NATIONAL COMING OUT DAY CELEBRATION

Students celebrated National Coming Out Day to end the It's On Us: Week Of Action.

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STATESBORO STUDENTS BURN AUTHOR’S BOOK

Students make their voices heard to administration concerning the incident at an SGA Open Forum.

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SGA Holds Open Forum on Book Burning Incident

Chief of Staff Brian Kohler then said, “Two years ago the advisors weren’t teaching first year seminar on this campus and also for the past three years the SGA, since before consolidation, has been trying to push for mandated diversity training for professors, advisors.”

Marrero referred the question to Interim Vice President for Student Affairs Dr. Melanie Miller. Miller said, “Outside of the complexes there are grills that are built into the ground that are permanently there and this was one of those grills. I don’t think you have to get permission to.”

The student replied with, “Are those grills Georgia Southern property?”

Miller said, “I assume they are. Yes.”

The student then went on, “Well then why don’t they have to fill out a form? If the grill that we use here on Armstrong’s campus is Georgia Southern property and the grill that they use at their student complexes are Georgia Southern property, why are they not filling out open flames request forms and going through the proper training that we have to do here?”

Marrero commented, “Great point. I learned something.”

STATEMENT FROM SGA EVP SPENCER DEMINK

What happened last Wednesday in Statesboro would by some, only be described as students exercising their first amendment rights. Although this is true, I would better describe it as racist behavior and should be treated as such.

You will hear university administration say they are bound by certain policies and laws that prevent them from taking action upon the students that burned a Cuban-American woman’s literature, for calling students privileged because they are white. Barring the irony that after these students were called privileged, they probably did the most privileged thing they could do by literally burning books… is the fact that our top officials cannot take further action. But this does not mean we as students cannot either.


Those students protested something they disagreed with but there is nothing against us protesting their actions right back to them. Do not stay silent. Silence will only bring the understanding that we are okay with what happened last Wednesday. And I am not. We as your Student Government are not and I hope you aren’t either.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT PROPER ANSWERS

BY JASON CHAPMAN
The George-Anne Inkwell Staff

“Your going to hear university administration say they were bound to certain policies and laws that prevent them from taking action among students that burned a Cuban-American woman’s literature for calling students privileged for being white, part of the irony that after these students were called privileged they did probably the most privileged thing they could do, they burned books, the fact that our top officials not taking further action does not mean that we as students can not either,” said SGA Executive Vice President Spencer DeMink in his opening statement, at the open forum to discuss the book burning that took place on the Statesboro campus on Oct. 9. The forum was held on Oct. 14.

The students that took part in the burning of Jennine Capó Crucet’s novel “Make Your Home Among Strangers” on a grill in Statesboro last week are not being sought out or reprimand because they are protected by their first amendment rights according to administration.

University President Dr. Kyle Marrero said, “Here we are we’re dialoguing about something that happened last week that we have to press into… This is a campus of which we have to unite together and understand what we will tolerate what we will allow to happen on our campus’ and then how we will uphold First Amendment rights. These aren’t easy. These aren’t easy conversations.”

Marrero went on to name the many First Year Experience (FYE) classes that deal with diversity. He then went through the events that lead up to the book burning.

Marrero mentioned, “Students were strongly encouraged but not required to attend her presentation.” However, by multiple accounts, students were told to attend.

Marrero then went on to clarify that there were never crowds gathering outside of the Crucet’s hotel.

Marrero said, “I am not able to respond as quickly as you would like me to respond. I don’t respond at the speed of social media.”

The event was investigated by campus authorities and a statement was released. Marrero said, “It wasn’t until we had via investigation enough information for me to respond to campus. The approval for that statement was expedited via the legal and system process and sent to campus Friday afternoon.”

The event occurred that Wednesday night.

Marrero went on, “Some of you would like to see more formal action taken on the students in the video and I can empathize—I can sympathize with your frustration and even your anger. My job. My job is to protect the rights of all students.”

Students were then given a chance to ask questions. The first question was, “From your perspective how can I, a white person, address somebody else’s white privilege when they don’t address it existing?”

Marrero replied with his experience of being born in Puerto Rico and growing up in New Mexico. He then went on to to tell the audience of his realization that he understands what privilege is and “that it’s real.”

Marrero said, “This is a real subject area of which we all need to understand and understand those perspectives together.”

Another student brought up the fact that these issues of racism are systemic issues, and talks about how the people teaching these classes aren’t qualified because of budget cuts.

She said, “If these hard conversations were had in class then it wouldn’t have been such a huge deal at the event… What I do believe is that the university is trying to put a bandaid over a bullet hole… Are these professors—are these advisors going to be taught how to have these hard conversations?”

Marrero stepped away from the microphone and let the VP of Academic Affairs Dr. Carl Reiber answer this question.

Reiber went on to urge students to look at the syllabus, and said that Armstrong’s FYE classes have been predominantly taught by advisors.

Marrero commented, “Great point. I learned something.”

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To contact the editor, email chief.inkwell@gmail.com
PICK OF THE WEEK

Visiting Writer Series: Craft Talk with Beth Ann Fennelly
Thursday, October 17 at 11 a.m. to 12 p.m.
Gamble Hall

Sponsored by the College of Arts and Humanities, Visiting Writer Beth Ann Fennelly, Poet Laureate of Mississippi and Professor of English at the University of Mississippi’s Graduate Program in Creative Writing, will conduct a craft talk for students at 11 a.m. in Gamble Hall on the Armstrong Campus. This event is free and open to students from all Georgia Southern University Campuses.

MEME OF THE WEEK


PLAYLIST

Creepin’ It Real

We Fell In Love In October- Girl In Red
Portions for Foxes- Rilo Kiley
No Care- Daughter
Sway- The Hooks
John Wayne Gacy, Jr.- Sufjan Stevens
Highly Suspicious- My Morning Jacket
Pet Sematary- Ramones
Little Razorblade- The Pink Spiders
Helena- My Chemical Romance
Evil Woman- Electric Light Orchestra

To contact the editor, email chief.inkwell@gmail.com
The first part of the Savannah Mayoral forums began on Oct. 10 in the Armstrong Center with a crowd of about 100 people. Four candidates were presented to the audience: Regina Thomas, Incumbent Mayor Eddie DeLoach, District 1 Alderman Van Johnson and Louis E. Wilson. Local WSAV news anchor Tina Tyus Shaw was the moderator of this forum.

In her opening statements, Thomas highlighted the importance of having an audit of the city government to see where money is actually going and having transparency for the people of the city. “I’m no stranger to politics, I served as your state representative for four years and I also served as your state senator for 9 years... We need to do a forensic audit and find out where the money is going and where it is coming from,” Thomas said.

DeLoach began his opening statement by letting everyone know that he’s “the man with the results.” “I’ve had four years of great results with a great council and I look forward to an opportunity to do the same thing. So when you look at things I get results. I don’t tell you about what I’m going to do. I tell you what I have done. I have got 5,739 jobs here in the city of Savannah the last four years. There is $1.5 billion worth of investment in the city of Savannah over the last four years. There’s a 40% drop in the murder rates since I took office. There’s also a 20% drop in the poverty rate since I took office. All of these add up to a very good day in the city of Savannah,” DeLoach said.

Johnson believes in the future. Johnson included that he graduated with his bachelor’s degree from Savannah State College, and received a masters degree from Georgia Southern. “Yes, the mayor just said it is a great day in the city of Savannah but it’s not a good day for everybody,” he began. Johnson continues going on to speak on the issues of homelessness, and other issues that still plague the city. Johnson said, “I’m working to become your mayor to create better days for everybody. There’s a party going on in Savannah, everybody’s just not invited.”

Vietnam veteran Wilson begins by stating his history in accounting and economics. “We got a new city manager and the city manager says that Savannah’s now losing money. We’re spending more money than we’re taking in. This administration came in on a surplus and I think that if we don’t stop the bleeding soon we’re going to have some bad problems,” Wilson said.

Further issues of police department recruitment and retention were then addressed. DeLoach stated that his administration put $5 million into the department for raises and implemented ways to move up in the police department, in turn making a career out of being an officer in the city of Savannah. DeLoach said, “It’s important that we make sure we take care of our officers, we also want to make sure we do a great job of giving them the opportunity to advance.”

Thomas stated that morale within the police department is at an all time low. Thomas said, “It’s hard to keep a police officer when other agencies around in law enforcement pay more, but I think that we need to be sure that we are fair in promotions. We need to make sure that we get rid of the cliques, the friendship, the favoritisms, the cronyism and all the other isms and schisms that affect our police officers. They are overworked and underappreciated.”

Alderman Johnson responded to the question by saying nothing has been given to the department yet. Johnson said, “Because of the demerging of the Savannah Metropolitan Police Department, we ended up in a bidding war between our local area police departments. The two highest paying police departments [were] actively fighting over the same officers. Those who were able to leave left and that’s been our reality. As a result we have 50 less officers right now... You treat people fairly, you pay them a decent wage, you help them see a career path.”

Wilson was the second African-American deputy sheriff in the Chatham County Sheriff’s Department. “I think that we should provide incentives for the police officers to stay, but I think that the rush to load the police department up with policemen too quickly it seems as though a lot of them don’t come out with the right kind of training,” Wilson said.

Question two addressed the crumbling infrastructure of Savannah. Thomas started, “With Savannah being the oldest city in the state of Georgia, I would say that we should have been doing this all along. You do not allow a building or any place else to sit and not revitalize it. It’s going to take a while because when I say we have a fiscal problem in this city, we really do have a fiscal problem in this city.”

Johnson wants a long-term commitment to infrastructure because it is not a project that can be completed in the short-term. Johnson said, “Savannah is an old city. We have old streets. We have larger vehicles that are traveling on them that have never travelled on them before. So it shows.”

Johnson wants to form a long-term plan and make sure that a little bit is done every year.

Wilson believes that frivolous spending is the cause of the loss of our infrastructure. Wilson said, “I didn’t see much sense in buying fairgrounds, I didn’t see much sense in selling the water revenue department. There’s been a lot of kind of shady deals.”

DeLoach said the funding for new infrastructure projects should come from the Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST). According to the Chatham County Department of Engineering, SPLOST was first authorized in 1985 and out of the 159 counties in Georgia, Chatham County was the only one to implement it.

It has been continually implemented every year since then. It is a 1% increase on the sales tax, and 73% of the funds go to infrastructure. The other 27% has gone to quality of life projects like the International Trade and Convention Center.

The General Election day for voting is Tuesday Nov. 5. The polls are open from 7 a.m.-7 p.m. For more information on where to vote in your area, as well as your residency eligibility, please visit vote411.org.

Students listening intently as the candidates answer questions.
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- GREEN: Environmental Biology and Sustainability

To contact the editor, email chief.inkwell@gmail.com
When asked why the National Coming Out Day Celebration was important to her, Lydia Boone, a senior and diversity peer educator, said, “National Coming Out Day here on the Armstrong campus gives students a message that they are loved, supported and accepted, regardless of sexual orientation or preference.”

The Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA) partnered with the Housing office to host The National Coming Out Day Celebration in the Compass Point Clubhouse on Oct. 11. The event was part of the Georgia Southern It’s On Us: Week of Action Oct. 7 - 11. Other events included the Commit to Consent Rally, Beat the Blame Game and the Day for Survivors.

There were markers, colored pencils, glue, glitter and sheets of blank paper so people could decorate their own “Out Cards.” There were buttons with sayings on them such as “ally” and “Best B.” Support and acceptance were common themes expressed at the tables. Both members of the LGBTQ community and allies attended the event.

“I came today because I am an ally. I support everyone who decides to come out. Everyone deserves love,” said student Brianna Benton.

Another student, Asia Brown, said, “It helps show people, especially those who don’t have that much support, there are other people like them.”

Participants were invited to take their picture with a mock Instagram frame and put their own message on it. A wall mirror was hung in the back of the clubhouse for attendees to post positive messages on Post-It Notes around its board so people could see themselves within the “Mirror Affirmation Wall.”

The attendees played two rounds of traditional bingo using Skittles to mark their tiles. Then, the person who called out the words and phrases decided to make the game harder by playing a game of four corners and eventually requiring participants to make an X on their Bingo board before calling “bingo.” The Bingo cards had tiles on them that described prominent people, organizations and words in the LGBTQ movement like Ellen DeGeneres, Ellen Page, The Trevor Project, National Coming Out Day, Love Wins and Anderson Cooper.

Then, the event moved outside for the Coming Out Monologues. During the monologues, three students and one faculty member shared their stories of how they discovered their sexual orientation and came out to those they love.

**DON’T PLAY THE BLAME GAME**

**BY JASON CHAPMAN**

The George-Anne Inkwell staff

Beat the Blame Game, as part of the It’s On Us: Week Of Action, focused on the problem of victim blaming or the act of blaming the victim for a crime or an unfortunate act that happens to them.

The event hosted by Health Services was held in the Ogeechee Theater on Oct. 10.

Beat the Blame Game focused heavily on the act of victim blaming specifically in sexual assault cases. The presenter Anthony Dinicola covered many issues and aspects attached to the act of victim blaming. Dinicola was a lively and well-informed moderator, and he brought the crowd of young college students in to participate often.

Many students in the crowd participated and also seemed to already be informed to what the subject of victim blaming is. Students came to Dinicola with answers as to why people victim blame. Building upon the topic of why people victim blame Dinicola said, “We know from research there’s two major reasons and y’all hit on exactly the two reasons why people victim blame, the first one’s this idea of hindsight bias.”

Hindsight bias refers to people realizing the outcome of a certain chain of events and then they go back and try to find those links (or details) in the chain. They try to inspect every molecule that goes into that chain even when they don’t see the actual chain.

In this case, the outcome is rape and murder. Bystanders hearing about horrific events on the news or in social circles will begin to form their own theories about why things happened a certain way. They might say, “Oh well, she shouldn’t have been wearing those clothes, or he shouldn’t have been in that part of town late at night.”

Dinicola likens this phenomenon to horror movies. Many people love horror movies, especially during the Halloween season. When watching a character running in the woods from a masked killer with a trademark weapon in their hands, that will ultimately lead to the character that is running away’s untimely demise, we are glued to the screen ready for what happens next.

What often happens next is that the character trips on a root and falls face first into the ground. The audience immediately recognizes what has happened. The character made a fatal mistake by tripping on something they didn’t know was there.

The audience erupts. Reacting by wondering why in the world did that character just trip? Horrifically this is what can happen when someone is reported dead, missing or has been a victim of sexual assault. Why did they trip? They shouldn’t have done that.

The infinitely better question is why was there a masked killer chasing people around in the woods looking to hurt them? How can this be stopped? This line of thinking refers back to the abstract idea of identifying proper links in the chain of events.

Dinicola goes on to explain the “just world fallacy” which is the idea that people need to believe one will get what one deserves so strongly that they will rationalize an inexplicable injustice by naming things the victim might have done to deserve it.

“That leads to the second reason we know why people victim blame, that is the just world theory… from a very early age, no one wants these bad things to happen so they start to point at and they start to criticize to attack the person who is victimized,” Dinicola said. People begin to attack the character of the victim.”

When the blame for the rape and murder of another living being is projected at any point onto the victim, that is unjust. The cultural tendency to victim blame is one of many reasons people living with past traumas don’t come forward to accuse the offender.

According to the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN), acts of sexual assault or violence have been cut in half since 1993. One out of six American women have been victims of rape. One out of 33 men have been assaulted or raped in their lifetime. The majority of sexual assaults happen near the victim’s home.

The statistics in this article aren’t intended to scare or drive fear. They are merely facts highlighted so that more people can recognize how often it is occurring. The world isn’t always a just place, and, in hindsight, people can never truly know what happened in any situation. All that people can do is try to prevent it, raise awareness and inform the public on the actual horrors of it.

If you or someone you know has been a victim of sexual assault, please contact RAINN’s National Sexual Assault Hotline 24-hours a day at 1-800-656-4673.

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LEVEL: DIFFICULT

SUDOKU by Myles Mellor and Susan Flanagan

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