

THE EAGLE

The University of Charleston's Student News
Fall 2025

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Equipment

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World Fest in
Review



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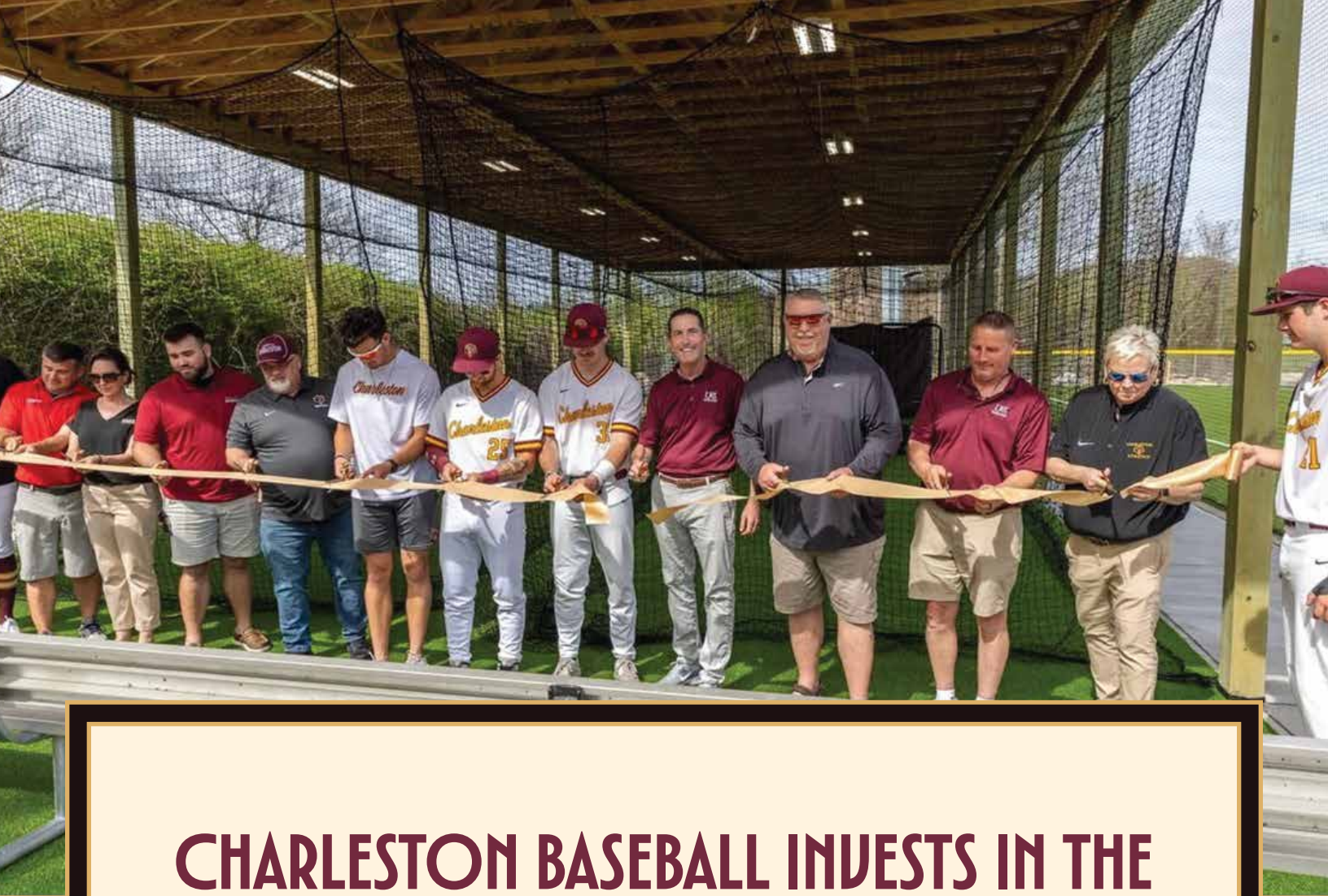
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CHARLESTON BASEBALL INVESTS IN THE FUTURE WITH NEW TRAINING TOOLS

By: Sam Slodic

Photo via Instagram @ucwv

On April 6, 2025, the University of Charleston officially finished construction of its new on-field batting cages, a much-needed upgrade that has already started impacting the way the team trains.

Head Coach Dean Peterson expressed his appreciation for the supporters who stepped forward and helped bring this vision to life.

“I am incredibly grateful for the generous support of so many alumni and families who helped make this initial phase possible,” said Peterson.

The cages, built on the third baseline right by the home dugout, now provide Charleston's hitters with accessible space. Practices have become more efficient now that players have a more structured training environment.

Peterson noted that although the main purpose of the cages is for hitters' development, the long-term impact will hopefully reach every player in the program.

"While the primary use of the cages is for batting, we envision a significant contribution to player development for all of our players, especially when we are able to enclose the facility and add more technology to the space," said Peterson.

The completion of the batting cages may have taken some time, but for Coach Peterson and his coaching staff, it was worth the wait. With the ability to consistently train on-site, there is no reason the team's success should not skyrocket.



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THE INNOVATION SERVICES STUDENTS DON'T KNOW ABOUT

By: Alex Cochran

For much of campus, there's a mystery brewing in the Russell and Martha Wehrle Innovation Center. It is commonly known that the building houses many of the University of Charleston's athletic spaces, but lesser known is its titular treasure trove of free-to-use equipment.

The Innovation Center has several 3-D printers, a fully equipped podcast studio, a laser engraver, a vinyl cutter, sculptable polymer clay, robotics and circuitry equipment, and a drone flight and construction lab.

Dr. Travis Kahle, the Director of the Innovation Center, testified to the quality of these services while speaking about the podcast studio.

“It is an audio recording studio. It’s got soundproofing, it’s got audio equipment, it has a recording console where you plug in microphones and it records to an SD card or computer. We’ve got some studio-quality voice microphones. We’ve even got some lighting where if you wanted to do a video podcast you could do that.”

If these resources sound new, that’s because they are sort of.

According to Dr. Kahle, the facility first started offering its services to students when the building finished construction in 2017. For three years it grew its operation, but when the COVID-19 pandemic was declared, the equipment was put in storage for safekeeping. Dr. Kahle said that the equipment was still in the storage closet when he became the new Director in 2023.



Dr. Kahle demonstrating the comb binding machine in the Maker Lab.

“We’re just now getting to the point where students are finding out about it and, quite frankly, we’re just now getting to the point where enough people are trained on the equipment to be able to show others how to use it,” said Kahle.

For example, only three people regularly use the podcast studio.

As such, the Innovation Center is still establishing its identity to the larger campus community.

Dr. Kahle plans to increase student events and educational workshops that teach newcomers how to operate the equipment. One such workshop, held in late September, gave an overview of the entire 3D printing process, from computer models to handheld products.

The Innovation Center is also home to its Innovation Scholars. However, this too has become a source of confusion, as some students think the scholars are the only ones who get to use the equipment. This is not the case.

“Everything in this Innovation Center is for the school. This is all for the University of Charleston students and even staff members,” said Kahle.

Dr. Kahle explained that while the Innovation Scholarship is a separate program, its intent is to be utilitarian and not exclusive. Its students are given additional leadership and innovation training in exchange for helping to keep the various programs of the Innovation Center running for the benefit of campus at large.

“They are truly the innovation ambassadors to campus ... But as far as the general resources of the Innovation Center? That’s available to anyone who wants to take advantage of it.”

That said, the equipment is only useful if it is indeed used.

Consider again the podcast studio. According to Dr. Kahle, it would only take 30 minutes to teach someone to use the equipment, and another 60 minutes to get good at it.



Equipment of the podcast studio.



Dr. Kahle and the Little Bits circuitry lab.



One of several 3-D printers free for student use.

It's a similar pattern for the rest of the equipment. The Maker Lab houses cutting-edge equipment like 3D-printers and a podcast studio, but it still needs people to use it.

To keep up with the Innovation Center's plans, keep an eye out for various workshop invitations through email, or follow their Instagram account @ucwv.innovation. Additionally, anyone interested in using this equipment can talk to the front desk or email Dr. Travis Kahle directly at laurenkahle@ucwv.edu. The Innovation Center is open from 8:00 a.m. to midnight from Monday to Friday. On weekends, it opens later at 2 p.m..

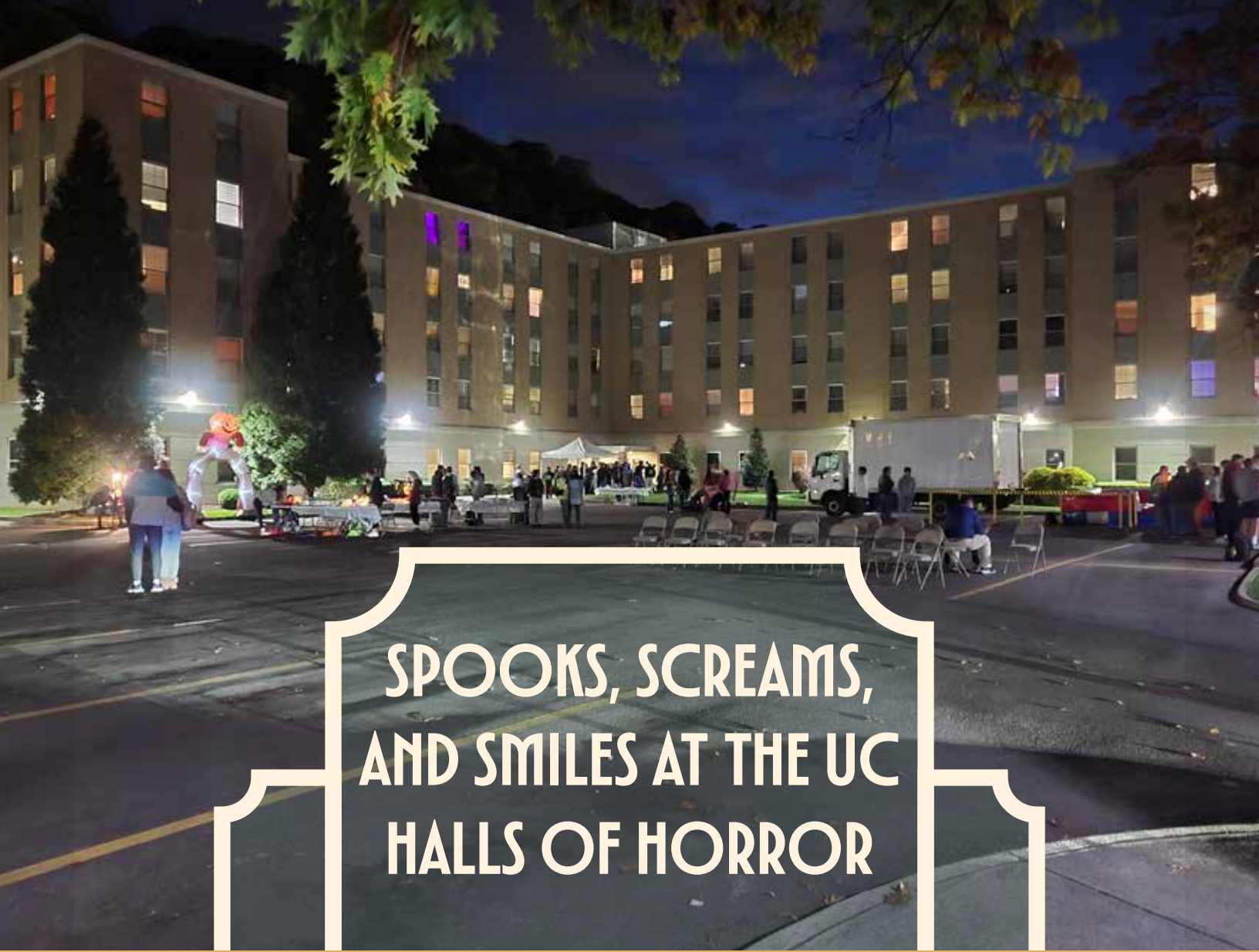
“Our mission is to help the UC community develop new ideas and bring them to life,” said Kahle.



3-D printers from Bambu Lab (left) and Crealty (right).



A LulzBot 3-D printer.



SPOOKS, SCREAMS, AND SMILES AT THE UC HALLS OF HORROR

By: Sam Slodic

On October 28th, Middle Hall was turned into a spooky maze filled with scares and excitement. The University of Charleston hosted its annual Halls of Horror. This event was organized by Student Activities and Residence Life. Year after year, it gives students, faculty, and staff a night full of screams, laughter, and Halloween fun.

“It’s always exciting to see how Middle Hall transforms every year. The team works hard to make sure each floor offers something new and terrifying for students to enjoy,” said one Residence Life coordinator.



This event ran from 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m., with guided tours every few minutes to ensure maximum fright. Outside of Middle Hall, there was a table set up with food, drinks, and snacks for anyone who wanted to stop by along with live music from the UC Choir.

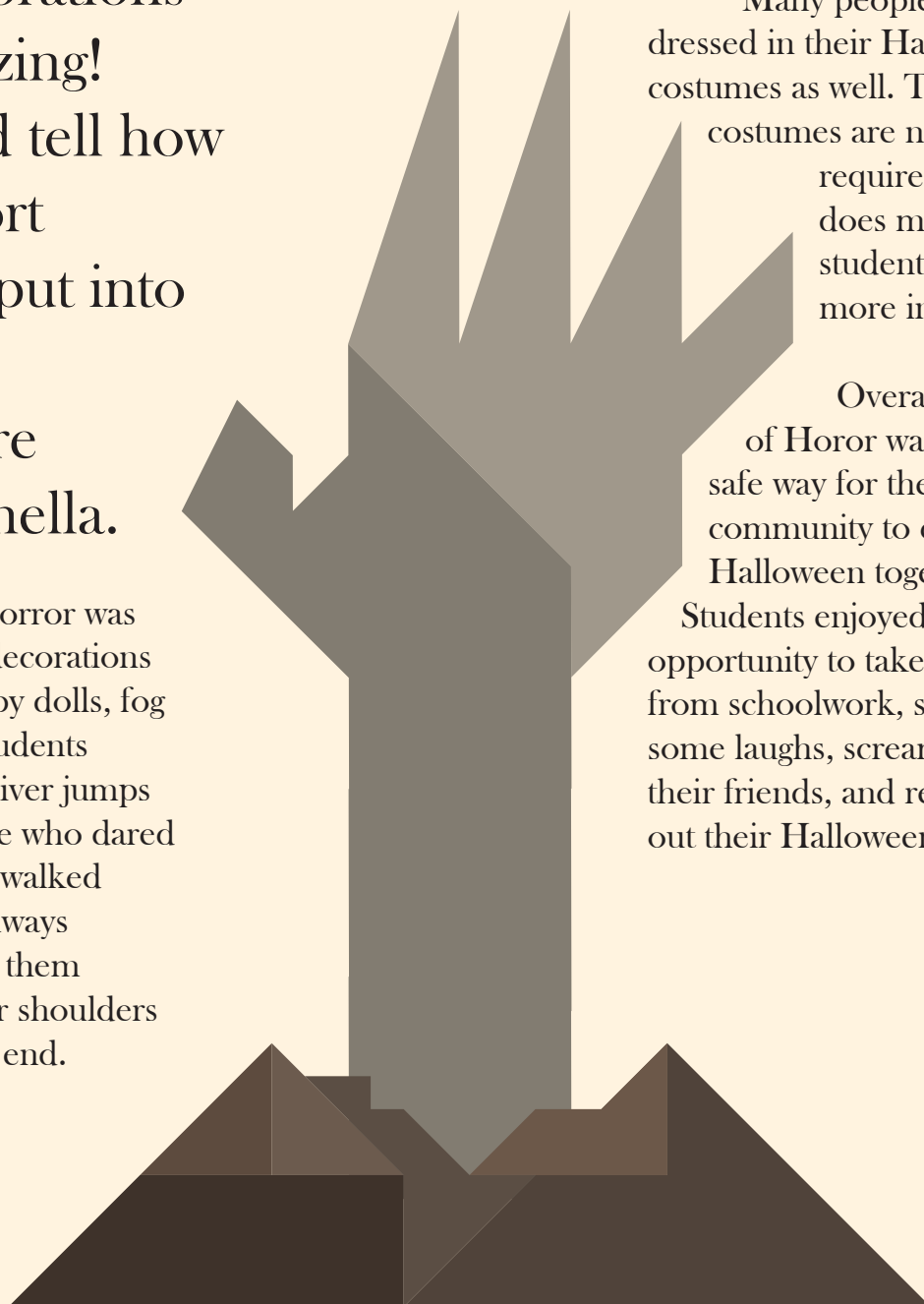
“The decorations were amazing! You could tell how much effort everyone put into it,” said sophomore Ryan Comella.

Halls of Horror was filled with scary decorations like clowns, creepy dolls, fog machines, and students dressed up to deliver jumps and chills to those who dared to enter. Visitors walked through dark hallways designed to keep them looking over their shoulders all the way to the end.

“I loved that people came in costumes. It made the whole night feel more like a big Halloween party than just a haunted house,” said junior Owen McMulkin.

Many people came dressed in their Halloween costumes as well. Though costumes are not required, it sure does make students feel more involved.

Overall, Halls of Horror was a fun, safe way for the campus community to celebrate Halloween together. Students enjoyed the opportunity to take a break from schoolwork, share some laughs, scream with their friends, and really bring out their Halloween spirit.





TALKING TO A SQUIRREL

THE INSTAGRAM ACCOUNT THAT TRACKS SQUIRRELS ON CAMPUS

By: Alex Cochran

Photo via Instagram @ucwv.squirrels

Wherever people go, the humble squirrel will surely follow. Along the trees and buildings, in search of nuts and foodstuffs, the family Sciuridae scurry all around campus. Take, for instance, one such preserved vignette of a resident University of Charleston squirrel gnawing in its tiny palms a whole slice of pizza.

This oddity can be found on Instagram at the fan-run account [@ucwv.squirrels](https://www.instagram.com/ucwv.squirrels). The true identity of the person behind the account is a mystery, but online, she goes by the pseudonym Squirrel and shares user submissions of squirrel photos taken on campus. Some of the account's most notable mugshots include a squirrel stretched out over an outside table and another squirrel perched inside a trash can. After a brief chuckle, one can only question the origin of such novelty. Fortunately, Squirrel answered.

“I was inspired by my friend who showed me her school's squirrel Instagram account! So, I decided to make one, too. I also love squirrels and there are a lot on campus, so it was a pretty easy decision to make this account!”



A common squirrel under a bench.

Squirrel said the account has been operational since 2023, demonstrating two years of campus squirrel chronicling. In this time, more than 170 people have followed her account, including a number of UC's official accounts, and even some similar squirrel accounts from other college campuses. This social network of squirrel devotion begs one question: does furball photography transcend into something beyond vanity for the order Rodentia? In other words, what social effect does an account like this have on campus?

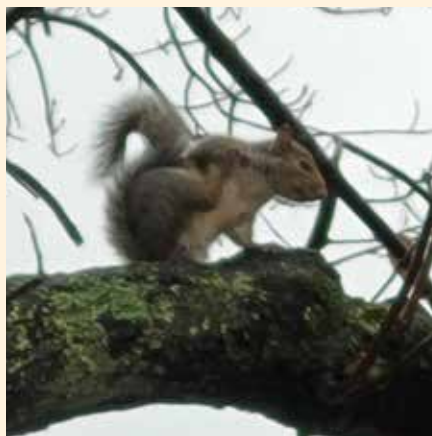
According to Squirrel, the account helps to promote positivity

“People talk about it on campus. I've heard people say how it brings them joy to see the posts.”

When looking through Squirrel's posts, such positive moments of campus yester-joy are preserved like a time capsule. On February 5, 2024, a cheery student once gave two thumbs up to a squirrel balancing on a bench. In another post from October 23, 2023, another student gestured at a squirrel until it tagged a few fingers with its nose.

In this manner, Squirrel's page is a library of happy moments. No matter the time, no matter how little, everyone can look at squirrels and collectively giggle.

If one looks close enough, there's always something intriguing at the Charleston campus. To contribute to this collective wonder, send pictures of squirrels to @ucwv.squirrels on Instagram.



Left: A campus squirrel circa November, 2022.

Right: A squirrel gnawing a nut outside of Riggleman Hall, circa October, 2022.



Two squirrels enjoying the UC campus.

“It's always a pleasant surprise when I do get a squirrel picture. I enjoy getting to post pics when I do receive them.”



WORLD FEST AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHARLESTON

By: Robert Wickliffe

Photo via Instagram @ucwv

The University of Charleston hosts World Fest each semester to help celebrate our international students.

“It brought joy to my eyes seeing that the University cares about us having events for us on campus,” said David Madej who is from Poland.

This past fall, UC celebrated over 30 countries, including Japan, Italy, Poland, and Spain. The festivities included food/drink samples, music from around the globe, and even dancers from various regions.

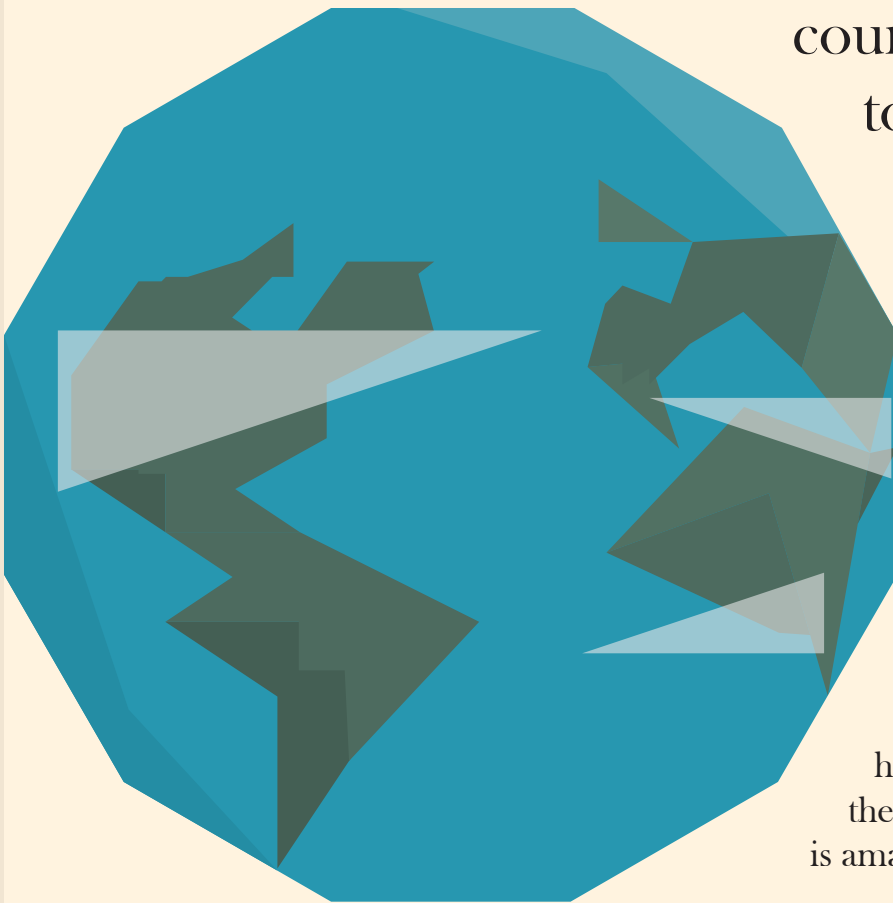
Gabrielle Harrison, who is from Canada, said “Spain had a stand set up with different sets of candies. Each one had its unique flavor from chocolate wafers to sugary fruits.”

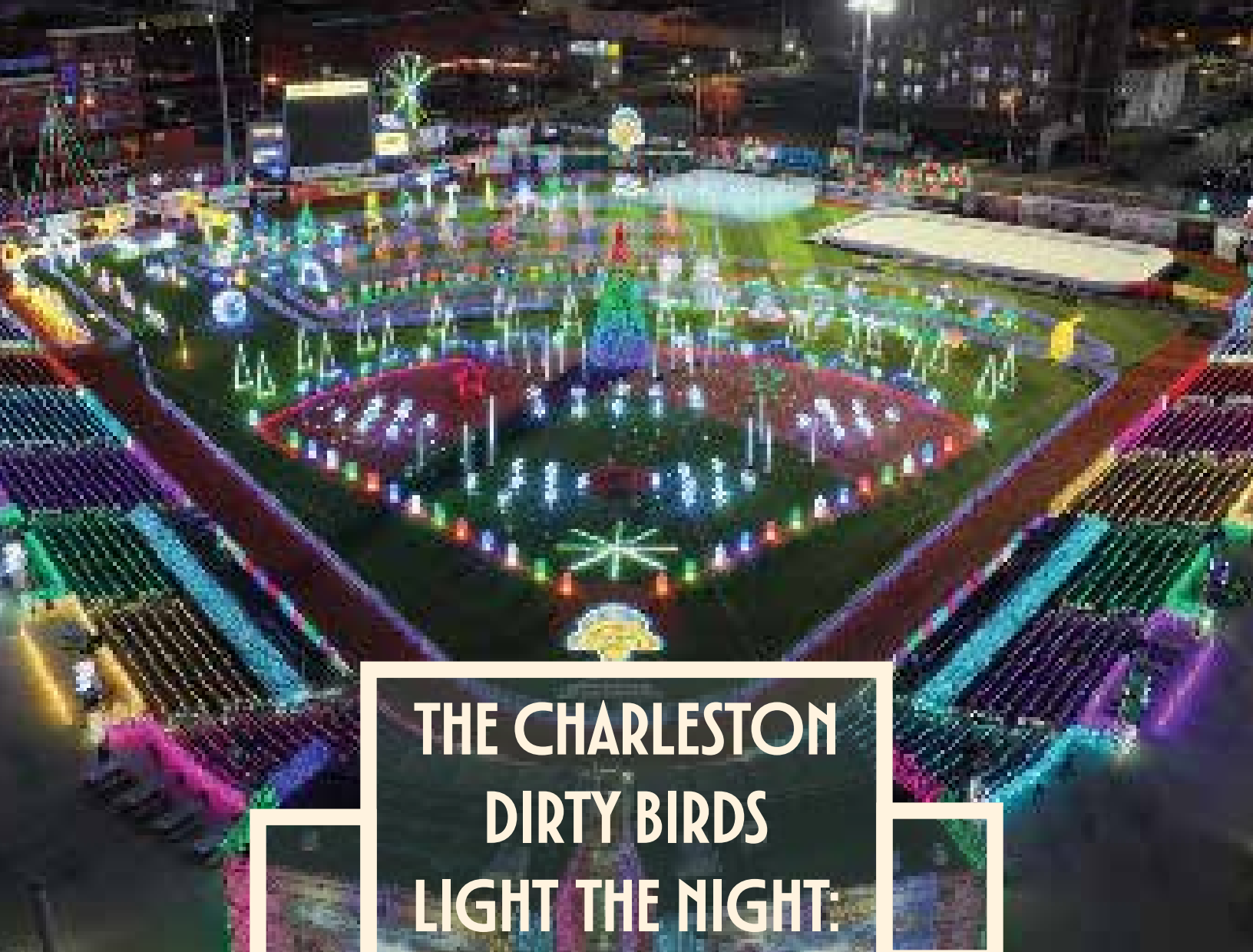
“The fact that the university let us bring a piece of our culture to show here is very heart warming. You could see a lot of other internationals having a blast,” said Adonis Soto whose nationality is Puerto Rican.

“Its almost like if all the countries came together to celebrate and have world peace,” said Madej.

In the spring semester, UC will host World Fest for transfer students who couldn’t attend in the fall. This one will include a fashion show.

“The University of Charleston really cares a lot about their international students; hopefully they can attract more as the years go by because the love here is amazing!” said Soto.





THE CHARLESTON DIRTY BIRDS LIGHT THE NIGHT:

A HOLIDAY TRADITION SHINING BRIGHT

By: Sam Slodic

Photo via WCHS-TV

The holiday season in Charleston is about to get even brighter. The third annual Salango Law Dirty Birds Light The Night is returning to GoMart Ballpark this year and promises to be the best celebration yet.

From November 21 through January 1, 2026, families and friends can experience over 2.5 million lights and a host of festive attractions designed to bring joy to all ages. Light The Night will be open Monday through Thursday from 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. and Friday through Sunday from 5:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

This event will be closed on Christmas Day. Tickets go on sale this fall, and guests are encouraged to purchase them early to make sure they secure their preferred date.

This winter wonderland transforms the home of the Charleston Dirty Birds baseball team into a glowing landscape of light and color. The event has eight themed displays, each offering an interactive holiday experience.

From huge winter scenes to glowing tunnels of light. Guests can walk along the ballpark, surrounded by sparkling displays, such as the Winter Forest and Fairytale Land.

One of the most popular spots is the outdoor ice rink, located right along the first baseline. Skaters can enjoy the view of the stars and the glow of the nearby lights. For those who may be looking for more of a thrill, the event also has ice bumper cars, carnival rides, and games.

No holiday event is complete without Santa Claus making an appearance. Children can meet Santa, share their wish list, and take pictures. Families can also stay warm by the fire pits, where they can make S'mores and drink hot chocolate.

In addition to the holiday fun, Light The Night also offers opportunities for shopping. Local vendors will be around selling seasonal decorations and gifts, making it easy for visitors to find something special for everyone on their list.

Multiple food options will also be available.

The combination of lights, laughter, and community spirit creates an unforgettable holiday experience for everyone.

Whether you're skating under the stars, trying to win a prize, or taking pictures with Santa, the Dirty Birds Light The Night event is an amazing way to bring out your holiday spirit.

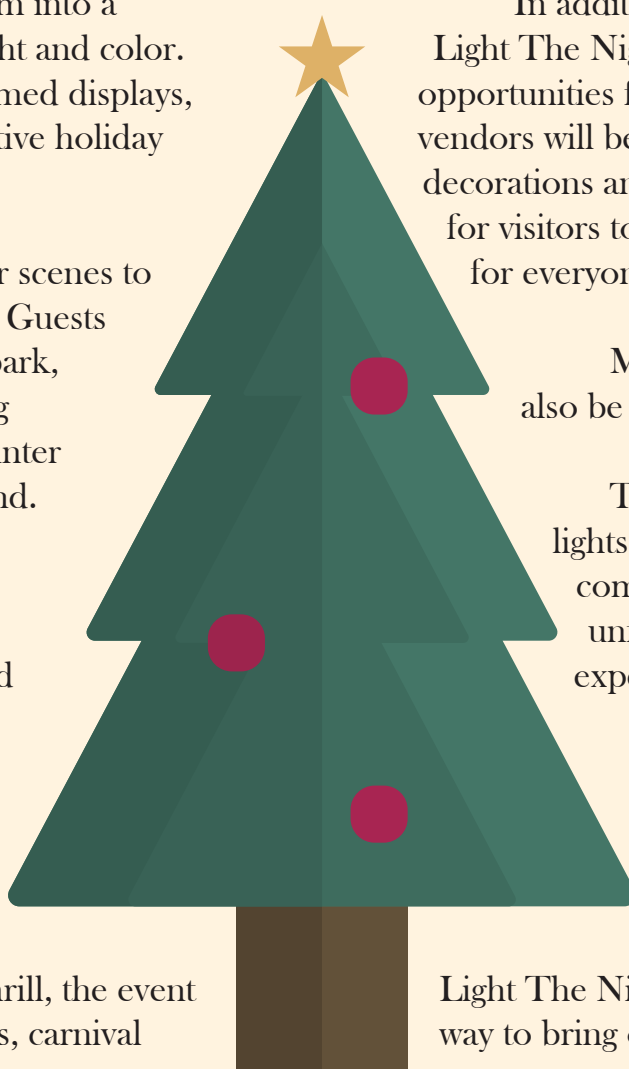




Photo via Charleston Gazette-Mail

Pricing:

General admission tickets do not include all activities.

For the most up-to-date and accurate information on ticket pricing, please consult the official website.



TIMELESS, ENDURING, WANTED.

Every semester, the Eagle produces bold and tangible results that impress employers.

As a news publication run by students, the Eagle is an open platform for students to share their ideas while also gaining real-world experience.

It is a cross-effort between fields like English, Communication, and Digital Media Design, and is always seeking new students.

PRODUCED BY

EDITORS: DR. JEANNIE DALPORTO
PROFESSOR HANNAH KENNEDY

WRITERS: ALEX COCHRAN
SAM SLODIC
ROBERT WICKLIFFE

LAYOUT: ALEX COCHRAN

