



AUTHOR: TWALKER1

August 7, 2022 by twalker1

Epilogue

I learned from this program what grad school and doctorate school is like, and now know that I will be going on to grad school next year. I am very appreciative of everyone involved in helping me understand grad school and figure out the next steps in life for me specifically.

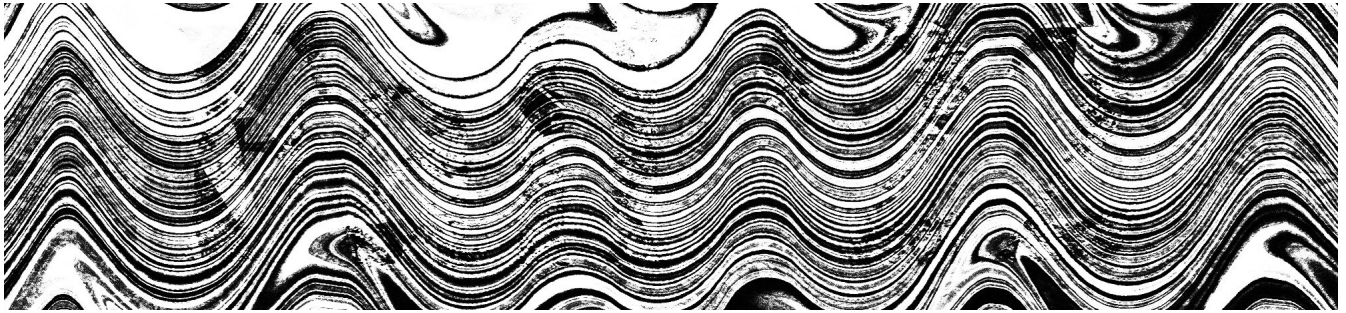
I am also grateful for all the friends I have made along the way. Each of the interns brought something wonderful and unique to the group. I hope to continue my friendship with them in the future. I would also like to thank the people who led our group and instructed us in classes, deeper dives, and luncheon lectures. I gained a lot of valuable insight from that time. Lastly, thank you to the staff of VRAC who facilitated our internship and made it a wonderful experience.

Sincerely

~ Thomas

August 4, 2022 by twalker1

 at this point 



This is my last blog in this office. Well, I wil probably be finishing this on my own laptop actually. Lately things have been winding down as we have been finishing our posters and preparing our presentaitons. ☺ Last week we all bought tickets for the Mega Million and won nothing. 🎰🎰 However we made a contract to make sure that if somebody one they were legally obligated to split it with everyone. 🙌🙌🙌🙌🙌🙌🙌



Mega Millions Prize Split



As of Friday, the 29th of July 2022, this group of people is entering into the Mega Millions lottery. All of these people have bought at least 1 ticket, or contributed the cost of at least 1 ticket, which has been added to the group pool. Every ticket bought will become part of the group pool and the buyer gives up claim to that ticket and its value. The winnings will be split equally amongst everyone who signed this document on July 29th, 2022. Everyone will receive an equal amount of the prize, regardless of how many tickets they contributed to the group pool. The prize will be split equally between everyone who signed this document once taxes and fees have been settled.

Name Printed

Signature

Date

Eli Whitney

Eli Whitney

7/29/2022

Thomas Walker

Thomas Walker

7/29/2022

Emma Edgar

Emma Edgar

7/29/2022

Charles Chai Brailowsky Baker

Charles Chai Brailowsky Baker

7/29/2022

MERIEH #CIN1

MERIEH #CIN1

7/29/2022

Grace Almyer

Grace Almyer

7/29/2022

Md Parham Ahmed

Parham Ahmed

7/29/22

the contract with my handwriting in green for money





We went ice skating again yesterday which was just as fun as the time before. 🛼 I got to practice more and I am even better than I was a few days ago (wow!) Then our Coop Gaming group met in the apartments with Yvonne to play games and eat pizza. It was nice to hang out and finally play the games we've been studying for so long. 🎮🎮

This morning Paul filmed us answering the questions for the interview videos that will go on the website. Everybody seemed to take so long and have so many bloopers. I went in there and answered every question and got out in like 5 minutes. I don't understand what took so long. 🤔 Now I'm getting ready for school and being an RA and such. The other interns are preparing for school too. We found out that all our footage is being overexposed which means we had to rerecord everything that evening.

Later we presented the poster at the symposium. 📋 I thought it would be a good experience for me but I didn't want to have a billion mini conversations for three hours

(sigh). Its okay I'm fine. It turned out that pretty much only vrac people showed up so it was super chill. I also got snacks and drinks (yum)!



Emma serving girlboss blazer energy 🦋





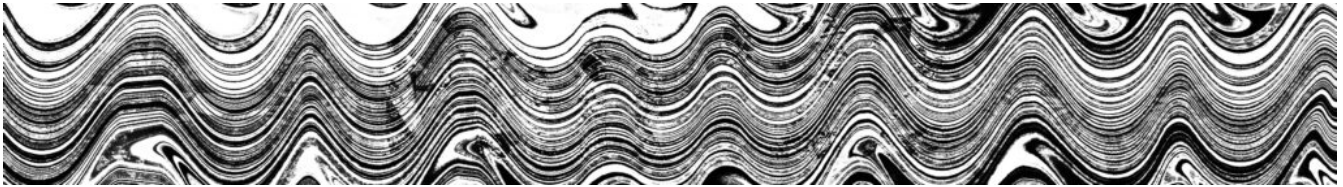
just after waking from my slumber to record

We returned to the office to rerecord the interviews. 🧑🧑🧑 It was really confusing to plan because some people needed to have the bikes all unlocked to give back to Val at Freddy's. Somehow I ended up recording dead last. By the time it was my turn to go I was asleep in Dr. Gilbert's office. 🛌

I once again had no bloopers whatsoever and finished it in like 2 minutes. Then we all had a potluck and cooked A TON of food in our apartment. We couldn't even fit all we cooked on the island. 🌴 I didn't contribute to the food at all but I enjoyed eating it. 🍲🍲🍲🍲🍲

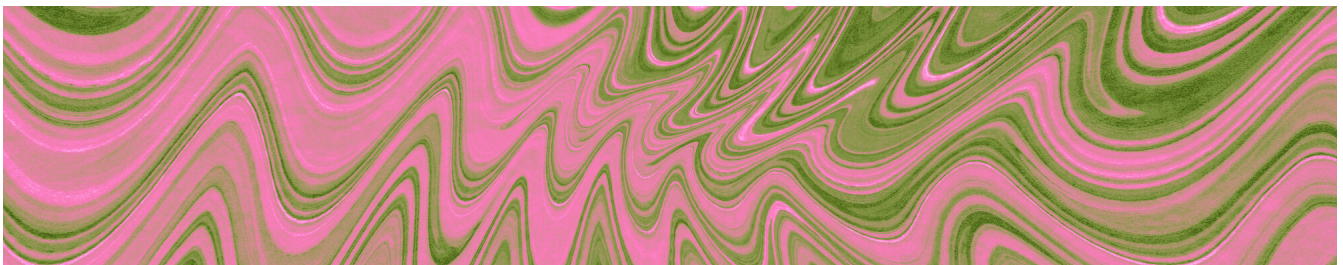
Tomorrow we have some kind of reflection on our experience here for the VRAC people to review for the next REU and the farewell lunch. After then it's truly over over. I keep realizing that I'm doing things for the last time here. At this point I feel like I'm in a memory and not really here anymore. I will cherish this time.

~ Thomas



July 29, 2022 by twalker1

~made me feel pretty cool~



We found out that we don't need to have the full version of our research paper written at the end of this week and it has been a relief. 📝 I feel so much more chill now. 😊 Instead we have been working on our poster for the symposium. I'm really happy with how it looks. I'm the best graphic designer in the group so everyone's compliments for my poster made me feel pretty cool. 😎 I've also had time to work on my art once again which was sorely missed. Jack took us to get a snack on the VRAC card and we finally went to get something else than bubble tea. I had to defend myself and face criticism from Jack the whole time but at least I got a good smoothie. 😊

Then in the weekend some of us went ice skating which was so fun. Dante showed me how to do backwards cross-overs and I felt pretty cool practicing those. Farhan did really bad and Dante got a walker for him to use on the ice. Alli did really good but also fell a billion times and bruised her knees quite a bit. 🤕







Moments before Eli's surprise

Then we celebrated Eli's birthday with a cake and a littl egift and he openly cried. 🥳 I'm going to miss this group when this ends in a few days. Oh my gosh I need to start packing don't I? This is so sad. 😞

I found this pretty trail in the park near the apartments the other day and I've gone on it like three times. Its a dirt trail and it is very secluded in the woods and nobody is every there. 🌳🌳 That's really nice but a bit scary since I'm alone. Except yesterday Meriem and Shae went with me and I got to show them all the cool things i've found and we saw deer! Then we sat on this fake truck thing where the playgrounds were.





she thinks she bad



those flowers ahhh

I am not prepared for the end wow.

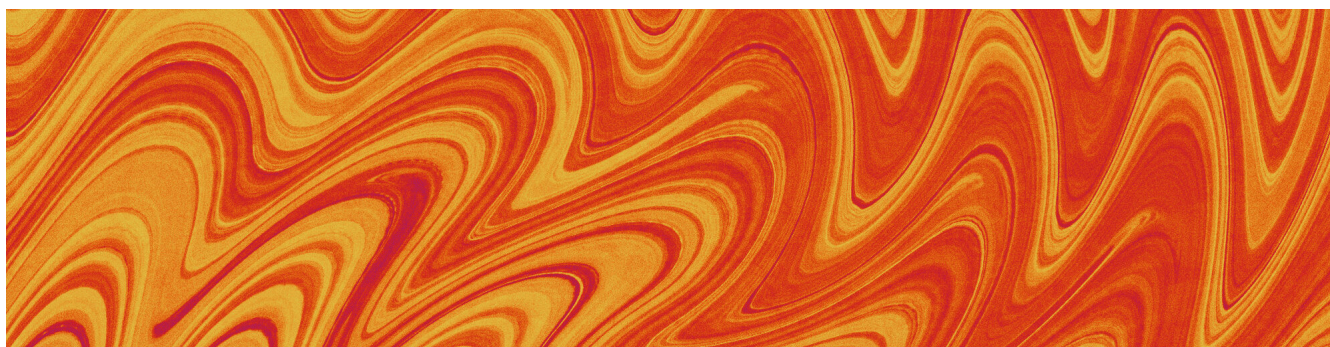
~ Thomas



July 28, 2022 by twalker1



so soon now



Meriem's birthday was last week. We went out to eat at El Aztec to celebrate.



I am hidden by Farhan and Eden in this photo but I was there I promise

Then the next night us old people went to a couple bars now that she's #legal. 🍹 Except Farhan cause he was sick. Pretty sure he gave that to Emma too becuae now she's sick. Anyways, I've never gone to a bar so it was a fun experience for me. I developed a program to automate the data collection for our Coop Gaming project. 📊 I felt like a pretty cool computer science person when I did that. Our team has continued to work on the data collection process and it has become very smart. 😊 We have finally finished annotating gameplay footage which I am happy about. Now we need to write the rest of the paper and develop the symposium poster. 📅 This week will be very full getting all that done in time. I keep thinking about the end of this program. It is going to be over so soon now. 💧



The gang on the way to the bars

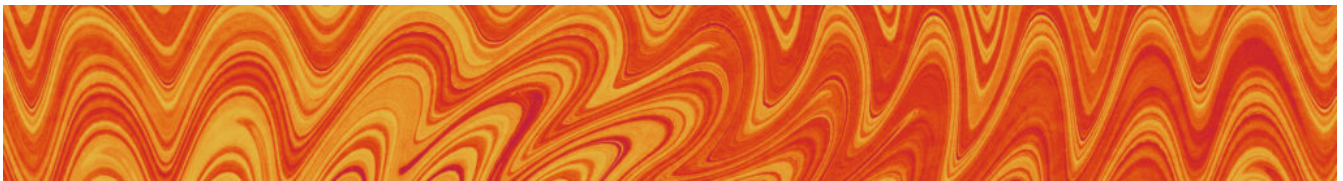
On Sunday me and Meriem and Shae visited Alli and we all went to the lab. There I was playing with Farhan's magic rainbow light up keyboard and kind of messed it up. 🌨️ Then we all hatched a devious scheme and wrapped the keyboard like a present for Farhan to find on Monday. im pretty sure he loved it.

This week we went to get icecream from the soybean building or something im not suer what it was. They had a dairy lab that you could see so I guess the ice cream came from there? 🐮 On the way back we took a detour to see this big unimpressuve classroom Dante was raving about. 🏛️



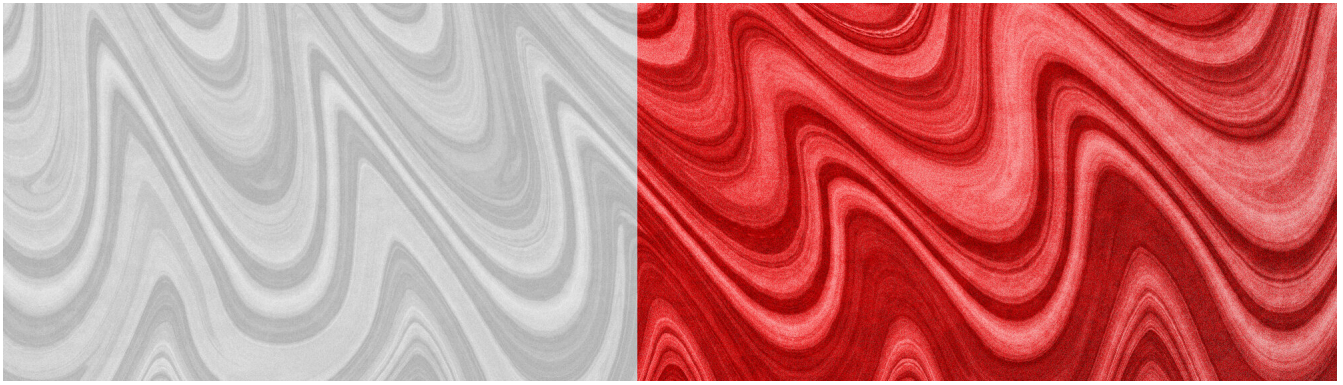
Things are starting to slow down a bit now that we have finished our actual research. Now all we have left is working on the poster and the paper. 🙄

~ Thomas



July 18, 2022 by twalker1

🚨 it was just not super fun for me 🚨



They took us to a fancy etiquette lunch that I adored. These old man taught us how to eat a fancy meal and by the end I was ready to adopt him as my grandfather. 🧑 The food was also the best I've had this summer.



We tried to watch *Spirited Away* but it didn't go very well because the fire alarm kept going off in our apartment. 📢 We had to get emergency maintenance to deal with it and it delayed my sleep. Also the fire alarm went off for the entire building twice on Saturday. 📢
🔥📢



5 am.



Farhan before his demise

This weekend we went to Des Moines and first visited the farmers market. 🧑🌾 There were so many people packed between the tents there it was just not super fun for me. Farhan got this honey lemonade stuff that he was insisting we try but no body else liked it. 🍹

While we were there we played an escape room that we successfully got out of (yes). Before the game started Farhan guzzled the rest of the lemonade since he couldn't bring it into the room and got sick *tisk tisk*. Then we walked around the mall. 🏢🏢 I enjoyed going somewhere new and not just being in Ames it was nice. I did not make a purchase while I was there. Lastly we ate at Olive Garden. I thought it was funny how fascinated people were by the restaurant – it is one of the most mundane places to eat from my life experience. 🍝



🎵 tuesday night at Olive Garden 🎵

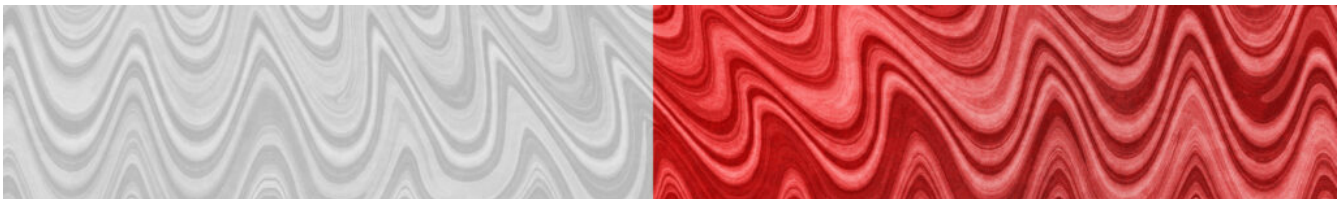
Yesterday we played badminton and four square outside. I was okay at badminton but really good at four square (wow)! What a throwback game.

That night I was walking around Freddy's and a stranger pulled up to me in their car and said they needed help getting into their room because they didn't have their ID card. He said he is a football player here. 🏈 I called the RA on call and went with him to his apartment and then the RA took over. I don't understand how this guy is a student here and couldn't figure out what to do on his own. 😬 At work I am back to grinding out video game annotations. We will be checking soon to see if we actually are all annotating similarly or not. I fear our annotations will not be super similar. 👉👉



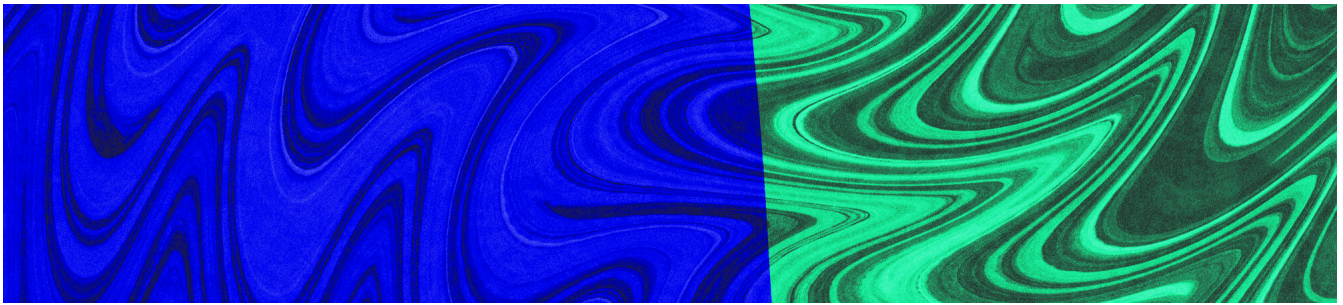
🌳 children at play 🌳

~ Thomas' ~



July 12, 2022 by twalker1

🌀 getting pretty crazy 🌀



I have brought my Deeper Dive project on to my phone. Its really cool! We met another REU group today. There are so many of them. 🧑🧑🧑 We are trying to plan a big REU group hangout of some kind since we all live in Freddy's. Things are getting pretty crazy with all of our projects. I feel like ive been doing so many things i havent really been getting a lot done. 😊



me at my desk 🖥️

After monday we will just have our pod projects and then i can focus on one thing. Imtiajul gave us less than 24 hours to put together 3 shirt designs on top of that. #cracratimes I

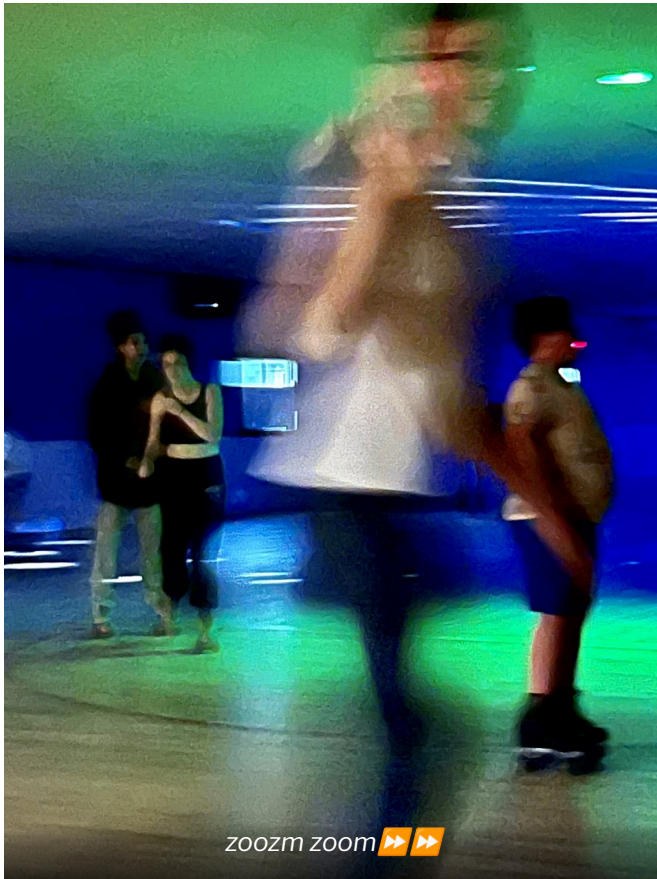
got to use my illustrator skills to draw it which was fun. Charles is considering getting like three different colors of the design (wow).



i made a mockup 🧨

Then we presented on our MCA projects which was exhilarating. I was just like wow all this people are straing at me. 👁️💋👁️ Jack voluntold me to go first so I got it out of the way and no one asked me any questions after my presentation. They were stunned... i guess. Later elliott said he liked our presentations so that's cool. ✨ Now we are focusing on just our

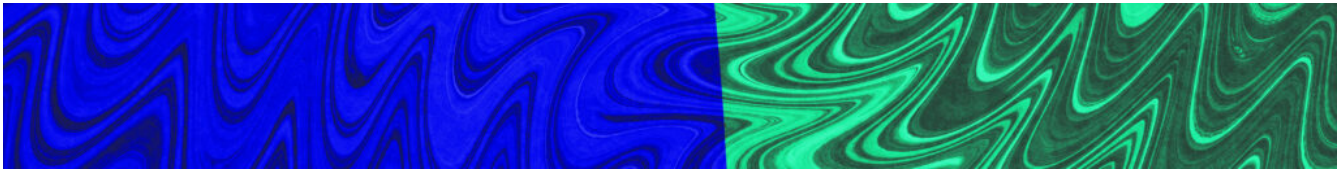
individual projects. For Coop gaming that will be involving lots of annotating gameplay and working on a codebook of cooperative behaviors. We went to a fair in Ankeney which was nice. I rode two rides and my stomach was just churned. 🎢 Meriem was struggling as well. We got some food and watched fireworks. That was lovely. 🎆🎆



Last weekend we also went roller skating. The rink was small but there was a lot of people there and it was fun. We also got to meet other REU interns who came too. It is really fun to hear what other people are up to in their internships.

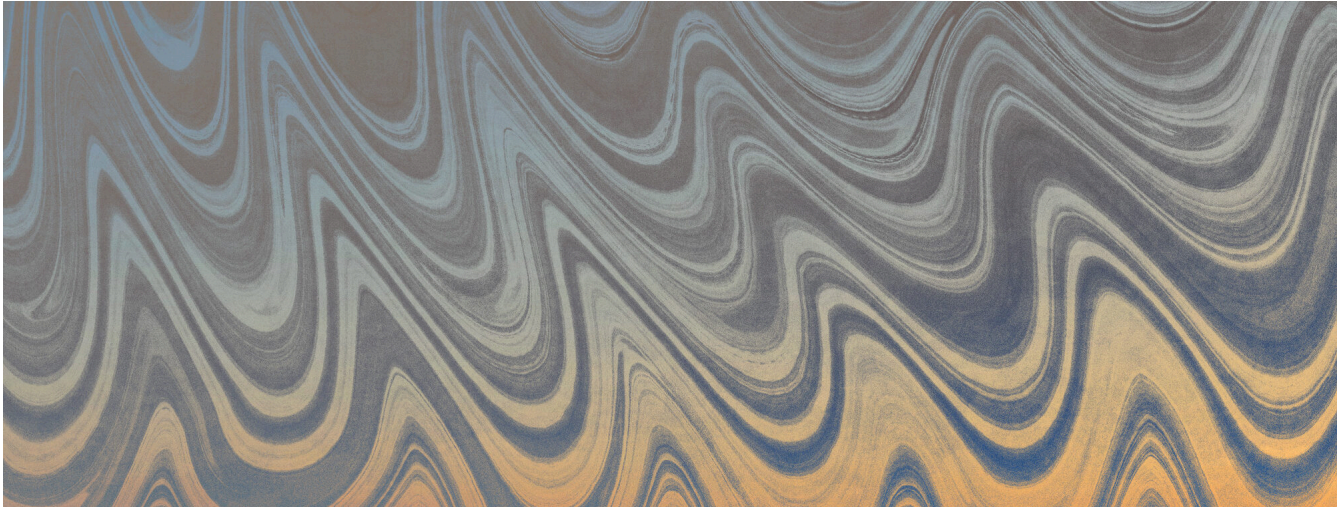
Recently I have been eating at Freddy's (not to be confused with Frederickson or Frieley's). It is a good burger fries and ice cream place. I recommend. 😊

~ Thomas



July 5, 2022 by twalker1

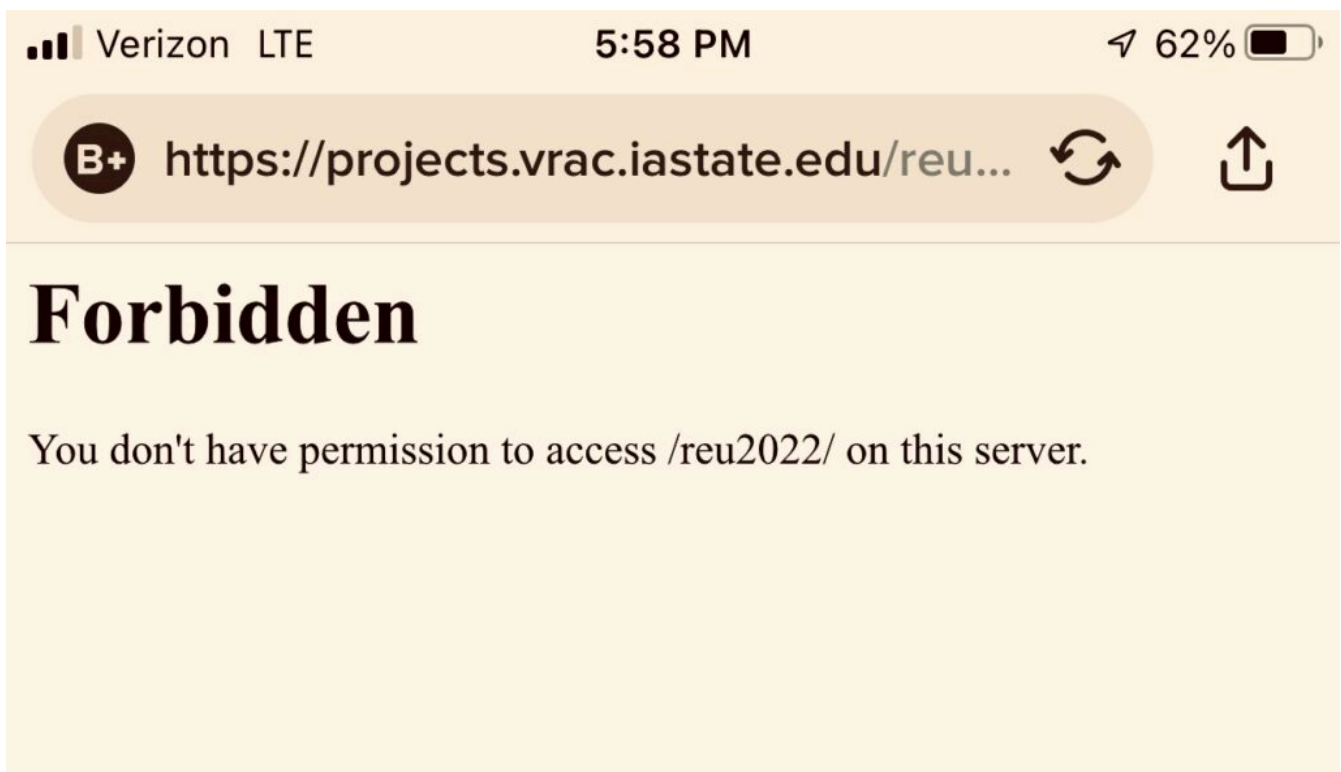
❖ im just a writer ❖



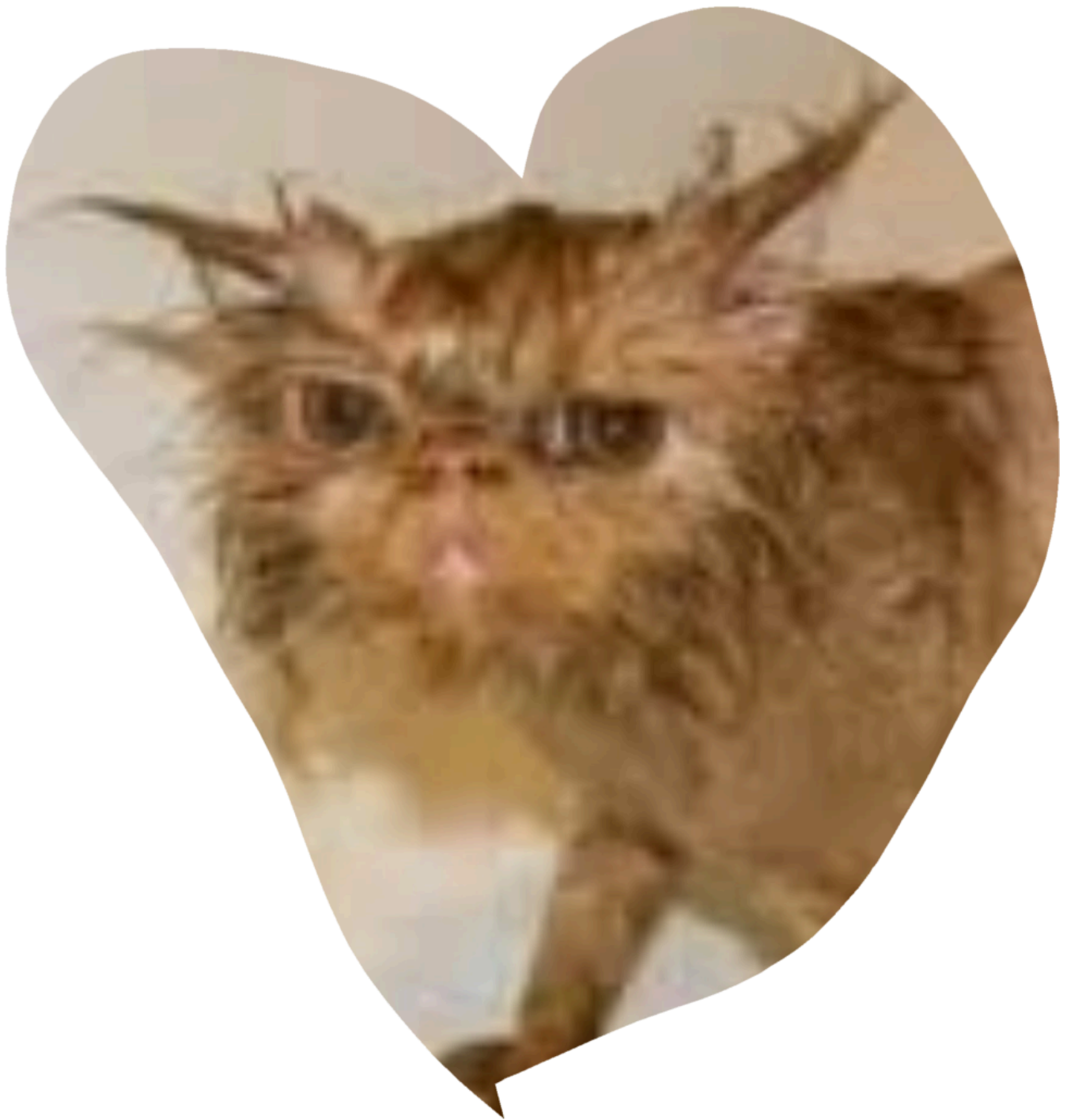
Lale invited us to eat dinner at her apartment. I enjoyed the visit. Her house is so cozy I immediately sat on the couch and start falling asleep. 🛌 On Saturday I wrote a 2,000 word letter to the mayor's office of a town I used to live in. They should change their city flag but they have yet to confirm whether or not they will do so for the last 6 years. That's a whole other story. 📜 Soon I will actually try to condense that and mail it off. I also finished one of my art pieces yay! On Sunday I worked with my Pod on our homework to write our paper. Then I biked more around Ames. 🚲



🦌 I did nto realize deer would be out here! 🦌



The blog was forbidden this weekend. What was up with that? @GLEN



Blessed to have this beautiful kitty on my desktop this morning 🥰 ✨

Farhan and I started the last episode of Stranger Things season 4. We didn't finish it because it was 2 and a half hours long. Why was it so long?? 😡 Then all of us went to Eli's house to have burgers. It was nice else than the bugs. They were ravenous. I don't know how people eat outdoors here.





Then we went to the cornfield that's a 2 minute walk from their house. The field was so long – corn as far as the eye can see. 🌱🌱🌱🌱



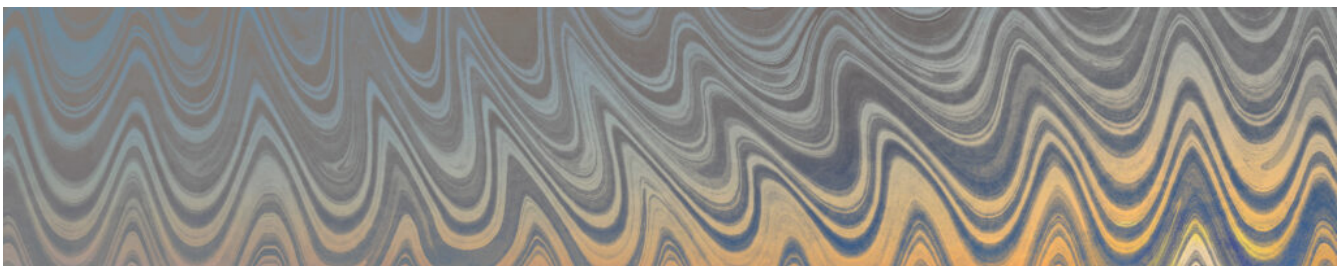
Someone can be seen destroying their blinds in Freddy's 🤖

Then we went with Imtiajul and his daughter to the stadium. We sat in Eli's pickup truck and watched the fireworks. They were good. Then we drove back to Freddy's which took forever because of the traffic leaving the parking lot.



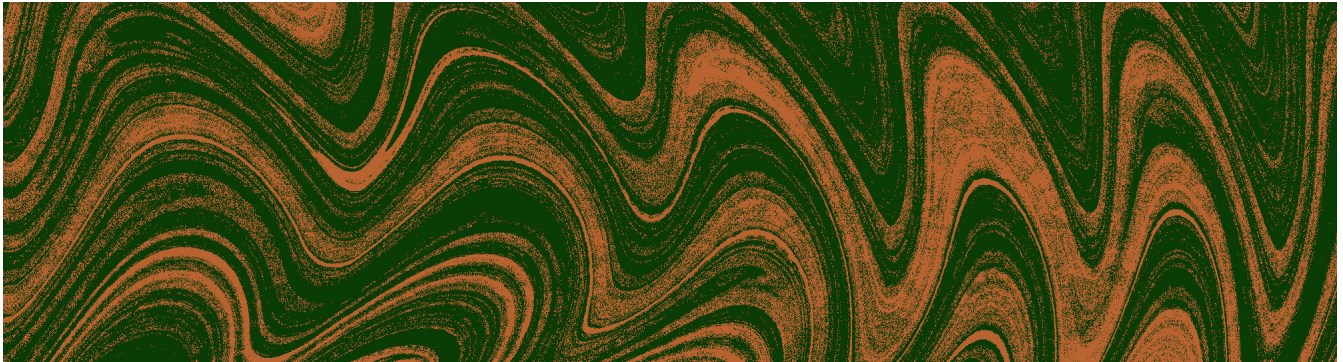
On Monday I wrote a 3000 word short story. I'm just a writer all the sudden i guess. 🖋️
Also we finished the rest of the Stranger things finale and honestly we weren't impressed.
I feel like I got no closure with what happened. 🐛 I noticed that I got many bug bites from
the day before. Now my legs have itchy bumps all over them as well as cuts and bruises
from my bike wreck last week. Not a fun time. 🚲 We are supposed to be writing the
beginning of our report and it is a struggle.

~ Thomas



July 1, 2022 by twalker1

😹 i did not like that 😹



VRAC was once again evacuated, but this time due to the fire alarm. Someone in aerospace apparently burnt popcorn. That was veyr inconsiderate – I missed some time I could have worked. A fire truck came and two firemen came out decked out with hatchets. 🧑🔪🧑🔪 It was quite extra if you ask me. That morning I saw the same type of firetruck at Freddy's. What was going on there? I was on my bike and went to work and saw it on my way. 🚒 Once I was at work I realized I had intended to go to a print shop for one of my designs that morning. I left VRAC and biked to the print shop... or at least what I thought was the print shop. 🖨️ I actually went to a grocery store thanks to my GPS.



emma is peaking thruogh





Then I headed out to the real locaiton. But on the way I hit a big bump or something on the sidewalk and fell off my bike! I did not like that. My knee immediatly starting oozing blood and my white shirt got a grass stain on it. 🩸🌿 My legs and arms had some scratches and bruises as well. After getting over being seen wrecking by the cars on the road, I decided to clean up at Freddy's. But the wreck also screwed up my bike so I haphazardly shoved the handles and wheels sort of back into alignment. 😬 Thanks to Val's handy work I was able to make it back where i actually repaired the bike. At Freddy's I put my clothes in the washer and cleaned up the wound. All this time, Imtiajul and Lale knew what was going on. Therefore I was suprised to find that no one knew why I was late to our meeting once I was back at VRAC. For this reason, Jack threw shade when i came in and everyone jsut gave me confused pity looks. 🙄 After the meeting I was able to explain how much effort I had to put in to be there and they gave me an appropriate sympathetic response. 😞😞





she thinks she really did something here 📷

That evening I came home and found the grass stain was still there. Rest in peace white Tee. 📖 We went got fast food from Culvers for dinner. Some of the interns also went to the pool but I didn't go with them. They keep trying to convince me to go to the pool but the vibes' just never right. 🚫 Culvers was fine but actually tasted really good because we ate at like 8 pm for some reason.



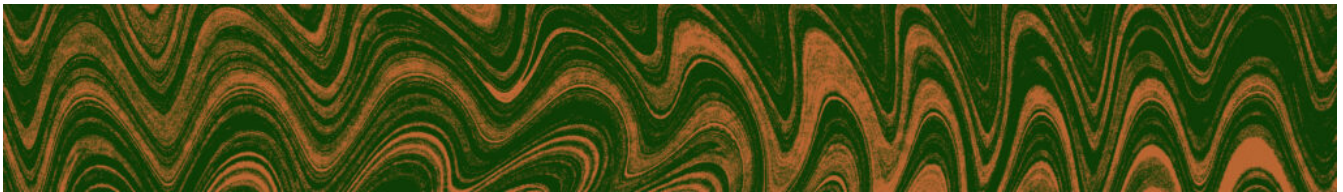
Today Me Merium and Emma went to the Hub to get something before work. It was a nice walk and then we just chilled at the Hub for a bit. Then for lunch Alli and I were the only ones who went to Windows to eat. Everyone else was in a meeting or went to MU again. Now that all the orientation children are no longer scurrying about it was so nice and quiet. I truly felt at peace for a little while. 🪐 Then that ISU student who played volleyball with us and looks like a 70's office worker came and ate with us for a few minutes before we left. Who is this guy? 🧑



I am continuing to make progress on my Deeper Dive project. Today I should be testing out my AR work on my phone instead of a VRAC camera which will be cool! 🤖 In Cooperative Gaming we now have a decent outline for the rest of the summer and I finally feel like I understand the entire research from start to finish. I do wonder if we will survive this amount of work however.

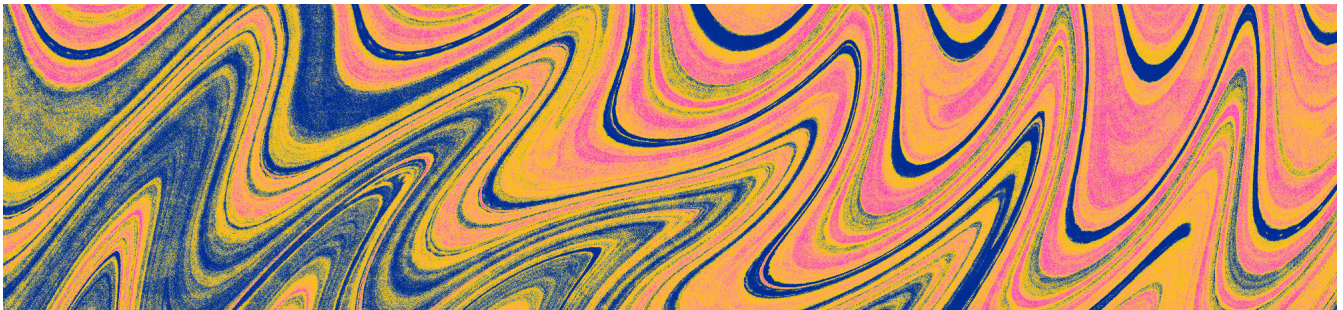


~ Thomas ~



June 29, 2022 by twalker1

Im intimidated by what I need to do 🙄👁️👁️



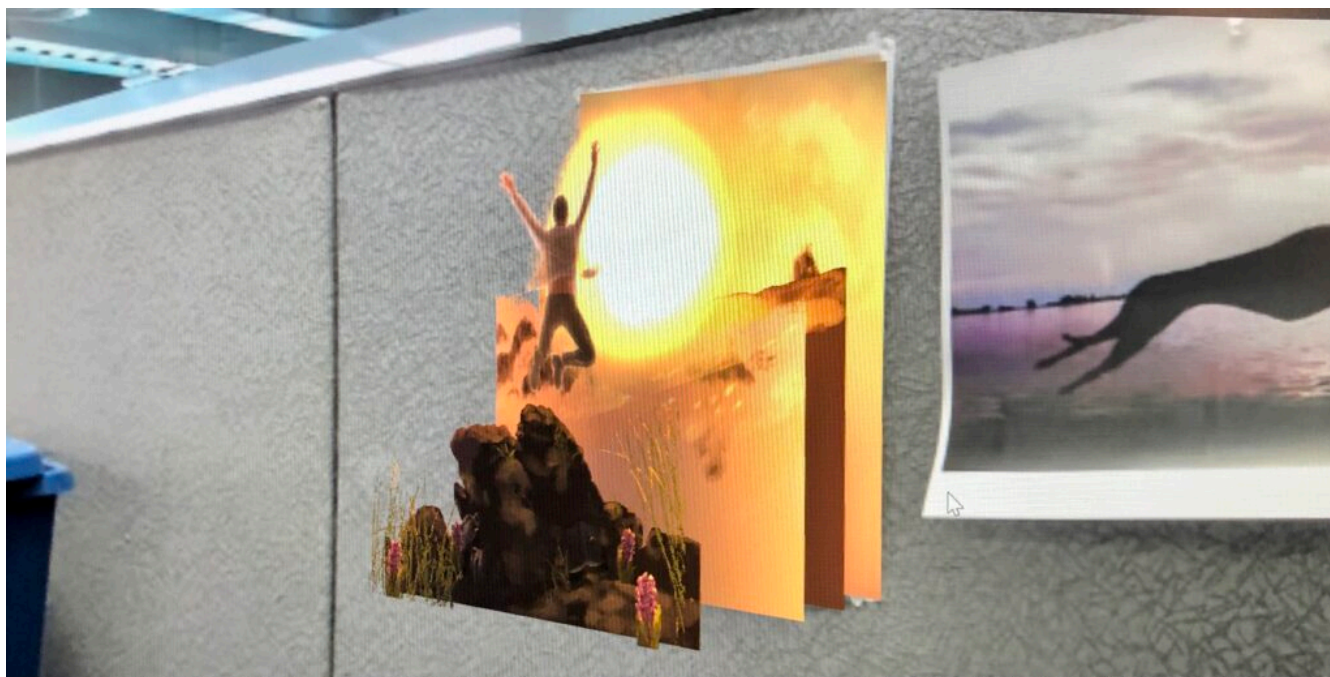
I have mixed feelings about my bike seat. It is nice and big and squishy too. 🐙 However, it is also old and cracked and leaves black marks on my shorts when ride it 😞 Alex gave me

a new seat to try putting on my bike. It is much smaller but I will switch so I don't have to wash my shorts every day. 📌 Yesterday VRAC smelled like paint. People were working on the bottom floor apparently so all this chemically stuff was in the air. I was fine with this but people decided it was dangerous to inhale so we all evacuated. 😞 Eliot took us all to get bubble tea again. After the last one not being very good and WAY to sweet, I tried something different. Me and Alli both got the Oreo smoothie. It was basically a milkshake but not as good. I'm still not getting what people love about this place. Ill try suggesting icecream next time or something. Then we sat outside and talked with the doctoral students plus eliot. ☀️ There is so much that goes into doing grad school well. I am intimidated by what I need to do. Today we tried going to memorial union instead of Windows for lunch. I was not as much a fan but I'm glad I tried it. I would prefer to just keep going to Windoes I think. While we were there I found the art gallery and stopped in to see what they were showing. 🖼️ That was really fun. I hope to visit that a few more times before the end of the summer.



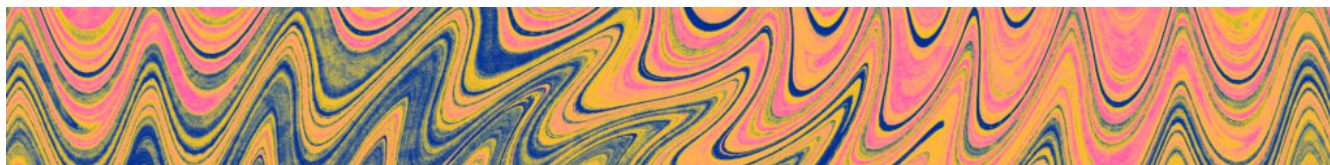
😄 one of my favs from the gallery 😄

I have got to do some really cool AR things in Unity. Right now im trying to add more animation and movement to make the digital space come alive. 🖥️ In our Cooperative Gaming group we are annotating more videos of gameplay. Yvonne says we will be going through 10 more hours at least. This is, like, a lot of watching videos. 😞



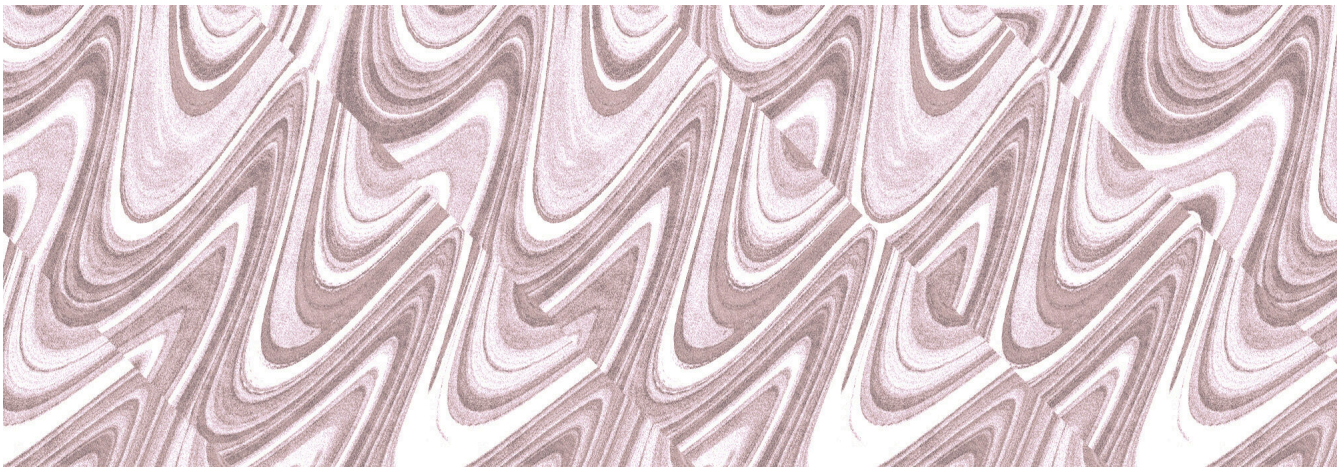
🌸 a diorama in augmented reality 🌸

~ Thomas



June 27, 2022 by twalker1

📖 better than i expected 📖



On friday we got more group pictures taken (still waiting on Paul to upload those 📷). We also got boba tea which I have never tried before 🧋. I was too sweet for me i wasnt a fan.



Alli understands whats wrong with these thighs

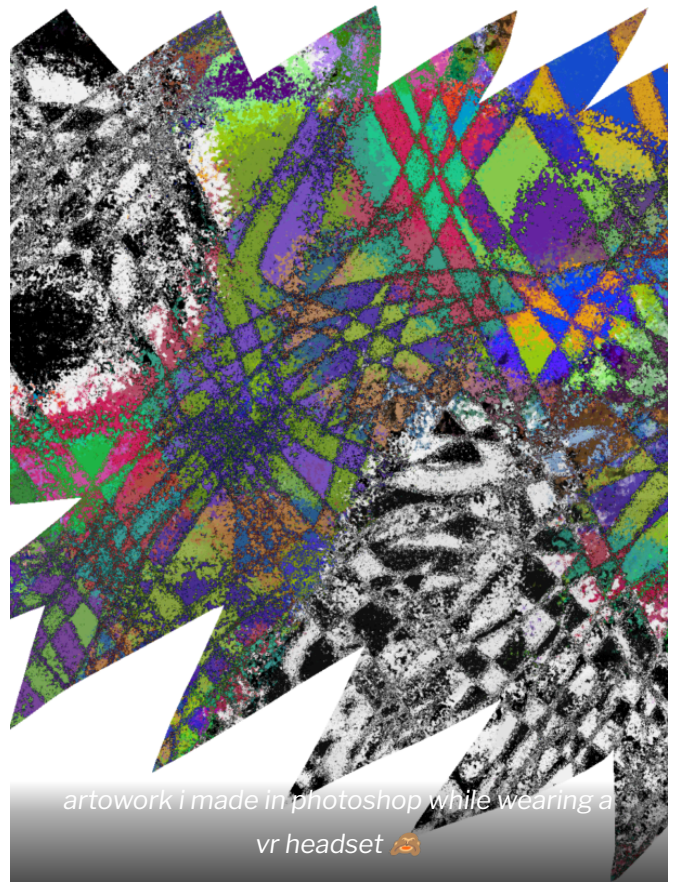


hands up clayton 🍌

Plus the chunky beverage thing just wasnt hittting right for me. This weekend I went biking a lot on my own. There are a lot of sidewalks around Ames so it was really easy to explore. I rode through a park and also ended up near some of the neighborhoods. 🏠🏠 I also biked to a place to get my hair cut 💇. Saturday morning we went to the farmers makret. They still do not have any fruit at all so I got nothing while I was there. However, I did see my favorite Cy statue so far and had to get a pic with it.



disco CY pats my head approvingly 🐱



artwork I made in photoshop while wearing a
vr headset 🐱

Some of the other interns met three students from another REU and now I've got to know them somewhat too. We've got dinner with them twice and we also played games together at the apartments. I'm glad we got to meet some new people because I'm kind of bored already of the interns here (I kid). We talked about going to the waterpark on Sunday but some of us just ended up playing volleyball 🏐. I was better at it than I expected which was fun. There was a random ISU student there who joined in our game who was kind of odd but sure whatever right? I'm pretty sure our team lost because he joined ours though.





Continuing with the XR deeper dive, I am learning how to make AR and VR games in Unity! It is actually not as complex as I thought it would be. The Cooperative Games project is starting to seem really intimidating. I'm wondering if we are going to have time to get to some of our goals. July 4th is next Monday!

~ Thomas

