



## Your *Paydirt Staff:*

### MEET THE STAFF

**EDITOR IN CHIEF** Skyler Matteson - Senior in the Materials Engineering Department. He enjoys playing games and guitar and is worried his bio makes him look like a square.

**JOURNALISTS** Alexandra Sartori - Geology and Physics, cool, lit, sick, awesome, critically acclaimed, one may daresay perfect.

**PHOTOGRAPHER** Samuel Baca - Mechanical Engineering student whom do not know how to write he not only takes photographs for the paper but also seeks out images.

**LAYOUT-EDITORS** Jaime Mendoza - Civil Engineering, Professional Climber, Professional Procrastinator. *\*Copy and Paste\**

### SPECIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Eberhard Grossgasteiger  
Zoey Mancuso de Lopez  
Marrinna Martinez-  
Marshall

Special thanks to Student Affairs for printing contributions!

Want to contribute or advertise? Send us an email at:  
paydirt@npe.nmt.edu

@nmtpaydirt 

# PAYDIRT

Halloween Contest  
p. 9

Creative Collective  
November 8th, 2021



# In This Issue:

## General

SGA Rundown..... 2 Skyler Matteson

## Student Spotlight

Ryan Himes: The Man. The Myth. The Legend..... 3/4 Alexandra Sartori

## Professor Spotlight

English in STEM: Love to Hate it but Need it to Succeed ..... 5/6 Alexandra Sartori

## Campus Life

Technical Difficulties: the Life and Times ..... 7/8 Skyler Matteson

## Relax and Unwind

Halloween Costume Photo Gallery..... 9 Samuel Baca

Sudoku/Crossword ..... 10



## Sudoku

	4		2		1	9		
		2		7			6	
9							4	
		8				2	5	
		4	3		8			
	1		6					
		1	9					
						3		5
7			1	6				

## Relax and Unwind

### Halloween Costume Photo Gallery



### SGA Meeting Rundown: 11/02/21

1. **ANNOUNCEMENT:** We are still looking to hire a Journalist for Paydirt! Apply at [paydirt@npe.nmt.edu](mailto:paydirt@npe.nmt.edu) with your resume and any questions if you are interested.
2. The next Socorro Council meeting will be November 15th at 6pm. The address is 111 School of Mines Road. The Council is open to and encourages students to attend.
3. Multiple concerns from students were brought to the attention of the SGA mainly regarding car break-ins, COVID policy, and the Office of Residential Life. Some problems are being or have been solved, and others were disproven or clarified. For the sake of brevity, it is encouraged that you send complaints or forms to the attention of the respective offices. Contact [michael.voegerl@nmt.edu](mailto:michael.voegerl@nmt.edu) for a more detailed response to help you with your concerns.
4. Admissions has reported they are up 50% year-to-date for the incoming freshman class. They are also looking at involving and bringing students for recruitment purposes in the future.
5. Several events are planned for the future and around Thanksgiving Break. Keep an eye out for event emails!
6. Multiple SGA offices are focusing on organizing and clarifying forms and procedures to make things easier for students and student SGA workers.
7. The next Board of Regents meeting is the 19th of November in Fidel Ballroom B and C at 1pm.
8. Admin is looking for an undergraduate student representative to sit on a committee on undergraduate advising; contact [wes.cook@nmt.edu](mailto:wes.cook@nmt.edu) or [michael.voegerl@nmt.edu](mailto:michael.voegerl@nmt.edu) if you are interested!



### Ryan Himes: The Man. The Myth. The Legend.

Written By: Alexandra Sartori



There's a reason students at NMT are called Techies (besides the whole "tech" is in the name thing). We all share a similar drive and love for STEM. We're all a little nerdy and geeky. We all have our unique idiosyncrasies and while they may be different for each student, it's what makes us Techies. When we walk around campus it's easy to group all the people we walk by into this Techie category but with all of our similarities, there are also differences that make each of us individuals. Ryan Himes, a civil engineering major in his last semester at NMT, shares his insights into what makes him his own unique Techie.

Ryan came from a small town to another small town, Taos to Socorro. He's always preferred the tight-knit

community that comes from small towns. Then, coming to NMT, he found that, despite his passion for civil engineering, the small and welcoming department was what kept him in love with school. "We already have a really really small department...It just felt normal to me to have one-on-one contact with my professors. I'm sure if I went to UNM I would not be [as happy] and I likely would have questioned my degree path."

Civil engineering is a field that many take for granted despite it making up so much of the world we live in. Each civil engineer has their own reason for their attraction to the field, but Ryan finds that: "It goes back to that primitive need for shelter on Maslow's



up and asked 'can ya play drums?' He said 'no.'" Andrew asked again, to which Cody stated: "Ya got sticks?" Cody arrived, and "played the set at the SAC almost exactly perfectly." After this event, COVID happened, and the band went back to their respective homes.

In the Fall of 2020, Andrew, Keith, and Cody moved together, with Andrew having a small bedroom. In return, he had a second room/office/garage that was also the jam space for the band. The band, now including Cody, did their first Open Mic, after which "the guys got the 'bug' after hearing it back after it was recorded, and Keith posted it to YouTube." Another Open Mic later, the band invited Seth over "and at that point is when [they] realized he was the missing link." They promptly "roped him into" the band.

In March of 2021, singer Gibbs was about to graduate from Tech, and the band wanted to do one last show with him. They contacted Ronna Kalish from the Macey Center and PAS, asking to do a concert. Keith recalls the evening they got the gig: "Late at night she emails us and said she needed a yes or no, right now. So I said yes (without telling the band). She said we needed a band name, a picture, and a 1hr setlist [by that evening]. I was still in class. We called a mandatory emergency band meeting and we sat them down and told them the situation. Gibbs says "I had a wedding, but I guess I'm gonna miss it."

The band name Technical Differences, which they went with for the event and from then on, came from a mistake. "Years ago, Gibbs wrote 'Technical Difficulties' [for a band name], but [Andrew] was illiterate and read it as 'Technical Differences.' At the time we didn't think we deserved it [as our name.]" Once they got their info to Ronna, they had a month and a half to prepare their set: "Everything we did was choreographed, down to the jokes. This is around when Sound Guy started hanging out when we were practicing. [He made sure] everything flowed together." The night before the event, while the band was practicing, prepping, and

joking around, Andrew accidentally jammed his guitar head into Keith's room light: "We took it as a good sign and went to bed happy men."

During the event, the band did their best to keep the show running smoothly as the elements worked against them: "the tent collapsed and nearly killed half our members. Several technician guys were holding poles trying to save our lives." It was a memorable final concert for Gibbs to be sure, but after that, the rest of the members "had to learn to sing, and on time." Sound Guy started hanging out more to help with acoustics and to direct the members on dynamics to make sure everything sounded correct, and he has joined Technical Differences for shows since.

The band has 3 active songs, with multiple other songs in the works. One of their biggest songs, 'Finding Time,' originated from a bassline Keith wrote over the COVID summer: "We sat down one day and hashed out ideas and changed it around to get a chord structure. It's about 188 Bpm; Cody plays drums very fast. We were playing it one time and Gibbs came in and started singing lyrics to the song, making it up on the spot. There are no minor chords in the entire song. [Keith] sent it to a guy with a PhD in music theory and he said he had no idea what key it was in. Its excited how interesting the song itself is." Another piece, 'Song 3,' is "occasionally about Steve the iguana" and is used mostly to open shows and warm up the fingers. Cody also has a song titled "Heartbeat" that he has worked on for a time.

When asked what they wanted to conclude on, the band stated "Hi Evie!"

Technical Differences' next concert is December 1st at the Christmas Tree lighting ceremony. They also have 2 other potential concerts in the future, so be sure to look out for events showcasing this talented and history rich band.

## Technical Differences: the Life and Times

Written By: Skyler Matteson

Shown Below Left to Right: Keith, Andrew, Cody, Seth



If you attended the 49ers events a few weeks ago, you might have heard several of the bands playing on Friday, October 15th. Among the line up included the student band known as Technical Differences, a longstanding music group of NMT. The band has played at many events at and around campus over the years, and often brings up guests to jam with them. I contacted Keith Lucero, one of the founding members, to find out more about how the iconic band started, and what their experience was like.

Luckily for me, the whole band was able to carve out some time between their practices and classes to meet with me. They are all seniors in their respective fields. The two founding members are Astrophysics Major Keith Lucero, a “clarinetist first, bassist second,” and MechE-Explosives Major Andrew Wagg, a “somewhat reluctant” lead guitarist. Seth Sisneros, another MechE Major, came in wearing an astronaut helmet (which the other members claimed to be due to him forgetting a mask, though that point was disputed). He describes himself as “astronaut first, vocals second, guitarist third.” Cody Gray, a Physics Major, is the “drummer by force.” The final member, another Physics Major only going by ‘Sound Guy,’ is the sound guy (or more formally, audio engineer). Unfortunately, our photographer was unable to take photos of the band so the images you see here are ones provided by Keith and the band themselves.

Every member of the band reported widely different tastes in music, from country to rock to the blues. Sound Guy, being the audio engineer, listed Andrew Wagg himself as his inspiration.

After the introductions, Andrew started describing how the band came about. For ease of reading, the quotes are generally treated as though the band itself is speaking, as multiple members chipped in at different times.

In October of Andrew’s freshman year he bought an acoustic guitar at a pawn shop. After playing it for a bit, he was “getting bored.” Keith, his roommate, owned and played clarinet, so Andrew began to “force him

to start playing” with him. After jamming for a while, one of their senior friends gifted them a full acoustic drum set, the one with the huge drums and symbols. Of course, Andrew and Keith were freshmen, and needed to squeeze the whole thing into their South Hall dorm room, stuffing the various pieces under beds and in corners.

Due to the quiet hours in dorms, they “were only really able to jam Fridays and Saturdays.” They tried out some recording within their room whilst Andrew attempted to force Keith to play the drums, despite his own background and training in drumming. As Andrew said, he simply “liked guitar more.” After a time, their friends Gibbs started singing with them. The band said Gibbs was “the drummer archetype; [he] had perfect rhythm and style, even though he was adamant he had no music ability.”

Christmas their sophomore year, Andrew received a microphone from his uncle and Keith received an electric bass as he was developing interest in the instrument. Using the microphone at one point during a night, the duo recorded a song known as ‘Stand by Me.’ They spent all night editing it, calling Gibbs to sing on short notice. Gibbs “did it perfectly in one take and double tracked his own voice perfectly without hearing his own voice. He had an incredible sense of rhythm.”

The band, at this point including Keith, Andrew, and Gibbs, recorded a cover of “Knockin’ on Heaven’s Door” by Bob Dylan. Andrew sent this cover to his father who, unbeknownst to the band, put the recording up onto the radio for a time. He worked for KALH 95.1 Alemogordo at the time.

Cody and Seth entered the picture the Spring of their sophomore year, “right before COVID.” They would jam at Seth’s house, and the original band with Gibbs was known as Saturdays at Seth’s for this reason. When the band was recruited for some technical practise at the Student Activities Center, “Gibbs jokingly suggested Cody.” Andrew “called him



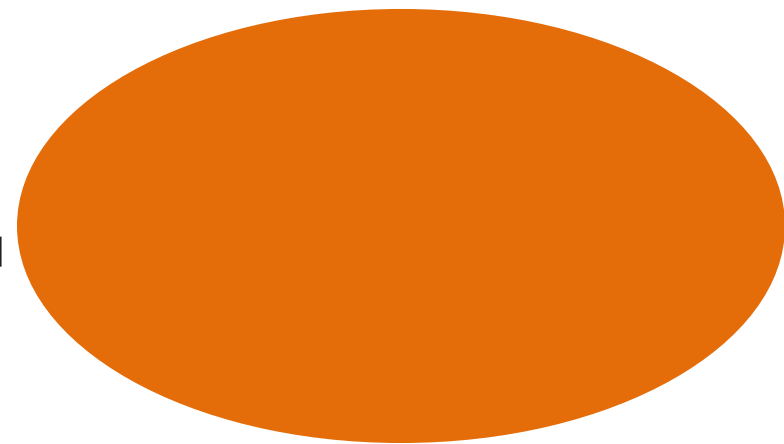
hierarchy of needs triangle. Especially in exoplanet infrastructure, you have to go back to the basics. You take something that seems to be a part of the 21st century, when in reality, it’s just become redefined through the centuries. A stick shelter to survive the cold is the same [thing] as living in a modern home with heating. It’s the same mentality, you need shelter...I really like the idea of translating the past into the future.”

Socializing at NMT can be tricky. As Techies, a lot of us can lean towards a hermit-esque lifestyle. With that, Ryan took to video games as a way to reach out and connect with friends around NMT and the world. “It’s just a way to connect with friends, that online connection really brings everything together.” He also found that video games presented lofty goals to always strive for, “[You] can always better yourself, there’s no peak master level to reach, you can always improve... having a goal for something that you can never really achieve, makes you stay in it.”

“That’s the downside to Tech, if you don’t come here with a hobby you don’t really have the time to create one...like, yeah, it’s cool to be able to go to one of the hardest schools in the country but if you don’t have that previous grounding agent, you’re not likely to find it while here.” Ryan discovered his passion in music and guitar long before his time here at NMT, starting when he was 8 years old. This love for music has propelled him into performance as well, having performed at every 49ers that he has been at Tech for. “You can practice 10,000 hours at home but there is an art to performing live.” His childhood music teacher’s philosophy on performance was integral for Ryan through these experiences, “Don’t give a [damn] what other people think, just don’t do it.” From there he grew and developed his own line of thought on performance that “you want people to remember the music, not you.”

Chatting with Ryan led to a very quick discovery that he is a very thoughtful person with many wise musings on life and its facets. One of the most profound that stuck with me was, “Western culture, we are very focused on the individual. We don’t realize that we are standing on the shoulders of giants. Not even historically though, let’s look at life laterally: even just someone telling you to ‘have a good day’ can be insignificant to them but can completely change your day. I don’t like saying ‘I did something’ because it feels disingenuous. I have a whole beautiful community around me and a really close knit group of friends that have helped build me to be a better person. Discrediting them would be an injustice to them. How do you say ‘I did something’ when everyone contributed to it. You have to be able to reframe it and remember who has helped build you to the person you are now.”

You see Techies everyday, whether you’re on your way to class, sitting at Chartwells, or the gym. You can choose to view these students as NPC Techies that aren’t really a part of your life or you can choose to view them as unique individuals that are a big component of this NMT community that contributes to your success as a person. Ryan Himes, a passionate and thoughtful Techie, chooses to regard this community with love and always strives for better.



### English in STEM: Love to Hate it but Need it to Succeed

Written By: Alexandra Sartori



Writing. It'd likely be fair to say that most NMT students loathe it. "I became an engineer so I DON'T have to write," is a quote I've heard thrown around more than enough times around campus. There are even days where I, a journalist, detest writing. It's a different type of effort than Calculus or Physics. There's no right answer with writing so it can seem like there is no real attainable goal to strive for.

Writing is dependent on the author's creativity. It can come to life when the writer loves their story and it can fall flat if the author isn't invested. While this may seem like something you may not care about, writing is integral in almost all STEM careers. Whether you're a Mechanical Engineer, a Pre-med student, or even Computer Science, your ability to write, or inability to, can either sink or propel your career.

NMT has a department known as the Communication, Liberal Arts, and Social Sciences (CLASS). This department oversees fields that range from English to history to music. It also encompasses the Technical Communication major on campus and the BS/BA option in Psychology. CLASS also offers minor options in Education or in History.

A big proponent in the CLASS department is Dr. Steve Simpson, a Professor of Communication and the Dean of Arts and Sciences. "[I] handle everything here that is not STEM," he stated. Dr. Simpson has been with NMT for 10 years and brings his passion for creativity and writing to the school.

Dr. Simpson, in high school, found that he had a passion for both STEM related subjects and English and writing. Both of which were two fields that did not meld together very well nor presented too many job opportunities at the time. Instead of pursuing his love for physics and math, he decided on an undergraduate degree in Journalism. Following it, he obtained his PhD in English with a specialization in Composition Studies.

During his time in graduate studies, he discovered his ardor for teaching students that were non-native English speakers. "I did a lot of work with Bosnian refugees. I worked in a Bosnian organization in Cincinnati and I also went and taught English in Bosnia for a Summer." His experience with teaching non-native English speaking students led to his focus in his PhD where he assisted many ESL (English as a Second Language) students in writing scientific papers. "[Which] ended up being what they were looking for at Tech with this department... someone to help non-native English speakers with their [technical] writing."

Dr. Simpson takes pride in getting to be a non-STEM academic in a STEM institute. "I think that the more I work with students and faculty here, the more I try to show them the ways that language use, writing, and reading all works with science and technology. I think they start to see that we are not the ugly stepchild and are just as important as any other part of STEM." Writing is a crucial aspect in STEM, whether your career will ask you to write memos, dissertations, science articles, instructions, or proposals, being able to write fluently and eloquently is a necessity. "It does you no good to have all the science all the world in your laboratory, if you have no way to tell people about it."



Dr. Simpson also puts a big emphasis on creativity in STEM. "Learning how to create novel ways to cure cancer takes creativity and the more you exercise those creative pathways, the better scientist or engineer you'll be."

Technical Communication is a major that can sometimes, inappropriately, be looked down upon by other students. Technical Communication is "the people that work alongside scientists and engineers. Whether it's a place like NRAO or the labs...they help the scientists and engineers with all the communication needs they have." While this could be misconstrued as easy on the surface, Technical Communication careers require in-depth knowledge of the field they are working with. Technical Communication (TC) students here at NMT are required to pick a specialization field that they must accrue a good amount of knowledge and credit hours within to be able to write fluently in the field. Some common specializations are Computer Science and Biology.

CLASS is one of the most unrecognized departments, yet makes up an integral portion of our education and ability to progress in STEM. Dr. Simpson works to inspire a love for creativity and writing in STEM students. Creativity

and writing are important parts to a STEM career but can be something that many students are afraid to approach. Dr. Simpson teaches many classes in the TC major and encourages students to scope them out so they can maybe find a new love for English.

