

JULY 2024

# RAMS

MONTHLY



STORIES OF STUDENT SUCCESS AND LEARNING AT VICTOR VALLEY COLLEGE

# WEST SIDE STORY

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# It's a Frog Eat Frog World

Survival of the fittest: Cane toads' cannibalistic tendencies reveal their adaptive prowess in challenging environments



Cannibalism, once considered rare and shocking, has become a subject of profound interest across various species, shedding light on evolutionary strategies and ecological dynamics. Recent research, as reported by Live Science and The New York Times, explores cannibalistic behaviors in frogs, including cane toads and certain female frogs, under specific environmental conditions, while also highlighting cannibalism in other parts of the animal kingdom.

Cane toads (*Rhinella marina*), known for their invasive impact, exhibit cannibalistic tendencies as a survival mechanism during adversity such as droughts or food shortages. Studies highlighted by Live Science illustrate how cane toad tadpoles cannibalize smaller, less developed tadpoles, thereby enhancing their survival and growth prospects in competitive environments. This adaptive behavior underscores the resilience of cane toads and their ability to thrive in challenging habitats.

In a distinct exploration covered by The New York Times, researchers document cannibalism among certain female frogs, challenging traditional views of maternal care. Some female frogs have been observed consuming

their own fertilized eggs, particularly under stressful conditions like overcrowding or limited resources. This behavior is believed to provide essential nutrients to the female for future reproductive efforts, highlighting a complex interplay between survival strategies and reproductive investment.

Beyond frogs, cannibalism is observed across a wide spectrum of the animal kingdom. In some insect species, such as praying mantises and certain spiders, females are known to consume males after mating. This behavior, while seemingly drastic, can provide the female with vital nutrients needed for egg production, thereby enhancing reproductive success.

In mammals, cannibalism is rare but documented in certain circumstances. For instance, in times of extreme environmental stress or scarcity, some rodents may resort to eating their own offspring or members of their own species to survive. This behavior underscores the desperate measures animals may take in the face of challenging conditions.

Dr. Richard Shine, an evolutionary biologist involved in cane toad research, emphasizes that cannibalism often serves as a form of adaptive parental care or self-preservation

across species. By consuming weaker or surplus individuals, animals can ensure the survival of stronger offspring or themselves in harsh environments, contributing to population resilience and ecological balance.

These insights into cannibalistic behaviors underscore the importance of understanding such phenomena in managing species conservation and ecosystem health. As researchers continue to investigate these dynamics across different species, their discoveries promise to deepen our understanding of how animals adapt to environmental challenges and evolve over time. By unraveling the complexities of cannibalism in the animal kingdom, scientists aim to gain valuable insights that could inform conservation strategies and enhance our knowledge of evolutionary biology amidst changing environmental conditions.

## GEOMETRY OF SNACK PERFECTION:

### THE HYPERBOLIC PARABOLOID SHAPE OF PRINGLES

Next time you reach for a Pringles chip, take a moment to appreciate its unique shape. Known as a “Hyperbolic Paraboloid,” this mathematical marvel is more than just a quirky design—it’s a feat of engineering that enhances both the crunch and consistency of every bite.

A hyperbolic paraboloid is a three-dimensional, saddle-shaped surface that curves upward in one direction and downward in the perpendicular direction. This shape isn’t just aesthetically pleasing; it serves a functional purpose. The hyperbolic paraboloid’s structure provides strength and stability, ensuring that each chip remains intact during packaging and transit. Additionally, this geometric form helps the chips stack neatly in their iconic cylindrical container, maximizing space efficiency and reducing breakage.

The design also contributes to the snacking experience. The curvature of each chip fits comfortably on the tongue, offering a satisfying crunch that Pringles fans know and love. This perfect balance of form and function is a testament to the ingenuity behind one of the world’s favorite snacks.

So, the next time you pop open a can of Pringles, remember that you’re not just enjoying a tasty treat—you’re experiencing a delightful intersection of geometry and gastronomy.



# Jets and Sharks Ready to Rumble at VVC: West Side Story Takes Center Stage

Experience the timeless clash of love and rivalry with VVC's stunning rendition of West Side Story this Summer

This August, Victor Valley College (VVC) will host one of the most iconic musicals of all time: West Side Story. Under the expert guidance of co-directors Isaac Ramsey and Allen Gildard, and with choreography by Katherine Page, the college's drama students are preparing to bring this classic tale of love and rivalry to life. Adding to the production's grandeur, a live orchestra directed by VVC's Dr. Karen Miskell will accompany the performance. RAMS Monthly had the privilege of sitting down with Isaac Ramsey, who shared insights into the production and his experiences teaching at VVC.

Isaac Ramsey, an adjunct faculty member in the Theater Department, holds an MFA in Acting from UCLA. This is his second production with VVC, having previously directed South Pacific in 2015. Ramsey expressed his enthusiasm for working with VVC students, noting, "The students here are people you can joke with. Things are always looser in theater, and it allows a strong rapport to help build trust in the creative process of making art."

West Side Story, a modern retelling of Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet, is set in 1950s New York City. It explores the intense rivalry between two teenage street gangs, the Jets and the Sharks, and the romantic entanglement of two young lovers from opposing sides. With its powerful themes and unforgettable music, West Side Story remains a timeless piece of American theater.

Ramsey's excitement for the production is

palpable, particularly regarding the intricate fight and dance choreography that West Side Story demands. "The fight choreography is like a dance," he explained. To ensure safety and authenticity, the cast participated in a fight camp to learn the basics of stage combat, including how to throw a punch while maintaining proper spacing. "You never actually want to hit another person. It's crucial to build trust and respect each other when rehearsing stage combat for safety purposes," he emphasized.

The students are equally enthusiastic about the choreography. Ramsey noted that while some students were initially timid and nervous during auditions, they have since gained confidence and are fully embracing their roles. "Everyone is willing to work with one another. There's a lot more openness and collaboration," Ramsey remarked.

In addition to technical skills, Ramsey focuses on developing his students' awareness of their bodies and voices. "The audience never sees inside the actor's head, only the manifestation. It's about where you're at, what you're saying, and how you're delivering it," he said. He also encourages his students not to fear failure. "If you don't fail, then you can't make choices. You restrict yourself when you're afraid to fail. Part of learning how to act is allowing students to fail so they can learn from that and make better choices to become successful," Ramsey advised.

As the cast and crew of West Side Story

continue their rehearsals, the anticipation for opening night grows. Isaac Ramsey's dedication to fostering a supportive and creative environment promises a production that will not only entertain but also inspire. Be sure to catch West Side Story this August at Victor Valley College and witness the incredible talent and hard work of these aspiring performers.

Thursday August 1 - 7:30PM  
**(Classic Car Show 4:00p - 7:00pm)**

Friday August 2 - 7:30PM

Saturday August 3 - 7:30PM

Sunday August 4 - 2:30PM

Thursday August 8 - 7:30PM

Friday August 9 - 7:30PM

Saturday August 10 - 7:30PM

Sunday August 11 - 2:30PM

A classic car show display with a 1950s theme will take place prior to the August 1st premiere around the Performing Arts Center. The classic car display is a free event and the community is invited to attend.

West Side Story tickets can be purchased directly at [VVCfoundation.com/WestSideStory](http://VVCfoundation.com/WestSideStory)



# WEST SIDE STORY

Based on a Conception of JEROME ROBBINS

Music by  
LEONARD BERNSTEIN

Lyrics by  
STEPHEN SONDHEIM

Book by  
ARTHUR LAURENTS

Entire Original Production  
Directed and Choreographed by  
JEROME ROBBINS

Originally Produced on Broadway by Robert E. Griffith and Harold S. Prince  
By Arrangement with Roger L. Stevens

MUSIC DIRECTED BY

Dr. Karen Miskell

DIRECTED BY

Allen Gildard &  
Isaac Ramsey

CHOREOGRAPHED BY

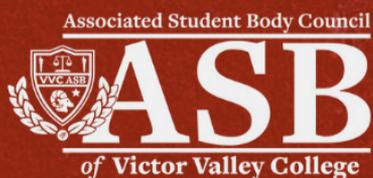
Katherine Page

## August 1st - 11th 2024

## VVC PERFORMING ARTS

## CENTER MAIN STAGE

Produced in  
partnership and with  
the sponsorship of



### TICKETS



[vvc.edu/tix](http://vvc.edu/tix)

WEST SIDE STORY  
Is presented through special  
arrangement with Music Theatre  
International (MTI).  
All authorized performance materials  
are also supplied by MTI.  
[www.mtishows.com](http://www.mtishows.com)

# Victor Valley College Announces Board of Trustee Opening for Area 3



Victor Valley College (VVC) is informing residents about an open college Board of Trustee position for Area 3 in the Victor Valley Community College District. Area 3 encompasses residents in parts of Hesperia, Oak Hills, Phelan, Pinon Hills, and Wrightwood communities. The deadline to file for candidacy is August 9, 2024.

The Area 3 Board of Trustee position has been held by Vice President Sharon Pinkerton since December 2020. Trustee Pinkerton announced during the July 9, 2024 board meeting that she will be stepping down to spend more time with her family. In her announcement, she expressed gratitude, stating, "John and I would like to thank all of those who supported us with your votes and love and your encouragement over the past 12 years. This has been a great ride." Pinkerton also extended her best wishes to her successor, saying, "All the luck and good fortune and the blessings of God himself to continue the work that we all have begun here at [VVC]."

Victor Valley College is proud to be recognized as the fastest-growing community college in California in terms of enrollment. The institution remains dedicated to providing high-quality education and fostering community development.

**As a Trustee:**

- Participate fully in board meetings and key college events.
- Engage in balancing the needs of many diverse groups.
- Be knowledgeable and act on behalf of the communities served by the college.
- Commit to the Victor Valley Community College District (VVCCD) mission.
- Attend Board of Trustees meetings held on the second Tuesday of each month.

For more information on the Board of Trustee position, please visit [www.vvc.edu/board-trustees](http://www.vvc.edu/board-trustees). Interested candidates can also contact VVC Public Information Officer Robert Sewell directly at 760-245-4271 EXT. 2395 or [Robert.Sewell@vvc.edu](mailto:Robert.Sewell@vvc.edu).

**2024**  
**VICTOR VALLEY COLLEGE**  
**TRUSTEE OPENING**  
**(AREA 3)**

**FILE DEADLINE**  
**AUGUST 09, 2024**

**BE PART OF**  
**THE FASTEST GROWING**  
**COMMUNITY COLLEGE**  
**IN CALIFORNIA!**

**MORE INFO**  
**ROBERT.SEWELL@VVC.EDU**  
**760-245-4271 EXT. 2395**

Associated Student Body Council



# ASB

of Victor Valley College

## 2024-2025

### GOALS & OBJECTIVES

- 1** To advocate for student success, the ASB Council will work with the VVC Foundation to promote and increase scholarship opportunities.
- 2** Nutrition being necessary for educational success, the ASB Council will partner with the Vice President of Administrative Services for extended hours of operation of food services and diverse options such as vegetarian and vegan.
- 3** The ASB Council requests that the appropriate Vice Presidents repair the Art Building and Kiln Yard to enhance the Art Program.
- 4** The Associated Student Body requests to be consulted throughout the design of the new VVC website.
- 5** The Associated Student Body will collaborate with Student Services and Human Resources to enhance student success by creating and clarifying job opportunities, streamlining the hiring process, and improving career resources.
- 6** ASB will assist the Vice President of Student Services in promoting an anonymous reporting system, thereby increasing student safety.
- 7** ASB will work with Administration to make a Canvas tutorial more readily available to students.
- 8** ASB will collaborate with administration to construct outdoor shaded study areas, with priority to lower campus.
- 9** In support of the Guided Pathways model, the ASB will publicize and encourage student involvement for the "Thrive to Drive" campaign and Engagement and Career Centers.
- 10** The ASB will collaborate with students and agriculture faculty to revitalize the botanical garden.
- 11** To build on the Basic Needs Center's success, the ASB will publicize its events and encourage students to use its services.



**FREE COLLEGE!**  
VVC will cover your student fees\* for Fall and Spring terms.



**FIRST TIME STUDENT?**  
**2024 - 2025**  
[VVC.EDU/RAMPROMISE](http://VVC.EDU/RAMPROMISE)



# RAMS MONTHLY



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IT'S FREE!

Associated Student Body Council



# ASB

of Victor Valley College



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