



Winthrop University

September 5, 2024

Rock Hill, SC

VOLLEYBALL SEASON PREVIEW

Coach Gearheart and players share their thoughts and goals for the coming season

CORPORATIONS EFFECT ON SMALL BUSINESSES

A dive into the effect big business has on small markets

IMPACT OF PARASOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

Can there be positive benefits in a parasocial relationship?



An excavator tearing down Wofford Hall.

via Instagram/ @winthropu

Winthrop begins demolition of Wofford, Richardson soon to follow

The demolition of Wofford and Richardson Hall, beginning this August, has prompted former residents and alumni to reflect on their experience living the “high-rise life.”

Evi Houston
Staff Writer

The demolition of Wofford and Richardson Hall, the former high-rise residence halls lining Cherry Road, began on Aug. 12, welcoming students back to campus with hazy skies and the sound of crumbling cinder blocks.

The buildings were both built in 1967, with Wofford Hall designated for women students and Richardson Hall for men. Richardson later became a co-ed hall. The buildings “remain among the tallest buildings in Rock Hill” according to Winthrop’s Alumni Association.

While many current

students have never lived in the two dorms (their final year in use was 2021), Winthrop alumni have expressed their feelings of nostalgia for the buildings over social media, with some even returning to campus to pick up bricks from their former home as a memento.

The university has also begun selling “High-Rise Life” t-shirts to memorialize the buildings. The shirts are \$20 and will continue to be sold until Oct. 18.

A few former residents spoke to The Johnsonian about their experience in the high-rise buildings and how the demolition has made them look back on their college years.

Candace Pixley, who graduated from Winthrop in 2007, said, “I spent many nights in that stairwell. Writing in my journal, reading, crying. So many memories of meeting some of the coolest young women ever.”

Beyanca Vinson, class of 2011, felt similarly. “Oh my gosh I have so many memories about Wofford. The crying sessions, parties, study meetups and meeting my best friends for life are what I cherish most from my time there.”

Vinson knew Wofford Hall well, as she was an RA in the building for two years. She describes fulfilling this role as a “really cool experience.” Continuing, “I’m sad to see it torn down, but I

Alumni Jody Gaulin, class of 1979, lived in the Wofford Hall soon after its inception in 1967. She recalls, “I had many great memories while staying in Wofford, but there is one I’ll never forget. We had a fire drill while I was on the top floor, and it was just utter pandemonium. I still take a flashlight when traveling and staying in high rise buildings.”

While Wofford and Richardson will likely be reduced to rubble by the end of this year, according to Winthrop’s Instagram post, the lessons learned and friendships forged within their walls live on forever.

More photos on pg. 2

New rules for SC teachers restrict student privacy

Riley Brodie
AC&T Editor

Significant changes to the South Carolina public education system have been made recently, impacting the current school year. The most notable changes involve tightened book/material regulations and a starting salary increase for teachers. There is additionally a great chance that a statewide cell phone ban will be implemented in 2025.

The State Board Of Education proposed new content regulations for books in South

Carolina public schools which were passed on June 25th.

Section I of Document 5269 from the State Board of Education states that, “Instructional Material is not “Age and Developmentally Appropriate” for any age or age group of children if it includes descriptions or visual depictions of “sexual conduct”. The regulation does not explicitly state what content falls under

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People lined up for Purrfect Pair’s grand opening. photo by Clark Vilardebo

First cat cafe in York County is a purrfect hangout spot for Winthrop students

Lanie Cauthen
Staff Writer

Hang out with furry friends and enjoy coffee at the Purrfect Pair Cat Cafe – the first cat cafe in York County and only the fourth in South Carolina.

“Winthrop students should be excited about the cafe as a great place to work on schoolwork and to relax with cats,” Purrfect Pair Cat Cafe owner Inga Carey said.

The Purrfect Pair Cat Cafe – located at 1125 N Anderson Rd, Suite 101, Rock Hill, S.C., 29730 – features a great area for students to hang out, Carey said.

“We have high-speed internet, free wifi, charging ports, comfy chairs and fun drinks to sip while you’re working on a paper or meeting for a group project,” Carey said. “The cafe side is free to occupy,

admission provides the ‘purrfect’ brain break from your studies.”

To support students, the cafe offers a 15% discount for students who present a student ID. They also host College Nights every Friday from 6 - 8 p.m. to provide a safe space for students. However, students are also encouraged to visit the cafe during slower hours from 10 a.m to 2 p.m.

“Cat cafes are so great for college students, we have coffee to perk you up, cats to help you destress, and more cats to sit on your laptop,” Carey said.

While the cafe offers food and drink for all – such as coffee, slushies, cake pops, cookies, and

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Police Blotter



Evi Houston
Staff Writer

WUPD addresses Cherry Road shooting

Winthrop Police were called to assist RHPD on the site of the Aug. 25 shooting. The shooting took place around 6:30 p.m. at the McDonald's on South Cherry Road. RHPD handled all arrests and assistance to the victim.

Woman followed and asked for money

A woman was followed by a man while walking near the intersection of Oakland Ave. and Eden Terrace on the afternoon of Aug. 23. The man asked her if she could give him any money or share money with him via Cash App. The woman declined and walked to the Good Building for protection, where police were unable to find the subject.

Man injured playing basketball

A man was playing a game of basketball in the West Center when he hit his head on the rim of the net on the evening of Aug. 26. WUPD was called for assistance, but the victim declined further treatment by EMS.

Three cases of marijuana use in Winthrop dorms

Three students were found using or possessing marijuana in their residence hall or apartment during the first two weeks of the semester. The first took place in Phelps Hall on the night of Aug. 19, in which the subject was issued a state citation. The second possession was discovered in a Walk2Campus apartment on Aug. 22, and additionally incurred a state citation. The third incident took place in The Courtyard on Aug. 25, where two students were questioned and one admitted to smoking marijuana. No citations were given, but the student will have to report to the Dean's Office.



Wofford and Richardson through the years | Cont. from pg. 1



Outside of Richardson, late 60s

Photo credit/Louise Pettus Archives



Decorations outside Wofford, late 60s

Photo credit/Louise Pettus Archives



Winthrop students in a Wofford dorm

Photo credit/Winthrop University



Recent photo of the demolition of Wofford Hall

photo by Clark Vilardebo

Local businesses fight back against big corporations, with South Carolina at the forefront of the battle

Jenna Johnson
Guest Writer

The number of local businesses across South Carolina has risen, along with an interest in the many diverse products being made and sold. As the upcoming summer season brings local markets back, vendors prepare by creating their own unique products that compete with what is offered by chain stores.

In the past year, the number of small businesses in South Carolina has grown by 14,000, making up 99% of all establishments in the state and employing 43% of all workers. Yet, many small businesses are overshadowed by chain stores, which have also risen in numbers since 2023.

The U.S. Small Business Administration reports that 13,074 locally-owned businesses closed due to the increase in chain stores over the past year. Some grocery stores, such as Lowe's Foods, Food Lion and Harris Teeter, have partnered with local produce and meat suppliers. This allows small businesses to receive recognition and profits and big companies to advertise locally sourced products.

Caroline Lee, a frequent visitor of the Greenville State Farmers Market, says, "I try to shop at local businesses as much as possible because I'd rather support people in town than big chains owned by people who

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via Instagram/@oldtownmarket

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New SC public school rules | Cont. from pg. 1

the term “sexual conduct.”

Additionally, a complaint process has been put in place for parents who disagree with the content of specific materials being taught.

Section IV of the document states that “a parent or legal guardian of any student who attends a school within a school district and who has made a good faith effort to address their concerns regarding noncompliance with this regulation with school level or district level staff shall have the right to file a complaint requesting that specifically identified Existing Instructional Material be discontinued for any grade level or age group and/or removed by the district board from all district schools and/or should be subject to a requirement of parental consent for some or all grade levels or age groups.”

Students at Winthrop University appear displeased with the implications of these regulations.

Katie Ashmore, a senior elementary

education major, said, “Increasing the number of statewide book bans will only hurt the students in the future. Having so much censorship will lead to the close mindedness of students. Being able to expose them to new and diverse concepts and history will only engage students.”

Tara Carpenter, a sophomore social studies education major, shared a similar sentiment, “I don’t agree with how strict they are becoming. As teachers, it is our job to expose kids to the world in a safe manner and provide a safe place where they can share their opinions. Schools are not a place to push one opinion on kids. Whether it is something we agree with or not, every child is allowed to have their own opinion and they are allowed to have discussions about it.”

Jamie Conran, a senior educational studies major with a concentration in special education said, “They [book bans] are incredibly dangerous and set a precedent of silencing the voices and experiences of

marginalized communities. They also reduce a child’s experience of seeing themselves in media.”

An additional and definite change that has been implemented is a statewide minimum salary increase for public school teachers. According to News19,



photo via Shutterstock

“Both the house and Senate passed the South Carolina state budget for FY 2024-2025” The \$13 billion budget allows the starting teacher salary to rise to \$47,000 a year from \$42,500 a year.

Students at Winthrop University responded more positively to this information.

“The statewide increase in teacher

salaries is where we should begin looking at what we can do for teachers. Teachers do so much more than we give them credit for and their pay is certainly not where it should be but it is a step in the right direction,” said Ashmore.

“District leaders by

department need to be more accessible by their constituents, and also districts need to be more up to date on best practices for more individualized student populations such as students with disabilities and MLs,” said Conran.

According to the Charleston City Paper, a new model policy was given approval by

the board of education on Aug. 13, which outlines a statewide cell phone ban in South Carolina.

The article states, “Board members are expected to give final approval to the policy in September, with local district implementation required by January 2025.”

The South Carolina Department of Education released a document outlining why they believe there is a need for a cell phone ban.

They stated that, “Digital distractions [are] linked to lower academic performance”, “[there is] a significant increase in feelings of loneliness among teens since 2012, coinciding with the rise of smartphone and social media use, which has exacerbated focus issues, anxiety, and irritability.” They also claimed that “a significant number of teachers reported that cell phones contribute to behavioral issues and social problems among students.”

Amy Clausen, a special education professor at Winthrop

University, expressed a more nuanced opinion on the matter. She said, “It is important for students to have cell phones to stay in

communication with their families, whether those are families of origin or their chosen families. Cell phones are an important form of technology that we should be able to teach students how to use appropriately. However, it’s also important for students to have time to learn and socialize with their peers without constant use of cell phones. A balance is needed.”

The education system in South Carolina has recently undergone multiple changes and will continue to in the future. It’s important for residents to stay up to date with potential adjustments in policies and regulations while they are still in the process of reaching appealment or rejection.

**Cat Cafe | Cont. from pg. 1**

cookies and more – it also includes a storefront with cat themed goods. The coffee and snacks are provided by local businesses – including Forte Legato Coffee Company, K&M Sweets and The Magic Box.

Winthrop student and Purrfect Pair lead barista Allie Waterhouse created the standard specialty drinks for the cafe. Each month features different themed specialty drinks, with September featuring Taylor Swift themed drinks.

Not only does the cafe provide a great space for students, it provides cats a chance to find a forever home. Purrfect Pair partners with the

Humane Society of York County to feature cats in the cafe, making the cats available for adoption.

“I think a big bonus is seeing the cats go to a really great home,” Purrfect Pair Cat Cafe employee Elliot Baker said.

Since their opening, 22 cats have been adopted from Purrfect Pair.

“Cats are amazing creatures that provide great companionship,” Carey said. “It is a long term commitment but I promise the love and joy you will feel for this animal enriches your life so much more than just going through it alone.”

Carey was inspired to create a cat cafe as

a way to do good after her parents’ passing.

“After both of my parents passed away in 2020 and 2021, I received an inheritance that I didn’t just want to spend on frivolous things and started to search for ways to reinvest in the community,” Carey said.

She combined her love of cats with this desire to create Purrfect Pair – while working as a teacher at India Hook Elementary.

“It is definitely never a dull day with two very demanding jobs, but both are so rewarding in different ways and that’s what keeps me going,” Carey said.

Over 400 people visited the cafe on it’s

opening day, May 25th. Visitors can support the cafe by donating to it along with the Humane Society.

“The cafe and HSYC can take donations of unopened food, litter, beds, toys, towels and more. We have a donation bin at the cafe that the HSYC volunteers get when they do regular checkups on the cats,” Carey said. “The best way to support the cafe is to stop by and see us and tell all your friends! Like us on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and plan to support our small business.”

To book a reservation or learn more about the cafe, visit <https://www.purrfectpaircatcafe.com/>.



photo by Lanie Cauthen



photo by Clark Vilardebo

But I thought we were friends: The targets and evolution of parasocial relationships

Christa Young
Guest Writer

Parasocial relationships often start innocently. You like a photo of your favorite actor. You leave a congratulatory comment under a singer’s post. You might talk to the TV as you root for your favorite athlete or dream about a stranger on the street. Then, you start to clip their photo to your wall, set their face as your phone’s wallpaper, or bet money on their dreams.

Parasocial relationships like this grow from a person’s

belief that they have a special or mutualistic relationship with someone that doesn’t know they exist. While this is often attributed to celebrities, they can also be connected to fictional characters or everyday people you’ve never met.

What separates a parasocial relationship from being a fan is in the decisions they make and how far they take their interest. The distinction is in quantity of media they consume of them, what they buy, their emotional connection and their ability to form other relationships in real life. They may also

begin to copy their favorite celebrity, support them financially and build communities with others ingrained in celebrity worship.

The biggest misconception about these relationships is that their only target is teenage girls. However, this demographic, generalized as obsessive and too impassioned, are not the only ones.

The most notable figure attached to parasocial relationships is Taylor Swift. This singer songwriter blurs the lines between fan and friend. Before releasing

past albums - “1989,” “reputation,” and “Lover” - Swift would host “Secret Sessions” or listening parties at her home and hotels across the world. In two Youtube videos posted to the official Taylor Swift account, Swift details the process of “handpicking” groups of fans called “Swifties” to listen to her albums before their release. They mingled with her, played with her cats, even ate her homemade cookies. In other words, Swift attempted to foster actual relationships with a small group of fans as a business

strategy. Her most devoted fans have been chasing that intimacy ever since.

While the most popular examples of people in parasocial relationships surround young women and girls, no one is immune to it. Another area of entertainment where parasocial relationships emerge is sports.

In a study called “The Return of the King”, researchers detailed parasocial relationships Northeast Ohio residents had in connection to LeBron James. After leaving the Cleveland Cavaliers, these researchers reported some of these

found that some of these fans felt actual grief. Like fans of musical artists and celebrities, sports fans interact with social media and advertising of their favorite celebrities in similar ways.

Ultimately, this phenomenon transcends gender, sex, age, and orientation.

These examples still leave us with unanswered questions about why this phenomenon matters and how they are created.

Jadyn Williams, a senior biology major,

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EDITORIAL

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Small business vs. big business | Cont. from pg. 3

don't know. I also know what exactly I'm getting and what's been put into the food I get locally. When I buy from a grocery store, sometimes I don't know where exactly the food is from. And bigger stores use all kinds of pesticides on produce. It may cost a little bit more to shop locally but that goes towards keeping the businesses open."

Farmers markets are the biggest form of local advertising for small businesses according to the South Carolina Department of Agriculture. The SCDA says there are 133 markets across the state that operate throughout the year. With summer markets being the most popular, vendors are preparing for a busy season.

Chancey Lindsey-Peake, owner of Banana Manna, says, "The benefit of shopping locally is an opportunity to give back to the community and keep it thriving. If you don't shop locally, we, as small businesses, would die off. It has been said that small local businesses cannot compete with big

businesses, but I beg to differ. Local businesses take more pride in their product, they get it fresher and you can taste the love in it."

Lindsey-Peake sells her banana bread at the Downtown Saturday Market in Greenville, South Carolina, along with 75 other vendors. This market brings the community together with lots of locally sourced and handmade products, live entertainment, and food trucks. Markets like this offer guests an experience along with their day of shopping.

Joyce Lee from Taylors, South Carolina, says, "I need to go to the farmers market more. I think it's better to buy produce from around here because I know it's fresh. I'll go to the farmers market when some fruits and vegetables are in season. I do try to buy products in the grocery store that say they're locally grown or made in the state."

Shopping locally allows small businesses to grow and expand what they have to offer, as well as preserve their individual cultures,

heritages, and passed-down traditions. This is what makes both the shopping experience and product unique compared to a chain grocery store, according to the directors of the Downtown Saturday Market.

Vendors also market the sustainability of their products. Goods produced locally do not have to be transported as far, require less manufacturing, and use regional materials. Becca Wade, owner of Becca's Beeswax Wraps, creates a sustainable and reusable alternative to plastic wrap to decrease plastic pollution. Her products are sold at the Downtown Saturday Market as well.

The U.S. SBA says vendors and small businesses across South Carolina have generated \$3 billion in exports, boosting local economies in the last two years. The biggest markets in South Carolina can be found in Charleston, Greenville, Spartanburg and Columbia. Rock Hill also hosts one through the year, called "Old Town Market."



Greenville farmers market

Photo credit: VisitGreenvilleSC



Small store with "Going out of Business" sign

AP Photo/Wilfredo Lee

Parasocial Relationships | Cont. from pg. 1

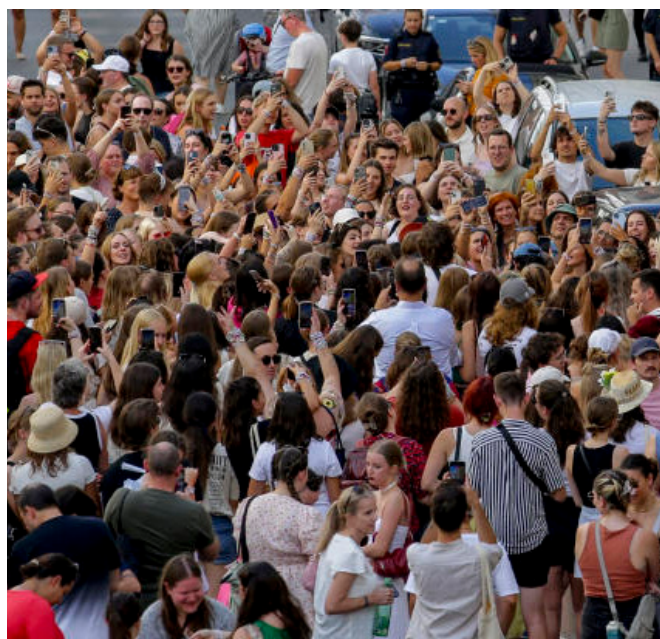
had a difficult time separating parasocial relationships from their regular fan behavior. Ultimately, they'd concluded they hadn't had any parasocial relationships when they said, "I get invested in a [book] character but never to the point of delusion."

But is a delusion the only catalyst?

Often, these relationships can stem from loneliness.

Kyntrea Roberts, a junior interior design major, said "I think people engage in parasocial relationships because of mental illness. Specifically, if it's dangerous to other people and perhaps yourself, then you could have some mental issues."

There are undeniable and sometimes unintentional positive effects of parasocial



Group of Swifties in Vienna, Austria AP Photo/Heinz-Peter Bader

relationships. Most notable is the bonds created in online and in-person communities. However, the danger of parasocial relationships can evolve quickly. What was once a simple case of naivety can grow detrimental. Carsyn Smith said, "a negative of parasocial relationships is that, in extreme cases, it can create stalkers." As newer generations gain more access to the internet and interact with celebrities in online spaces, we may see this worsen.

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2024 Volleyball season preview

After an up-and-down 2023 season, Winthrop volleyball looks to bounce back and win the Big South

Clark Vilardebo
Editor-in-Chief

Following a season that saw a 0-10 start and a 14-4 finish, one goal is echoed amongst the Winthrop volleyball team: consistency.

“Our biggest challenge from last year was our cohesion on the court. We had a lot of amazing players and pieces, but we struggled to consistently fit together to complement each other’s talents,” said junior outside hitter Avery Jolley.

The team already has some consistency in the form of their roster, with 12 of the 18 players from last year returning along with head coach Heather Gearheart. However, players like Jolley don’t necessarily see that as an advantage or disadvantage.

“We are focused on the future and growing the 18 players we have this season. That’s not to discredit the seniors we lost. We lost a lot of great talent and leadership, but we also have an amazing group of freshmen who have come in and helped raise our level of play and better us as a team,” Jolley said. “Overall, we have a special group this year with a lot of potential and our main goal is to elevate that potential every time we practice and then let our hard work show in games.”

The volleyball team had quite a difficult schedule to start last season, which included

a matchup against the consistently ranked Florida Gators. Despite the slow start to last season, they were able to finish the year on quite a hot stretch, which coach Gearheart views as a positive sign heading into this year.

“I think we did a really nice job of peaking at the right time and taking the lessons from non-conference into our conference season,” said coach Gearheart. “We talk a lot about our goal is to win in November, not August, so our team did a really nice job of weathering the storm and remaining motivated to win when it matters in conference.”

Gearheart, who is in her second year as the full-time head coach after having the interim tag removed in December of 2022, has one major goal on her mind this season.

“We want to be Big South Conference Tournament champions and earn a berth to the NCAA tournament,” Gearheart said.

When asked what their number 1 goal for the season is, Jolley echoed a similar sentiment, but also focused on building for the future.

“I want to help us dominate and continue to help build a lasting culture for Winthrop Volleyball,” said Jolley. The senior group we have is great, and they are big on the legacy and culture we leave behind, so not only do I

want to help us dominate in conference play, but I want to continue to build a culture where we are each other’s fiercest competitors and biggest supporters.”

That is more than a possibility this year, with the Big South preseason poll voting Winthrop as having the second-best odds of winning the conference.

Avery Jolley and redshirt junior setter Isabella Murray were also voted on to the preseason all-conference team, the second consecutive year for both players.

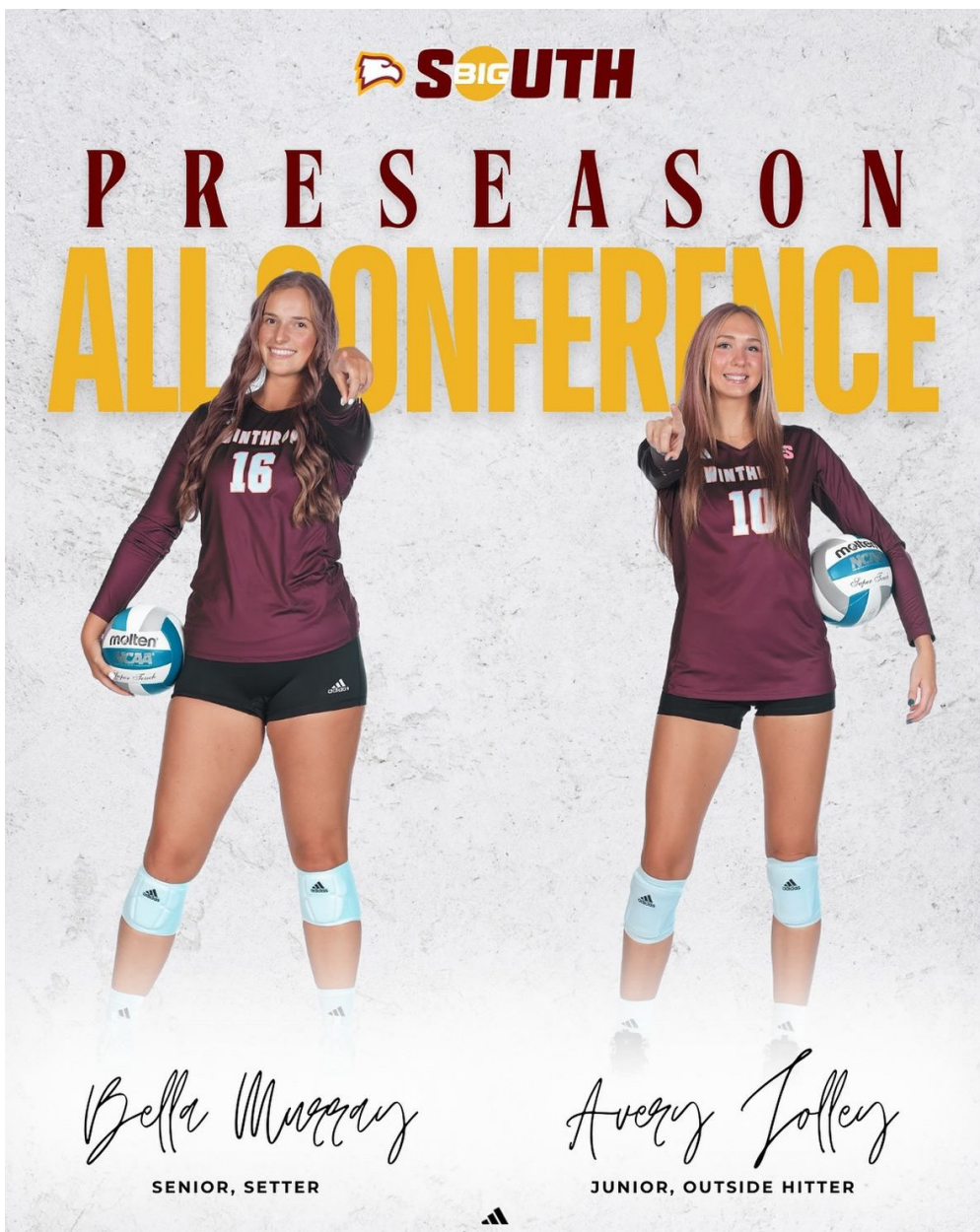
Despite the preseason hype and accolades, the team is just looking to take it one game at a time and focus on the present.

“We bring it up when the rankings and awards come out but don’t really discuss it after that day,” said coach Gearheart. “It is cool to earn recognition, but we don’t let other’s opinions dictate our own personal or program worth.”

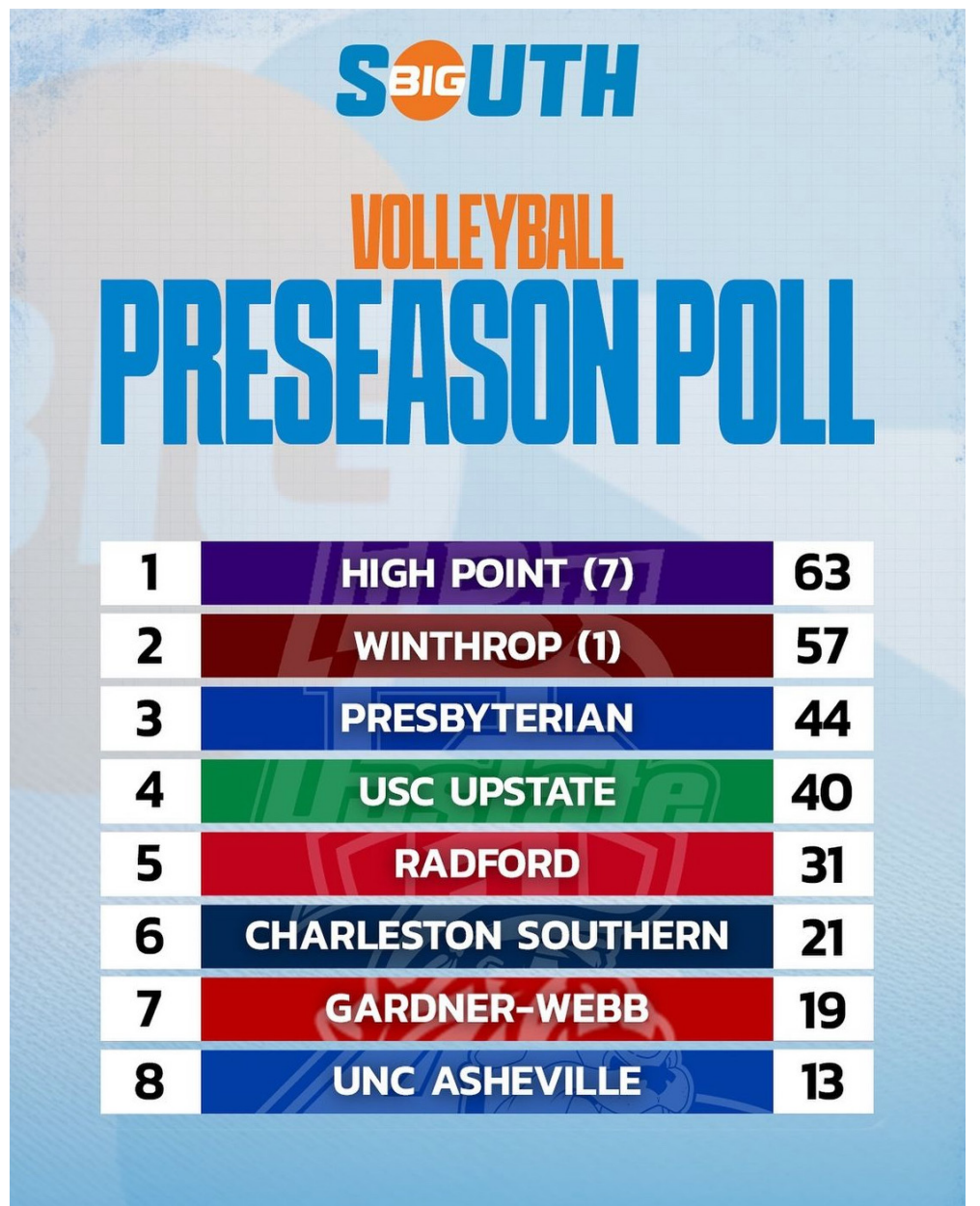
It looks as if the trials and tribulations from last season are already paying off, as Winthrop won their recent match against Virginia Tech on Sunday. The Lady Eagles continue their non-conference schedule as they head back up to Virginia for matches against Lafayette and VCU this Friday and Saturday. They will then head up to Boone, N.C. for the Black and Gold Invitational.



Winthrop volleyball players celebrate during their 3-0 win over Virginia Tech Photo credit/Winthrop Athletics



Bella Murray and Avery Jolley posing for all-conference honors via Instagram/@bigsouthsports



Pre-season volleyball rankings via Instagram/@bigsouthsports

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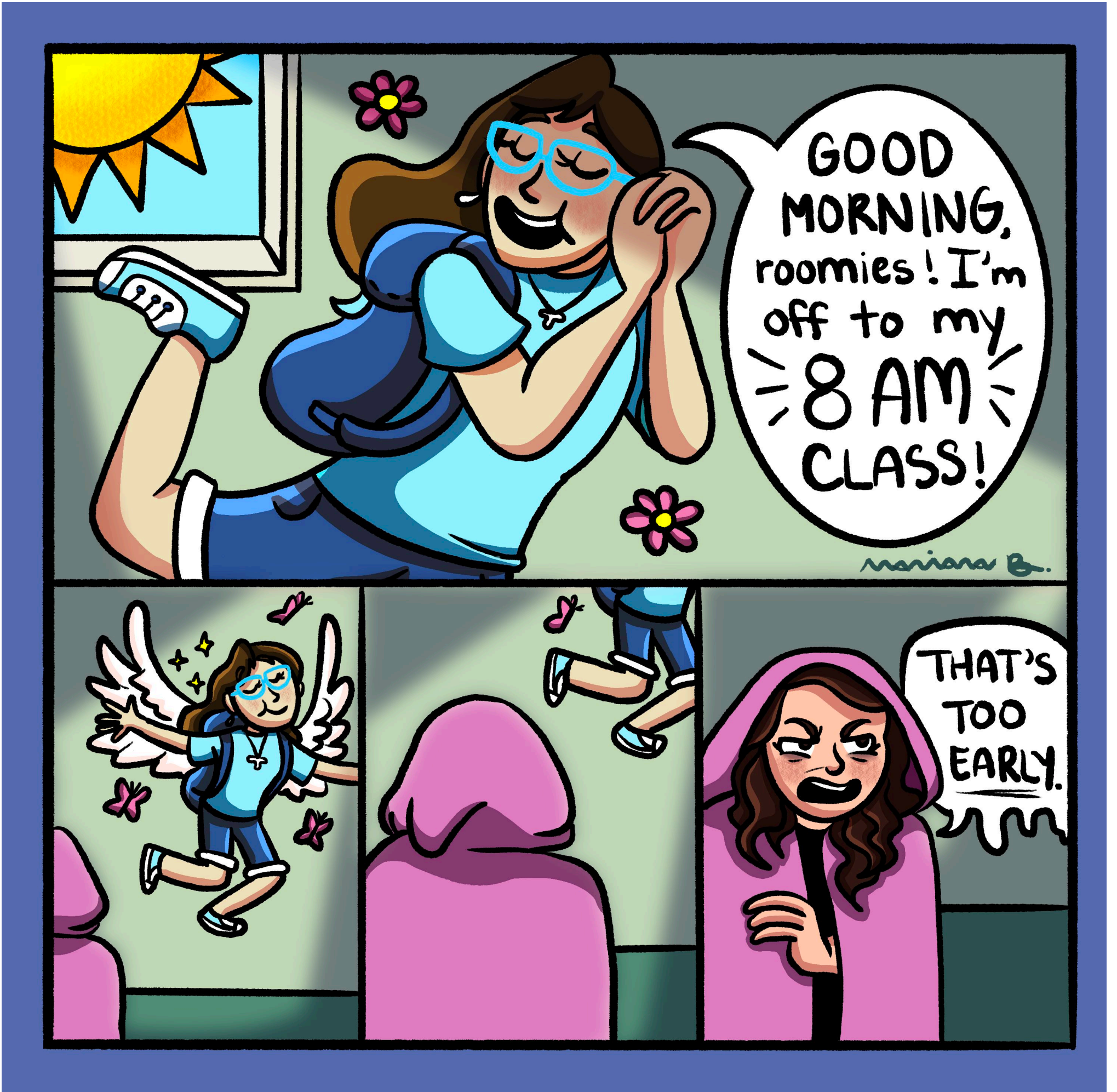
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