Imprint

Your Stories, Your Voice

October 2026
Volume 4 Issue 3



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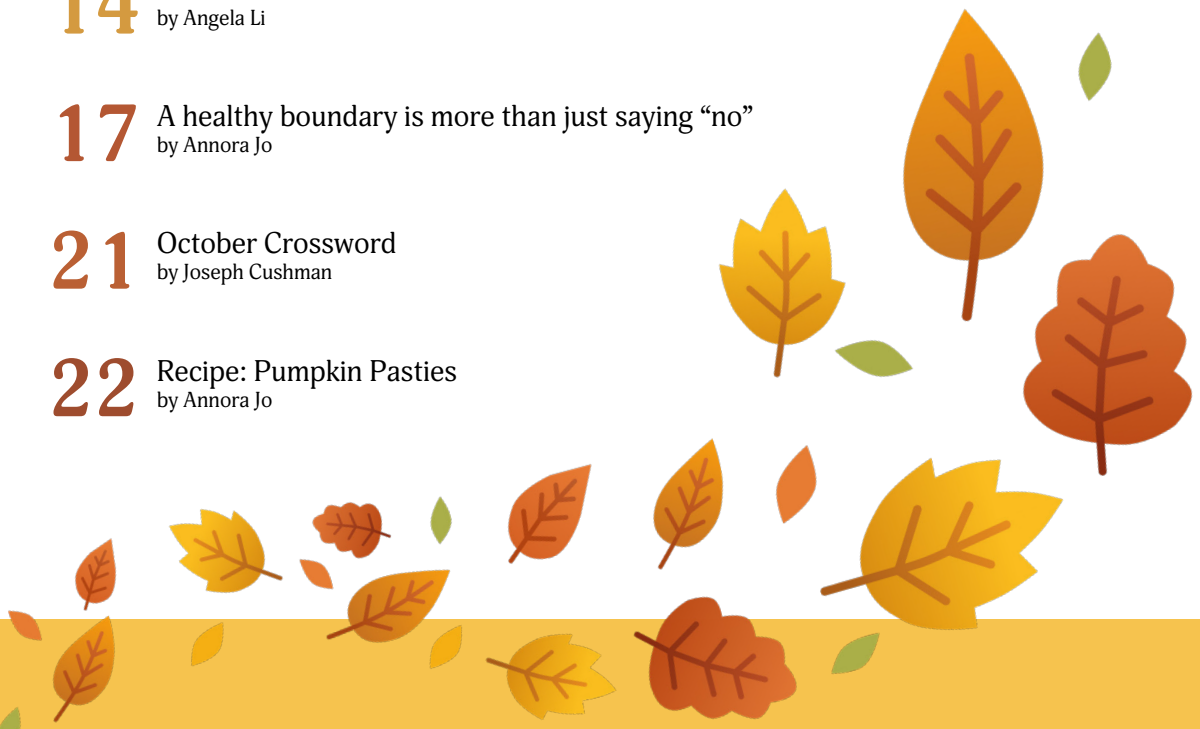
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October 2026
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uwimprint.ca

Publisher: Andres Fuentes
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Meet your 2026 City of Waterloo mayoral candidates

Waterloo's five mayoral candidates discuss their platforms ahead of the Oct. 26 municipal election.

Mallory Ball, Staff Writer

The 2026 municipal elections are taking place across Ontario on Oct. 26. To help students cast an informed vote this election season, we reached out to all five City of Waterloo mayoral candidates for interviews: incumbent Dorothy McCabe, 2022 runner-up Shannon Weber, Business Improvement Area (BIA) executive director Jeyas Balaskanthan, 2025 federal independent candidate Jamie Hari, and startup founder Jerry Jiang.

Of the five candidates, we sat down with Dorothy McCabe and Jeyas Balaskanthan to discuss their platforms and received written responses from Shannon Weber. The other two candidates did not respond to our interview requests.

Dorothy McCabe (incumbent since 2022)

McCabe is seeking to be re-elected for a second term after first winning the mayor's seat in 2022 on a climate-forward platform. A community leader of nearly 20 years, she attended Wilfrid Laurier University for her BA in communication studies.



Mayoral candidate Dorothy McCabe

Housing: McCabe points to her first term as evidence of her housing priorities: the city has approved roughly 24,000 housing units, passed Waterloo's first affordable housing strategy, and launched an affordable housing grant. "We've taken some big steps into the space, which is not traditionally work that local municipalities have done. But because we've seen the housing crisis of four years ago and the challenges that still remain, we have stepped firmly into this space and are doing some really groundbreaking work."

> **If students don't vote, they let older residents make the decisions for them instead.**
>
> — Dorothy McCabe, mayoral candidate

Transit: "Transit is very high on my priorities. I'm a transit user; I'm an e-bike user," she says. McCabe is working to restore 15-minute peak service on bus routes 9 and 13 that serve North Waterloo, which were cut in the last budget. She also seeks to improve service to Vista Hills. "My message to students who come here is… don't come here thinking you need to buy a vehicle. Come here and try [transit] first." She adds that the city has been awarded Platinum Bicycle Friendly Community status by the Share the Road Cycling Coalition.

Jobs: "We really want to keep students here," she says, citing a new city partnership with the Accelerator Centre, backed by provincial funding and focused on health-tech companies scaling up near the planned hospital. "There's a limit to what municipalities can do. What I'm trying to do is create the conditions for success." In her view, more capital and more investors give students a reason to stay in Canada rather than leave for the U.S. for work.

Cost of Living: "Affordability isn't just one thing," she says, citing free or low-cost city programming like festivals, movie nights, and events like Lumen as one lever. McCabe also emphasizes the importance of walkability. "The more we can build a community that is walkable, that someone can use a bike or an e-scooter, or transit to get around, that takes a $20,000 a year cost burden off of their shoulders," she says, referring to the annual cost of owning a vehicle.

Climate: "This is something that I ran on in 2022, and for me, it's foundational," McCabe says, noting climate sustainability work that has been integrated across city departments rather than siloed. She highlights the city's push toward 10,000 newly planted trees, an urban forestry strategy awaiting council approval, and an emerging "carbon budgeting" process that will weigh climate impacts alongside cost in all city decisions.

Why Students Should Care: "It's a perennial problem across most elections," she says. If students don't vote, McCabe says, they let older residents make the decisions for them instead. Issues like transit, recreation, parks, and water are critical student needs. "It is worth taking the time to exercise [your] democratic right."

Shannon Weber

Weber has spent more than 30 years in municipal government, non-profits, and higher education after earning a BA in economics at UW and an MBA at Wilfrid Laurier University. She narrowly lost the 2022 mayoral race and is running again this year.



Mayoral candidate Shannon Weber

Housing: "Housing needs to work for people at every stage of life, and that absolutely includes students." Weber points to her own time as a student, working part-time to cover the costs of education and housing, and recognizes that housing has become significantly more expensive since. Her pledge is to improve transparency and reporting on the 2023 Affordable Housing Strategy, prioritizing measurable timelines and annual targets. Weber points to property taxes as an indirect pressure on renters. "We have seen record high property tax increases… and I recognize that this is an important issue for residents in our city."

Transit: Weber supports the continuation of the U-Pass for post-secondary students, aiming to keep it as an affordable transportation option as ridership grows. She hopes to expand services to the west end of Waterloo to better support student riders: "I have met many post-secondary students in neighbourhoods such as Vista Hills and Laurelwood that have no viable GRT option." She says closing that gap would be a priority.

> **"Your vote matters, and every vote counts. I'd encourage every student to take a few minutes, learn about the candidates and vote."**
>
> — Shannon Weber, mayoral candidate

Jobs: "My goal is to make Waterloo a place where talented young people choose to study, start their careers, build businesses and stay." She believes that the local government needs to champion and scale up Waterloo's existing innovation infrastructure. "I will use my economic development background and community connections to pursue these opportunities and help Waterloo achieve our full potential," she says. Weber also believes that attracting and retaining talent includes focusing on quality of life in the city through enhancing attainable housing, public spaces, and strong neighbourhood communities.

Cost of Living: Weber cites affordability as one of the biggest concerns she hears from residents, pointing to housing, transit, property taxes, utilities, and the services residents rely on as key areas the city can control. "My approach is simple: every tax dollar should work as hard as the people who earn it," she says. "For young people, affordability means being able to afford a place to live and get around without breaking the budget."

Climate: Weber frames climate policy around resilience. "Climate readiness is about being prepared for the weather we know is coming and making sure our infrastructure can handle it," she says. Her plan calls for a citywide flood and climate vulnerability review, along with a 10-year resilience plan to identify infrastructure vulnerabilities. "Waterloo can't do this alone. We'll need investment and partnership from other orders of government, and that means strong advocacy and collaboration to make sure Waterloo gets its fair share of infrastructure funding."

Why Students Should Care: WWeber argues that the municipal government touches students' daily lives most directly, and "students are affected by it more than they may realize." She points to her own narrow loss in 2022, "I ran for Mayor four years ago and lost by just 330 votes, so I know firsthand how much a relatively small number of votes can matter in a municipal election." Her message to students is straightforward: "Your vote matters, and every vote counts." Weber adds, "I'd encourage every student to take a few minutes, learn about the candidates and vote."

Jeyas Balaskanthan

Balaskanthan is the executive director of the Uptown Waterloo BIA and has spent more than 20 years working in student residence management in higher education in Waterloo.

Housing: Balaskanthan distinguishes between "affordable housing" and "attainable housing," and says the city needs to work with landlords directly. "We need to work with landlords who already have the housing and [make sure] that they are holding up their end of the bargain," he says, citing rating systems, co-op housing options, and the city's rental licensing bylaw as tools to hold landlords accountable when tenants report issues.

Transit: "We need more LRT, more GRT," he says, noting the region is already looking at expanding service and adding routes. He adds that the ION runs directly through UW, and that students' transit fees already provide unlimited access. "When transportation is there, accessibility is there. It's great, it gets greater use, and it's also great for the environment."

Jobs: Balaskanthan highlights the city's track record of homegrown companies staying local, citing TextNow's billion-dollar valuation as a UW offshoot that still employs people in the city. His focus is on space: "There are firms here, office spaces, because of the hybrid workplace now, spaces available. How do we collaboratively work together, bring folks to the table to create those spaces?" So graduates have somewhere to launch startups and stay in the city.

Cost of Living: He highlights local food access, floating the idea of a smaller-scale farmers' market in Uptown, similar to St. Jacobs Market, that students could reach on foot or by ION. "You are cutting out the middleman and the money, obviously it's directly going to the farmers as well," he says, also mentioning community-supported agriculture box programs as an underused option for students living off-campus.



Mayoral candidate Jeyas Balaskanthan

Climate: Balaskanthan cites the city's 2030 and 2050 climate targets and its relationship with Sustainable Waterloo Region, and points to evolv1, a LEED-certified, carbon-neutral building in the David Johnston Research + Technology Park that feeds energy back into the grid, as a model for how the city should work with developers going forward.

Why Students Should Care: "Municipal politics affects a student's life quite a bit," Balaskanthan says. He emphasizes the privilege for students to vote in Waterloo and in their hometown, and how municipal government is responsible for many aspects of a student's day-to-day life, from rent to roads to restaurants. "It is in the best interest of students to pay attention because you can have a great way of shaping your four or five years here."

Jamie Hari

Hari is a former candidate for Waterloo MP, running as an independent in the 2025 federal election. He has lived in Waterloo for more than 20 years.

Housing: Hari's platform calls for mandatory rent registries that would require landlords to disclose all their rental holdings and their units' monthly rent rates, and to pay an annual landlord registration fee that scales with their number of holdings. Hari also wants 25 per cent of new builds mandated as "affordable for singles" under $1,500 a month and 50 per cent mandated as "affordable for families" under $2,350 a month.

Transit: His platform calls for fully subsidized transit passes for seniors and students, down from the current $47 monthly rate under the Affordable Transit Program. In the long term, Hari aims for GRT passes to be subsidized for all residents.

Jobs: Hari's campaign website does not outline specific jobs policies.

Cost of living: Hari calls for a progressive property tax scheme that would exempt the first $250,000 of a home's assessed value, with increases targeted at properties valued above the city's roughly $700,000 average.

Climate: Hari proposes a mandatory polluter registry, which would require businesses to disclose their local emission rates and contribute to an environmental resilience fund for any emissions exceeding provincial, federal, or international standards. He also wants businesses to be required to meet provincial and federal emissions standards to be eligible for local programs.

Jerry Jiang

Jiang is the founder of Akatos, a Waterloo startup community.

Housing: Jiang's campaign website does not outline specific housing policies.

Transit: Jiang says additional bike lanes are only part of the solution, but his campaign website does not outline specific transit policies.

Jobs: Jobs sit at the core of Jiang's platform: he wants Waterloo to become "Canada's home for ambition." His proposals focus on making it easier for people to find collaborators and workspace to start a business, including cutting the regulatory barriers that make it harder for people with ideas to get started.

Cost of living: Jiang's campaign website does not outline specific cost of living policies.

Climate: Jiang's campaign website does not outline specific climate policies.

> **It is in the best interest of students to pay attention because you can have a great way of shaping your four or five years here.**
>
> — Jeyas Balaskantham, mayoral candidate

THE CITY OF Waterloo

Casting your vote

Advance voting begins Oct. 10 and continues from Oct. 16 to 18 at designated voting locations, ahead of election day on Oct. 26. Students renting or living in campus housing at UW are eligible to vote in this election. More information, including voting locations and eligibility requirements, is available on the City of Waterloo's elections webpage.



Bomber monthly special review

Aiden Elise Chamberlain, Contributor

Plenty is happening at the Bomber this term! Since re-opening last year, it has slowly been working its way back to its former glory. Students have begun to make visiting the Bomber a weekly staple, bar service is set to return, and, of course, there are new monthly specials to look forward to. This past week, I got the opportunity to try October's specials and I'm here to give you all the details.

Now let's get to the specials coming to the Bomber this month. First there's the Walking Taco Bags, right in line with the current trend. The meat version will be $11.99 and the vegetarian will be $10.49. I've seen so many places add similar items to their menus recently, including other options in SLC, so let's look at how this Bomber special stacks up.

The walking taco bag starts off with seasoned taco chips, specifically the Tostitos loaded nachos flavor in snack-size, which is described as having all the classic nacho flavor packed into each chip. Then come the toppings: cheese sauce, ground beef patty, chopped red onion, shredded lettuce, diced tomatoes, sour cream, and salsa. It is then all covered in shredded cheese and served right in the chip bag. The veggie taco bag has all the same ingredients except for the ground beef.



The ratio of chips to ingredients is closer to nachos than tacos; think toppings not fillings. I would question how truly walkable this walking taco bag is though, I was a little unsure if I should use a fork or not and it definitely got a bit messy as the chips softened. The toppings aren't entirely evenly dispersed so it can be a little onion forward for a few bites. I'd also be interested to see if students decided to mix it or not.

With the vegetarian walking taco bag, you're getting pretty much the same thing. I'd describe it as slightly lighter and less filling because of the lack of protein, but overall it still had the classic nacho flavor and a good mix of toppings. I was also quite pleased to see that the

vegetarian option was cheaper. However, it would have been nice to see the option to get it with their vegetarian burger patty instead.

Both the vegetarian and meat walking taco bags lean a bit more salty, and you'd want to eat right away as the chips do get soggy. In terms of portion size, I'd say they were fairly decent — not a heavy meal but you could definitely get one as your lunch. Overall, it's a solid take on the trend, with a decent portion for the price and a good balance of ingredients.

The second October special is the bacon cheddar ranch fries for $11.49. This special features fresh cut fries, cheese sauce, bacon bits, and creamy ranch dressing drizzled on top. I really liked the presentation of this one. The portion is similar to a medium poutine, with this special being more of a side or snack than a full meal. The fries are kept classic, but I'd say they could have been crispier. The bacon bits are definitely crispy and are a good amount for the poutine. The poutine loads up on the liquid cheese, with some on every fry. As my roommate puts it, "There were no naked fries!" The ranch was surprising as it didn't take over the flavor of the dish like I expected it to. It was quite subdued and I didn't get much of that tangy ranch flavor. This special is also more on the salty side given the bacon and cheese sauce, but it would definitely be a fun one to try during a break between classes.



Overall, October's specials are giving festival foods and I'm really enjoying them. The prices were reasonable and the portions were good. My only points were that both leaned salty and it could have been nice to see some customizability. I hope you enjoyed this review and maybe get the chance to give these specials a try for yourself.



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FOOTBALL VS

OCTOBER 17 / 1:00 PM
WARRIOR FIELD

STORE | POP UP SHOP

HOME OPENERS

MEN'S HOCKEY



VS

OCTOBER 9 / CIF ARENA
7:00 PM

CAMPS AND MINOR LEAGUES NIGHT

STORE | POP UP SHOP

WOMEN'S HOCKEY



VS

OCTOBER 23 / CIF ARENA
7:00 PM

RESIDENCE NIGHT
EMPLOYEE NIGHT

SWEET LOU'S cookies

HOMEWOOD SUITES by Hilton
Waterloo St. Jacobs

MEN'S & WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL



VS

OCTOBER 30 / TOTZKE COURT (PAC)
(W) 6:00 PM (M) 8:00 PM

RESIDENCE NIGHT
EMPLOYEE NIGHT

HOMEWOOD SUITES by Hilton
Waterloo St. Jacobs

MEN'S & WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

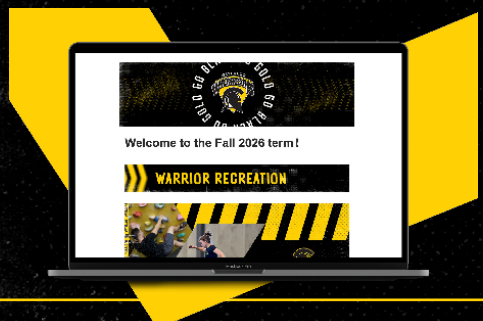


VS

NOVEMBER 6 / TOTZKE COURT (PAC)
(W) 6:00 PM (M) 8:00 PM

splitsville bowl
3 POINT THRILLS FOR $5,000

CAMPS AND MINOR LEAGUES NIGHT



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Matcha here, matcha there: Matcha boom explained

Annora Jo, Contributor

Nowadays, if you walk into nearly any café in Waterloo, you will likely find a matcha-flavoured beverage on the menu. Only a few years ago, most people had never heard of this green tea drink, but today, it has become one of the most popular choices among younger generations. The reason behind its popularity isn't simply its trendiness but also the perceived wellness benefits that come along with its unique flavour and aesthetic.



What is matcha?

Although matcha may seem like a newer item to many consumers, it is rooted in centuries of Japanese tea culture. Matcha is a type of green tea, but unlike the regular green tea that is familiar to most people, its production method differs, from cultivation and processing to drink preparation. For matcha, the entire green tea leaf is used to create the powder, whereas for regular green teas, the leaves are steeped and removed. Since the whole leaf is consumed in powdered form, matcha has a stronger flavour, deeper colour, and higher caffeine content than regularly brewed green tea.

What gives matcha its distinct qualities begins with the plant-growing process. From 3-4 weeks before harvest, the green tea plants are grown in the shade, where nearly 90 per cent of sunlight is blocked. This shading helps increase the levels of caffeine, L-theanine, chlorophyll, and antioxidants. Its nutritional elements deliver a steady energy, making matcha appealing as a coffee alternative. All types of authentic matcha powders go through this unique procedure, but depending on the grade of matcha, there are variations in leaf shading duration, harvesting timing, and milling. The grades are defined according to their intended use. The three commonly used types are ceremonial, premium, and culinary. The premium grade is the one that many people can easily find at cafés, ceremonial is best consumed with hot water, and culinary is used for baking purposes.

According to an article from Nation's Restaurant News, mentions of matcha on menus in the U.S. increased by 21.6 per cent between the first quarters of 2024

and 2025, with matcha desserts increasing by 24.4 per cent. Although matcha is traditionally consumed as a tea that is whisked into hot water, its demand has grown internationally, and the matcha flavour began to appear in the West in various forms. One of the most popular ways of having it is in a latte, where a small portion of whisked matcha is combined with milk, similar to an espresso latte. As the mentioned data shows, matcha is not only consumed in beverages but also used in desserts like cookies, ice cream, and other pastries for its unique bittersweet flavour.

+21.6%

Mentions of matcha in U.S. menus between the first quarters of 2024 and 2025

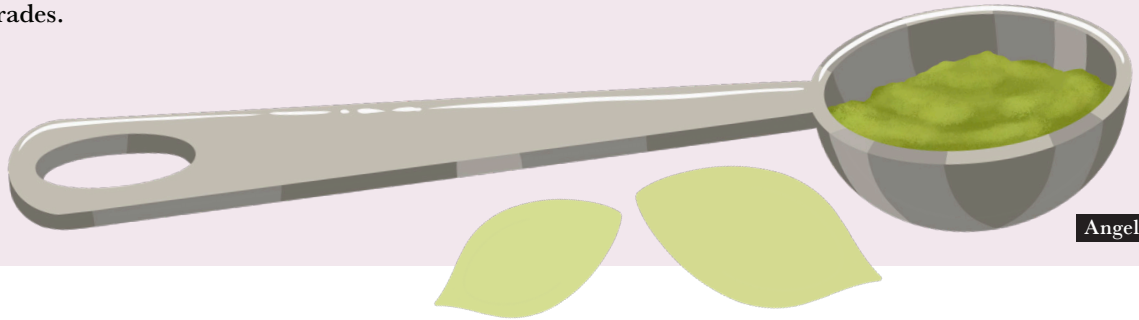
The rise of matcha and its shortage

Social media platforms have played a significant role in bringing matcha to the attention of younger generations. According to statistics from Tastewise, social media's mentions about matcha surged by 107 per cent year over year in 2026. The hashtag #matcha has also accumulated more than 16 billion views on TikTok alone, with content ranging from homemade matcha latte recipes to café reviews. Outside of social media, the influence of matcha has been increasing as well, according to the global matcha market analysis 2026 by Matcha Times. Its popularity has contributed to the increase in matcha-dedicated cafés across North America.

+42%

Green tea export growth in Japan

However, this explosive demand and Japan's economic constraints have outpaced the production capacity of Japan's tea farms, leading to a shortage of certain grades of matcha. In fiscal year 2025, Japan's green tea exports rose by 42 per cent in volume, while the export value roughly doubled, according to *The Japan Times*. Specifically for ceremonial-grade matcha called "tencha," the shortage has been a real pressure. Tencha is only produced by a few hundred Japanese farms, and it takes a considerable amount of time to reach full production as a selling product. Moreover, between 2000 and 2020, Japan lost around 53,000 tea producers to retirement, while the new generation of tea producers was unable to replace them at the same rate. Although the shortage may be more pronounced among premium grades of matcha, it does not necessarily affect all matcha products equally, particularly those made from more commonly available grades.



Angelina Wu

Matcha on and off campus

Both on and near the UW main campus, matcha has already established itself as a popular beverage, and continues to grow in popularity each year. According to UW Food Services, matcha has been one of the most popular and consistent beverages on the menu at the franchises offered on campus.

Matcha has been one of the most popular and consistent beverages on the menu at the franchises offered on campus.

As these franchise cafés utilize conventional matcha powder, the availability of matcha items has not been directly impacted. In fact, the director of UW Food Services mentioned that they are planning to launch handcrafted matcha beverages at a number of locations soon. As of now, you can find higher-quality matcha beverages at cafés in the CEIT and EV3 buildings, as they currently offer beverages made with matcha concentrate. Off campus, cafés like Tsujiri and Lala Bakeshop currently offer matcha specialized items, with more cafés soon to launch. Whether it is matcha-flavoured drinks or desserts, you will be able to spot matcha at many local cafés and franchise tea shops in Waterloo.



Angelina Wu



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WUSA is testing a WALKSAFE program to help students get home safely.

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WATERLOO UNDERGRADUATE WUSA STUDENT ASSOCIATION

wusa.ca/municipal-elections

WR votes

Local voices, local choices

The municipal election is happening on

Monday, October 26

For voting information visit wrvotes.com

The Round Table: The students behind the DRAGEN lab and CAMELOT

Angela Li, Senior Editor

Known for its STEM pursuits, the bulk of UW's reputation comes from work in tech and finance. But for those who seek a different kind of innovation, there's a space for students to engage hands-on with history and nature.

Located in St. Jerome's University is the Medieval Digital Research in Arts and Graphical Environmental Networks Laboratory (DRAGEN lab). Founded in 2016, the lab is a learning and research center whose work sits at the intersection of environmental science, technology, and the arts.

"We are a hub for interdisciplinary projects that kind of span across the humanities," says the lab's assistant director, Shannon Drew. The DRAGEN lab is the main hub of Environments of Change, an initiative developing resources and technology to explore environmental history and anthropology. Two projects under the initiative include the digitization of Anglo-Saxon artifacts found in the Tees Valley of the UK, and the augmented-reality (AR) game, Northeye, which simulates flooding in a medieval village to educate students about the historical impact of climate change. The DRAGEN team at UW also collaborates with scholars from institutions across Canada and the UK in said projects, as well as archaeological excavations in both countries.

Aside from faculty, the lab also is home to a close-knit group of students. "Ever since the formation of the DRAGEN Lab, there has been a very strong undergraduate presence as well as graduate presence … it kind of was a loose group of folks before there was ever a title for it," Drew says. Undergraduate students, usually volunteers, are paired with graduate students working on lab projects for research mentorship and leadership opportunities. Initially, the undergraduate lab members formed an unofficial body advocating for students in medieval studies and other arts programs. "It was [meant to be] a safe space, but also provide a great learning environment and collaborative environment," says Drew. "Over the years we've had a lot of undergraduates stick around and be involved." The ragtag collective then formally became the Undergraduate Caucus last year.

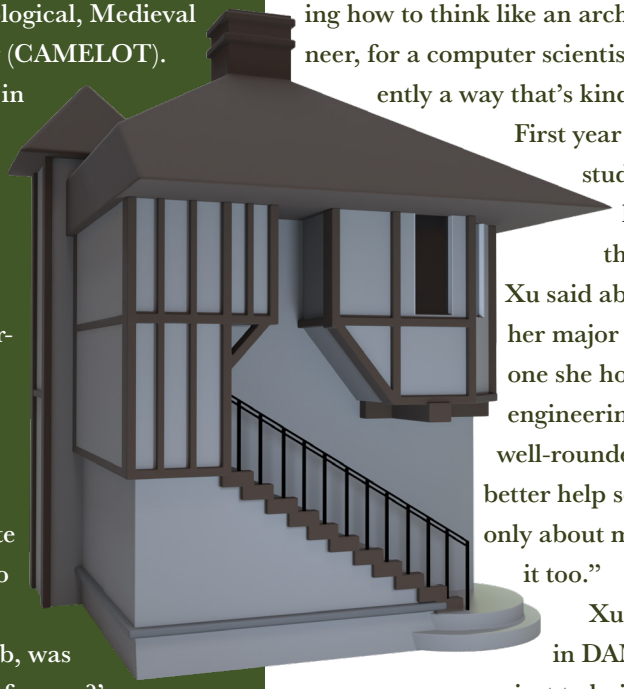
Research isn't the only kind of opportunity available for students in the DRAGEN lab. The caucus also helps coordinate outreach and organize events for both the UW community and the general public. "The purpose behind [the caucus] is making events more accessible to

Cedric Ho

a larger audience," says Drew, "and with that, making digital humanities and arts and interdisciplinary collaboration more accessible to people." Past events have included a Minecraft speed building competition where participants raced to build historic sites, and holiday-themed medieval card-making workshops.

"We try to do these events that can showcase one, the [lab] space; and two, how all these different folks with different interests can access fun events and collaboration together," Drew emphasizes. The DRAGEN lab plans to host another historical Minecraft challenge in the coming months, as well as the Evidence Jam, an ecology-focused hackathon running from Nov. 13 to Nov. 16.

But the largest of the DRAGEN lab's outreach efforts by far is the annual Conference on Archaeological, Medieval and Experiential Learning of Tomorrow (CAMELOT). The event, which took place on Sept. 26 in SJ2, brings together UW community members and members of the public to learn about experiential learning in environmental studies and the humanities. This year's lineup included sessions like stunt swordfighting workshops, an undergraduate presentation on the portrayal of women in the history of Islam, and a panel on careers in archaeology.



The conference is also entirely student-led, organized by the undergraduate caucus, which owes its existence partly to the undertaking of running CAMELOT.

"Steven [Bednarski], who runs the lab, was like, 'Hey, do you guys want to run a conference?' And we were like, 'Sure!'" says Amelia Dreyer, president of the caucus and fourth year student in medieval studies and history. "We had no idea what we were going into, but then that sort of formed the caucus [and] gave us a goal to work towards."

CAMELOT had originally launched in 2018, but ceased running after its 2019 iteration. "We all came along roughly in 2025 with essentially no idea what we were doing, so we built a conference essentially from scratch," says third year history student Theo McCarthy, financial officer and secretary of the undergraduate caucus.

Last year, 96 attendees and four vendors came to CAMELOT. This year, attendance and vendor registration more than doubled, with a headcount of 190 visitors and ten vendors. The success, McCarthy says, will hopefully help break down barriers between disciplines at UW. "There's this idea, with academic conferences, where you go to your own subject area and none of the other ones are useful to you. But in environmental science, even math, you can definitely gain useful information from these conferences."

Adjunct professor in anthropology, Dr. Maria Liston, was invited to present at a panel on careers in archaeology. While now retired from teaching, Liston continues her research investigating human remains excavated in Greece.

"Archaeology teaches students first about how to turn the real world […] into data," Liston stated at the conference. "These data sets are fragmentary, incomplete and dealing with things we don't completely understand, and yet you learn how to produce real reproducible results from that."

"Even if you're never going to be an archaeologist, learning how to think like an archaeologist is good for an engineer, for a computer scientist, or [anyone]. And it's inherently a way that's kind of fun and different."

First year mechatronics engineering student Grace Xu agrees. "I didn't know they had projects like this, and it's right up my alley," Xu said about the event. History is one of her major interests outside STEM, and one she hopes to incorporate in her future engineering career. "The goal is to be well-rounded and well-read so that I can better help society, because engineering isn't only about making things, it's why as we do it too."

Xu also cites particular interest in DAMMES, a proposed DRAGEN project to build an accessible database of 14th-century court records found in the French town of Manosque. The database would use AI to transcribe the documents and partially translate them into English and French. "I'm grappling with my stance around AI use, all things considered," she expressed. "I'm looking to be exposed to many opinions on the subject and I definitely want to know how the people working on this project feel about the ideal practice around using AI."

So after the conference, what's next for the DRAGEN lab? "Unfortunately, like most groups on campus, everything is contingent on funding," says Drew. Funding for the Environments of Change project will end in May 2027. "My role will also not exist after May. So it's going to be interesting to see the pivot and the change that this group of folks will take on," Drew noted. She clarified that she will "still be around [the lab], just not in the role" of assistant director.





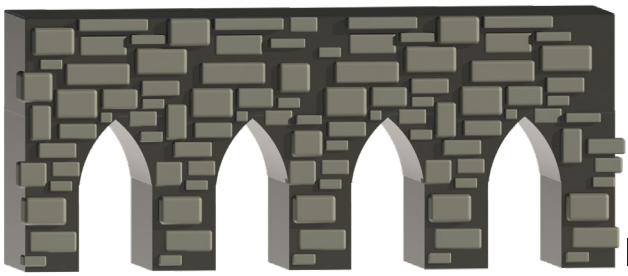
Dreyer will continue on as an undergraduate research assistant in the lab, though with less involvement in organizing CAMELOT. “I hope that the lab expands its support for undergrad students and increases the projects that we can help out with. It’s a wonderful opportunity and I’d love to see more students being able to access that.”

Overall, the DRAGEN team and their supporters hope that word of the lab’s research will help bridge the gaps among academic silos at UW, while the team’s studies on the past and present provide insights for the future.

“A lot of folks don’t really know about the DRAGEN lab, which is unfortunate because, you know, we’ve had all this funding for this many years,” said Dreyer. She also notes that events run by DRAGEN, like CAMELOT, are a critical forum for learning and building connections. “The arts don’t get this opportunity very often, especially history … having this conference where we can all get together and nerd out a little bit is very important.”

Liston agrees, and hopes that the university will not waver in its support during a challenging time for the humanities. “I want UW to continue to develop the faculty of arts, and recognize that what we do is not separate from math and science and engineering, but is a critical part … Arts are what provide that relevance, that scope or reference point, for connecting to human beings.”

Ultimately, Drew wants those inspired by DRAGEN’s work to carry it forward. “I think [the] bottom line [is] making sure that exposure to these experiences is accessible to as many people who are wanting and committed to receiving it as possible. If we’re able to keep doing that and meeting in the middle and working together, I think that is the best possible outcome that we could have.”



Cedric Ho



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A healthy boundary is more than just saying “no”

Annora Jo, Contributor

Relationship conflicts are an inevitable part of interacting with others. Whether it is a romantic relationship, family relationship, friendship, or other social connection, uncomfortable situations naturally arise as relationships develop. When you experience discomfort with someone else, it is worth reflecting on whether you are protecting yourself and prioritizing your values in that process.

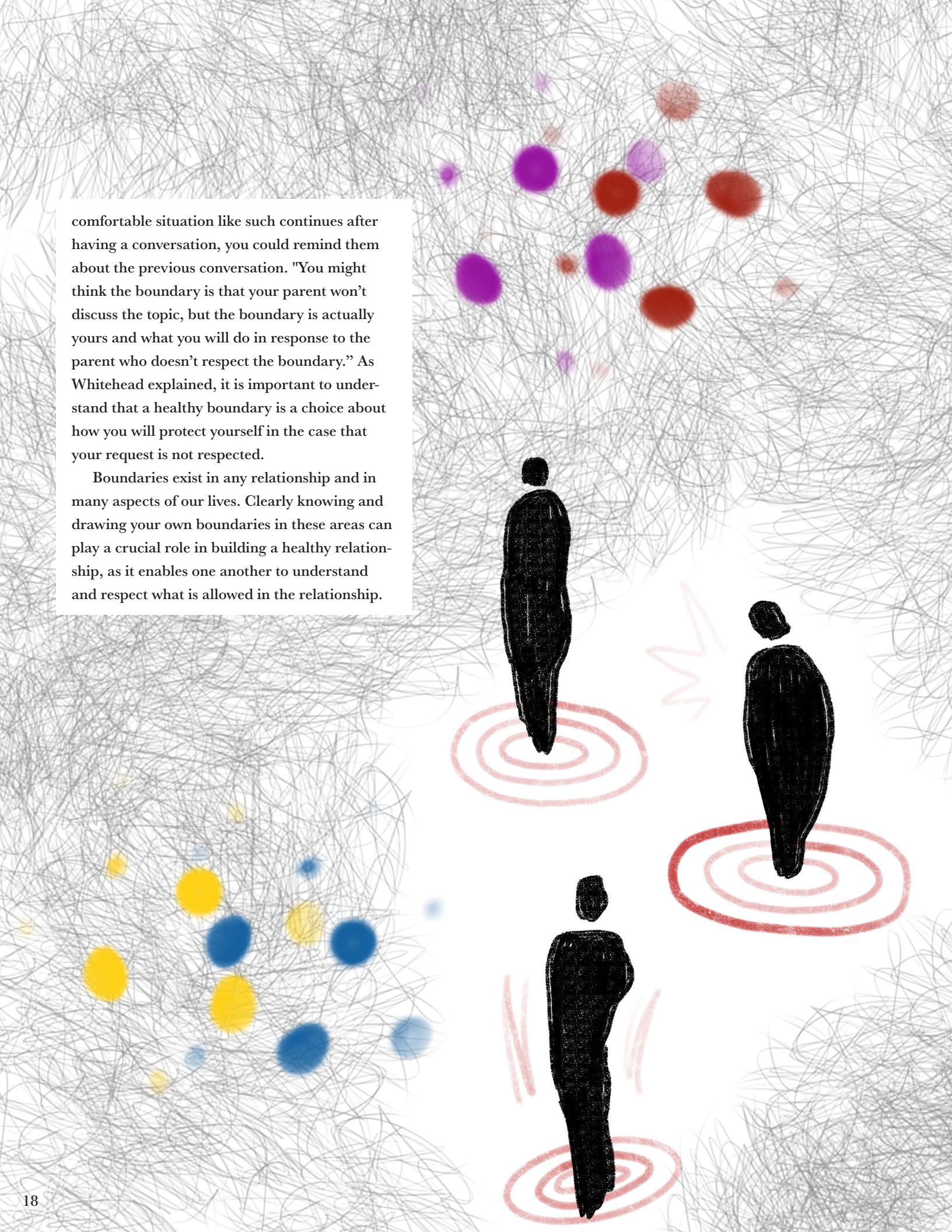
What is a boundary?

When you think of a boundary, what comes to mind? Broadly speaking, many people seem to think of it as being able to say “no” or the ability to protect your comfort regardless of others' opinions. While these are valid aspects of a boundary, it is only the surface of what a boundary actually involves. Professor Denise Whitehead from the sexualities, relationships, and families department at St. Jerome’s University shared her perspective: “One of the biggest misunderstandings is that a boundary is about getting someone else to do something that you want. A good boundary starts with oneself and understanding what one values in a relationship. It is about how you decide [on] how you will protect your own well-being in a relationship."

In practice, setting boundaries is more about knowing what to do when someone crosses them. Many students might relate to Professor Whitehead’s boundary example of visiting family and having them repeatedly ask your relationship status. “Your first step, when you are calm and measured, would be to sit with your parent and have a conversation that while you appreciate their concern, you are an adult who is making your own decisions about your romantic life,” she said. If an un-

comfortable situation like such continues after having a conversation, you could remind them about the previous conversation. "You might think the boundary is that your parent won't discuss the topic, but the boundary is actually yours and what you will do in response to the parent who doesn't respect the boundary." As Whitehead explained, it is important to understand that a healthy boundary is a choice about how you will protect yourself in the case that your request is not respected.

Boundaries exist in any relationship and in many aspects of our lives. Clearly knowing and drawing your own boundaries in these areas can play a crucial role in building a healthy relationship, as it enables one another to understand and respect what is allowed in the relationship.



Importance of setting a healthy boundary

When your boundaries in a relationship are not communicated clearly, others may try to figure them out by making assumptions based on their own perspectives, which may not align with your boundaries and can lead to harmful experiences. Furthermore, if your boundaries are not communicated early enough, the other person may continue to cross them, even without intending to cause harm. Over time, this may ultimately lead to emotional or physical estrangement due to cumulative effects of unresolved conflict.

Esther Yang, a third-year psychology student at UW, shared how uncommunicated boundaries caused harm in a relationship. “I think unlabeled relationships cause a lot of unawareness [between] two parties in their expectations with ‘boundaries’ and [they] are easy to cross if not communicated clearly beforehand. There was a moment when someone I liked was only testing the waters or prioritizing the fun of the moment, while I expected a level of commitment sooner than they did."

Hamin Hwang, a second-year UW math student, spoke about the struggles of setting boundaries in a family setting. “Instead of having a back and forth conversation with my parents where we could genuinely try to understand each other, I often felt like the conversation ended before I even had the chance to explain myself. Over time, I think this made it harder for me to not only express my truest self but also to set boundaries around them."

In the context of family relationships, Whitehead shared the challenging reality of setting boundaries. “When it comes to family relationships, we have a strong societal belief that family should stay close through thick and thin,” she said. “When we are unable to sort out our differences and respect each other's boundaries, that shrinks the degree of closeness we feel, and the loss can feel greater when it impacts how or where we spend holidays, who we can call on a bad day, or who will take care of us when we are ill.”

A common example of an absent or unclear boundary is when someone continuously accepts requests they are not comfortable with, and does not express their honest feelings about this to others. Without communicating your values, you may become emotionally exhausted and overwhelmed, leading to relationship burnout. Whitehead shared that one may consider cutting off contact or becoming estranged from someone when attempts at healthy discussions fail or requests for boundaries are repeatedly denied. But above all, it is important to make an effort to establish and protect your boundaries before choosing to distance yourself from someone or end a relationship.



Sarah An

How to set a healthy boundary and effectively communicate

Not everything in life is within our control — including other people, our environment, and the situations we encounter. Setting a boundary does not begin with confronting the other person but with looking inward. To guard your well-being against this unpredictability, it is vital to establish clear boundaries and communicate them effectively.

When a disagreement surfaces in a relationship, it is easy to think that the main problem is with someone else. However, honestly recognizing the issue and identifying each person's responsibility should come prior to bringing it to the other person. Whitehead said, "Guilt is an important emotion when we have transgressed. When we are the one who has hurt someone, it is important that we have a conscience to recognize that we have caused harm." Likewise, without first recognizing each person's responsibility, it may deepen the offence rather than resolve it. Recognizing and analyzing the problem allows for greater clarity about each other's responsibilities, and you will not have to unnecessarily take on the other's part nor burden them with yours.

Once you have clarity about problem ownership, the following step is to communicate with the other person when they are ready as well. It is important to speak honestly about your own role, then let the other person know what needs to be respected and what the consequences will be when that boundary is crossed. In terms of communication, Whitehead emphasized the necessity of a deep conversation where both sides have a moment to agree on next steps. "A disagreement or conflict in any relationship should start with a calm, open discussion where you can share your concerns and be open and listen to the other person." She added, "We have the tools to make a real apology where we take responsibility for what we have done, express remorse without excuses, and change our future behaviour."

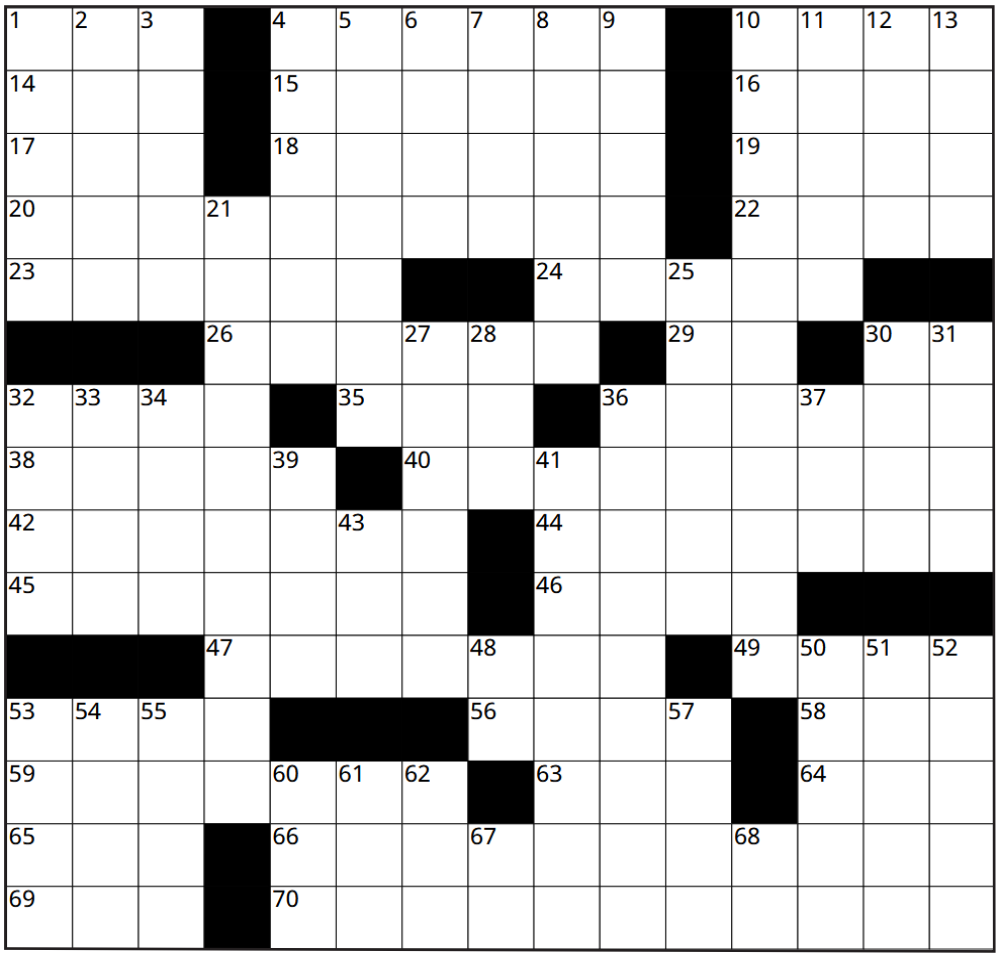
At the same time, boundaries are not one-sided, and as much as you want to be respected, the same applies to others. Yang shared a real-life instance of how she learned this through living with a roommate. "[I] simply ask questions. Just because something is your boundary doesn't mean you can assume that it is also applicable to the other person. I always asked her to tell me if anything I do crosses her hygienic comfortability, and things like bringing over friends would also be communicated."

Hwang also had a similar approach with his roommate. "Having these conversations allowed us to minimize unnecessary conflicts and truly made the experience of living together much smoother," he stated. "I believe it's really important to have these kinds of conversations consistently to check in with each other and make sure that each person's boundaries are being respected. " To set a healthy foundation for relationships, the key was to ask questions rather than making assumptions.

A boundary is not about controlling others but about setting your own limits and communicating your needs. Although many young adults struggle to set boundaries because they don't want to hurt the other person's feelings, establishing this clear line becomes the foundation of a healthy relationship, as Whitehead highlighted. Moreover, it is crucial to remember that people should not feel guilty for not being able to meet others' expectations. What must be recognized and improved is the part where we did wrong to that person. For those who struggle with guilt, Whitehead advised, "Never bend down to pick up guilt off the floor that others have laid there for us. Oftentimes, the easiest way to live without guilt or fearing that you are being selfish is to express your love of the person while also living your own life with the clarity of your own values and convictions."

October crossword

Joseph Cushman, Contributor



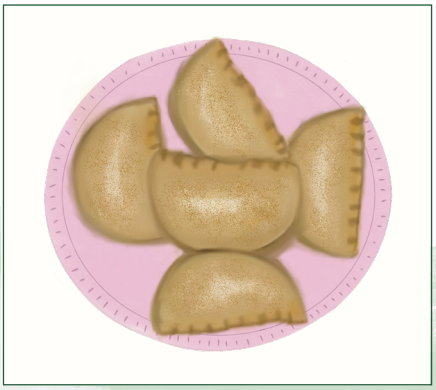
ACROSS
1 Added to, as an email thread
4 Suez Canal outlet and Indian Ocean inlet (two words)
10 Hoarse voice
14 Cell service letters
15 Standards of perfection
16 Succulent often present in lotion
17 Waterloo street with intersections with University, King, and Weber
18 Sets to play next, as a song (two words)
19 "Get ___ writing" (two words)
20 With 66A, 10D, and 21D, the fifteen classroom buildings within Ring Road without numbers in their names, listed alphabetically (abbreviated) (1-4)*
22 Counterpart of pepper
23 Helfer or Nixon
24 Keen
26 Process
29 Conjunction used in simile
30 3.1415[...]
32 Pomegranate seed
35 "Gross!"
36 Trembles
38 Finally loses it
40 Decisive statements
42 Takes up the challenge (three words)
44 "Black Panther" role for Chadwick Boseman
45 Consult a pre-ChatGPT digital assistant
46 ___ Hubbard (founder of Scientology, two words)
47 Advanced algebra course
49 Pointless
53 Solemn vow
56 "Horton Hears ___" (two words)
58 Mauna ___
59 Make believe
63 Visual communication system (abbreviated)
64 This issue's publication month (abbreviated)
65 Large flightless bird
66 See 20A (5-8)*
69 ___ King Cole
70 Clever little thing (two words)

DOWN
1 Soccer shoe
2 Keyboard shortcut to refresh a page
3 Founder of Mrs. Fields baked goods company
4 Lionel of R&B
5 Teach
6 Profound
7 Girl Guide accessory
8 Got away from
9 US pet welfare organization (abbreviated)
10 Has a question (three words)
11 Wedding fixture
12 Dirt
13 Bottled (up), as frustration
21 See 20A (9-12)*
25 Cowpoke folk hero figure
27 Chaotic
28 Bird that really isn't as wise as it's reputed to be
30 Popular Unix scripting language
31 Actress Rae
32 Actress Banks
33 Genetic code strands (abbreviated)
34 "All ___" (Adele song, two words)
36 See 20A (13-15)*
37 Nickelodeon counterpart of Kenan
39 Tend to, as a pot
41 "We have bigger problems than that" (two words)
43 Fury
48 Standard battery type
50 Recommended method of securing a bike
51 Chewy rice treat
52 Clean oneself
53 Ready for customers
54 ___ mater
55 Lacking slack, as a rope
57 Margarine
60 Commercials, for short
61 Scrabble word with no vowels
62 Brewed beverage
67 Late-night hospital department (abbreviated)
68 Therefore

Crossword solutions are published on uwimprint.ca.

Pumpkin Pasties

Annora Jo, Contributor



October brings with it several celebrations that we cannot miss out on. Thanksgiving Day, Halloween, and last but not least… National Dessert Day! In the celebration of desserts, this month's recipe will feature pumpkin pasties that are perfect for the crispy autumn weather.

A pumpkin pasty is a small hand pie inspired by traditional British pasties with sweet and spiced pumpkin filling inside. This recipe is an ideal choice if you are looking for something light that carries the fall vibe, spicy and sweet flavours, and is easy to share at a festive table with family and friends.

Yields 10-15 pasties (depending on the size)
Cooking time: 1 hour

Ingredients:

- 2 puff pastry or pie crust sheets (store-bought or homemade)
- 1 cup of pumpkin purée (around half a 425 g can)
- ¼ cup of brown sugar
- ⅓ cup of cream cheese, room-temperature
- ½ teaspoon of vanilla extract
- ¼ teaspoon of each spice of your choice (recommendation: cinnamon, nutmeg, ginger, or clove)
- 1 egg, beaten
- ¼ of white sugar
- 1 tablespoon of cinnamon powder

Tools:

- Baking pan
- Parchment paper
- Large mixing bowl
- Small plate
- Whisk or fork
- Cookie cutter or small bowl

Instructions:

1. Preheat the oven to 400° and place down a piece of parchment paper on your baking pan.
2. In a small plate, make the cinnamon sugar topping in advance by mixing the white sugar and 1 tablespoon of cinnamon powder together.
3. In a large mixing bowl, add in pumpkin purée, brown sugar, vanilla extract, and all spices to mix everything. Once it is well-incorporated, add in the cream cheese to thicken the texture and enhance richness in flavour.
4. After mixing everything together, set the pumpkin cream cheese filling aside in the fridge to chill until use. Then get the pastry sheets out of the fridge, flatten them out, and cut them into circles by using a cookie cutter or a small bowl.
5. On half of each dough, place a small scoop of the chilled pumpkin filling, fold the dough over the filling, and pinch the edges using a fork or your fingers. On a baking pan, place the half-moon-shaped pastry dough, brush the surface with beaten egg, and finish by sprinkling them with the cinnamon sugar topping you made at the start.
6. Bake them in the oven for 10-12 minutes or just until they are golden-brown and enjoy a piece of autumn!



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