



Winthrop University

October 17, 2024

Rock Hill, SC

## REPORTS OF MOLD IN DORMS

Students are expressing health and safety concerns regarding mold in residence halls

## BATTLE OVER WATER SUPPLY

Rock Hill and Charlotte struggle to reach agreements over Catawba River access

## DSU HOSTED DRAG SHOW RETURNS

Hear from those who will be performing in Winthrop's student union annual drag show, DragWU



Fallen tree and powerline outside of Johnson Hall

photo by Julie Schrader

# Hurricane Helene wreaks havoc across Winthrop's campus

While Winthrop recovers from Hurricane Helene, students question the university's response to the emergency. Facilities Management Associate Vice President, James Grigg, offers his perspective.

**Zachary Bell**  
News Editor

On Sept. 26, Helene made landfall as a Category 4 storm, sweeping through the Panhandle and striking as far north as Tennessee. In South Carolina, 72 mph winds and heavy flooding tore through unprepared communities. In total, 36 people had died, and 1.3 million customers were without power. Images of the damage to Winthrop's campus and Rock Hill circulated online in the aftermath: downed power lines, flooded roads, fallen trees, and debris. Worse still, the storm left many Winthrop students completely in the dark.

James Grigg, the Associate Vice

President of Facilities Management, talked with The Johnsonian about the stresses that Helene put on the campus.

"I've got no power on campus. I've got [a] limited amount of generation power... We're not going to be able to keep the student body on campus much longer," said Grigg.

Duke Energy, which provides power for most Winthrop facilities, had been crippled by Helene. Although the university remained in contact with Duke throughout the storm, the extent of the damage strained Duke Energy's resources.

"At that point, Duke Energy was thinking it could be as far as Monday before power

could be restored to campus," Grigg said.

Helene's unexpected severity left many students feeling uncertain about their immediate future.

Caitlyn Mayes, a sophomore who lives in Phelps Hall, spoke about her experience. "I found out we had to evacuate at the very last minute. I found out at 3:30 or 4 [on Friday] that we had to evacuate. And I'm not from the Rock Hill area."

Although Mayes had learned of the evacuation on Friday, campus leadership had been made aware of Helene five days before the storm made landfall.

At the time, Helene's path and strength were still in flux, but

campus leadership had already begun their preparations. Grigg described the effort as "getting a leg up" by taking proactive steps that would not disrupt campus activity. These preparations included stocking generators with fuel, cleaning gutters, and draining Winthrop Lake.

On the morning of Sept. 26, the Winthrop University Emergency Management Team announced that Friday classes would be remote. The damage proved to be worse than anticipated: the next morning, university leadership closed the campus and canceled Friday classes entirely. Six hours later, university leadership extended that closure through

Sunday. Helene had taken down a large power transmission line, a problem that would take time for Duke Energy to fix.

Mayes, who struggled in the immediate aftermath of Helene, said "I don't have a car. I had to find a way to get back home." But Mayes's mother, who she hoped would pick her up, could not find the gas to drive to Winthrop.

For Mayes, what followed was a scramble to find a hotel for her and her roommate. They booked a room at the Fairfield Inn, but upon their arrival, "the hotel was already sold out," Mayes said. Mayes and her roommate contacted 20 other hotels before finding

a vacancy in uptown Charlotte.

"I don't think the University did enough," Mayes said. "On Wednesday, they should have told us to evacuate instead of waiting until the last minute. Some people live out-of-state or live far away. I feel like we should have evacuated Wednesday, and then we wouldn't have had to worry about it."

After losing power to several dorms, the university scrambled to find its own solution to the housing crisis. Residence Life conducted a poll on Friday of how many students would not be able to evacuate. "So, we kind of had a rough number," Grigg said about the poll, "and we

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## Police Blotter



Evi Houston  
Staff Writer

### WUPD assists with catching juvenile runaway

WUPD was called to assist the Rock Hill Police Department on the night of Oct. 8 with a juvenile runaway. They were able to find the individual and return him to his home, but upon arrival the juvenile began to fight with his mother. Following this incident, RHPD determined that he should be put in Emergency Protective Custody instead.

### Man asleep on the steps of Withers Building

Police were notified of a man who had passed out on the steps of the Withers Building outside of the Student Activity Center on the morning of Oct. 8. The man was approached and explained that he had fallen asleep while waiting for his mother to arrive. He was subsequently given a trespass notice.

### Student bicycle missing

A student contacted WUPD regarding her missing bicycle last week. She explained that the bike was last locked up on Oct. 2 and noticed that it was missing on the morning of Oct. 8. She assumes that it was stolen, but police have yet to identify a suspect.

### Fecal matter found on the steps of Thomson Hall

A resident of West Thompson Hall found fecal matter on the steps leading up to the Second Floor on the night of Oct. 7. An officer responded to the issue and contacted Facilities Management, who disinfected the area.

### Planted air tag found on car

WUPD met with a student in the Johnson Hall parking lot on the night of Oct. 7. The individual had found an air tag in the trunk door jam of their vehicle that they were not previously aware of. The air tag has been placed into evidence with the department.



www.mytjnow.com

### Hurricane Helene | Cont. from pg. 1

thought we weren't going to be able to fit them into every nook we had on campus."

Their solution was to convert Winthrop Coliseum into a temporary shelter, complete with dining facilities, shuttles for transportation, and mattresses in the Coca-Cola study area. But when the message went out, only six students responded to the offer.

"Now, I feel like we pay enough as students

to where we shouldn't have to stay at the Coliseum," Mayes said about the university's temporary housing plan. "They should have given us a hotel or something instead."

When only six students responded to the offer to stay at the Coliseum, Residence Life worked to find them space in Courtyard and Campus Walk. Because Courtyard is attached to the Rock Hill grid, it

retained power when the rest of the campus failed.

By Sunday morning, power had been restored to campus. A damaged transformer delayed Thompson's restoration of power, and a temporary transformer is currently supplying power until a permanent solution can be found.

"There's always lessons learned," Grigg said about the university's response.

When asked about the university's plan to protect the campus from future storms, Grigg spoke about the design for a planned cafeteria. "One of the things we want to do as part of that new design is not have that on Duke Energy's power grid but have it on Rock Hill's power grid. We'll have redundancies. If we lose power on the Duke side, we'll have power on the Rock Hill side."

Although Helene has passed, students continue to reflect on the university's response. Many hope that the lessons learned from the hurricane will better prepare everyone for the next crisis.

Whatever happens, it is important for students to remember the financial and well-being services that are offered by the university, and to make use of them when in need.



Fallen tree outside of Phelp's Hall

photo by Julie Schrader



Damaged stop sign and street signs from Helene's winds

via Instagram/@winthropu

## South Carolina performs first execution in over a decade, with five more likely to follow

Following legal deliberations addressing expired lethal injection drugs and the legalization of a firing squad and the electric chair, the state is prepared to administer capital punishment every five weeks if necessary.

Evi Houston  
Staff Writer

After an unintended thirteen-year suspension of capital punishment, South Carolina has begun to file through its inmates on death row, beginning with the lethal injection of Freddy Owens on Sept. 20.

Five more men are to follow, including Richard Moore's execution on Nov. 1. According to the Death Penalty Information Center, or DPIC, there are currently 35 individuals on South Carolina's death row, many of which have run out of appeals.

Though lethal injection is the most common methodology used in capital punishment for South Carolina and the nation writ large, starting in 2021, South Carolina inmates were authorized to choose between a firing squad, lethal injection, or the electric chair according to the Associated Press. The state declared all three methods constitutional in a 2024 Supreme Court case. The legalization of these forms of execution is rooted in long-standing issues the state has had with procuring lethal injection drugs.

The absence of state sanctioned executions since 2011 is not the result of a dramatic drop in violent crime or the moral revelation of state officials, but instead of a pharmaceutical hold-up.

The lethal drug

typically used in capital punishment executions expired soon after 2011, and subsequent requests for the drug have been denied. In 2021, NPR reported that "the agency still couldn't obtain the drugs because manufacturers and compounding pharmacies contacted by the state refused to help."

While government officials were in limbo passing laws and filing cases to obtain a new drug, inmates on death row were forced to choose between the electric chair and firing squad, both of which have been called barbaric and outdated.

According to the New York Times, this dilemma led to the ultimate postponement on capital punishment, as courts decided lethal injections must be an available option.

Pausing capital punishment due to logistical complications is not uncommon in the United States, as multiple states have faced concerns over botched procedures, expired drugs and old machinery. In South Carolina, this pause has resulted in a backlog of inmates on death row and the steady flow of executions soon to come.

Today, as noted by the Associated Press, all three methods of punishment are deemed "tested and ready" by the state. With this came the acquisition of a new lethal injection drug, Pentobarbital, in 2023 which will narrow down the process from

three drugs to one, with expected effectiveness.

Despite calls that both methods constitute "cruel and unusual punishment," the courts ruled in their favor, claiming that since inmates are allowed to quite literally "pick their poison," the methodology is legal. The majority-conservative bench additionally denies responsibility for unfair punishment if lethal injections are no longer available or an execution is botched. Given these complications, lawyers of death row inmates and advocates against capital punishment have highly criticized the ruling.

Additional rulings by the South Carolina Supreme Court have noted that if a death row inmate decides not to choose their execution method, the electric chair will be used by default. They also authorized for executions to be held every five weeks, ignoring calls by lawyers to wait at least three months between executions so that cases could receive proper attention and relieve stress on prison staff, according to the Associated Press.

The state of South Carolina has conducted 44 executions since 1976, making it 10th

in the nation for capital punishment. In addition to this, no South Carolina governor has ever granted clemency to inmates on death row. This instrument of punishment is indicative of the state's criminal justice system as a whole, as Dr. Anthony Hobert, Professor of political science, highlighted.

"Both the United states of America and South Carolina execute people whom our judicial system decides are guilty and deserving of death. This puts us in an unenviable company, as most of the other nations that retain this

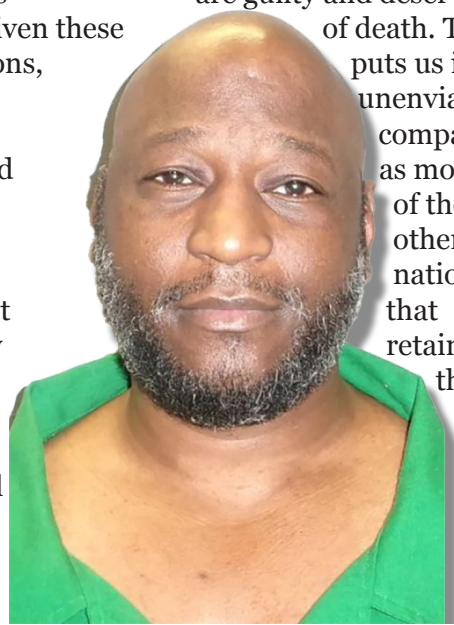


Photo of Freddy Owens, via the SC Department of Corrections

punishment are those with the most egregious records of human rights violations (e.g., Iran, China, North Korea, Syria). As citizens of both South Carolina and the U.S., we need to consider the arguments put forth by those nations that have abolished the punishment, and we should accept the practice only if we deem those abolitionist arguments wanting," said Dr. Hobert.

Freddy Owens and Richard Moore, the two inmates whose

execution marks a reinstatement of South Carolina's death penalty, have been central cases in the current controversies surrounding capital punishment in the state. Although they were both charged with serious, violent crimes, the inmates' cases are riddled with complications that many feel do not merit such a final consequence.

Freddie Owens, executed on Sept. 20 in Columbia, South Carolina via a lethal injection, was first charged with manslaughter in 1997 after reportedly murdering a convenience store clerk while demanding that she open the store safe. He was 19 years old. Following this incident, Owens killed a fellow inmate in the county jail while awaiting his trial.

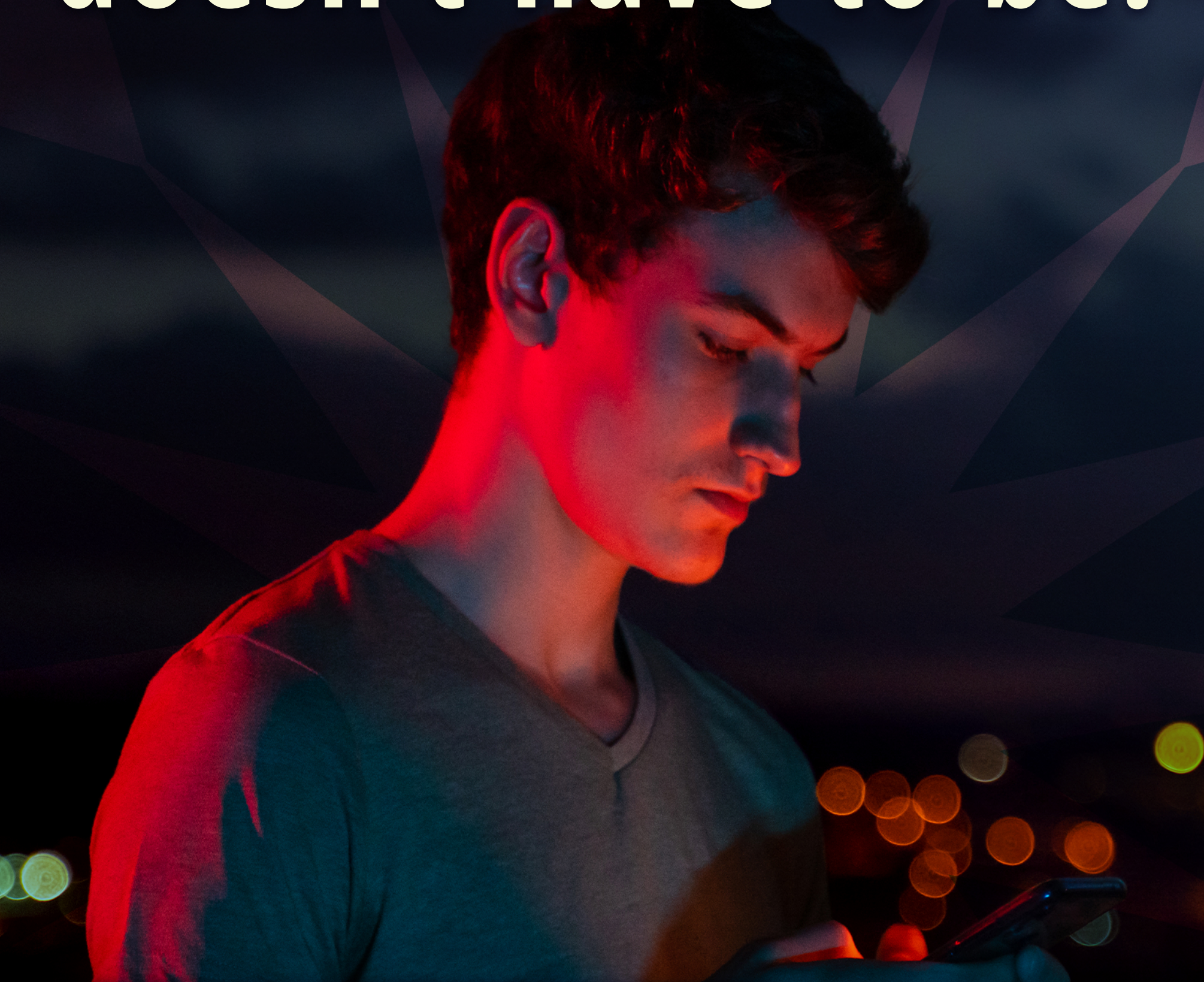
Due to his religious beliefs, Owens was allowed to have his lawyer decide how he would be executed, so as to remove himself from any personal choice, which he associates with suicide. South Carolina Governor Henry McMaster denied Owens clemency immediately prior to his execution.

The details of Owen's case are far from clear-cut. The Associated Press reported that no scientific evidence was given for his initial murder. Security footage inside the store has been deemed inadequate, and the

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Talking about sexual assault  
can be hard.

**Finding someone  
to talk to  
doesn't have to be.**



Visit **sccadvasa.org**

to find local help and resources

for sexual assault survivors.



## Drag artists performing at DragWU share their experiences and perspectives in preparation for the upcoming show

Riley Brodie  
AC&T Editor

On Oct. 18, DSU will be hosting Winthrop's highly anticipated annual drag show, DragWU. The show will take place in Richardson Ballroom at 8PM and the tickets will cost \$10. This year's theme is "elements".

Three drag performers who will be featured at DragWU this year have offered insight into their experiences and perspectives.

Jersey O'mari Lavish, a professional drag artist, currently holds the titles Mr. Upstate Pride and Mr. Outfest in South Carolina, as well as Mr. New Beginnings in Tennessee. Additionally, Lavish has frequently performed in areas such as Washington D.C. and Baltimore, Maryland.

Lavish said, "I will definitely say when I came and did Winthrop last year, when Gottmik was there, that was amazing to me. I said 'it's always about the energy that I see from the audience.' You could definitely tell the people who were there were just excited for what each of us entertainers brought."

Lavish has undoubtedly found

support throughout his career as a drag artist.

He said, "You will definitely find that there are more allies than people against you and I love that because it is very important to have support, especially in this day and age. Especially with heterosexual parents who have gay kids or transgender kids or whatever the case may be, I'm noticing that there's more support rallied around that and that's so important, because a lot of kids out here feel like they don't have people they could talk to."

Relatedly, Lavish has a great deal of wisdom to give to aspiring drag performers and individuals who are scared to live authentically.

Lavish said, "A quote that I live by: 'I used to care what you thought about me, until I remembered what I thought about you.' Just remember that you only got one life, so if you spend that one life that you have worrying about what another person is thinking about you, you'll never live life to the fullest."

Two Winthrop students who will be performing at DragWU this year additionally took the time to speak about their lives as drag queens.

Azreil Starr, a senior

theater performance major, has performed at multiple venues, such as the Carolina Creepshow, Protagonist, and multiple Pride shows. Additionally, she has been performing at DragWU since her freshman year.

She said, "DragWU has helped me grow so much since my first time performing. I want to give my goodbye and also just share a little love for DragWU. So I am very excited to perform for this final time and to see everyone there."

Starr has had an interest in drag long before going to college.

Starr said, "I was in like eighth grade wearing wigs but I did not do drag until I was in like tenth grade. I really started honing in on my drag when COVID happened because everything was shut down so I was like I got time now."

She continued, "So I was doing makeup already, but once I was able to be alone, and doing whatever I wanted to do, that was when I really started to get into drag and I've been doing it ever since. I've been doing it for like five, almost six, years now."

Throughout Starr's time as a drag queen she has noticed a lack of racial diversity in

certain areas.

"There have been times where I've performed, and it doesn't happen as often as it may have happened in the past for other queens, but it has happened to me, where a venue or place will ask me not to have certain songs that are too provocative or say too many cuss words," Starr said. "Usually they just don't want anything that, to me, seems too black. So to me that's a little shaky."

She continued, saying, "I've also been cast as 'the' black queen in the show; a lot of the times show runners will have a full cast of other people, and then they will have one black king and one black queen just to have that 'diverse aspect'. So I have been through that a couple of times, especially when I first started drag in Greenville."

Starr has made a great effort to "lead with love" in her life, as both an individual and a performer.

Regarding this value of hers, she said, "I try to make sure that everyone is having a good time, everyone is comfortable, and everyone feels safe – not only in my environment, like with the people around me, but also when I go to perform. I want

everyone to feel good; I don't want anyone to be upset or anything like that. I feel like I get way farther with leading with love."

Leonasia Chanel, a sophomore theater major with a concentration in acting, has been a drag queen for a little over a year now. Chanel has previously performed at Charlotte Pride and Resident Culture at their annual Culture Shock Pride Brunch.

Even though Chanel is relatively new to the drag scene, she has been interested in the art form since she was young.

"I first learned about drag in fifth grade, I started watching RuPaul's drag race, and I've been watching it ever since then. But I didn't start doing drag until I took a gap year after high school," Chanel said.

Chanel particularly loves the creative aspects of drag.

She said, "My favorite parts of drag are the freedom of expression and playing with gender roles. I think it's kind of fun to be a man during the day but then transform into a beautiful woman at night. I think it's fun. I also feel like the energy that drag brings is just a different type of energy than any other kind of live theater."

Chanel is a transfer student, so this will be her first time performing at DragWU.

"I'm most excited about seeing the campus come together for something like this obviously walking around you just see people going to class but I feel like these cultural events are a really good opportunity to bring everyone together," Chanel said. "So that way everyone can see different walks of life and different cultures. I'm just really excited for people to be excited about it."

Gabe Halka, the chair of DSU's Daytime/Late Night committee, said, "I love seeing the drag performers who go crazy on the dance floor, it's kind of mind boggling to me to watch them. Have you ever heard of a death drop?–that's insane. So that's very fun for me."

Halka shared, "I honestly wasn't super interested in drag until I saw DragWU last year. It was something I never thought I'd be interested in, but it was very eye opening. It was just such an awesome culture. I tend to be very curious, I asked so many questions and it was so interesting to learn about it."

Students are highly encouraged to attend Drag WU for a night of fun and celebration.



photo via Leonasia Chanel



photo via Jersey O'mari Lavish



photo via Azreil Starr

## Chappell Roan puts conventional politics aside, leaving fans divided

Kyan Feser  
Staff Writer

2024 is the year of the female pop star. Not only did Charli XCX's "brat" dominate the internet, but lesbian pop singer Chappell Roan saw a massive spike in popularity.

That's no coincidence though, as her 2010s throwback sound was perfectly timed with the popularity of "brat," said Julia Husar, a computer science major at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte.

In tandem with Roan's presence on TikTok, it was the "right place, right time" and everything combined to pave the way for her success.

"The queer

community needs an artist that speaks for them and I think Chappell Roan does that perfectly."

Not everyone shares this sentiment though, as Roan has found herself in several controversies. The heart of these controversies is her stance on the election, as she refuses to endorse Democratic candidate Kamala Harris due to her plans to continue aiding Israel.

Queer rights play a large role in the 2024 election, and many LGBTQ+ people deem voting Democrat the sole option. While Roan plans to vote for Harris, she hasn't motioned others to do the same, which many fans find disrespectful

considering her status.

"Any candidate that we get in office will fund the genocide, it's just our place as an ally to Israel," said Hannah Cervantes, an accounting major at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte.

"Roan is far too casual for her presence as a celebrity, dismissing the impact that Trump winning would have on queer people," Cervantes added.

Roan's argument is that both voting parties have issues, and she doesn't feel comfortable endorsing either side. However, if both parties intend to send money to Israel, many question why she hasn't funneled voters toward Harris, a well-known queer advocate.

"To reduce it to 'there are problems on both sides' and not acknowledging what those problems are and what it would entail for the opposite candidate to win? I think that's just irresponsible," Cervantes said. "You're not using your voice to direct your fans to an issue you're passionate about."

On the other hand, some view Roan's stance as empowering, as she's taking a stance for what she believes in.

"She's voting for Kamala Harris, she's just not endorsing Kamala Harris, and there's a very big difference between the two," she said. "Not all progressives are liberals, there are a lot of leftists who agree

with what Chappell Roan did."

Roan is also passing on a marketing opportunity, as pop star Taylor Swift's endorsement of Harris has been wildly successful.

Husar said, "She chose to stick true to her core beliefs, which I think a lot of people truly appreciate and aren't going to forget."

Regardless of Roan's various controversies, her music is here to stay, boasting 45.9 million monthly listeners on Spotify alone.

The future of Chappell Roan's career remains in question. However, even amidst controversy, there is no denying the impact she's made within the LGBTQ+ community.



Chappell Roan performing in Charleston, S.C.

photo by Emily Roberts

October 17, 2024

## Movie Review: "The Deliverance" delivers heart-pounding thrills and an exciting performance from Glenn Close

Mia Molfetta  
Staff Writer

### Spoilers ahead!

In "The Deliverance," popular actors like Andra Day, Glenn Close and Caleb McLaughlin show us a top tier-terrifying performance through the effects of horrifying demon possession, and steps of overcoming bad habits because of a (literally) demonic problem.

Most people may not think about scary movies year-round, but they are most definitely around this time of the year. More specifically, we are all looking for that horror movie that's sure to scare us more than the last one or changes the genre, like found-footage horror movies.

However, the ones that always seem to linger on after viewing, are those based on true stories. "The Deliverance" fits that bill, as it's not only about demonic

occurrences which turn into literal demonic entities and a portal to Hell, but also based on a true story.

"The Deliverance" starts out with Ebony Jackson (Andra Day), a struggling alcoholic single mother who moves her, her three kids, and her mother into a new house, just to encounter first-hand disturbing supernatural events that lead her to strongly believe her house is a literal portal to hell.

Throughout the movie as the occurrences escalate, Ebony's mother, Alberta or Berta (Glenn Close), suspects that Ebony is succumbing to her past struggles of alcoholism as well as harming her three children. This attracts the attention of Ebony's social worker, Cynthia (Mo'Nique) yet it becomes obvious that is something much more stronger than Ebony harming her children.

Ebony's children, Nate (Caleb McLaughlin), Shante (Demi Singleton), and Andre (Anthony B. Jenkins) all become victims to dreadful pain to their bodies because of the entity. The demon takes over the youngest, Andre physically and mentally, while mentally controlling Nate, and Shante.

Finally realizing all of this, after the fateful death of her mom because of the entity, and her kids getting taken by CPS, and put in the hospital and then places somewhere for awhile, Ebony fights not only to get her kids back but also to figure out what is tormenting her and her family.

She teams up with a pastor from a local church, who then informs her that the last family who lived there had the exact same thing happen to them. With the mother

killing the father and daughter, and the son being "taken" from the demon – they all died in the house.

The pastor also told Ebony how she had not done an exorcism but provided a 'deliverance' on the boy, but never got to finish because of the tormenting the demon was possessing. The 'deliverance' is an exorcism without all of the people needed for an exorcism.

This leads them to the absolute crazy quest of finding Ebony's son, Andre, in the hospital and taking him from the hospital, back to the house to perform the deliverance. They succeed in bringing him back, but as they start the deliverance, that's when it all hits the fan.

The demon tricks them to think it's working and ends up overpowering the two women.

The pastor tells Ebony to go upstairs

and wait, and she does for a bit. But as soon as she hears noises downstairs, she goes and finds that the entity was so strong it killed the pastor in an instant.

Ebony tries to continue throwing the holy water on the entity, but as she does the entity continues to shape-shift into things it knows Ebony is vulnerable to. She fights off the fact that the entity isn't her now deceased mom, or son, or anyone else but just a demon.

Ebony starts to pray out loud, cursing the demon back to Hell. She does this for a few minutes before she appears to be powered through God, and starts speaking in complete tongues fluently, which begins to curse out the entity back into a hole in the basement floor – condemning it back to hell.

The movie ends with Ebony having her children back finally.

She lets it be known to the viewers and her children that she is completely sober, and they've now moved out of the house. She also lets them know that she has talked with their dad, who is away in the army and lets them know that though they've had a rough patch, they're going to work on it and continue as a family. Which is a nice calm ending to such a chaotic movie.

The movie itself draws inspiration from the real-life story of Latoya Ammons, who suspected her family experienced similar paranormal occurrences after moving into a rental house in Indiana.

I definitely recommend this movie. Especially with friends, it's a good, fun watch and it really sparks up a conversation about bad habits, really believing in demons, and the control we truly hold for our own sanity.



Glenn Close portraying Alberta Jackson

photo via IMBD



"The Deliverance" title card

photo via IMBD

## Election season profile: Winthrop College Republicans

College Republicans President David Ibragimov prepares for the Presidential election on Nov. 5.

Lanie Cauthen  
Staff Writer

The country is weeks away from the presidential election – with Vice President Kamala Harris and former President Donald Trump facing off in the polls on Nov. 5.

Winthrop students can become involved in politics on campus by joining a club that aligns with their political beliefs – including the College Republicans and College Democrats. Winthrop College Republicans are a student organization for more conservative-minded students on campus, club president David Ibragimov said.

"Winthrop is very unique in the fact that we offer so many clubs of different political and ideological leanings," Ibragimov said. "Whether you are interested in a campaign or are passionate about certain issues in America, you will be sure to find someone who shares your thoughts, concerns, and passions."

The College Republicans host events on campus while working within the Rock Hill community. The organization became a member of the College Republicans of America in March – becoming the third chapter in South Carolina. "Education is an important aspect of the organization," Ibragimov said.

"I believe that students should understand that, especially in a time of misinformation and political turmoil, it is very important to understand what they support and why they support it," Ibragimov said. "We believe that education is a very essential step toward a better society, and this is what we are here to provide; an education about what conservatism aims to achieve."

Ibragimov suggests that voters look at all sides of the political spectrum to have a better understanding of issues.

"I would advise sticking with neutral and independent sources, but sometimes

it is also important to see what conservative or liberal commentators are saying about particular issues," Ibragimov said. "By seeing what the other side is talking about, and potentially challenging your world views, you can become better educated, and more certain about what you believe."

Ibragimov recommends that new voters focus on the main issues that matter most to them.

"When you are a first-time voter, no one expects you to know everything about your candidates, and it is ok if you don't," Ibragimov said. "Understand what you care about, what your priorities are, and which of the candidates, if any, satisfies your desires for what you want to see in the country."

With the upcoming election, the organization, alongside the College Democrats, hosted a bi-partisan panel and a presidential debate watch party for students to prepare for the election.

"We will all come together as a

community," Ibragimov said. "At times, we get so wrapped up in the propaganda, animosity, and discord of our politics that we forget to be human. What I can tell everyone is that you should vote how you believe is right, but you should also realize that we will all be okay."

Currently, Harris leads in the national polls by only 2% while Trump leads in South Carolina by 10%.

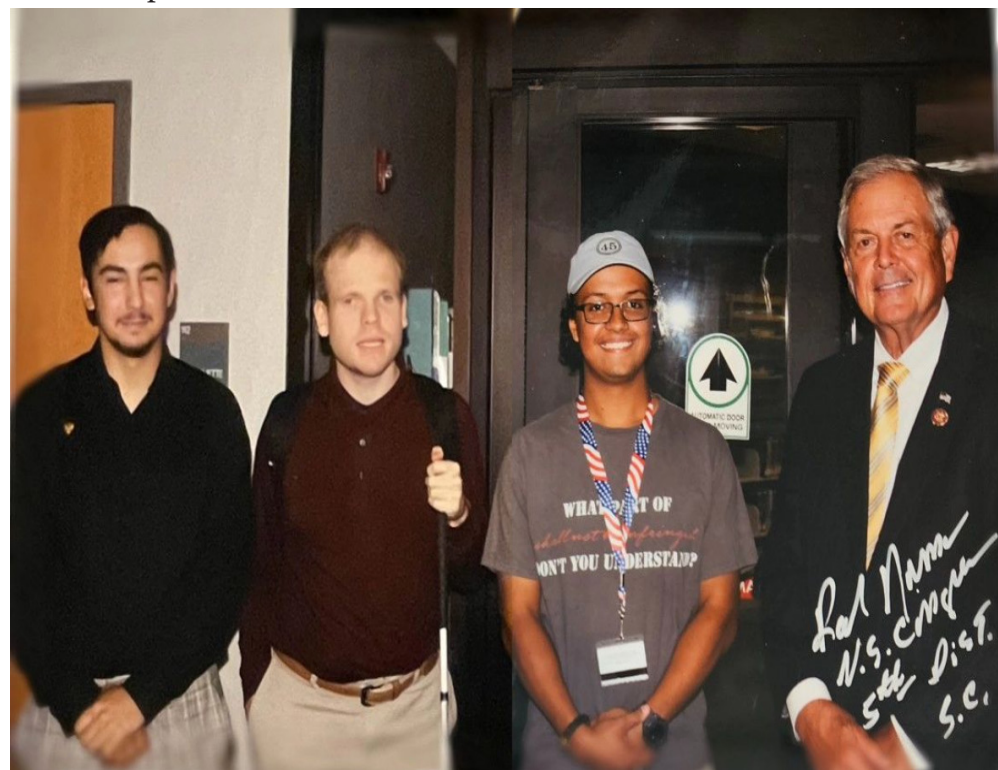
"This Presidential election is predicted

to be one of the closest in American History," Ibragimov said. "Being a Political Scientist, this puts myself and many of my colleagues at an edge. What I am particularly afraid of is the aftermath of the election, regardless of who wins. I believe that all of us, whether right or left, will win and lose. However, we must do this peacefully, and without violence."

The College Republicans host weekly meetings for interested students.

For more information about the College Republicans, email [collegerepublicans@winthrop.edu](mailto:collegerepublicans@winthrop.edu) or visit their Facebook at Winthrop College Republicans or Instagram at @wu\_collegerepublicans.

Early voting for South Carolina residents begins Oct. 21 and ends on Nov. 2. Requests for absentee ballots need to be received by Oct. 25. Absentee ballots must be returned by Nov. 5.



College Republicans members with U.S. Representative Ralph Norman

via Instagram/@wu\_collegerepublicans

Opinion Editor: Currently hiring!

Contact [vilardeboc2@winthrop.edu](mailto:vilardeboc2@winthrop.edu)

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**Death penalty in South Carolina | Cont. from pg. 2**

weapon Owens wielded was never found. The primary evidence used to convict Owens was the guilty plea of his co-defendant, Steven Golden, which could potentially be tied to his own self-interest.

His lawyers additionally argue that the brain damage Owens suffered in his traumatic childhood and the violence he experienced while in juvenile prison should be taken into consideration. Although previous cases have examined these limitations, the Associated Press noted that "Owens had two different death

sentences overturned on appeal only to end up back on death row."

Richard Moore's execution date, set for Nov. 1, will mark the state's second use of capital punishment since 2011. Moore was also charged with murdering a convenience store clerk whom he attempted to rob in 1999. Moore has spent over 20 years on death row according to NPR and "plans to ask Gov. McMaster [ . . . ] for mercy and to reduce his sentence to life without parole," this month.

While murder charges are typical of capital punishment cases, Moore's story

differs from most in that he was not armed when entering the convenience store and instead utilized one of the clerk's two guns to fight back after being shot in the arm. This action was not premeditated, so Moore has claimed self-defense in his appeal cases, which the state has since denied.

The Associated Press notes that "If he [Moore] is executed, he would also be the first person put to death in the state in modern times who was unarmed initially and then defended themselves when threatened with a

weapon."

Moore feels there is bias in the prosecution of his case, as he was convicted by an all-white jury as a Black man. He has since appealed to the Supreme Court regarding this issue.

Moore's lawyers additionally claim Gov. McMaster has had too much interference with Moore's case as the state's former Attorney General to be impartial in deciding clemency.

A final curiosity in the executions of Owens, Moore, and the four men that are likely to follow, revolves around race.

Four out of the six of

these men are Black, or approximately 66%, whereas the population of the state is around 30% Black. This trend is eerily present as far back as the DPIC's data for South Carolina goes, with 237 of the 302 persons executed in the 20th century being Black, or 78%. From 1985 until the present day, about 40% of those executed have been Black men.

Ethical concerns regarding race, methods of punishment, and limited appeals for death row inmates have been raised by those who oppose the death penalty in recent weeks. This will likely continue throughout the rest of 2024 and into 2025, given that South Carolina proceeds with its ramping up of postponed executions.



State's death chamber in Columbia, S.C., with the electric chair (right) and firing squad chair (left) photo via S.C. Department of Corrections

## Complaints about mold inside dorm rooms are on the rise at Winthrop

Reports first started circulating on popular social media app YikYak, only to be confirmed after students reported the mold to WUPD.

**Omar Woods**  
Staff Writer

Reports of mold being found in Winthrop's dorm halls skyrocketed in recent weeks. These reports of mold come from residents all over campus ranging from both Courtyard, East and West Thomson, Phelps and Lee Wicker. Bathrooms, closets, windows, and even bedcovers can become victims to the small bio-invaders

Mold and all of its different variations can be quite troublesome for residents that live in these dorm halls, as they cause many serious health issues. These health issues range from allergies, respiratory issues, skin irritation, and eye irritation. The effects mold can cause to someone can be extremely damaging to the someone faced with a mold problem, and these problems can last long-term.

Evan, a resident from Lee Wicker, may not have dealt with as much of a mold issue himself, but has friends that have suffered due to the mold making its way into their dorms

way into their dorms.

"I've had a few friends who've had mold in their bedding and A/C units," Evan said. "Especially from the bathroom's that have little to no circulation. One of my friends had mold poison from mold being in their bedding and they were sick for months."

For some residents, the issue of mold has persisted since the beginning of the school year. Some residents found mold on the very exact day they were scheduled to move into their residency halls. Students and parents both had to take part in cleaning the dorm hall to make just a little less moldy.

"When we first came for drop off, it was already in the bathroom, but it wasn't that bad so I didn't say anything about it," Ny'Asia, a resident from West Thomson, said. "After we started using the bathroom and taking showers, it got worse."

Ny'Asia continued, "I feel like it's the ventilation, that's why the mold is so bad. I recently just cleaned

bathroom with Clorox and sprayed it down, but it just kept coming back."

Residents who have lived on campus mentioned mold being a prevalent issue as far back as the previous semester. The mold was found in the same areas as well that usually being the bathrooms, more specifically, the bathtubs and sinks.

"There was a little bit when we first moved in, but throughout the months we've been here, it's only gotten worse," Serenity, an East Thomson resident, said. "I've been experiencing a lot more allergies now that I'm here. I wake up a lot in the morning with a sore throat and cough."

The residents of these halls have made an effort to their resident advisors regarding the mold problem plaguing their dorms.

Resident advisors, or RA's, are in charge of dealing with any of the complaints or concerns that the residents may have and are in charge of keeping the order of the hall.

However, it does not

seem the RA's are able to do much in face of issues such as mold other than alert maintenance.

"It's mainly the bathrooms because they are not getting aired out properly. A few people have been upset about it because people do think they have been sick because of the mold, but we don't know for sure," Ana, a resident advisor and resident of Lee Wicker, explained. "They do come to me as a RA to do something about it but I can't exactly do much. I can put in a work request and get maintenance to come clean it up but that's just about it."

Though the mold may seem a bit challenging to deal with, thankfully there are ways to combat it. Doing a thorough cleaning of areas that happen to have an abundance of moisture such as bathrooms can help keep the instances of mold quite low. One more trick to combat the mold is to make sure to allow the moisture to leave the bathroom especially after taking a shower.



Mold in a dorm bathroom photo by Kaydence Hill



Mold above a door in a student's dorm room photo by Kaydence Hill

## Charlotte and Rock Hill continue to battle over water rights

Charlotte Water starts a plan which includes taking more water from the local Catawba river in Rock Hill, while Winthrop students try to figure out if their water is safe to drink after Hurricane Helene.

**Gabriela Griggs**  
Staff Writer

Charlotte Water has begun the approval process for a new plan that would allow them to take more than double their previously allowed amount of water from the Catawba River without replacement.

While the approval for this plan will likely take years, it has already begun to spark outrage in respective York, Chester, and Lancaster counties; all of whom rely on the Catawba River as a

crucial resource.

Previously, in 2010, South Carolina sued North Carolina over a similar transfer of water usage. This resulted in reductions in water withdrawals and limits for North Carolina.

The largest concern over water usage rights lies in the impact on South Carolinians, not just in terms of potential drought, but in how it could stunt the predicted growth of Rock Hill communities. The Catawba River is a very limited water

resource, causing its use to become extremely regulated over recent years.

Over the past ten years, the Rock Hill area has faced frequent droughts due to the lack of replenished water to the Catawba River. If Charlotte is allocated to take out more, this could mean even less water than before for Rock Hill and other areas in York County that highly rely on that river for water.

While the two states and cities continue to fight over water usage,

the ery same Catawba River faced part of the near 500,000 gallons of sewage waste dumped into Rock Hill waterways following Hurricane Helene.

Sewage spills happen often after heavy rain. Spills are not a new occurrence in Rock Hill, but this one seemed to spark concern on Winthrop University's campus as many students noticed the water in their dormitories running yellow during the break.

When asked about

how she dealt with the water issues, Winthrop junior Peyton Moore expressed how she and her suitemate decided to take matters into their own hands while waiting for Courtyard superiors to say anything on the water conditions.

"We were pretty chill," Moore said. "We noticed the discoloration, and because me and my suitemate are chemistry majors we researched and found official statements from local cities about

how heavy rain will sometimes evoke discoloration in water from minerals. We stayed chill because we decided to research. but I knew of people who were a little confused about the water discoloration from the lack of cohesive communication."

Discussion over the Catawba River and Charlotte's usage will continue to rise as the approval process continues, especially after the issues with sewage and storm surges post Helene.



# WINTHROP TRAILBLAZERS

A PANEL DISCUSSION COMMEMORATING  
WINTHROP'S 60TH YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF  
INTEGRATION



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**11 a.m.**

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**AUDITORIUM**  
WITHERS HALL

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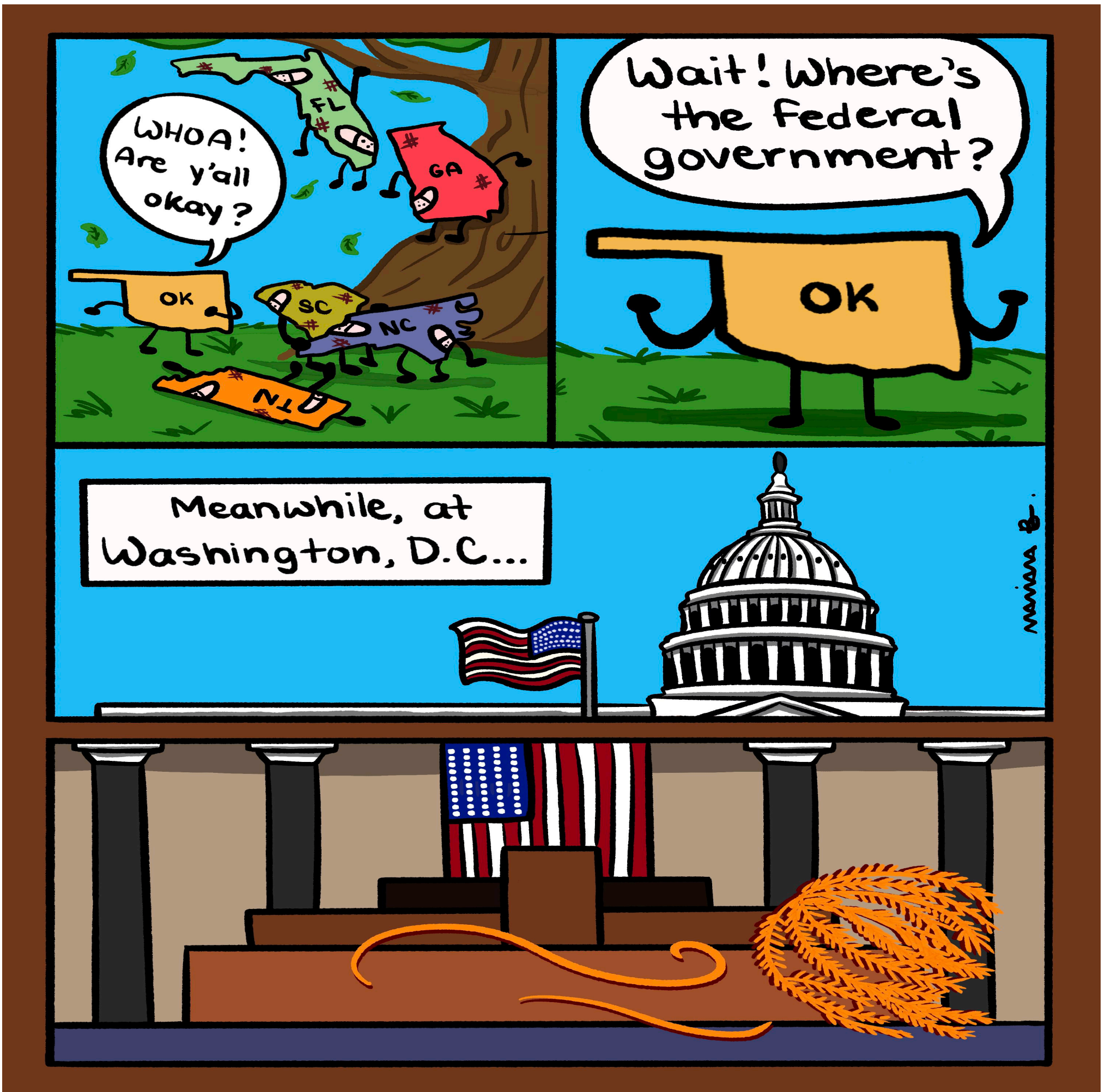
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October 17, 2024



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