

Brevard College Band Invitational hits the high notes

Kyle Stefanick
Staff Writer

Some of the area’s brightest musicians will take the stage in the Porter Center on Feb. 27-28 to showcase their skills and passion at the ninth annual Brevard Band Invitational.

The Brevard College Band Invitational is a vital opportunity for young musicians to enhance their skills. Working with professional clinicians, students receive valuable insights and feedback that foster improvement and collaboration. This event encourages some of the most foundational components for professional musicians: a passion for music while connecting with peers who share their enthusiasm in a supportive environment.

This event has seen a tremendous rise in participants. “High school and middle school bands from Brevard, Rosman, Hendersonville,

and Asheville will attend, with more than 250 student instrumentalists on campus,” Citizen-Times reports in an article published in 2017. This year, a record 800+ students are set to arrive and participate.

Alongside the performances, the Invitational offers students opportunities to engage in discussions about the future of music education and the ongoing evolution of the wind ensemble world. Workshops on composition, arrangement, and even history enable students to explore various aspects of their craft and comprehend the chang-

ing landscape of the wind ensemble setting.

This event serves as a platform for students to build lasting connections with fellow musicians and industry professionals. Networking opportunities can lead to future collaborations, mentorships, and even pathways to further education in music. The Brevard College Band Invitational is more than just an event; it’s a stepping stone for aspiring musicians, creating memories and experiences that will shape their musical journeys for years to come.

THE CLARION

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Peace Corps Week: A celebration of culture and opportunity

Autumn Jones
Editor in Chief

Peace Corps Week starts tomorrow.

This annual commemoration—Feb. 22 through March 1 this year—celebrates the creation of the Peace Corps more than 60 years ago, the fact that it is still here, the volunteers who have served, and ways to pique the interest of new volunteers.

The celebration is particularly relevant for at least one Brevard College faculty member: art professor Rebekah Alviani served in the Peace Corps for 18 out of 27 months.

“The Peace Corps is a government organization that allows trained individuals to serve abroad. It is a great opportunity to immerse yourself in a new culture,” Alviani said. The organization pays for any medical care needed, sets up housing, and gives you a living allowance in the local currency. You can choose where you are placed by giving your top three choices.

President John F. Kennedy established the Peace Corps on March 1, 1961, to “promote world peace and friendship through community-based development and intercultural understanding.” JFK saw an opportunity to build a more diverse world, and he took it.

This year’s theme for Peace Corps Week is “Tales of Transformation.” The theme is there to celebrate changes individually and in the community experience. Alviani says, “A huge part of the Peace Corps is intercultural connection.”

Volunteers are given a primary assignment, and the assignment is based on what the community needs. For the Peace Corps to send out volunteers, the local government has to request the help of the organization. Peace Corps can



Students practicing math equations.

only come into the country if they’re invited by the local government. “Because the Peace Corps is trying to get away from the white savior complex, the community needs to have some stake

times, they’re not properly trained on how to handle certain situations.

“The people of Ghana are truly the nicest in the world. The community is kind and welcoming,



Rebekah Alviani with students at the Kibi School for the Deaf.

in a project,” says Alviani. “The community will communicate what they need, and it’s up to the volunteer to facilitate those needs.”

The Peace Corps has three main goals: to send trained individuals out to help interested countries, to help promote a better understanding of Americans by the people being served, and to promote a better understanding of the people being served by Americans.

Alviani comes from a family who also served in the Peace Corps, and it is partly what inspired her to join. “I grew up hearing my dad’s stories, and then eventually my older brother’s stories. My dad was placed in Colombia, my brother in Tanzania, and myself in Ghana.”

Before joining, Alviani owned a photography business and was in school to get her bachelor’s in graphic design. “I hated owning my own business, and yet I was in school furthering my education on it. I went to visit my dad and saw the Peace Corps poster he keeps on his door, and I thought I’d see if that was something for me.” Alviani called a recruiter, asked what she could do, and was placed to be an art teacher in Ghana at a school for the deaf.

“There are a lot of different cultural differences. One is the perspective towards those with a disability. Teachers are placed within schools, so some-

and coming back to America after experiencing that was a huge adjustment for me,” Alviani says.

After your 27-month immersion is over and you return to the States, there are still benefits. The organization will help pay for graduate school, and you will receive a pretax payment of \$20,000 for reintegration. “They take care of you while you’re serving and having your experience, and when you come back, they help you get reacclimated,” says Alviani. “I would not be who I am today, and I would not be teaching at Brevard if it was not for this opportunity.”



Salvation Army School for the Deaf teachers take students to a local hospital.

Pedaling to new heights

BC's Owen Clark joins Pivot OTE pro mountain bike team

Madeleine Pollock
Staff Writer

Senior Owen Clark of King City, Ontario, recently signed with Pivot OTE, a professional mountain bike team out of Québec, Canada, where he hopes to take the UCI Mountain Bike World Cup circuit by storm.

Clark, a member of the Brevard College Cycling Team, won both the cross-country and short-track events at the USA Cycling Collegiate Championships in Fayetteville, Arkansas, in 2024.

For the spring, he will be turning his attention to professional racing; in an interview, he says, "Joining the Pivot OTE team this year will be another step up as I plan to hit a full World Cup calendar in Europe. Having all that travel logistics and extra financial support means I can put that extra bit of focus into the actual racing."

Mountain biking is a family affair for the Clarks; Owen's older brother and BC alumni, Tyler Clark, is also a decorated Canadian mountain bike racer. Owen says he first got into mountain biking when his family attended a local 24-hour biking event when he was only 7 years old. Both Clark brothers have raced locally, collegiately, and internationally.

Owen Clark is currently taking the spring semester off to focus on racing and training;



Owen Clark crossing the finish line to win his second event of 2024 Collegiate Nationals, the short track.

his first race of the 2025 season will be the US Cup in Fayetteville, Arkansas, in mid-March, followed by spring and summer World Cups in Europe and South America, as well as late-season races in North America. He also plans to race in the Canadian Nationals in July and his final Collegiate season next fall.

Being a student-athlete, Clark has both cycling and academic aspirations for 2025. On the cycling side of things, he says, "I can't graduate without [BC Cycling winning] a team overall championship, it just won't happen. I also want to win an Under 23 World Cup." As a double major in Business and Integrated Studies with an emphasis in Communications and Theater, Clark says that he is also "especially excited to work on my senior semester short film project in the fall."

After Clark graduates, he hopes to continue racing bikes at a professional level, as well as "get more involved with the world of movies and hopefully one day write and direct a feature film."

As he looks back on his time at BC and nears the conclusion, he says that his favorite moment at Brevard so far has been "sharing so many successful mountain bike nationals with the Cycling Team family we have, yet the team relay victory in Bentonville probably takes the crown." He also shouted out cycling coach Bradford Perley, saying, "Coach Brad gets a lot of thanks from

us, but it will never be enough."

Clark says both the geography of Brevard and the college experience have given him the freedom and peace of mind to reflect on how he wants to spend his time. "I've been able to find the goals that I want to pursue, knowing they're the right ones because I'll genuinely enjoy the process of pursuing them. The fun thing with goals is they never really end. So even while I've achieved some of them while being here, what Brevard has really done is just given me more ideas of goals to write down."



Owen Clark in Pivot OTE team kit. Photo courtesy of Pivot OTE Instagram.



Cycling coach Bradford Perley and Owen Clark celebrating after Owen Clark's Cross Country win at 2024 Collegiate Nationals.

SNL celebrates 50 years on TV with star-studded live special

John B. Padgett
Contributor

“Saturday Night Live” turns 50 this year, and to commemorate its five decades of being a cultural zeitgeist, NBC aired a three-hour special Sunday featuring new skits with old characters, musical guests, and many, many cameo appearances by Hollywood stars.

To borrow a line from the Church Lady, one of many vintage characters referenced in the special, “Isn’t that special?”

The show’s cold open was a musical performance of “[Homeward Bound](#)” by Paul Simon, who said he first performed it on the show with George Harrison in 1976, and Sabrina Carpenter, who quipped, “I was not born then. And neither were my parents.”

In the [monologue](#), host Steve Martin also joked about how long the show has been around, saying, “A fun fact: a person born during the first season of ‘Saturday Night Live’ could today be easily dead of natural causes.” (Prior to Sunday night, Martin had hosted the show 16 times, which is one behind Alec Baldwin, who has hosted 17 times.)

The entire special was long on nostalgia, with numerous references and tributes to the original “not ready for prime time players” in 1975, which included Gilda Radner, Jane Curtin, Dan Aykroyd, Chevy Chase, and John Belushi. Two of that first season’s cast appeared in the special: Garrett Morris and Laraine Newman.

Sitting in an armchair alone on stage, Morris joked that when he joined the cast in 1975, “I had no idea, y’all, that I would be required to do so many reunion shows.” Morris then introduced a short black and white film that aired on the show in 1978 in which a much older [John Belushi](#) vis-

its a graveyard where all the other original cast members were buried. The film’s poignance is underscored by the fact that Belushi was the first SNL alum to die, of a heroin overdose in 1982, just a couple of years after leaving the show.

Newman’s bit was also tinged with nostalgia, as she stepped onto the famed Studio 8H stage, the home of the show from the start, and tries to reminisce on old times, only to be distracted repeatedly by noises from “[Chad](#),” a “night crew” member (played by a much later SNL cast member, Pete Davidson) who seems oblivious to the show’s history (or Newman’s significance in that history).

During SNL’s long run, it has often served as a touchstone for the times, often commenting on current events, public figures, and trends. The show has from the start satirized celebrity and media culture, politicians, and the news. Sunday’s special continued in that long tradition with a special “50th anniversary [Weekend Update](#),” the satirical news segment created and first hosted by Chevy Chase—and who therefore placed fourth in the list of all-time greatest Weekend Update anchors by [Bill Murray](#) (who joined the cast in 1976 to replace Chase).

The special also did a montage of [fake commercials](#) that have aired on SNL for the past 50 years. Among the products hawked on the show: Colon Blow cereal, the two-seater Love Toilet, Mom Jeans, John Hamm’s John Ham, and a whole host of various pharmaceuticals including Tylenol BM, Xanax for Gay Summer Weddings, Cialis for Threeways, and Swiftamine (for when you realize you love Taylor Swift).

Given the show’s propensity for political satire, and the effects it often had in the real world—a trend that began with Chevy Chase’s impersonation of president Gerald Ford as a clumsy, accident-prone buffoon—the Sunday



Tom Hanks reprises his character “Doug,” a MAGA-hat wearing Donald Trump supporter who somehow winds up as a contestant on “Black Jeopardy” during SNL’s 50th anniversary special.

night special was mostly devoid of political jokes. Steven Martin made a couple of topical references in the opening monologue, saying he represented SNL’s “newest diversity hire” and that he had been vacationing on a friend’s yacht in the “Gulf of Steve Martin.”

Perhaps the most obvious political barb came when Tom Hanks reprised his character “Doug,” a MAGA-hat wearing conservative who somehow finds himself on [Black Jeopardy](#). Hanks has gotten some backlash from conservatives on social media, saying the portrayal was racist, divisive, and even a betrayal of fans who have supported him over the years, but the controversy stems mostly from Doug’s apparent fear when the show’s host, played by Kenan Thompson, approaches to shake his hand in agreement over something Doug had just said.

Except for a portrayal of Rudy Giuliani by

See ‘SNL,’ page 7



Laraine Newman (center), a first-season cast member in 1975-76, reminisces on the Studio 8H stage about her fellow cast members (clockwise from lower left) Jane Curtin, Dan Aykroyd, Gilda Radner, Garrett Morris, John Belushi and Chevy Chase.



Left: Hollywood legend Jack Nicholson made a rare appearance on the SNL 50th anniversary show to introduce Adam Sandler (right), who performed an original song, “50 Years,” while images of two deceased cast members, Norm Macdonald and Chris Farley, are shown. Sandler, an SNL cast member from 1990-1995, co-starred with Nicholson in the 2003 film “Anger Management.”



Detroit's frozen flood indicates a larger winter weather phenomenon

Sammy Vargas
Staff Writer

The U.S. continues to be hit with freezing temperatures, snow, and ice. Many states are suffering through heavy snow and low temperatures, which in turn cause blown water pipes.

This weather has left cars and streets flooded with ice in Detroit, and emergency workers having to rescue over 200 people in knee-deep icy water in inflatable boats in the streets of Detroit because of a main water line explosion. These conditions forced civilians to sleep in hotels and kept them out of the dangerous conditions in the frozen streets.

City officials have reported that expenses not covered by insurance will be covered by the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department. With reports saying many cars that were submerged in frozen water will be out of commission, people are wondering how companies will help those who lost their cars due to the water line blowing.

People also wonder if this will affect surrounding areas that depend on this water line. The Great Lakes Water Authority has reported that repairs for the main water line are estimated to take at least two weeks.

Many other states are suffering from freeze warnings and travel delays. The storm has dumped about a foot of snow in some parts of Virginia and North Carolina, leaving countless school systems to close, and leaving flights to be delayed and canceled. Some states have reported record-low temperatures, and many winter storm warnings forcing millions of Americans to endure these awful winter conditions.



Television crews in Detroit captured images of cars left frozen after frigid temperatures led to a massive water main break this week.

SNL turns 50

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[Kate McKinnon](#) (for his role as mayor of New York City after the 9/11 attacks), almost no political figures, real or impersonated, factored in the special. President (and two-time SNL host) Donald Trump has been a frequent target of the show in recent years, played most famously by Alec Baldwin, but none of the sketches or retrospectives featured him or other presidents

who have been satirized on the show.

The special also featured several musical performances, including [Miley Cyrus](#) singing “Nothing Compares 2 U” and [Adam Sandler](#) performing an original song paying homage to the show’s half-century of cast and crew members. Playing an acoustic guitar as images from the past showed behind him, Sandler ended the song with “Fifty years of the best times of our lives.”

Ending the show as a kind of bookend was

[Paul McCartney](#) performing songs from the the Beatles’ “Abbey Road” album, which famously ends, “And in the end, the love you take / Is equal to the love you make.”

If you missed the live broadcast, you can watch individual segments or a playlist of all segments on the Saturday Night Live YouTube channel, <https://www.youtube.com/@SaturdayNightLive>.

Big win for women's basketball

BC closes out home schedule with 80-59 victory

Abigail Callahan
Staff Writer

The Brevard College women's basketball team won 80-59 against Meredith College for their last home game of the season.

Senior point guard Lexie Shepard felt she improved her game this season by playing defense and passing the ball. Her biggest challenge was building confidence, especially as a senior who



Senior women's basketball manager Hayley Kenney poses surrounded by friends, faculty, and coaches for a senior day photo (photo by Caden O'Brien.)

was expected to lead the team. Shepard says, "I just liked playing basketball. I was a junior coming in, playing a role and being a leader. So, I was able to become a little more confident.

"When we were at Methodist, there were a few things that if I'd done it differently, then we probably might have won that game or been a little bit closer, and I just have to talk to myself to be better."

Hayley Kenney, a senior and manager for the team, was a surprise addition to the roster for this game. She dressed and played point guard. She scored a basket for the final home game of the season. "It was really great. I love the support of all my teammates, and how excited they were for me."

Kenney found out she would be playing from Coach Hudson. She said, "Coach Hud made me aware of it. He said, 'Hey, I'm gonna have you suit up, kid, if you're feeling up to it.' It just made me really happy." The team's encouragement played a significant role in her performance during the game.

The Lady Tornados currently hold down second place in the USA South Athletic Conference.

Congratulations seniors on a great season and don't miss the Lady Tornados on Saturday, Feb. 22 at North Carolina Wesleyan.



Senior Jordan Gresham shoots the ball in Saturday's home matchup against Meredith (Photo by Caden O'Brien.)

NBA All-Star Game 2025: A spectacle gone wrong

Ace Evett
Staff Writer

The Feb. 16 NBA All-Star Game met backlash for its new format, featuring a confusing three-game mini-tournament and "too much non-basketball content."

This year's event introduced a three-game mini-tournament featuring four teams. One team did not have any All-Stars. The structure was intended to boost competitiveness, but it led to confusion and dissatisfaction among viewers and players.

Draymond Green, a player for the Golden State Warriors, appeared on TNT's broadcast as an analyst and had major criticisms about the All-Star Game. His colleague Kenny Smith sug-

gested a return to the game's previous structure might be necessary for future All-Star Games.

The appearance of comedian Kevin Hart was also heavily criticized for his excessive non-basketball segments. His frequent interjections and extended comedic bits were seen as forced and distracted the game's flow.

A mid-game tribute to the TNT broadcast crew, lasting nearly 20 minutes, led to further frustration among fans and players. Trae Young, one of the All-Star players, expressed his displeasure with the game and overall entertainment.

The event was constantly tainted by commercial breaks and forced promotions that prolonged the game. One of those promotions included an extended segment featuring YouTube star Mr. Beast. These interruptions were poorly re-

ceived by the NBA community.

In response to the widespread criticism, the NBA has been considering reverting the All-Star game to its more traditional format.



Draymond Green. Photo by Cary Edmondson- USA TODAY Sports.