

The Gadfly

Unreliable Narrators Since 470 BCE

WEATHER: *Varies based on the mood, location, and disposition of the reader; generally sunny*

Satirical [adjective] - /sə'tɪrɪkəl/
"Exposing human folly to ridicule"

Example:

The Gadfly is a satirical newspaper

Read Online:

www.thegadfly.news



Issue #9

May, 2026

Five Cents



Strategic Plan "Neither Strategic, nor Planned"

By Hassan Ahmed

In an endless quest to become the most mismanaged board west of the TDSB, the Waterloo Region District School Board concocted a 4 year plan in 2022 designed to waste as much government revenue as possible. The original plan was authored by then Dictator of Education Jeewan Chanika. Written completely in magenta crayon, critics not only acclaimed the unique writing utensil, but the unique content as well. Proposals included 'installing trash-bin incinerators', 'hiring Halloween-prevention monitors', and 'implementing anti-coup measures'. Following a coup in early 2025, Scott Miller became the acting Dictator and initiated a wave of reforms aimed to de-Jeewanify the board. As part of these measures, the public was invited to review the WRDSB's 4 year strategic plan. Parents, staff, and students alike were all dumbfounded when they actually began to read the document.

The most glaring issue was that Section 3 was written in gibberish, possibly authored by pre-preschooler hands. Setting that aside, the public was more or less positive about the direction of the Board. In total, 81% of respondents checked the 'strongly support', and 'slightly support' boxes on the optional survey handed out following a 3 hour seminar about the Plan. Despite overwhelming support, respondents pointed out a few criticisms:

1. The Plan uses unclear, vague, and inaccessible language.
2. There is a significant lack of real priorities.
3. The Plan is completely untrustworthy and no one can be held accountable for its eventual failure.
4. There is no way for the public to know the outcome of the Plan's implementation.

The LHSS Anti-Jeewan Committee has taken an even stronger position, claiming that the Strategic Plan has neither been strategic, nor planned. According to the Committee, the Plan has only been used to "expand the overreach of the WRDSB in the most ineffective ways possible" and that "their corruption would be scary if [the WRDSB] weren't so bad at it". The Board has pushed back against these accusations, claiming that they "only serve the community, not themselves". As part of the Board's next steps, the Plan aims to address inequities for "those who are Indigenous, Black, Radicalised, 2SLGB-TQIA+ identifying, Have identified learning needs, and in low socio-economic living situations." It is unclear whether or not the Board will ever achieve the equity it

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"Don't be afraid of enemies who attack you. Be afraid of the friends who flatter you"

seeks, or if they will continue to use these groups as objects to pretend they are making progress while resuming old habits of doing nothing.

After more than a year out of the Jeewan era, parents, staff, and students are hopeful that the Board will reorient itself back towards serving the people rather than themselves. Re-examining the Strategic Plan has been viewed as a major step in the right direction, though many are hesitant. It will take a long time for trust to be restored between The Board and the public, and the WRDSB will have to put in the work if it wants to redeem itself from the harm and confusion it has caused.

Gravel-Mouth



By Oskar Deneau

A new sport has swept the younger generation, and it has dentists and geologists intrigued.

The newest fad for gen Z is a game known as “gravel-mouth”, which entails two people feeding each other loose gravel until one wins. Although the win condition remains ambiguous, the hype is real with 83% of children under 14 saying they watch gravelmouth daily.

With its rise in popularity a new batch of celebrities have made their debut in the mainstream. Notable players including names like Brokk Metalbeard and Crazy Advilface. Crazy Advilface is renowned for his unique style and provocative movements while playing. Many fans have described him as “the Michael Jackson of our times”

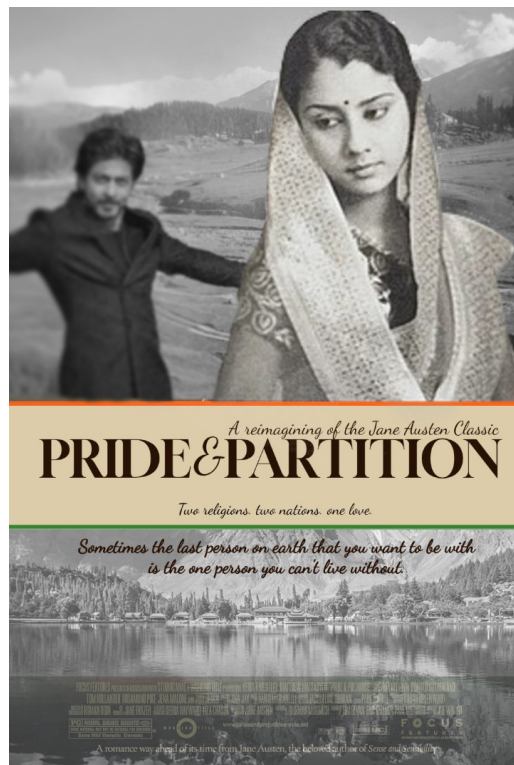
with hopes of a mediocre biopic to immortalise his career.

With all the excitement around the gravelmouth, how can you ensure your child's safety when playing? According to both geologists and dentists, gravelmouth poses little to no threat to your child's safety. It is recommended to use soft “beginners gravel” for children under 5.

Another pro tip is to provide your child with proper eye protection while playing. Research shows 90% of non-mouth related injuries are related to the eyes or another part of the body, so providing eye wear is essential.

Gravelmouth is extremely popular, however, it is not without its controversies. Many speculate that the illegal gravel cartels are responsible for the funding of gravelmouth tournaments. Several high-profile cartel members have been arrested at these events including the infamous Gimli Mountainberry, who is responsible for the shipment of illegal gravel across Norway.

Gravelmouth is a new phenomenon sweeping the globe and it seems to be here to stay. Several schools have already considered varsity gravelmouth programs as well as an exhibition being considered at the 2028 Olympic games.





A History of Double Blue Day

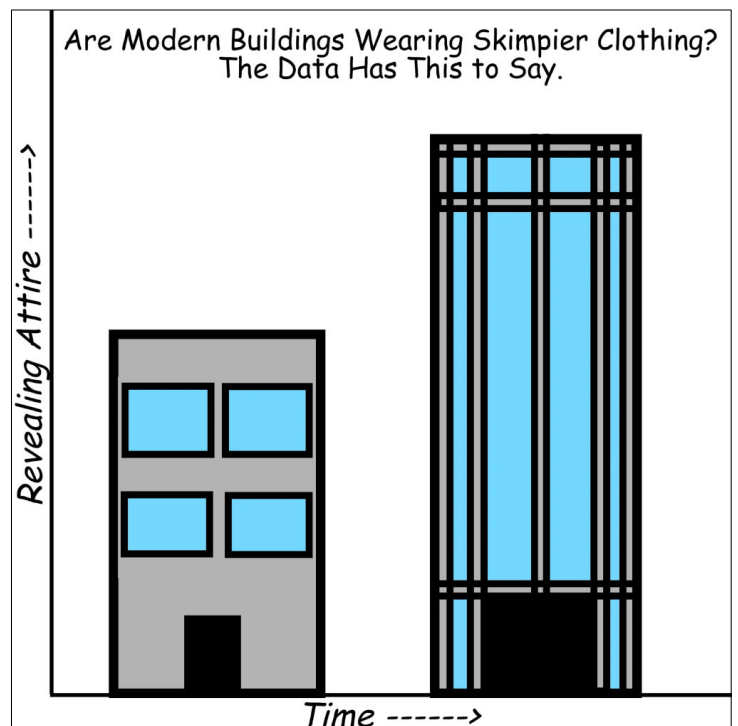
By Hassan Ahmed

Sitting on the cold gym floor, with piercing music and an unruly audience, you would be forgiven for thinking that Double Blue Day was a waste of time. Rebelling against what you may think at first however, the rally actually takes a lot of logistical planning and effort. So why do we do it? To figure this out, we can look to the history of the holiday in order to comprehend the creative crevices that have shaped this day over the centuries. Did you know that Double Blue Day used to be called the *Duplicatio Tristium Dierum*? You'll learn what that means and more as we dive into the often forgotten history of LHSS and the rituals that have defined it since its inception.

Ye olde story begins in 1687. Scotland had just recently discovered public civilisation, and decided that they too were going to hop on the trend. One of the things they decided to do first was to invest in a mediocre secondary school: Thus, Sir John A. Macdonald (SJAM) came to be. Athleticism was verily valued at the school, since SJAM had the best varsity golf team in the country! Because they were very serious, they needed to do the things that serious people did (lest other schools think they were un-serious, which would seriously be a serious problem). Common in Scotland at the time was ritual sacrifice. After the golf season came to an end, the worst performing athlete in the school was brought to an altar in the middle of the gymnasium. Students would gather in the gymnasium after mass. Following the rituals of mass (which I do not care to explain) the festivities would begin. Historians argue about when the festivities were named the *Duplicando Felix Dies* (which literally translates to “The doubling of happy days”). The festivities

were not very happy, but historians believe that the name was chosen because contradicting yourself was considered to be a very serious pastime in medieval Scotland.

The festivities would start with drunken dancing and music from the local church choir. Possibly on account of the alcohol, the choir sang just ok and the dances were just alright. Definitely on account of the alcohol, people would cheer like wild animals at the end of every number. Food was also included in the early celebrations. The menu included: Pork, bacon, beef, mutton, and lamb. Discerning readers will note the lack of fibres in their diet, which led to a serious case of 17th century constipation! To remedy this, super-laxatives were handed out at the end of the meal, though there was really only ever enough for the teachers. Once everyone was wasted and stuffed, the athlete who had disappointed the serious students and staff of the school was ripped away from the stands, lifted onto a giant pole, and cooked over an open fire like a rotisserie chicken.



By 1886, the event had changed a lot. Firstly, the school was moved from Scotland to Waterloo on the Juneflower (The Mayflower's more pretentious cousin). The festival was also renamed to the *Duplicatio Tristium Dierum* (The Doubling of Sad Days). This was because the school was put in Waterloo, which would make even the happiest of

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"The weak fear happiness itself. They can harm themselves on cotton wool. Sometimes they are wounded even by happiness"

holidays very sad. Technology had also made big strides in the couple hundred years since the first celebrations. One of the biggest inventions was Thomas Edison's latest model of ConfabulationGPT. ConGPT made it much easier for staff organisers to be lazy, which they called "streamlining inefficiencies". In the 19th century, historians believe that it was a mark of seriousness to be lazy, which was good since the organisers were very serious. ConGPT also made everyone real dumb, and everyone forgot Latin. Duplicato Tristium Dierum had to be translated to English, and dumbed down so that nobody would be confused. 1886 marks the first year where the new name was used: Double Sad Day! The final major change was that since the school was Canadian, the golf team was replaced by the hockey team. I bring this up to signal to you how patriotic I am: nationalism is an indicator of a very serious writer, and I am very serious.

Fast forward to the 1950s, and Americanisation is all the rage! The hockey team was replaced by the football team, the co-prime office was now an unelected dictatorship, and the school changed its name to the boring (and very serious) Laurel Heights Secondary School. Yankees weren't big fans of human sacrifice at this point in history, so that part of Double Sad Day was regrettably dropped. The word 'sad' was also a bit too honest for the Americans, who preferred a more professional euphemism. Coincidentally, Elvis' Blue Suede Shoes was playing on the radio when they were trying to think of synonyms for sad. In serious fashion, the board uncritically accepted the first idea that someone else thought up for them: The name finally reached its modern form, Double Blue Day! Oh, and the superlaxatives weren't great for the Americans, as they actually suffer from chronic diarrhea. The super-laxatives were quietly replaced with 'superlatives'. With that, we have mapped the evolution of DoubleBlue Day! From rotisseries to festivities, we seriously have come a long way.

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Normally, I'd tell you to read *The Gadfly*, but at this point, I don't know if you even should.



www.BadPSAs.com

Win The Rat Race.

And You're Still Nothing More Than A Rat.

Correction:

In the previous issue, we claimed that the war in Iran was ongoing. At the time of publishing however, the war had ceased.

Since then it has 'ended' 3 times.

Here's to many more failed peace talks!

Review: LHSS Coffee House



By Hassan Ahmed

Having the displeasure of being a journalist at perhaps the most boring secondary school in the WRDSB, there comes a time where you just give up. You walk into the library & throw your hat onto the ground out of frustration. The non-specific librarian tells you to pick it up and to stop being such a Debbie Downer. He doesn't understand how dark and twisted your mind is. You slump down into one of the study spaces. It's the most privacy you can get in a school crawling with cameras. You cry yourself to sleep. You wake up at the sound of an epic guitar riff. What the hell is going on in the library? The LHSS Coffee House is what! Accidentally finding themselves there, Gadfly journalists have compiled highlights of what might just be the best student-first event that the Student Activities Office hasn't corrupted yet. The public wants to know one question: Who won the night?

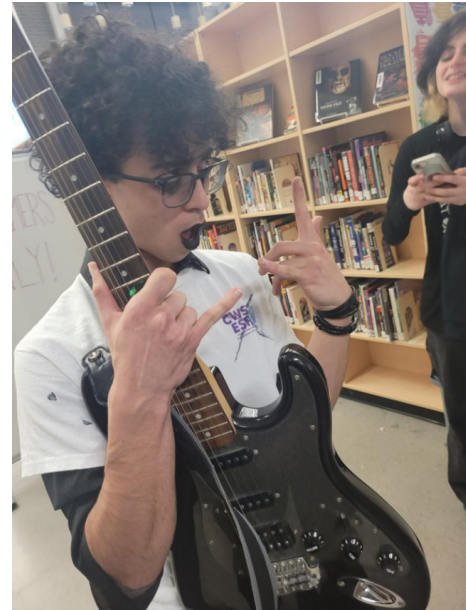
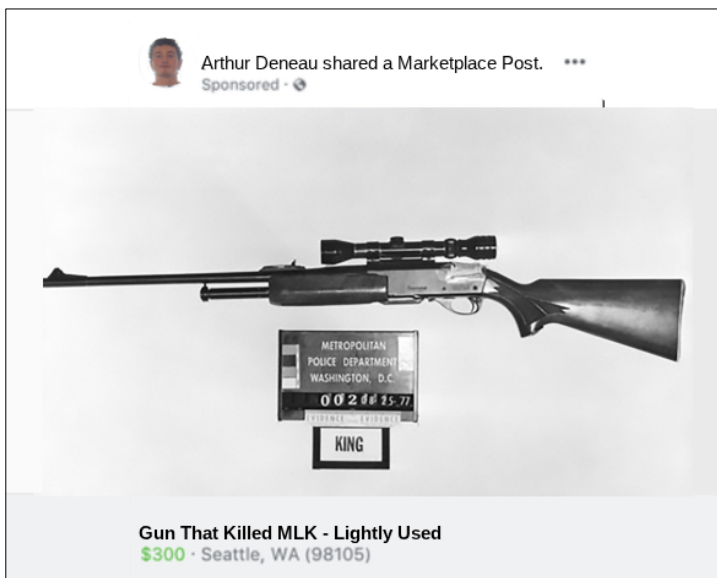


Fig. 1. The Lebanese Baddie in King Arthur's Court

An entertainer ought to look the part, whether he be a Senator, Prime Minister, or guitar-player. Performing in pretty much every show, Sammy Hawari blew the crowd away in that final Paramore performance. If we didn't know any better, we'd say he was a middle-school girl in 2007 who was going through a particularly nasty emo phase! The audience loved the look, describing his makeup as "iconic", "hot", and "makes [Sammy] look Lebanese"*. Everyone loved the makeup. Everyone except Sammy's mom. When we asked if she considered disowning him after the performance, she told Sammy who told The Gadfly the following:

"I was flabbergasted." According to Sammy, his mother told him to *"wash your face before you get on the bus."*



Fig. 2. The Mysterious Principal

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"Lorem Ipsum"

My little brother was at the coffeehouse. He was trying to peek over the bookshelves near the back of the audience. As he struggled to see the singers onstage, a certain principal from the WRDSB walked right up in front of him and blocked my brother's view. It was disgusting. My sad, sorry sibling couldn't see and we were forced to move to the concessions area, since that was the only place that wasn't swarming with sweaty teenagers. Out of fear of the principal banning this article outright, The Gadfly did not reach out for a statement. If he ever does read this, he should be embarrassed and ought to apologise immediately.

If Sammy was the king of goth tonight, Griffin was his court jester. Not only was he boogeying like no one was watching** during Never Happened's rendition of Misery Business, he also performed Tequila with his band. Though he was forced by the system to wear "Concert Blacks", Tanner still showed up looking even more like a clown than usual. Wearing his red-nose and rainbow hair, Griffin created a cataclysmic-ally cartoonish character that centred attention on him through the entire performance. His trumpet solo was pretty good too, I guess. He wins best solo or whatever. Tanner's group members told The Gadfly that, in his silliness, he "[REDACTED] everyone over" by ending "like 12 bars early". When asked to comment on his attire, Griffin told The Gadfly,

"Me with aura."

And just like that, another coffeehouse is over. Sammy, Sammy's mom, The Principal, and Griffin can contact The Gadfly to receive their awards. For everyone else: if you're still here next year, it's worth popping into at least one of the coffeehouses. Admission is free, you really have no reason not to. It might be hot, smelly, and you might hate all the performances, but you'll still have a good time anyway. That's The Gadfly guarantee!***

* being Lebanese himself, this comment is unlikely to have offended him

** I was watching

*** The Gadfly cannot be held liable for losers who get to see a free music showcase and leave grumpy.



Fig. 3. Rainbow-Head Griffin



NECK EXTENSIONS:

- Become taller
- Get all the fellas/damsels/people
- See things
- Fight Giraffes
- Give us money
- 416-228-8494
- Tell Friends
- Don't tell government
- Even if government is friends

Section of Fun

Generational Fall-Off By Hassan A.



QUESTION: Why don't Bolivians just vote for Graham Platner?

Bolivians have sieged their own capital ever since their government announced plans to take Indigenous and Farmer-owned land. They are demanding higher wages, an end to austerity, and the resignation of the President. Don't Bolivians know that revolting is infantile? Don't they know the only hope for change is to vote for Graham Platner? Don't they know they have to choose the lesser evil? They are doomed to fail.

See if you can find the 10
hidden Gadflies
throughout the newspaper!

There's one! →



Ask Harper with Hassan Ahmed

Dear Harper, So, Iran, puny Iran, they're not surrendering, despite my tremendous efforts, the best efforts, believe me, even though I've given them chance after chance to make a deal. In unrelated news, gas prices? Through the roof! A disaster! And Vance, total low-life, keeps stabbing me in the back, SAD! Then there's Rubio, little Rubio, wants Cuba invaded. Can you believe it? And the Pope, he's still whining about the killings. He tells me, "Donald, no one is better at killing than you are". LARPING Leo, that's what I like to call him. But catholics love him, believe me. They say they almost love LARPING Leo as much as me. Voters are UNGRATEFUL and the democrats are about to steal the midterms. LIKE USUAL! I'm trying to make everyone happy, the best they've ever been, and stay, you know, in the center, where I belong! THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION TO THIS MATTER! - President Donald. J. Trump

Dear President Donald J. Trump, Consider overthrowing the senate and making a new government. It worked for Caesar, didn't it? It really isn't terribly exerting; that is, if you can cross the Potomac without sinking. Yours democratically, Harper Artichoke

Dear Harper, I played a really nasty April Fools Joke on my sister and now she wants to kill me. I think I've made a mistake. What should I do? Yours in fear, Pranking reader

Dear Pranking reader, The essence of comedy is commitment. Your only mistake was letting her live long enough to hate you for it. Yours in innocence, Harper Artichoke

Dear Harper, The agency said they wanted a Jewish-born American folk singer born in the 1940s in the country's heartland to open a show at the 1968 Democratic Convention. But when I went to audition, they had already chosen Bob Dylan! What should I do? Yours in Troubadoring, Oching reader

Dear Oching reader, The people don't like consistency; they fancy contradictions more. Try becoming so deep that you're shallow, so rude that you're kind, so humble that you're guided by pride. Simplicity will kill you. Yours acoustically, Harper Artichoke

Opinion: With José Marti Dead, Spain has Saved its Empire

By Hassan Ahmed | May 23 1895

FOLLOWING a brutal uprising by the Spanish Empire's subjects in Cuba, many impressionable political novices have declared the death of the Spaniard's century long claim as world hegemon. Yet such an analysis would be immature. Proper political scientists note that it is indeed a sign of great strength when a colony tries to leave, and the Empire must bleed and break to secure its dominion over the unruly territory. How else would the great men of history put themselves on display? How else would the civilised race of people fix the savages? It is a heavy burden for the Empire to carry, and the entire world is grateful for the sacrifices of the Spanish. As the greatest nationalists of our time often remark,

"Warfare is the only state of affairs that can show you the worth of a people."

Four days ago, on the nineteenth of May, the leader of the Cuban resistance was shot off of his horse and killed. And with it, Cuba's dreams of independence have been crushed. Jose Marti was a man of many condemnable qualities. He held only the worst virtues and the most

vicious of vices. He was a poet, yet many esteemed English poets have tried and failed to comprehend his work. He may very well be a complete fraud, lying to the poor folk in order to gain their sympathy. As Professor John A. Barlow pointed out, Marti's entire poetry collection is written in complete gibberish. Incoherent markings are placed over some words, and the letters do not convene with each other to ensure sensible definitions are put in place. Barlow even went so far as to say,

"It's like it was written in a whole other language."

Almost as dishonest as his poetry was the destructive nature of his politics. Marti's Cuban Revolution Party is an undelectable mix of idealism and pauper-pandering. Marti promised the poor would be lifted out of poverty, that the government would belong to the people, and that ways of life would be honoured as sacred. Can the poor people of Cuba be trusted with democracy? Their complexion says otherwise. Democracy is a virtue, yet it must be delivered by the civilised race. Anything but is undemocratic. The Kingdom of Spain is much more democratic than the system envisioned by Marti. Just look at who supports the Spanish and who supports the Cuban terrorists. That ought to say enough. Perhaps if Marti had waited, he would still be alive and the proper authorities would have granted representation. Instead, as the official Spanish newspapers said themselves,

"For a man who wrote simple verses, he has an awful lot on his tongue."

With the pleasantries of respectful eulogies set aside, we can focus on what matters. Spain need not worry about its declining power on the world stage any longer. The killing of Jose Marti has killed the Cuban resistance in one tactical attack. With their leader dead, the Cubans have no choice but to fold to Spain. Murdering people of importance, as we are all aware, leads to that person becoming a symbol of defeat and the quick public amnesia about the dead person's achievements. Historians have pointed out that every time a leader is killed, the entire group that once backed the man, disappears. As an ancient historian proverb goes:

“Murder the men and you’ll murder the movement.”

Such signs of strength are seldom seen in society as Spain’s crusade against Cuba. It shows the world that the Empire is willing to stand its ground and not take security risks lying down. Perhaps they did lose the economic advantage to groups that sit farther east. And maybe they lost the technological and medical advantage as well. Yet these things do not matter when war is on the line. Future pacifist rebellions will think twice before attempting to force change, and ‘violent’ criminals (who are definitely not the people reading this) will fear every movement of every day as troops walk down the streets on patrol. Such authoritative structure is what’s best for the primitive Cuban population. It is not paranoia and greed that drive the Spanish Empire’s subjugation of Havana, but deep love and care. Their only problem may be that they care too much. This sentiment is shared by a PC (Paid Cuban) we found by-the-way,

“For 15 bucks an hour, love is hate and hate is love. War is peace and peace is war: I’ll say what you pay!”

As a whole, Spain could not have made a better decision in this war other than the highly planned and calculated murder of famed terrorist Jose Marti. The Cuban spirit has been crushed and the dreams of autonomy have long since vanished under the throng. Analysts have pointed to the only possible way Spain’s continuous decline would be what some are dubbing “the folly of Thucydides” in the form of “an American usurper”. The possibility of American involvement has grown following the Americans informing the Spanish that the Spanish will bomb an American ship in three-years-time, and that such a bombing would lead to an American dictatorship in Cuba. None reacted to the American declaration, since all eyes were on the English poets currently convening to figure out what ethnicity Thucydides is, and will then move to make a neutral decision on his knowledge. But as lead experts have pointed out,

“I’ve never met a Thucydides; name’s probably made up. Usurpers never win in history anyway, ignoring that time when we were the usurpers.”

The Day The Music Died & The Days Preceding That Killed the Musicians

By Hassan Ahmed | February 10, 1959

ROCK STARS BUDDY HOLLY, RITCHIE VALENS, J.P. RICHARDSON ANNOUNCE LEGENDARY TOUR: FANS IN AWE

Jan. 16, 1959 | Ivan Ochs

In the sleepless Wisconsinite city of Milwaukee next week, three rock and roll idols will be premiering a legendary concert. This ‘Winter Dance Party’, to rock fans’ delight, is only the start of a month-long tour zigzagging across the American heartland. Everyone, from your Mr. and Mrs. Everyman, to your little Juvenile Delinquents will find something to take away from this performance. Discerning readers will note the names involved in this grand production: Buddy Holly, Ritchie Valens, J.P. Richardson, and countless others no doubt, will all

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"this is going to sound misogynistic because it kind of is"

make an appearance. More information to come.

H. rushed to his telephone to call GAC. He dialed in waiting for someone on the other line to give him the respect a rock star ought to invoke. Following what could only be described as a Frenetic Autumn, H. was surely at the end of his ropes: An exhausting eighteen-month on-and-off tour, disappointing album sales and being kicked from the label. He could hardly recognise the reflection he saw in the stainless steel of the landline. Before his wallowing could go on for long however, someone on the other end of the line picked up.

"Hello? This is H."

"Hello Mr. H., how can I help you?"

"Can I talk to the boss? I've got some choice words for him."

"You'll have to make an appointment."

"An appointment?"

"Yes sir."

"Alright, when's the nearest time I can speak to him?"

"Seven minutes."

H. waited for seven minutes, listening to the hold music playing from the other end of the phone. Nothing of note happened in these seven minutes. A fly buzzed around a poster of the tour sitting next to the line. Just over seven minutes later, the fly had buzzed off and someone on the other end of the line picked up, again.

"Hey, H.! How's my headline star?"

"Good, fine, I think. Hey listen man, I need to talk to you about something."

"Anything for you kid!"

"I've got to cancel."

"Now, don't go starting something you can't finish son."

"It's pretty damn pathetic the way you've got me

riding in a dinky bus during the worst winter I've ever seen!"

"We've got you in contract son. Far as I'm concerned, contract says I make the arrangements and you make the music. You don't see me telling you what to play, do you?"

"This'll be just about the bleakest dance party the midwest has had the pleasure of witnessing!"

"Here, kid. Let me throw you a dog-grade bone. I'll make some changes to the routes, see what I can do to make things a little lighter. That's all I can do for you on this issue, I'm afraid. Anything else I can get you?"

"No, that's quite alright."

So now he was signed up for a tour. A tour in the middle of winter, at that. He decided that the only thing he could do now was keep a positive demeanor. And he would maintain that positive demeanour, even after receiving the new tour schedule, which maximised distance travelled on bus. Deep down H. knew he'd breathe his last breath on one of those damned buses.

MINOR SETBACKS IN MIDWEST TOUR; DELAYS EXPECTED

Jan. 28, 1959 | Harper Artichoke

THE eyes of the nation remain steadfast on the Winter Dance Party. Finding themselves in Minnesota's St. Paul, the precious performers brace as organisers announce possible delays. Even the greatest symbols of American ingenuity find themselves facing unexpected setbacks. None-the-very-less, fans have been astonished and amazed at the theatrics employed by all artists, but the young Ritchie Valens in particular. What novelties do our vocalists have up their sleeves? No honest man can answer for certain. But what is certain is that this American promenade has been one for the annals. More information to come.

This was it, the start of the rest of V.'s life. After closing the St. Paul show, he reflected on his journey to the tour. Just a year ago, he was a shy, hot-rod heartthrob, sitting

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"The law does not concern itself with trifles"

on the bleachers with his guitar. Now he had a shiny suit, a big crowd everywhere he went that he needed to impress, and a hell of a first impression to make. His colleagues were catching up with old friends, leaving V. without a place to be. A fly buzzed around him. It was the kind of fly he'd seen in the background of his terrors. The fly flew three feet behind where V. was standing. And three feet behind him sat a cleaning-boy, around his age. V. approached the boy, and, as if V's presence required some special acknowledgement, the boy stood up at once.

"Well now, am I a kid from California or the Queen of England! You don't gotta stand for plain-folk like me."

"Plain-folk? You? You're the guy with the most ginch here!"

"I think I'm more like you than I am like them."

V. gestured towards the artists, with bottles of gin in one hand and cigarettes in another.

"Keep on talkin' like that and I'll have to light up the ol' tilt-sign! You're a winner, man! Don't be so modest."

"Oh, that's a load of bogus! I'll tell you right now, I ain't ever won anything my entire life."

"Really? You're a star, how haven't you a single win?"

"It isn't always so rosy. You get to stay back here in this warm building n' clean up. I'm stuck on another cold, broken bus! Just pray it doesn't break down again with me still in it!"

V. glanced back over at the other singers for a time. They were signaling him to wrap up.

"But that's just what tourin' is about. Those guys know it. I'll feel it soon enough."

TOUR REMAINS RESILIENT IN FACE OF FRIGID SNOWSTORM

Feb. 3, 1959 | Ivan Ochs

AGAINST the frigid backdrop of the worst squall seen this

century, The Winter Dance Party finds itself colder than it ever anticipated. Determined as ever, the vocalists are pressing forward to provide the American people what they have feigned so long for. They remind the world that it's the strength of our nation, matched to reason and principle, that has gotten the United States of America this far. And it is this resolve so characteristic of the American people that will spring our flag farther than the red menace. The three performers remain stoic and unfettered, as the entire country throws its bountiful support behind them.

"Just about halfway done", R. thought to himself. The snow wasn't as forgiving as he had hoped, and he was sick and tired of the bus. "Just a little longer until we're out of here." There wasn't much to do while waiting for the bus to get fixed. No one really talked whenever this happened. The only sound at any point was a fly buzzing through the open door and into the back of the bus. The quiet suited R. just fine at this moment. He was debating himself on whether or not to stay or go.

"I might just die of frostbite stickin' 'round here."

"I'm not one to stop once I've started."

"The cracks are widenin', they're worse than they appear."

R's contemplation finally broke when H. announced,

"That's it! I can't take it anymore! By tomorrow, a plane will be charted."

"Givin' in so quickly, eh, H.?"

"Oh, shut it Bopper. Either you freeze down here like a man or you come with me."

"Ain't nothing manly about stayin' in the buses anyhow. All I'd be is a stooge. To hell with these cherry-buses! How 'bout it, V.? You comin' with us or are you goin' to be a square 'bout flyin'?"

"You sure you don't want your guy Allsup to take it, H.?"

"It's grundy. Flip a coin, it doesn't matter to me. All that matters is I'm getting off of this pathetic tour bus."

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"You can't shock an AI's nipples."

R. was grateful he wasn't the first to break. Something needed to be done, but he was glad that he wasn't the one forced to swallow his pride at the end of the day. For the first time since the Winter Dance Party started, R. was actually looking forward to the time on the road.

BUDDY HOLLY, RITCHIE VALENS, J.P.
RICHARDSON



Feb. 4, 1959 | Associated Press

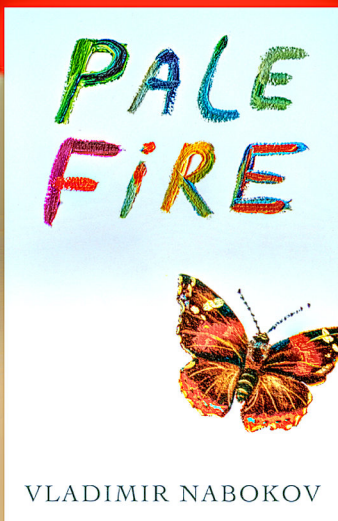
KILLED in a plane crash at Mason City, Iowa, were three rock and roll idols.

PALE FIRE

Directed By David Yates

VLADIMIR NABOKOV

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Unemployment: is it a farce of the stupid?

By Mateo Grgić

It is so hard to find good help these days.

I know this first-hand, as a small business owner and employer of a small team. We produce satire newspapers, you might've heard of us—we're called The Gadfly. Our company produces satire newspapers at a monthly cadence, which involves a team of writers, and 2 guys who do everything else. Now, our company has been around for close to a year, and already we've had a layoff of 20% of our workforce. 90% of the work in our team is done by 50% of the employees, too! Recently, I had to turn down a prospective teenager who applied to one of our entry level positions—quite nice, good at writing too—because we're looking for employees with years of experience. Surely that's not too much to ask for, it's an entry-level position after all.

Our numerous job positions—of which most are fake, to make it seem like we're doing well enough to afford a dozen new employees—are relatively lenient, especially given the current competitive advantages that many are being given. Our part-time and full-time jobs both offer the same competitive compensation packages: salaries start (and end) at zero dollars an hour. You get to keep all tips you receive, overtime is "optional", and healthcare isn't included. All one needs to apply is a burning passion for gruelling thankless work, at least 5 years of satire writing, 3 references, ample free time, an ability to keep

your mouth shut (politically progressive working conditions), and at least a high school diploma. Some may say this is a far cry from the jobs of yesteryear—all I have to say to that is look at LinkedIn. We're offering a lot more than most, for a lot less in return.

Instead of hiring that nice girl from earlier, I ended up hiring an incompetent friend of mine who hasn't written a single line of news before in his life. Sure, he's less competent, but at least I know the guy! Strange times, these, when you can't even find competent candidates for an entry level position. Because the general market is in a recession, we had to raise our March issue's price from the regular 5 cents, to a new 5 dollar price—just to stay in business. Docking the pay of our employees was also mandatory, just to stay afloat. Coincidentally, this is when our 20% layoff happened. They say the job market is in a recession too, but it seems to me that it's just the candidates who are lacking. Take this recent conversation one of my higher-ups had with this unruly employee:

Hassan — 31/05/2026, 07:45 pm

you wrote an article right

Omar — 31/05/2026, 07:45 pm

im currently reading about 50 types of extinct monkeys because bio said so

Hassan — 31/05/2026, 07:46 pm

you will be the 51st if you don't write

Simply outrageous. It really is hard to find good help. Not only does this employee not write, but we can't even fire him, because the Editor—me—hired him personally! Normally, we have a strict multi-stage hiring process, where we have you write an article or two, uncredited & unpublished, so we can evaluate your skill. We'll then get back to you a few weeks later if you did well, or just ghost you if you didn't. The whole process was entirely skipped for this guy, and he does nothing! Who could've seen this coming. This whole situation just reaffirms my belief in our current hiring process—in fact, we might make it even stricter, just to avoid bad cases like this in the future. I'm pretty sure one of our co-founders hasn't even spoken to us about The Gadfly in a few months, though...

Something is definitely wrong these days—and it's probably not our fault, if I had to guess.



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The Gadfly

Unreliable Narrators Since 470 BCE

“So this is how a person can come to despise himself-knowing he's doing the wrong thing and not being able to stop.”

Letter from the "ditor"

I find the human obsession with the impossible fascinating.

From the tarot cards to the benevolence of government, this fixation on the absurd runs so deeply that entrancement becomes compulsion—total reliance; we rely on small lies to get us through the day. These falsehoods are acceptable, desirable even, but we must acknowledge the fantastical for what they are. The modern world has done well to that effect, save one aspect of human society with an equal probability to the virgin birth of Jesus Christ: the deadline. It is a mass delusion that everyone I've ever met seems to have fallen under, from the educated to the serf. When I'm asked for an essay by Friday, a Gadfly article by Tuesday, I have to laugh—the concept itself is amusing. It is a physical impossibility for these deadlines to be hit. For, you see, the impossibility of the deadline is not merely because of my own personal failings—it is a matter of psychology and physiology. The brain has many mechanisms for distraction; let me show you.

It is noon.

I open up my word processor of choice to work on a new Gadfly article, for instance; a hundred things happen at once: I immediately think about the other cool things I could be doing—If that alone isn't enough to pull me out of my productive reverie, I hear a bird chirping or someone talking a room over—I listen to them at the same time as I write, and splitting my attention causes me to completely forget what I was talking about—So I put on some music, but I get entrapped by a song I haven't heard in a while, which then changes to an album on repeat—for predictability's sake—But then I notice some small bug or issue in my music client—I go fix that for half an hour, and my initial train of thought is derailed entirely—I figure that writing won't be happening today, so I go and do something else productive, like finish layout for the paper—but to do the layout, I need my article—So I go back to my word processor and stare at the article—“This isn't working,” I tell myself—I go on a walk and try reading a book—I glance at my to-do list, which grows ever longer, and suddenly I feel bad about walking—So I sit down and redo my to-do list, since that's probably something that will help me tackle my to-do list itself—I spend a bit of time redoing my to-do list, organising the tasks according to urgency, subject, personal/school, ease of doing, and colour-code it with neat handwriting—I also digitise a copy for redundancy—I redo my to-do list every month, it seems—I suddenly notice that a major essay is a week overdue, so I go and do that instead—I finish half of it but get bored and go down a Wikipedia rabbit hole while tangentially researching something related to my essay—I get up to go walk the dog, and when I come back to my computer, I completely forget everything that I was planning on doing—out of sight, out of mind, I guess—I go back to reading my book—but wait—I remember now, I had a Gadfly article that was supposed to be done—I sit down, and I begin to write—I am acutely aware of the clothing I'm wearing, so I go have a shower and change, since wearing dirty clothes is gross, and it'd be a blocker to my productivity—I come back half an hour later, and I sit and begin to write—I write a paragraph, but I re-read it, and it sounds terrible—I rewrite it a half-dozen times until I'm happy with it.

It is now 1 in the morning—and I have done essentially nothing today. Tomorrow will hardly fare much better.

I go to sleep, and I wake up tired. This is kinda what every day is like, for most things. It's why today is June 2, and the April issue isn't done. I had set a due date publicly with both The Gadfly team and our teacher sponsor for having this issue done weeks earlier. And privately with myself. Just recently, the deadline was Monday, which I missed. Then it was Tuesday, and I missed that too. The only reason I'm forcing myself to write this—regardless of how bad it is—is because I feel really bad for setting due dates and then completely missing them (especially since I said that this article was done—it wasn't—and layout was almost done—it isn't). I really need to finish this issue so we can get a start on the May issue (also to be published after the month in which it should've happened)—which I promise will be better than this April issue—so that we have enough time to write our ambitious ideas for the June issue. Also, just generally to get back on track, since I procrastinated (amongst other things) parts of the very long March issue until mid-April, which messed up the whole schedule.

But maybe enough about me—though, when is it ever—here's an update on current Gadfly happenings: For one we've tentatively maybe hired another employee. We're also planning on revamping the layout going forwards. We've also decided that the June issue is going to be a “flag-ship” issue, (hopefully) of similar length to our 40 page “serious” March issue, but, you know, “satire”—or whatever breed of comedy the Gadfly entails—instead. But anyways, that's been my past little bit & and an abridged version of what we've been up to on the whole. Hassan's articles have been done for like a month, btw. We've also been doing some small amounts of restructuring “behind the scenes”, and Hassan & I have a new thing (not strictly Gadfly related) in the works which promises to be something pretty cool—but that's a project-for-next-year though, so no spoilers!

Sincerely, Mateo

(P.S. I wrote this editor's note 3 months ago. We've been focusing on issue 10 a lot, and I still have ADHD—so it's double-worse)



The Gadfly

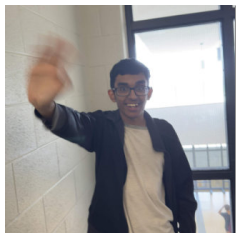
Unreliable Narrators Since 470 BCE

"The devil is not as black as he is painted"



MATEO GRGIĆ – Co-Founder, Writer, Steering Committee, Editor, Layout, Finances, Website

Mateo Grgić is a grade 11 student at Laurel Heights Secondary School. He was born & raised in Waterloo, Ontario. He co-founded 'The Backcast', a failed school newspaper with his friend Hassan Ahmed, which eventually got shut down for being too funny. Never ones to give up, they then started a new, legally distinct newspaper: The Gadfly. His favourite colour is neon green. He spends his free time reading, cycling, and browsing the Arch Linux Wiki.



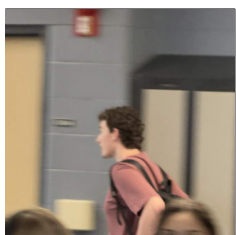
HASSAN AHMED – Co-Founder, Writer, Steering Committee, Secretary, Senior Ad Maker

Hassan Ahmed is a co-founder of The Gadfly, and an aspiring New York Times Bestselling Author. Born in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, he was deported for being too funny. He moved to the land that provided the most promise and opportunity for a young journalist; suburban Waterloo. With only 3 incidents involving the police, Hassan discovered one day that anyone can start a news publication if they tried hard enough, and here we are.



LIANNE ELKADRI – Co-Founder, Writer, Steering Committee, Unpaid Artist, Holder of the Secret Knowledge

Lianne Elkadri is a journalist for the Gadfly, while also dedicating a significant amount of her time to thinking about what to do with her free time. She also never knows what to put in "about the author" sections, despite this being the first time she has had to write one. She enjoys music, collecting vinyl records, the colour red, space, turtles, physics, and geometry.



OSKAR DENEAU – Writer

Oskar Deneau, is an investigator of sorts; he spends his time pursuing things he likely can't achieve. Once hailed as leader and king by his subjects, he was recently overthrown, and has landed a job here at The Gadfly. He is said to be a nuisance at many social gatherings and is reportedly banned from most parking lots. In his free time he enjoys art, music, tea, and selling your data online.

