as time goes on. “I don’t know where she picked it up, or what she thinks it means, but she keeps asking if I remembered to pack my hashtags before each day of school. It’s really

bizarre.”

Other family members are also noticing Cutter’s new habit. Samantha, 16, reports feelings of confusion and perturbation. “My first exposure was when Mom said to me, ‘I’m going to grab some ‘hashtag stuff’ from the store, do you need anything?’ just

## #Hashtag

slipping it into the sentence like a halibut into an envelope. Thankfully I had already started rolling my eyes when she started talking.”

According to Samantha, instances

of her mom’s verbal appropriation have been disturbing but mostly harmless. “Yesterday she asked if I’d seen any fresh hashtags on the internet, which sort of made sense until she mentioned that she saw a great one on a license plate that afternoon on the way home from work. I’m not sure what to think about all of this.”

Details will continue to be reported as the story unfolds. At press time, Cutters was overheard asking the family if anyone had seen the hashtags she’d left on the counter that morning, adding that she’d appreciate a retweet from anyone who finds them.



# CWRU takes gap year

Tejas Joshi

CLEVELAND—In a surprising public announcement Tuesday, Case Western Reserve University has announced that the university will be taking academic year 2017-2018 off. The decision to take a gap was reached unanimously and independently by every faculty, staff and administration employee.

Some employees supported the move so they could unwind from the stresses of collegiate education and recharge. Others were excited to travel to foreign locales like the White Cliffs of Dover, the back streets of Singapore or Mather Quad. Many faculty cited the ability to really reflect on all the biochemistry, nursing, philosophy and everything else learned so far in the 2016-2017

academic year as the primary reason to take a gap year.

President Barbara R. Snyder explained what drove her own personal support for the decision: “We see other universities like Carnegie Mellon University or California Institute of Technology taking the traditional path and going straight into the new school year. But that’s just not for us. The narrow, sheltered world of Cleveland can only prepare you for so much, so we wanted a chance to expand our perspectives and discover who we want to be before college starts again.”

After the Faculty Senate proposed the resolution on April 23 to take the gap year, the entire University unanimously upheld the decision in

a rushed vote last Tuesday.

Promptly after the decision, admissions rescinded the acceptances of the entire class of 2022.

“It’s not that we thought that it would be a tremendous mistake to accept the class as is,” explained Bob McCullough, Director of Undergraduate Admission. “We just wanted time to focus on relaxation and personal growth to better form our identity before taking on the rigors of a first-year class.”

Finally, Director of University Financial Aid Venus Puliafico explained that the move would also benefit the university fiscally, as it could take the year to set aside money to not spend on student financial aid.



# 600 GIFS perfectly explain that

Tejas Joshi

**Finals week is approaching and these 600 GIFs perfectly explain how you'll feel!**

## **1. Sometimes you feel ready...**



## **2. Then finals really start and the work hits you.**



# how we feel about finals week

**3. You'll try to study for a while**



**4. But eventually you'll be like**



**5. But when finals are over...wow, no words.**





# March Mania sweeps through admissions department

**Eddie Kerekes**

CLEVELAND—Sobbing silently at his desk after refreshing his browser for the 19th time today, Trevor Young finally accepted that he would not win this year's office bracket pool.

Though he had picked an unlikely champion, Young still had high hopes for his selection.

"I tried to go against the grain this year in order to maximize my chance of winning," the 35-year-old admissions counselor said. "So I went with a 4 seed from the West, someone none of the co-workers had even heard of."

Unfortunately for Young, his risky pick turned out to be a mistake. His selection, a hopeful theater and art history double major from Bozeman, Montana, was upset in the second round by a prospective biomedical engineering student.

Every year, the employees of the admissions department at Case Western Reserve University create a bracket of 64 students vying for the final acceptance slot into the school. It's called March Mania and more and more staffers participate every year.

"I've heard Babs [President Barbara Snyder] even submitted one this year. Under a fake name, of course," said James Wright, Young's cubicle neighbor. "She finished in second."

An anonymous worker known only Mr. M has won the pool every year since its inception, correctly picking the last student standing for the past 20 years. Multiple workers were asked about him and his methods, but no employee could give the same

answer as another. Some said he had inside information, while others explained his success away with luck.

Enthusiasm for the annual challenge varies among employees. Some, like Young and Wright, spend hours at work crunching numbers and looking at trends to figure out

his high school's student government and also concertmaster of the student symphony. He was picked to win by over 50 percent of the brackets in the pool this season.

He lost in the second round to Claire Folkes, an eight seed in the Midwest region.



who the best selection would be. Neither has ever come close to winning.

Others, like 71-year-old Agnes Harold, devote exactly one minute to filling out a bracket.

"I set a tomato timer to one minute, and when it rings, I stop," said Harold. "I have no time for this nonsense."

Last year, Harold finished second and won a \$20 gift card to Michelson and Morley Restaurant.

For the 2017 March Mania, Hunter Turner, the No. 1 overall seed, came in as a heavy favorite. A potential mechanical engineering and music double major, Turner was the head of

"I was shocked that he lost," said Young. "He had too good of a record to not go all the way."

Folkes advanced to the Final Four, with a solid resume of three varsity sports captaincies and a perfect 4.0 GPA. She lost to the eventual champion, Hector Nunez, the No. 1 seed in the East.

Nunez was ecstatic when he heard the news.

"Case Western Reserve University?" he asked earnestly. "Never heard of the place. Is that a military academy or something?"

As of press time, he is still waiting for his acceptance letter from Harvard.



# Syrian parents excited to hear child's last words

**Jeff Brisket**

Homs, Syria—In a small house on the outer fringes of Homs, Syrian parents Malek and Lama Isstaif are very excited to hear their son Tariq's last words.

"It's just an incredible moment, you know?" Malek explained. "Your last words can say so much, and when we hear them come from our boy, it will just mean the world to us."

The couple noted that they would be ready to capture the moment on their phones, no matter where the event occurs. They explained how whether Tariq is visiting a mosque at the same time as al-Qaeda operatives,

attending classes in a building that's merely adjacent to an ISIS recruiting meeting or even just taking shelter in the wrong building, they will be film-ready when an airstrike hits.

"And that's not even counting the possibility that even the rebels or government themselves, might be there," explained Malek, showing off a camera filter that would be able to penetrate through sulfur mustard, nerve agent sarin or any number of particulate gases.

"The real excitement is we never know what they're going to be," gushed Lama. At press time, neither



parent had realized that those last words would also be Tariq's first words.

# Local milkshake stop uses last straw

**Paul Palumbo**

Local milkshake restaurant Milky Way became the scene of an emergency last night when the cashier realized that the sipping utensil he had just given a customer had been the last straw. When the next person in line tried to grab one from the dispenser, she was shocked and outraged to see that no such straw was waiting for her. Soon the entire line was whipped into a frenzy; people were shoved, milkshakes were carelessly waterfalled to little success and the janitor wept in the corner as the floor went from a smooth, shiny blue to a wet, lumpy amalgamation of bright colors.

"The situation got out of control unrealistically quickly," said Jonathan Johnson, the cashier who catalyzed the unspeakable chaos. "I was like 'Guys, seriously, they're just

straws. We'll buy more tomorrow.' Then suddenly somebody shouts, 'That's the last straw!' and everybody dogpiles on one poor guy."

The "poor guy" in question was Robert Robertson, who frequents Milky Way and was in possession of the last straw when the pandemonium ensued.

"There was no way I was giving up the last straw," Robertson told us. "Every time I go there, the other people are really unfriendly. Shoving me, pushing me, cutting in line. I love those milkshakes, but boy does that place get on my nerves. When they tried to take my straw, I thought 'That's it! That's the last straw!' and roundhoused the guy who tried to take the straw out of my drink."

The situation deescalated when Milky Way's owner, James James-

on, went to a local McDonald's and begged the cashier there for some straws. Jameson soon returned to his own restaurant with 40 straws sticking out of the same drink.

Jameson has assured us that we needn't fear this kind of anarchy again, saying, "I bought like 100,000 straws once we closed for the day. There's no way we'll reach the last straw ever again."

Though Jameson seems confident, people have started bringing their own straws to the Milky Way, including some with loops and other with lights. In addition, there's a separate business, the Straw Stop, right outside the Milky Way selling straws. It seems unlikely that there will ever be a straw-related problem again, but time will only tell when the Straw Stop has reached its last straw.

# CWRU introduces new varsity yoga team

Erin Hartmann

In hopes of finally winning an University Athletic Association Conference Championship title, the Case

be a part of a new spiritual family that will represent their university. Director of Athletics Amy Back-



Western Reserve University Athletic Department has recently invested thousands of dollars to promote and begin recruiting yogis both from the current student body and the incoming freshman class. Yogis, the term for those who embody the yoga philosophy, will be given the chance to

us revealed the sport won a staff vote by an overwhelming amount, beating out lacrosse, water polo and badminton despite being its first appearance on the ballot. After running the concept by the University Athletic Association board, it was determined that all other conference

schools would implement their own teams by 2020.

Backus gave an Athenian reporter exclusive information, stating that “Washington University and the University of Chicago have already begun the recruiting process and will be ready to compete against CWRU next year.” The season will begin in October and run through March. The events and their descriptions are as follows:

## **Tree Pose Throwdown**

Whoever can stay standing in tree pose the longest wins

## **Downward Dog Doosie**

Whoever passes out last wins the event

## **Try to Twist**

Participants will show off their best unnatural yoga pose

## **Warrior One Wower**

The person who gets a leg cramp last wins

## **Child’s Pose Charmer**

Whoever has the prettiest child’s pose wins

## **Headstand Hullabaloo**

Technique and form will be judged to determine who’s the best at being upside down

In addition to pride, the first place team will receive funding to buy lululemon gear. Applications will be available soon for yoga instructors to have the chance to join the CWRU Athletic staff. Training regimes will include one day of lifting a week, three days of room temperature yoga and one day a week of hot yoga. Individuals of all pronouns are welcome to participate in the audition week the last week-end of September 2017.

# In which Mr. Jameson's stinginess is revealed

Jonathan Schaeffer

"So now there's a dead man in the garden, and I'm not sure why."

"Where's the garden?"

"Out there."

"How did he die?"

"Someone shot him."

"Where was he shot?"

"In the back."

"When did you find the body?"

"About this morning. I went to pick some zucchini by the fence and he was just kind of lying there."

"Do you grow zucchini often?"

"Thomas, be quiet."

"Yes, we cook with it almost every night. It grows very fast around here."

"Neat."

"Did you hear anything last night that might have been linked to the murder?"

"I don't think so."

"What time did you go to bed?"

"8 p.m."

"What time did you wake up?"

"5:30 a.m."

"And during that time you did not hear a gunshot or a body falling over your fence?"

"I don't believe so. Excuse me, Tom?"

"What?" "Yes?"

"Did you hear a gunshot or a body falling over our fence last night?"

"I heard a few gunshots."

"When did you hear them?"

"I think around 10 p.m."

"Thomas, what were you doing up at 10 p.m.?"

"Sorry, I was reading, I couldn't fall asleep."

"And you didn't think to call the police?"

"I just thought Mr. Jameson was protecting his zucchini."

"Who's Mr. Jameson?"

"Our neighbor."

"Does he grow zucchini too?"

"Thomas, be quiet. Does he live on the other side of the fence where you found the body?"

"He does, and yes."

"Do you mind if we take a look at the fence?"

"Not at all. Come on out."

"Jesus Christ, that's a lot of zucchini."

"Thomas, be quiet."

"Well, seriously, Todd, it's everywhere. I don't even think there's any grass."

"Can I come too?"

"The body's right there, officer."

"And this is how you found him?"

"Yessir."

"Why are there multiple bullets in his wound?"

"Mr. Jameson's is a very good shot."

"Thomas, get back inside!"

"Looks like he has zucchini in his pockets."

"Ma'am, I'm assuming these are Mr. Jameson's zucchini?"

"His always were a bit stingier than mine."

# Top 10 ways Spirit Airlines saves money

Leticia Dornfeld

10. Charge you \$10 to print your ticket at the airport.
9. Charge \$50 for the first checked bag and \$55 per carry-on bag.
8. Charge an extra \$55 if your checked bag is 40.1 pounds instead of 40 pounds.
7. Don't ensure that the flight crew arrives on time so the plane doesn't have to leave at the scheduled time.
6. Load you and the other passengers onto the plane, but wait 30 minutes for that one flight attendant that they didn't schedule. After one and a half hours, load everyone off the plane because of a maintenance issue.
5. Reschedule your flight for two hours ahead of the original time. Repeat three times before officially cancelling your flight.
4. Cancel your flight half an hour before takeoff but not change the "on time" status on the departures board.
3. Don't offer to help book you with another airline to get to your destination on time. It'll guarantee that you take Spirit flights only.
2. Not pay for your hotel room when they cancel and/or reschedule your flight for the next day.
1. Give \$50 vouchers instead of refunding your ticket. When you ask again for a refund, they'll give you \$100 vouchers.



# Battle of the Bands violates Geneva Convention, Model U.N. intervenes

**Paul Palumbo**

The recent Battle of the Bands between Case Western Reserve University (CWRU) and Cleveland State University (CSU) was shut down by the Model U.N. this weekend. According to the Model U.N., the battling bands did not adhere to the very strict Musical Geneva Convention. All college bands agreed to follow this strict set of guidelines after the incident in 1985, which sent several people to the hospital and more than a few woodwinds to the grave.

What did these bands do to break such a sacred agreement? According to the Representative from Model Canada, both bands participated in unsportsmanlike and purposefully destructive behavior during the competition. A trumpeter from CSU was observed playing excessively loud

into the face of a CWRU tuba player. Meanwhile, a CWRU trombonist was smacking an opposing drummer every time he needed to stretch his instrument. A student from CSU was seen playing in the CWRU band, performing purposefully awful and making it seem like CWRU was lacking in the drumming department. Then, of course, there was the CWRU violinist who threw mustard gas at the CSU guitarist, which is not specifically stated in the Musical Geneva Convention but is still probably not an okay thing to do.

After this unruly behavior was reported, Model U.N. stepped in and flexed their Model Authority, shutting the competition down before it escalated to espionage. The bands were dispersed and several

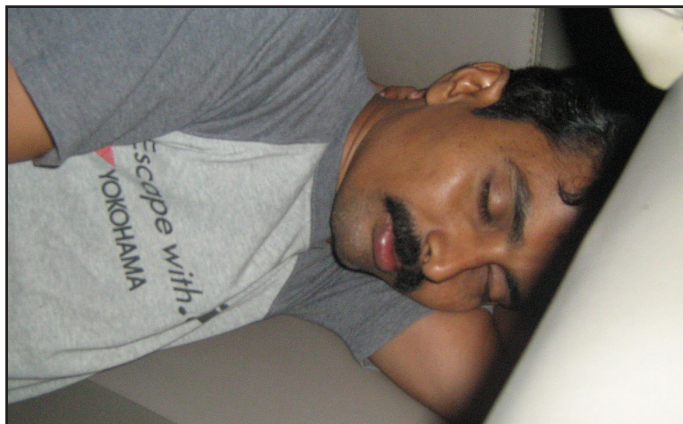
of the ringleaders were detained. Whether the Model U.N. actually has the authority to detain people is uncertain, but that didn't stop them. They have taken complete control of the situation.

What will happen to the Battle of the Bands? Model U.N. has announced the competition will be held again at a later date, under the strict supervision of Model U.S. Model U.S. will ensure that all involved parties have the right to play their instrument without fear of egregious interference. The ringleaders will be allowed to play, but each will be personally accompanied by a member of the Model U.N. Hopefully this next battle will go off without a hitch, or Model U.S. has threatened to bring in the Model President to deal with the situation personally.

## Famous last words before leaving KSL

**Erin Hartmann**

"I think we should head out."  
"Has anyone seen my espresso?"  
"I'm about to get a full six hours of sleep tonight."  
"Good thing tomorrow is Saturday."  
"Better call Safe Ride now."  
"My 8:25 starts in 20 minutes, I better go change."  
"How long was I asleep?"  
"That was fun."





# EPA trashed: Cuyahoga River, Lake Erie immediately catch fire

Charles Li

The Cuyahoga River once again caught fire after the leftover corpse of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was dragged off of Capitol Hill to be improperly disposed of in Chesapeake Bay.

Some sources claimed that the blaze started after an individual smoking in a “No Tobacco” zone tossed his or her stub into the once clear waters. Other sources claimed that the blaze was ignited by activists during an anti-environment demonstration. Regardless of the source, Cleveland’s burning river once again brought the city national attention.

After the city council finished hiding their bribes, a state of emergency was declared and firefighters from across the Rust Belt tried to figure out how to put out a burning river. After a week huddling under the shifting flames of the Cuyahoga, Fire Chief Angelo Cavillo declared the fire to be “an unholy mixture of a grease fire, an electrical fire, an industrial waste fire and self-sustaining cold fusion.”

“Adding water would only make it worse,” he confirmed during the press conference.

After incessant questioning from our reporter, he claimed “No, we can’t just put a pot cover on it!”



Full-time Baby Boomer Mitch Millerson grumbled at the lackluster effort of today’s Millennials, claiming that back in his day, they put out the burning river every weekend. However, when questioned, he refused to give more details on how to fix the problem. Instead, he kept repeating that today’s youth are too lazy and expect everything, including answers, to just be given to them.

When President Donald Trump’s Press Secretary Sean Spicer was asked about the administration’s role in and response to our burning river, he said “As we all know, rivers are flammable. That means they are prone to catching on fire.”

Not everything is doom and gloom, however. Ohio Governor

John Kasich is looking at the bright side, claiming that “Ohio’s tourism industry will be burning bright” over the next few years. A projected increase in sales of fire insurance and bottled water sales are also expected to bring economic growth to the city.

The Miami Heat protested having to play the Cavaliers in the Quicken Loans Arena, claiming that the hormone-filled fumes are an unsafe and unfair performance enhancement. Reportedly, the Cavaliers laughed until they were reduced to coughing fits. The coaches negotiated to move the game to the part of Miami that is still above sea level.

As of press time, the Cuyahoga River has been burning for 123 hours.

# Local man achieves perfectly balanced life

## Q & A with local idol Mike Flaggerty

Jess Chalas

Mike Flaggerty was spotted just three months ago at the grocery store picking out an unrotted bag of apples while simultaneously coddling his eight-month-old, directing his four-year-old and talking on the phone to his wife. Since then, he has become a social media sensation, known across America as “The Incredible”—a man who can, incredibly, do it all! We caught up with Mike during one of his well-balanced breaks for a brief glimpse into his daily life.

**Athenian:** So glad to have you with us, Mike. I would apologize for taking up your time, since we all know you do so much, but nothing seems to faze you. Have anything else going on today?

**Flaggerty:** Umm, not too much. We had an early morning; some breakfast cereal, got the kids out to day care. Then I drove to work, spent some time at the office, ran a few errands during my lunch break and finished up from there. I have a few hours before I have to retrieve the kids. Then we’ll fix up a quick dinner and maybe head out to the park this afternoon. It looks pretty nice out.

**Athenian:** Amazing! You even had time to notice the weather. I’ll bet you packed an umbrella too just in case?

**Flaggerty:** Yes, in fact, I did. There was a 40 percent chance

of rain, so I figured it would be a good idea.

**Athenian:** Look at you, always prepared, always on the go! Besides the job and family, it’s been rumored you even make time for a hobby. Some have speculated fishing, others horseback riding. We’re all dying to know—is it true?

**Flaggerty:** Umm, yeah actually. I enjoy painting, always have. It started in high school when I took a few art courses just for fun, and even here and there in college when accounting courses were at a lull. One day, after A.J., my first son, was born, the interest led me to buy a paint set off Amazon. Since then, I like to go out on the warmer days and paint the scenery. It’s nothing professional, just a pastime.

**Athenian:** I’m out of words! You have a real pastime? So impressive. You know, you could probably sell your pieces for good money just by signing them. A man of your caliber.... Wow. How have you felt these past three months? How does it feel to be an idol to so many out there—okay, all of us—currently stuck in the all-American routine of sleep, work, eat, repeat?

**Flaggerty:** It was a bit surprising, to be honest. Umm, I didn’t feel like I was doing anything special until I was discovered at the grocery store. But I have really

enjoyed being able to travel across America, giving speeches about how I balance work life, family life and free time. To anyone who asks, my motto is, “You can do it if you just believe in yourself.” My advice is to take it step-by-step, to make little changes. You know, set your alarm 10 minutes early so you can be on time for work or try changing your ring-tone to something more pleasant so you’ll actually answer the phone when your spouse rings. It’s not easy, and not everyone can do it, but hey, you gotta go big or go home.

**Athenian:** Great advice Mike! Personally, I know my dream has always been to have the kids, the job and the pleasure all in the same 24 hours—you know, the American Dream. Thanks for being that inspiration, proving that it is possible. Any big plans for 2017?

**Flaggerty:** Yeah, I’ve actually been contacted about possibly doing a book series entitled “The Modern Superhero.” It’ll be part memoir, part self-help book. Besides that, I’m just starting my tour by the same name and am so far really enjoying it.

**Athenian:** Well we can’t thank you enough, Mike, for speaking to us about your amazing lifestyle. We wish you all the best in your superhero-like endeavors!

# Confessions of a CWRU alumnus

## Former contributor

They told me it'd all be different once I left college, that it was going to be either one of the other: I'd be either swimming in misery hoping to go back, or so blessed with my life that I wouldn't be able to recall the long nights crawling through endless notes. (Notes which may or may not have been burned as a ritualistic exit.) They seemed to pretend that something would change, like flipping a switch when exiting the room and this miraculous process would be handed to us like a gift horse that we weren't supposed to look in the mouth.

They didn't tell me that there'd be a third option: that everything would still be the same after a year of navigating the "real world" alone. It's like high school became college that be-

came this day-to-day existence, plus some cats that now decide that my keyboard is the perfect spot to nap (with or without the presence of my fingers). I still find myself looking through my drawers at the end of a work day, wondering where I stashed the last packet of ramen. I'm still completely unsure of what to do with dollar bills. I still debate how much sleep I can sacrifice in the name of trying to beat the newest game of the month.

It might not be labelled college, but it certainly hasn't changed to the point where I'd know one from the other at a single glance. If you put a schedule of classes on my door, I'd be inclined to believe you in the grogginess of the morning (while panicking that the nightmare of

missing an exam from the night prior might not just be a nightmare). In retrospect, it'd almost be nice to be back on the \$14 per meal money sink, but only because no one realizes it's \$14 until they work out the math. Now, as a result of a few too many not-so-cheap meal plan cereals, there are student loans, somewhat resembling starved sharks smelling blood after all the fish managed to swim away.

The world, ultimately, has become a painting of the mundane, where the greatest adventures are in the mind of the 5-year-old we all once were. Although life isn't college anymore, a fundamental truth hasn't changed: you're no Cinderella, this isn't a fairy tale and if you lose your shoes at midnight, you're drunk so you should probably just go home.

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