

## LETTER to the EDITOR

# How far is too far?

*Editor's Note: Typically, The Clarion does not run unsigned letters to the editor. However, at the request of the writers, we are making an exception in this case due to the sensitive nature of the letter.*

By Names Withheld

Division III athletics offers an intense and competitive athletic environment for student-athletes who play for the love of the game, without the obligation of an athletic scholarship. But here at Brevard College, the volleyball program doesn't follow the set guidelines following the Division III athletics definition.

From many sources on the team, we have been informed that mental health has been deteriorating on the team, with many players having to go to therapy not only for personal issues but also for the psychological and physical abuse occurring on the team.

With the whole team requesting a break from volleyball and each other, the coaches denied the team a break. The volleyball team has been practicing with each other since the beginning of August. They have only had two Sundays off this entire season. The coaches told them that they don't deserve a day off.

The coaches for the volleyball program here at Brevard College are ruining the mental health of the players. For example, players have admitted they want to hurt themselves with the

coaches not doing anything about it. Another example is a player openly said she was addicted to painkillers—which she was taking for an injury—asked for help and was turned away from not only coaches but also athletic trainers.

A red flag that has sparked conversation within the team is that players have noticed that they are not sufficiently fed to play at their highest potential the night before games or for breakfast or lunch the day of games. Players expressed that they are told to "Bring a snack from breakfast" such as a banana or a bagel for lunch to fuel their bodies for the game.

Recently, a player let us know that a parent was so fed up with the team not getting fed on game days that she went out herself to buy lunch for the 15 players and two coaches.

Another thing expressed to us was that over fall break many players did not have any way to get food, since the cafeteria was closed on certain days. So, one of the coaches brought them pasta and sauce but no pots or any way to make the food. The coaches expected this to be enough for the team for lunch and dinner that day despite the fact they had no way to make the food. They then had a four or five hour

practice and three hours of volunteer work the following day.

It has been very apparent that the team has more injured players than healthy. There are players playing with possible stress fractures, achilles tendonitis, hyperextended hip flexors, back injuries, concussions, knee injuries, shin splints and multiple other things. A player expressed that these injuries are due to overwork and no breaks expressed by a player.

A player has told us that the coach has thrown a ball at another player's shins that is suffering from shin splints and laughed, then threatened to do it again the next day. They have also informed us about players traveling with concussions and playing an athlete when she had bronchitis, which is not safe for anyone.

In conclusion, it seems to be that the season is doing more harm than good for the athletes. With coaches that continue to tear down self-esteem rather than building it up, create an unsafe learning environment for athletes, have the fear of humiliation, physical punishment and degrading comments from the coaching staff, it makes the team play timid and scared.

## 'Jeffrey Epstein didn't kill himself'

By Mary Lewe

Editor in Chief

On August 10 of this year, Jeffrey Epstein was found dead while in federal custody in Manhattan. Although, officially, his death has been ruled a suicide by hanging, anyone who has any kind of social media account has likely encountered memes stating the contrary: "Jeffrey Epstein did not commit suicide."

On November 2, a former Navy SEAL added a tagline at the end of his FOX News interview regarding the training of military dogs, "Epstein didn't kill himself."

Even if Epstein did, in fact, hang himself, it would be the result of utter negligence on the part of those keeping him in custody. Epstein had a suicide attempt in July, which resulted in his being kept on suicide watch through July 29. At the very least, Epstein was meant to have a cellmate.

Epstein's lawyers maintain that they are not satisfied with the ruling of their client's death

and that they will be pursuing an independent investigation.

However, many forensics experts say that Epstein's death looks more like homicide.

Epstein started out in 1974 as a teacher at an exclusive New York private school, then became an assistant at Bear Stearns trading group by way of connections he made with parents at the school.

Epstein's past is riddled with ties to shady characters like Steven Hoffenburg, who ran the biggest Ponzi scheme in United States history prior to Bernie Madoff, but his guilt-by-association is nothing when observed next to Epstein's pedophilia.

In 2005 and 2006, Miami police and the Miami Herald uncovered becoups of evidence, with then, Miami police chief, Micheal Reiter stating, "This was 50-something 'shes' and one 'he'—and the 'shes' all basically told the same story," Reiter said.

All told, Epstein served a mere total of 15 months for his crimes, which included procuring

an underage girl for prostitution, soliciting a prostitute and sex trafficking.

One of the most insidious aspects of Epstein's death is the knowledge he held about the vile acts of other well-connected individuals, such as former U.S. President Bill Clinton. Epstein went so far as to purchase Little St. James Island, located in the U.S. Virgin Islands, where he allegedly would record others having sexual relations with minors as a means of blackmail.

Whether or not Epstein committed suicide, his disgusting secrets have died with him, and that is more than a little suspicious. In a climate where victims of sexual violence and pedophilia have been empowered to take action against their attackers, Epstein's knowledge of the acts he facilitated would have been fuel on a fire that is raging, and will continue to rage.

The best thing we can all do now is to not let anyone forget what Jeffrey Epstein stands for: the unbridled power held by billionaires to rewrite history, at the expense of the sanctity of the truth and the safety of everybody else.