

THE BEACON

Wilkes University - Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania

The news of today reported by the journalists of tomorrow.

Leadership through crisis series: A presidential lens

By Sean Schmoyer
News Editor

The Honors Program kicked off its "Leadership through Crisis" speaker series with its first speaker President Greg Cant on Sept. 23. The lecture was held online via Zoom, and it was only available to students in the Honors Program and those who registered beforehand.

Interim Honors Director Dr. Jonathan Kuiken introduced Cant and the lecture series as a whole. "It is our pleasure to welcome Dr. Cant as the first of two speakers in our speaking series this semester called 'Leadership through Crisis.' Leadership is a major focus of the Honors Program."

The current pandemic, Kuiken argues, makes this the perfect time for students to learn about how to lead through challenging times.

Michael Nowak, a first-year electrical engineering major, finds the lecture series to be beneficial given the current climate we are living in.

"This lecture series is an excellent idea," said Nowak. "There has not been a global pandemic or event like this recently, and not many people know what to do. It is nice to see what our leaders thought of and others' leadership, and to also see what they tried to do to lead us through the pandemic."

Cant explained that he wanted to talk about leading in a crisis by first expressing what are important challenges of leadership



The Beacon/Sean Schmoyer

President Greg Cant spoke to students and faculty as the first speaker in the Honors Program's "Leadership through Crisis" speaker series held over Zoom.

in general and then looking at how a crisis like the pandemic takes those challenges and exaggerates them.

"Let me address one first issue: As your new president, on a somewhat routine basis, someone will say to me, something like, 'Oh, we are so sorry that you started in this tough time.' What I say to them in every circumstance is that this is by far the

greatest honor in my life to lead Wilkes. Please never feel sorry for someone who is in a leadership role in a tough circumstance. It is tough for all us," explained Cant.

Cant went on to discuss what he thought were the important things to know about leadership. First, he identified what qualities he believes are important for leadership.

The ability to help give people a common

purpose or clear vision was listed as Cant's first quality.

"When we find something that is reliable, it affirms what our purpose is, and a key part of what leaders do is reinforce what that purpose, help re-imagine it and give a sense of direction," said Cant.

The next quality is the ability to ensure those you work with act courageously. Cant said that it is easy to be overcome by doubts, and compared organizations and businesses need to be courageous to that of a student's journey to get to college.

Cant explained, "As a young person growing up, it is one of the things that defines us. How courageous are we, how hard was it to come away to college. Most of you had to make some big journeys."

Collaboration was another area Cant identified as being crucial. He identified that higher education is predominantly driven by collaboration, and in order to build a business or organization that sustains itself into the future, collaboration has to be fostered.

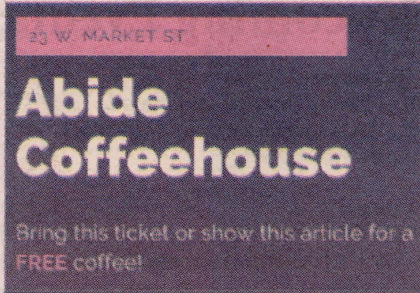
"The next thing that is really important for leaders is continuous communication. When someone asks me what I do for a living, and if I had to say the one thing I do, I would say I am a storyteller. As a leader, you are helping reinforce and understand the narrative that holds us together," said Cant.

LEADERSHIP, page 3



Courtesy of Karley Stasko

Sordoni Art Gallery got crafty with mask making over Zoom, page 5



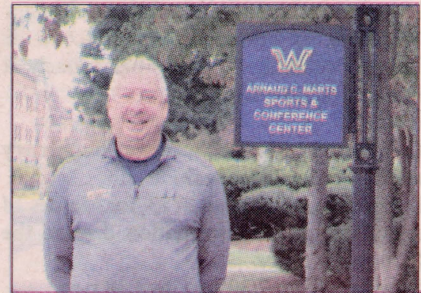
The Beacon/Kirsten Peters

Abide Coffeehouse adapts the morning cup of coffee to the new normal, page 7



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Opposing viewpoints: The safety of mail-in voting, pages 15 & 16



The Beacon/Ariel Reed

Joseph Czopek reflects on his career and upcoming volleyball seasons, page 21

News

Have a breaking story or a press release to send? Contact the news editor: Sean.Schmoyer@wilkes.edu

Student Government: Sept. 23 weekly meeting notes

By Maddy Kinard
Staff Writer

Student Government had its fifth online meeting of the semester, in which members discussed the re-recognition of a club and the planning of more ways to bring the campus together safely.

To start, Wilkes University College Republicans shared a presentation on their club and why it should be re-recognized. This club is looking to educate others on current politics and Republican policies and to cultivate an environment where students feel comfortable engaging in political discussions.

The club would like to bring in local political leaders to educate students on their responsibilities and roles, as well. Their mission is to encourage students of all political parties, not just Republicans.

The response across Student Government

was positive, agreeing it would be a good addition to the campus, and it would lend itself to spark a greater collaboration between other political societies.

Wilkes University College Republicans will be back next week for a final decision.

Next, the floor was opened for discussion on ways to improve advertising for the upcoming first-year class elections.

The members are focusing on establishing a line of communication with FYF professors, so that they can talk to their first year students about getting involved, a pamphlet about Student Government and what they stand for with a free mask, or even a board somewhere in the Henry Student Center that would

advertise positions and eventually show who was elected. It was also suggested that the organization work with communication co-curriculars like the WCLH radio station or The Beacon newspaper to establish another form of advertisement that would reach all of campus.



Student Government is working on increasing conversation within the council outside of its weekly meetings. A poll was distributed on what form of social media should be used for communication,

and with over half the votes, GroupMe, a mobile group messaging application, won.

The seniors have started posting introductions of each of their class board members, which can be viewed on the

Instagram account, @wilkeseniors21. They are also working on developing their virtual store, which will feature 2021 and 2023 class branded stickers, blankets and speakers.

Commuter Council will be distributing masks for commuters and off-campus students during the week of Sept. 28 through Oct. 2. The council will also be holding its first meeting of the semester that same Friday. They are hoping to have a couple of contests, such as one for the highest car mileage, which students can follow on their Instagram page, @wilkes_commuter.

In closing, freshmen polls went out on Sept. 22, and they will be out until Sept. 28. Announcements will be made Sept. 29, and positions will be instituted the following day on Sept. 30.

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Beacon Briefs: Upcoming campus events

Compiled by Sean Schmoyer

Racial Justice Vigil

Wilkes Football is planning to host a racial justice vigil on Oct. 1 at 7:30 p.m. at the Ralston Athletic Complex and Schmidt Stadium. Students are encouraged to drive or meet at Evans Hall at 7 p.m. to walk over to the event.

The vigil serves as a peaceful statement of unity against racial and social injustice inequalities for victims of police brutality.

For more information or questions, contact Erica Acosta, the associate director of diversity, at erica.acosta@wilkes.edu or Jonathan Drach, the Colonels' head coach, at jonathan.drach@wilkes.edu.

Get Your \$3 Movie Tickets at the Henry Student Center Info Desk

Movie tickets, which cost \$3, for Movies 14 are available at the information desk in the SUB at select times:

- Mondays from 2:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- Tuesdays from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- Thursdays from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Taste of Wilkes 2020: Home Edition

The Taste of Wilkes Committee has moved

to a virtual format, which will include a cookbook (physical and a PDF version) as well as a virtual gift basket auction.

The committee is calling for the members of the campus community to submit their favorite recipes to be included in the cookbook.

The committee is also looking for virtual chefs who will: submit their favorite recipe for inclusion in the cookbook, create a unique name for their dish and provide a short story about why the dish is special to them.

Find Volunteer Opportunities Through the Civic Engagement Office

The Civic Engagement Office has been working on curating service opportunities and has an ongoing list. Students are encouraged to check back often.

The opportunities are available on a Google Sheet with three tabs to help identify the type of service students may be looking for, including virtual events that are a mix of local and national community partners, face-to-face and group opportunities that work with local non-profits and a Colonel's Share tab that lists organizations that could benefit from student donations of both money and

goods.

If interested, students should let the office know they plan to participate, as well as complete a reflection of the experience. To gain access to the Google Sheet, students can check Wilkes Today or contact Megan Boone at megan.boone@wilkes.edu. Students are also encouraged to reach out if they have ideas about service events in the area.

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Upcoming Events: 2020 Fall Semester

September

- 30 - Honors Program at Chipotle
- 30 - Civic Engagement and Diversity Affairs Watch Party

October

- 1 - Racial Justice Vigil
- 5 - Wilkes women's lacrosse team's candle sale ends
- 6 - Online weekly Buddhist sitting meditation
- 7 - Major General Roberson Honors Lecture
- 15 - Virtual Career Fair

- 27 - Dr. Toll Zoom Lecture
- 31 - Halloween

November

- 7 - Virtual Open House
- 11 - Veterans Day
- 25 - Holiday Recess begins
- 26 - Thanksgiving

Want your event featured in the calendar?
Email: TheWilkesBeacon@wilkes.edu

Civic engagement re-introduces Into the Streets initiative

By Sara Ross
Asst. News Editor

Wilkes University's Civic Engagement Office is hosting Into the Streets on Oct. 24. This volunteering event is meant to help local elderly residents clean up the outside of their homes and prepare for the winter season.

This event is not new to the Wilkes community. Originally, it was called Into the Streets Week, and then, it went to Make a Difference Day, where the university partnered with a national program through USA Weekend magazine.

Civic Engagement Coordinator Megan Boone has held her position for 13 years and is excited to have this volunteering opportunity return to campus, as it offers all Wilkes students a chance to give back to those who are in need.

"Students can sign up through the Today at Wilkes email to register, and we will keep sending these reminders to ensure we can receive as much participation as possible," said Boone.

Makayla Guzzo, the civic engagement's student-led coordinator, is assisting Boone with the preparations for Into the Streets. This is her first semester at the university and in the civic engagement office. However,

this is not her first time helping out with this type of program. She was involved in a similar project at Elizabethtown College.

Some of Guzzo's responsibilities include reaching out to local churches and organizations who may know of individuals in Wilkes-Barre and other surrounding areas that would benefit from this type of assistance. She learns what tasks the residents need help with and determines if students would need any additional supplies for them. She also gathers interest from Wilkes students who would like to participate in Into the Streets. Once the event gets closer, she will pair student groups to community residents.

Volunteers will be placed in teams of three to five students. They will be sent to one of the homes and be given tasks. These include raking leaves, weeding, debris pickup, moving outdoor summer furniture into storage, changing smoke detector batteries and washing or removing screens from low-level windows.

Boone revealed that not all the homes of the residents belong to the elderly, as there are those within the Wilkes-Barre area who are struggling to sustain the appearance of their properties and are nearing eviction notices. Others are military veterans, while

some find it challenging to stay on top of their home upkeep because of disabilities.

Guzzo touched upon the significance of this civic engagement program and why all should get involved.

"It is an opportunity to allow students, faculty, staff and alumni to engage in a collective day of service. This student-led initiative will result in the completion of dozens of service projects benefiting the local community," said Guzzo. "The more students who get involved, the more community residents we can help."

To ensure participation from students, the event is being encouraged by all Wilkes athletic programs. Philip Wingert, the associate director of athletics, wants coaches to spread the news of the program to their athletes.

"Students feel a sense of fulfillment when projects are completed and feel good helping others. The residents are appreciative of everyone's efforts, maintain a sense of pride for their property and value the association with Wilkes," explained Wingert. "It's a win-win situation for the university and community. Athletics values being a part of that continued relationship."

Michael Piranian, Wilkes men's soccer head coach, is a supporter of these types of


events and often has his players get involved in civic engagement activities. He finds they help his team come closer together.

"It's time that they spend together, whether it's their teammates or classmates, that allows them to bond. It also helps them to realize that there is something bigger than themselves. It makes them find a purpose," said Piranian.

Nicholas Wadas, head coach of the men's and women's cross country teams, elaborated further on this point. He said that since his runners are often out and about throughout the community, it makes them appreciate giving back and taking part in the beautification process.

Many throughout Wilkes are looking forward to continuing this initiative, and Guzzo highlighted why volunteering in projects like Into the Streets is so meaningful.

"Volunteering is something that stays with you, as you know you have made a positive impact in someone else's day," said Guzzo. "Whether it be a new skill or awareness to the community, there is always something to learn when giving back."

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LEADERSHIP, from front

Cant explained that his job is to tell the story of Wilkes, one that he identifies as constantly evolving and always ongoing. He stated it is vital to work with those who have helped to make that story what it is and who will help to make it what it will be.

According to Cant, an example of the continuous story he is helping to tell, involves the new painting of Wilkes' first president, Eugene Farley, that is hanging in his office.

"What I love about that painting is that it is of a young man. It is a very casual look. All the other photos of Farley are suits and formal oil paintings, but this is optimism. There is a hopeful young man in that photo."

Cant went on to explain that the photo was painted during World War II, a time of crisis, but it shows a story of a university president that brought a sense of optimism and hope.

Cant then moved on to the current crisis of the pandemic and how leadership has changed to adapt to it.

Uncertainty plays a major role in crises, Cant explained. For universities like

Wilkes that plan many events along with every detail about when classes are held and when the semester ends, uncertainty throws planning out the window and leaders have to adapt.

Communication is also a key factor in leadership, and Cant stressed that in times of crisis, communication has to be constant, clear and adapt as situations develop. One way Cant has helped to do that during the pandemic is the COVID-19 Response Team, who update the COVID-19 dashboard twice a day to keep that communication clear and updated.



Courtesy of the President's Office
Framed photo of Wilkes University's first President and founder Eugene S. Farley.

As the lecture came to a close, Cant took questions from honors students, addressing concerns about how to create a positive and engaging atmosphere on campus when students are burned out, how to overcome failure and the importance of role models.


One of the most significant things Cant stressed was being a compassionate leader, especially when it comes to helping students avoid burnout and stay engaged. He identified that individuals have to make the most of it themselves, as the university's goal is to make sure that everyone can go home safely

around Thanksgiving.

In the same way, the university has strived to reduce the price of housing and meal plans to assist and aid students even at a loss of money for the university. Cant identified this as a part of compassionate leadership, since it is pivotal to make sacrifices as a business and as a leader to relieve the struggles of those you are leading.

Cant spoke about how mistakes build better leaders, and the best leaders will learn and grow from their mistakes. He also mentioned that if aspiring leaders can find a mentor or role model to guide them, then they will be better prepared to tackle challenges.

The next lecture in the "Leadership through Crisis" speaker series is on Oct. 7 and will feature Major Gen. Patrick B. Roberson, the commander and commandant of the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School at Fort Bragg, N.C. Honors students can register for the event through the Honors Buzz newsletter.

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New clock has students counting on climate change solution

By Genny Frederick
News Staff Writer

On Sept. 19, a new and foreboding art installation was unveiled in New York City. The Climate Clock, which counts down the years, days, hours, minutes and seconds until the damage of climate change is irreversible, was installed on Union Square.

It currently displays a little over seven years.

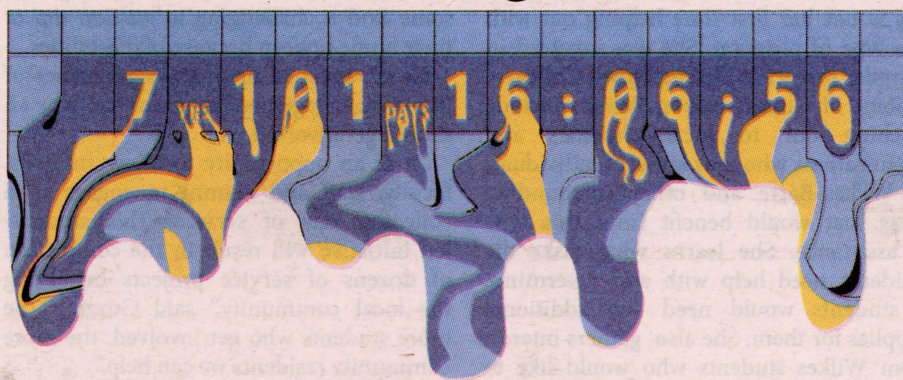
Kayla Acker-Carter, a senior environmental engineering major, explained her first reaction to seeing the clock, "I knew we were running out of time before reaching the 'point of no return,' but I was shocked at how little time we have. Seven years. I thought we had more time."

The scientists who determined the time used the carbon clock created by the Mercator Research Institute on Global Commons and Climate Change, which uses the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Special Report on Global Warming. The IPCC report states that global climate temperatures should not rise 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial temperatures.

Students across campus had different responses to how they believed the installation of the clock would cause people to change.

Michael Renard, a senior middle-level education major, was hopeful of the outcome.

"I do think that it will have a great impact on the way the world views climate change. It will make the everyday person aware of the problem and help in gaining the support of the world to fight for change in corporate policy and government to aid in reversing the human footprint on our planet."



Erin Tollinger, senior earth and environmental science major, was critical of how the clock would work.

"I think this climate clock can go multiple ways. Some people will walk past it and ignore it, some will take it seriously and want to make a change, some will say to themselves, 'If I only have seven years left, why should I even try?'"

Students had mixed reactions on how the clock would affect people, but many believed bigger players need to get involved in the fight.

Acker-Carter said, "The more people talk, the more it will pressure the people in power and the corporations responsible for a large amount of carbon emissions to take responsibility and create more regulations to greatly reduce the emissions. My biggest worry, however, is that greed runs deep, and we may already be too late."

Tollinger called out big corporations and people in power as well.

"We must hold large corporations, politicians and higher-ups accountable. Corporations that make millions of dollars

claim to be sustainable but won't cut back their emissions or donate money to the climate crisis. We need reform. Very few politicians in office right now are taking active steps towards combating global climate change."

Justin Burda, a senior electrical and mechanical engineering major, also pointed to large companies.

"An option is to lobby corporations to change the way they operate in order to achieve net-zero emissions. Some companies have already done this; however, it is opposing interest for some companies to do so. Take the oil industry for example. It would be impossible for oil companies to exist if they themselves and their clients were to go net-zero emissions."

While students supported change and reform at the higher levels, Dr. Marleen Troy, chair of the environmental engineering and earth sciences department, said people can create small changes in their everyday lives.

"You don't have to go nuts overnight, but little things add up. If you have to go out and

use your car, try to combine as many trips as possible. If you're able to, get a more energy efficient car, carpool when you can, take public transportation when it's feasible, ride a bike when you can. A lot of little things can add up to make a difference. Companies are driven by what their customers want. When they see their customers being interested, they're going to do what is important to their customers."

Troy also addressed other problems of getting people to make changes in their lives.

"It has kind of like political connotations. People don't think it's real, but if you pick up any of the news stories any day, I think we're definitely seeing all the consequences of what the scientists predicted, so I don't see how you can ignore it. And one of the things that's interesting is the suggestions are really not that bad. They make sense. Why wouldn't we be more energy efficient? Why wouldn't we look at better forms of transportation? So it is just when you get the preconceived notions that there's a political connection, I think that's the big challenge."

While opinions differ on how to handle the climate crisis, the clock is a constant reminder of climate change.

"I feel as if I have an assignment due that the professor will not accept late," said T.Q. Smith, a senior computer science and computational math major. "I am going to get started as soon as I can. We all have a great debt to pay to Earth. The climate clock symbolizes the debt that the world shares."

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Graphic by Mia Walker

Wilkes ranked 217th among top national universities

By The Beacon News Staff

News@Wilkes reported that in the 2021 edition of U.S. News and World Report's Best Colleges ranking of American colleges and universities, Wilkes was ranked 217 out of 400 national universities.

The category of national university requires a school to offer a full range of bachelor's, master's and doctoral programs. This is Wilkes' second year as a national university, and its seventeenth consecutive year being ranked.

Wilkes was originally considered a regional university but jumped to the category of national university after being named a doctoral university in the revised 2018 Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education. This doctoral/professional category includes institutions that award at least 20 research doctoral degrees or 30 or more professional-practice doctoral degrees.

In the 2019-20 academic year, Wilkes far exceeded the requirement by awarding 147 doctoral degrees in doctor of pharmacy, nursing practice and education programs.

In September 2020, Wilkes was awarded the university's first doctor of philosophy degrees.

Wilkes also made the U.S. News and World Report's list of "A+ Schools for B Students," which looks at schools in the top three-fourths of their ranking category and their average first-year student retention rate.

U.S. News & World Report considers several factors in its ranking calculations, including academic profile, retention and graduation rates, financial resources and peer perception.

U.S. News and World Report also ranked Wilkes as a top performer for social mobility.

The social mobility list was introduced last year and measures how well schools educate and graduate students who receive PELL grants.

Forty-five percent of students in this year's first-year class will be the first in their families to pursue a bachelor's degree, and 40 percent are eligible for PELL grants.

News@Wilkes states, "Twenty-two percent of the students in the incoming class are expecting a family contribution of zero dollars. In turn, Wilkes also boasts a 96 percent job placement rate."

This marks the third time in recent months that Wilkes has been recognized for academic excellence, social mobility and returning value.

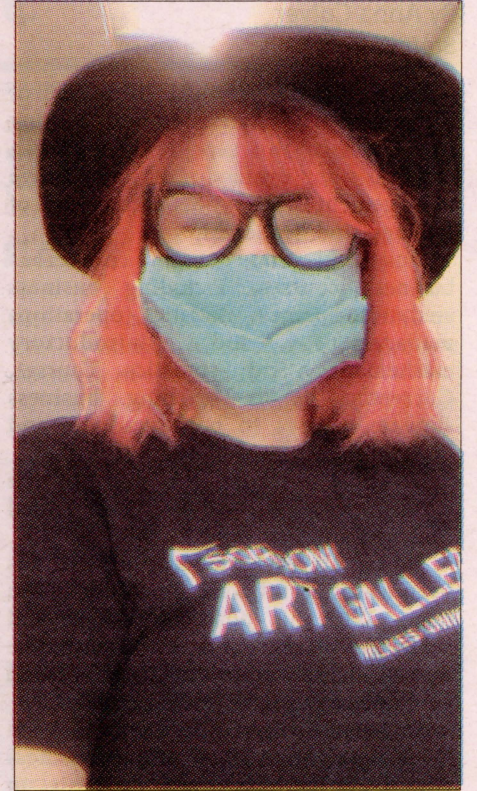
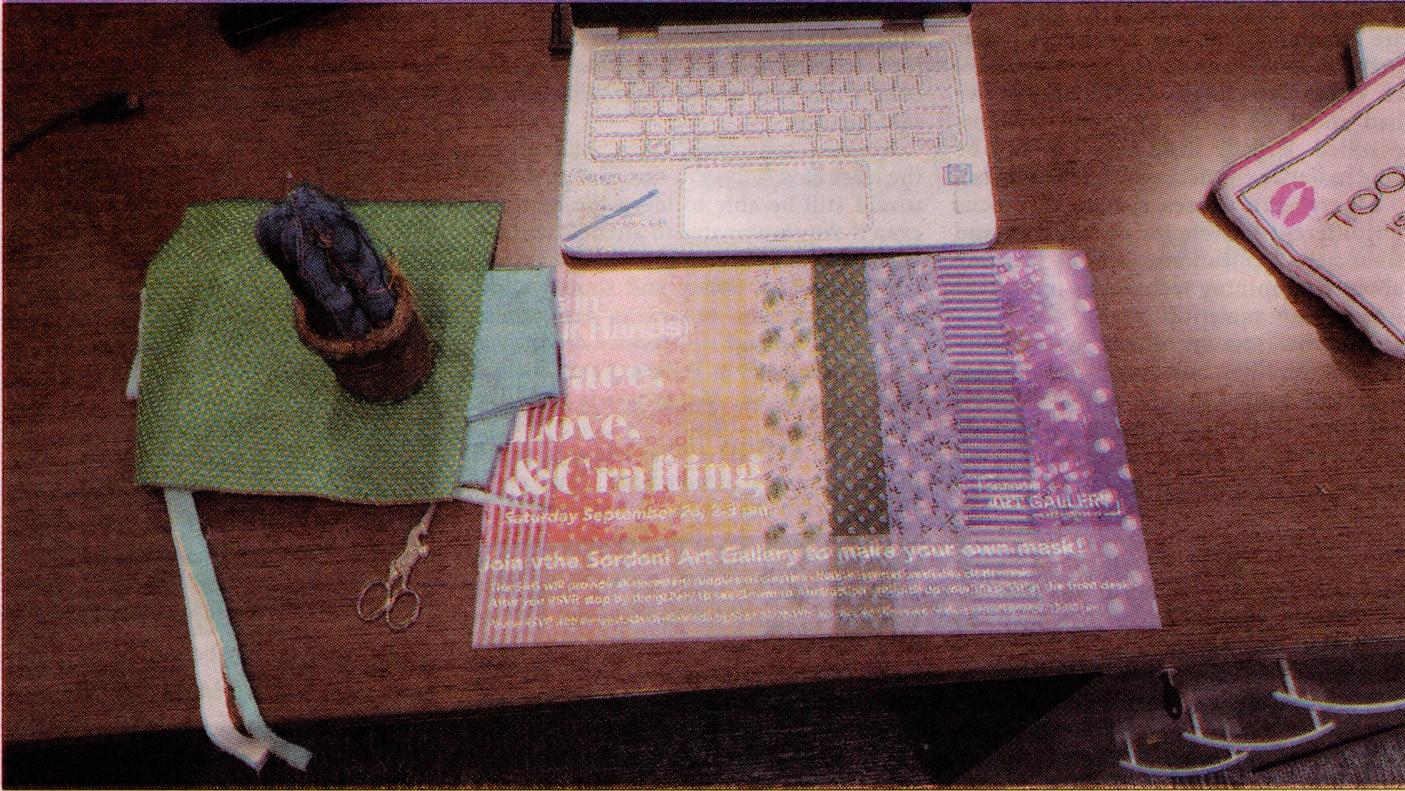
Brookings Institution recognized Wilkes for helping students improve their economic standing and income after graduation in May. Wilkes was ranked fourteenth overall among all colleges and universities and sixth among selective four-year private colleges and universities of its size for helping students from middle-class families raise their income level over previous generations.

In addition, Washington Monthly ranked Wilkes 156 among national universities based on what they are doing for the country. Wilkes was also included in Washington Monthly's best bang for the buck ranking, which recognizes schools that help students pursue a marketable degree at an affordable price. Wilkes ranked 228 of 397 northeast institutions.

Finally, Wilkes was one of 224 colleges named "Best in the Northeast" by Princeton Review.

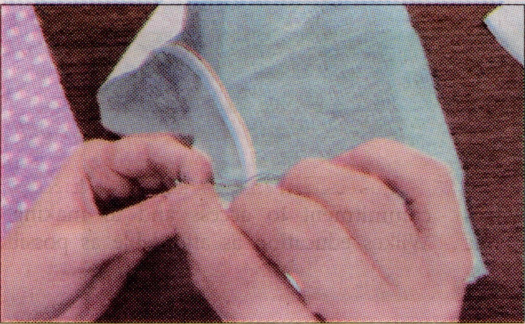
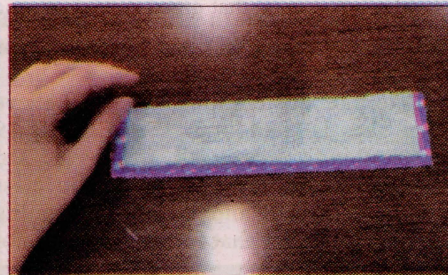
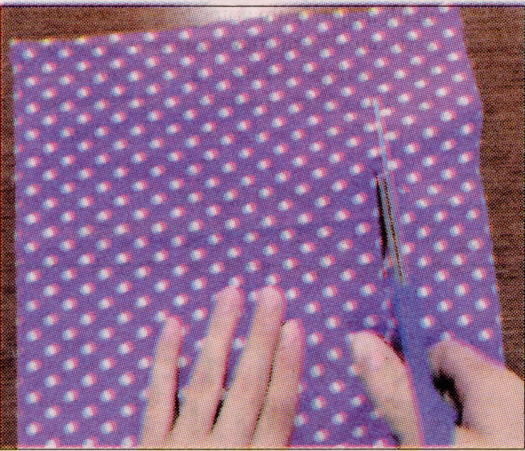
"Collectively, these rankings reflect our commitment to access and to making a Wilkes education as affordable as possible, while highlighting our ongoing return on investment for graduates and their families," said President Cant in a press release. "To be recognized during such a challenging time speaks to the dedication of our faculty and staff and the ambition and drive of the students who we serve."

Getting crafty: Mask making with the Sordoni Art Gallery



The Sordoni Art Gallery's Karley Stasko held a virtual sewing circle on Sept. 26 where students who signed up were able to pick up a sewing kit prior to the Zoom session to make a two-layered, reusable cloth mask.

Karley Stasko wearing her completed handsewn mask.



Clockwise:
 A. Stasko trimmed her fabric to ensure it was the appropriate size.
 B. Stasko displayed different techniques available for students to use as she connected the elastic to the fabric of the mask.
 C. Stasko demonstrated two different stitching techniques, the whip stitch and the running stitch.
 D. Setting two smaller pieces down as an example, Stasko explained that the good sides of the fabrics should face each other, so it can be turned inside out when sewn.
 E. The mask is flipped inside out to face designs the proper way.



Photos: The Beacon/Sean Schmoier and courtesy of Karley Stasko

Dasha Yakhnis and Dagney Markle hold up their completed masks in the Sordoni Art Gallery.

Profile of a professor: Dr. Richard Muszynski III

By Anna Culver
Staff Writer

Dr. Richard Muszynski III is one of the many new staff members joining the university this year. Muszynski is a new assistant professor of quantitative management in the Jay S. Sidhu School of Business and Leadership.

Muszynski has taught numerous business courses, including business analytics, business statistics, operations management and introductory mathematics and statistics courses. Currently, he is teaching business statistic courses to both graduate and undergraduate level students at Wilkes.

Dr. Abel Adekola, the dean of the Sidhu School of Business, commended Muszynski for his work to-date.

“So far, Dr. Richard Muszynski III has been a wonderful addition to our Sidhu team. With his positive outlook and academic background in quantitative management, we are super excited and glad to have him as our colleague.”

Muszynski received his doctorate from Washington State University in business administration with an emphasis in operations and management science, and he has earned two master of science degrees in mathematics and statistics.

Some of his research interests include portfolio analysis, data envelopment analysis, copula analysis and financial applications.

Muszynski said, “When I first arrived here on the campus of Wilkes University, I met with the department chair as well as several other professors, and I just really liked the vibe here. I like how it is

a smaller campus in general, so classes are smaller. I feel that I connect better with students. I came from a big school at Washington State University, so we had about 20 to 30 thousand students enrolled. I really liked how I would be able to better connect with the students.”

Muszynski’s classes specifically focus on different techniques of statistics and financial applications, while learning about data mining techniques important for business analytics.

“We analyze a lot of data, we measure the center values, how spread out the data is and we extend that further to estimate what we call those parameters, which are the measures of center or how spread out the data may be,” explained Muszynski.

So far, Muszynski has not seen much change on campus due to COVID-19 and still wants to make sure that his classes stay in-person for as long as possible.

“I really want to make sure that any class that was assigned to in-person is still in-person, especially for the students. I’ve allowed students that are enrolled in-person to go online and actually access some lecture videos that I have posted in case they don’t feel comfortable. So, my undergraduate courses are in-person. But, my other courses are graduate-level courses that are online.”

Zachery Banasze, a fifth-year financial investment major, has had Muszynski for classes.

“Despite the circumstances, I believe that he is handling the COVID-19 restrictions very well. I have Dr. Muszynski for my only in-person class of the semester, and we are continuing to operate under that format. Despite not

simultaneously zooming his lecture, Dr. Muszynski has provided access to pre-recorded lectures of him teaching the course last year at a different university,” said Banasze.

Banasze continued, “Any students in the class have access to these lectures and would still be able to learn the material even if they are unable to attend the class. Dr. Muszynski also has a very lenient late homework policy and should allow any student who misses an assignment to make it up and still receive credit. For his first semester at Wilkes, I am satisfied with the way Dr. Muszynski is handling my class.”

Though COVID-19 has changed much of our campus atmosphere, Muszynski shared that he feels welcomed as a new addition to the Colonel family. He elaborated that COVID-19 has not affected him as much as he originally thought because he has always had to be adaptive to new situations, especially when it comes to the university shifting to and from in-person to online classes.

“I actually do not notice much of a difference,” said Muszynski. “I am pretty sure compared to other professors it would be vastly different because they had to adjust their courses and so forth. I think what happened with me, in particular, is because I’ve adjusted so much over the years in creating videos to post online and other things, it really has not been much of a change.”

“I have taught online courses, and I have taught in-person classes before. So, the transition between online and remote really was not much of a big deal, even though we really haven’t transitioned. I’ve



Courtesy of Dr. Richard Muszynski III
Dr. Richard Muszynski III

just given students access to that option.”

Outside of classes, Muszynski is excited to hopefully be getting back to playing tennis after having not been able to due to COVID-19. Muszynski is also interested in recreational biking and chess outside of his classroom.

He is excited to continue teaching in the coming months, while getting back to his other passions outside of the classroom.



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Life, Arts & Entertainment

Have any restaurants that should be reviewed or artists to be featured? Contact life, arts and entertainment editor: Maria.DiBuo@wilkes.edu

Abide Coffeehouse: Taking COVID-19 changes in stride *Adapting the morning cup of coffee to the new normal*

By Breanna Ebisch
Opinion Editor

The soft melodies of a coffee shop playlist float through the air as the warm midmorning sunshine filters through the large windows facing one of Wilkes-Barre's West Market Street. Only one high top table is occupied inside, a man enjoying his fresh cup of coffee and doing some work on his laptop. A steady stream of customers, ranging from college students to local residents, flow through, excited to get their usual morning coffee.

This is the new normal for the cozy and welcoming coffeehouse nestled right on the corner of Market Street and North Franklin that has become a favorite for locals and college students alike. Similar to many other small businesses across the country, Abide Coffeehouse experienced drastic changes starting in March due to COVID-19 and affecting the way business functions on a daily basis.

After completely shutting down for 10 weeks in the early stages of the

pandemic, Abide opened again during the warm summer months ready to serve customers while adapting to the ever changing rules and regulations put in place by the Pennsylvania state government.

Lafe Isaacson, the owner of Abide Coffeehouse, has worked to keep his business running even if some days look slightly different now than usual.

"We basically cut our hours in half and then we increased them about an hour and 15 minutes and now we're waiting for things to normalize a little bit more to go back to normal," Isaacson said about how Abide has adapted to COVID-19. "We also stopped carrying food to be precautions, and then due to the extra restrictions on food handling, it was a lot more difficult to have pastries and donuts.

"Safety wise, we're doing everything the CDC and the state has asked us to do. If you come indoors and can't socially distance, you have to wear a mask and we're sanitizing everything daily."

Even though students have returned to local colleges like King's, Wilkes and

Luzerne County Community College, and they are bringing sales back, Abide has gotten involved with new ways of generating business during this unprecedented time.

"We've been trying to be more involved with the colleges, but then we've also gotten into wholesale," Isaacson explained. "So we provide coffee for four of the best restaurants in the area: The Powerhouse, The Canning House, The Ovalon and Bank+Vine. In regard to marketing and getting more people in the door, we've been having more social media promotions and giveaways."

In an effort to increase sales and gain more of a presence with less regular foot traffic along with losing the population of workers at downtown locations due to the virus, Abide Coffeehouse has found success in its newest outreach for incoming revenue. Isaacson stresses how the business strives to bring the big city coffee culture to Wilkes-Barre and through its various strategies. And even during the uncertainty of this year, Abide is succeeding.

Jordyn Nast, a barista at Abide, has

also seen the impact of the pandemic on the business, and she can pinpoint the positives of the situation.

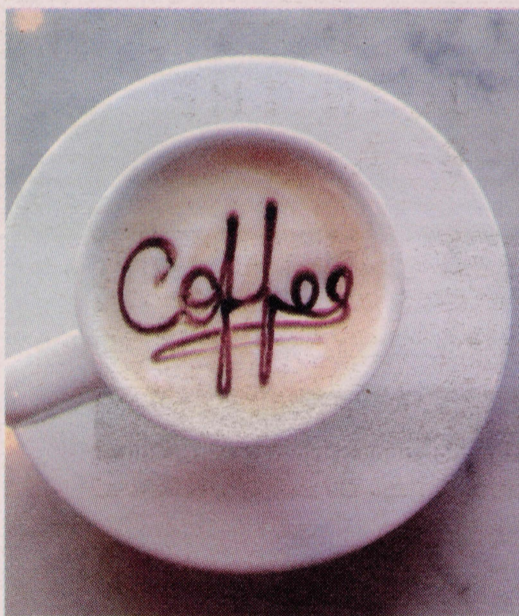
"It's been really cool seeing our regulars supporting us no matter what, so I would say the largest effect comes from the local businessmen and women who have not been in this area. That's who I haven't seen coming in, but we have a great regular base that comes in no matter what," Naste recalls with a smile.

In the future, both Isaacson and Naste are looking forward to having customers back in the store for coffee and events. The atmosphere of the homey and welcoming coffeehouse isn't the same without the loyal and new customers spending time socializing over coffee or enjoying every aspect Abide has to offer.

For now, customers are encouraged to stop in to order a cup of coffee and spread the word, whether that's through social media or word of mouth.



@wilkesbeacon
Breanna.Ebisch@wilkes.edu



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The moody foodie's twist on a strawberry prosciutto salad

By Anna Culver
Staff Writer

finds an easy balance in its varieties of flavors.

This sweet and salty strawberry prosciutto salad makes for a perfect mid-day meal that not only satisfies that salty craving, but also the sweet tooth with a healthy option. This is a perfect recipe that allows for multiple variations, so have fun with it.

Ingredients:

- 1) Strawberries
- 2) Prosciutto, a type of dry-cured ham that is finely sliced. It is often served uncooked, though there are recipes that involve cooked prosciutto.
- 3) Spinach & arugula
- 4) Green peppers
- 5) Sweet peppers
- 6) Feta cheese
- 7) Salad dressing of your choice

The strawberries, combined with the salty taste of the prosciutto, make a flavorful combination to create a filling salad. This salad's sweet and salty taste


Variations: If you are looking for more of a full meal, I would recommend pairing this salad with a quinoa base or possibly some chicken patties. There are great chicken patty options available at stores like Aldi's and Target.

Cheese: If you don't want to use feta cheese, I would recommend looking into a mozzarella cheese or even a cheddar, depending on your preference.

Dressing: I used a Greek Vinaigrette dressing, which has a tangy garlic flavor, but any basic balsamic vinaigrette would pair well with this type of salad.

Cost to make: About \$10

Food Allergies: Dairy

 Anna.Culver@wilkes.edu
Graphic by Anna Culver



The Beacon/Anna Culver

This salad is easily customizable to one's own preferences and allows for a diverse set of flavors.



BEACON BUMPS

Each week, the Wilkes Beacon staff adds a song to their Beacon Bumps playlist. Look below for this week's list of songs.

Kiraten Peters, Editor-in-Chief: [Vienna - Billy Joel](#)

Sean Schmoyer, News Editor: [You Are My Sunshine - The Fox and The Hound](#)

Sara Ross, Asst. News Editor: [Younger - Ruel](#)

Genny Frederick, News Staff Writer: [Leader of the Landslide - The Lumineers](#)

Maria DiBuo, LA&E Editor: [Lazy Day - Frijid Pink](#)

Emily Cherkauskas, LA&E Staff Writer: [Bloody Mary - Lady Gaga](#)

Breanna Ebisch, Opinion Editor: [in my head - Ariana Grande](#)

Zarqua Ansari, Asst. Opinion Editor: [Burfi - Samsa ft. Thiago](#)

Jordan Daniel, Opinion Staff Writer: [Saw You In A Dream - The Japanese House](#)

Dylan Mehl, Co-Sports Editor: [Holy - Justin Bieber & Chance the Rapper](#)

Ariel Reed, Co-Sports Editor: [Now - Olivia O'Brien](#)

Chris Gowarty, Sports Staff Writer: [Desperado - Mac Miller](#)

Mia Walker, Lead Designer: [Not Enough by Lido ft. THEY](#)

Steffen Horwath, Staff Photographer: [Put Your Records On - Ritt Momney](#)

Wilkes club updates: Communication Studies Department

Compiled by Maria DiBuo
Life, Arts & Entertainment Editor

CLUB: Wilkes Speech and Debate
EXECUTIVE: Christopher Smith
MEETINGS: Virtual Meetings are on Tuesdays at 5:30 p.m.

Speech practices are scheduled individually. Debate Practices will begin on Oct. 6.

HOW TO JOIN: Send an email to christine.mellon@wilkes.edu.

DESCRIPTION: Speech and Debate competes at tournaments each semester. We present pieces that are interpretative and dramatic, impromptu, and public addresses. We also compete in parliamentary debate. Our first speech and debate tournament will be virtual and it is scheduled for Oct. 16 and 17.

CLUB: Wilkes Now!

EXECUTIVES:

Director: Kirsten Peters

Producer: Ian Bayley

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Mark Stine

MEETINGS: Tuesdays from 11 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. in the TV Studio in the Karambelas Media and Communication Center.

HOW TO JOIN: Contact ian.bayley@wilkes.edu, kirsten.peters@wilkes.edu or

mark.stine@wilkes.edu, or simply show up!

DESCRIPTION: At Wilkes Now!, we strive to produce an excellent news-magazine broadcast and give our members hands-on experience with equipment in a television studio. It is especially beneficial to learning teamwork skills, scriptwriting, on-air interviewing, equipment operations and camera use.

CLUB: 90.7 WCLH - Wilkes University Radio

EXECUTIVES:

Production Director: Haedyn Hale

Metal Director: Tom Gallo

Alternative Director: Steffen Horwath

Asst. Alternative Director: Breanna Ebisch

Marketing Director: Nick Alfano

Hip Hop Director: Teylor Gordy

Sports Director: Ariel Reed

Asst. Sports Director: Dylan Mehl

Social Media Director: Lindsay Becker

MEETINGS: We meet monthly in KARAM Room 135.

HOW TO JOIN: There's no limit on our numbers. Students can join by contacting the Station Manager Kristen Rock at kristen.rock@wilkes.edu.

DESCRIPTION: 90.7 WCLH is a student-run, non-commercial radio station with

a wide variety of programming (metal, alternative, hip hop, sports and everything in between). We offer full broadcast training, so all majors and grade levels are welcome! We're located inside the Karambelas Media and Communication Center (Room 115 B).

CLUB: Zebra Communications – Public Relations Agency

EXECUTIVES:

Firm Director: Angelina Davis

Assistant Director: Anna Culver

Medium Editor: Sara Ross

DESCRIPTION: At Zebra, we work with client-partners, including not-for-profit organizations, government agencies, small businesses, campus initiatives and regional grant-funded projects. Having real clients means Zebra students gain valuable hands-on experience beyond the classroom. We accept clients on an application basis for PR campaigns of up to a three-month duration as well as smaller projects. This year, we plan to focus more on helping our clients grow through projects students can focus their skills on, such as graphics, logos, marketing plans, press releases and more.

HOW TO JOIN: For more information or to attend our biweekly meetings, contact Angelina Davis at angelina.davis@wilkes.edu.

CLUB: The Beacon

EXECUTIVES:

Editor-in-Chief: Kirsten Peters

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Kalen Churcher

MEETINGS: We meet every Tuesday at 12:15 a.m. in KARAM 135. A Zoom link is made available for those who cannot attend in-person.

DESCRIPTION: The Beacon is Wilkes' student-run newspaper. Weekly, students create a 24-page edition that circulates around campus and local Wilkes-Barre businesses. The paper is comprised of four sections — News; Life, Arts & Entertainment; Opinion; and Sports. Section editors, assistant editors, design editors, staff writers and photographers comprise The Beacon's staff.

HOW TO JOIN: All majors and grade levels are welcome. Those interested in joining the newspaper do not need to be writers! Photographers and graphic designers, as well as positions for an advertising manager, a distribution manager and a social media manager are always available.

For more information, contact Kirsten Peters at kirsten.peters@wilkes.edu.



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Maria.DiBuo@wilkes.edu

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<p>\$17.95 +TAX 12- cut Sicilian pizza & 1 order of wings</p>	<p>\$12.95 +TAX 12- cut Sicilian pizza</p>	<p>\$23.95 +TAX 2 tickets to Movies 14, 1 med- 1 topping pizza & 2 drinks</p>	<p>\$12.95 +TAX small 12" 1-topping pizza & choice of any sub</p>	<p>\$19.95 +TAX large 16" pizza, 1 sub, & an appetizer</p>	<p>\$28.95 +TAX 3 large 1-topping pizzas</p>

Liz's Craft Corner: How to spice up dorm rooms with pom-poms

By Liz Cherinka
Staff Writer

Every dorm room can use a pop of color and fun. What else can bring more fun to a space than pom-poms?

This DIY pom-pom garland decoration brings the fun and funky aspects of pom-poms into a garland that can be strung over a TV, on the wall above a bed, on a door or wherever it may fit.

Pom-poms are decorative balls of fibrous material and can refer to the ones cheerleaders use or small balls used on clothing. The ones for this DIY are yarn.

The fun part about this DIY garland is that it is completely customizable. The colors of the pom-poms and the length of the garland are totally unique, and it adds character to a space. It can be made blue to match the bedspread, made pink to match the rug, made green because it happens to be your favorite color or just made every color of the rainbow.

The materials required for this DIY pom-pom garland are (at least) one ball of medium sized yarn, a fork and scissors. You can use as many balls of yarn as you choose, with as many different colors as you choose. This is very affordable, and there is a high chance that you already have over half of the materials. The yarn can be bought at any craft store, such as Joann Fabrics or Michaels, Amazon.com or even the Dollar Tree.

To start, grab the ball of yarn of any color. Wrap it around the fork over and over again to make a large spool, leaving some space on top and on bottom of the fork.

Once the spool is as large as preferred (the bigger the spool, the harder it will be to cut out the bigger pom-pom), cut the yarn. Then, run a string of yarn through

the middle prong of the fork on bottom of the spool and then around the middle prong on top until the ends meet and tie them as tight as humanly possible, leaving some excess yarn on the ends because it will be needed later.

Next, carefully slide the yarn spool off of the fork. If the tie is too loose and about to slide off, make sure to re-tie it tighter. The pom-pom will fall apart once it is cut if this is not tight enough. It can be almost guaranteed that one of the pom-poms will end up falling apart, but do not get discouraged.

Now, cut every loop of yarn on both ends. This can be difficult depending on how much yarn you have, but it does not need to be perfectly or evenly cut. Once all the loops are cut, rearrange the yarn pieces to resemble a ball. This can be done by rearranging the yarn or rolling the ball in between your hands.

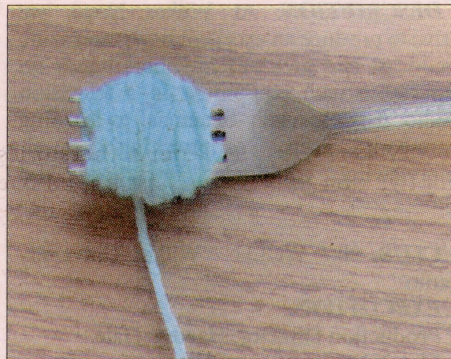
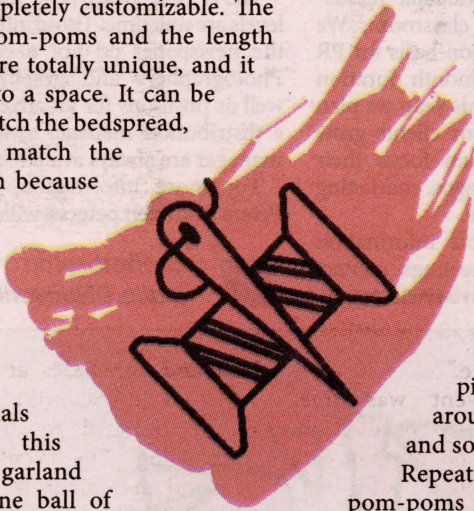
You can choose to cut the pieces of yarn to be even all around or to leave some long and some short.

Repeat these steps for as many pom-poms as you want in as many colors as you want. Keep in mind, the more pom-poms made, the longer and fuller the garland can be.

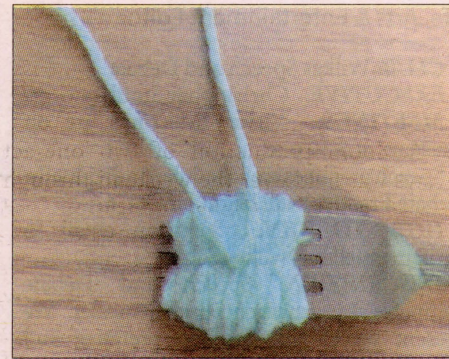
Once the pom-poms are made, grab a strand of yarn as long as you would like the garland to be. Then tie every pom-pom onto it using the excess yarn saved from earlier. Spacing can be totally unique, since there is no guideline for this.

Cut off the extra yarn used to tie the pom-poms on, and adjust them to your preference on the garland, and the pom-pom garland is all done. Now, it can be hung anywhere you would like. Or, you can make it more decorative by clipping pictures on or adding string lights.

Elizabeth.Cherinka@wilkes.edu
Graphics by Anna Culver



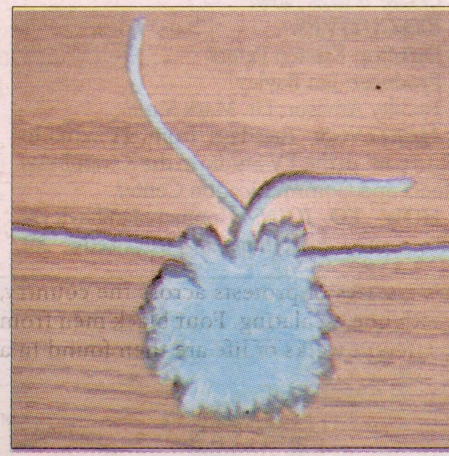
Step 1: To begin, wrap the yarn (color and brand of your choice) around a fork, multiple times. Remember to focus yarn in the middle of the fork.



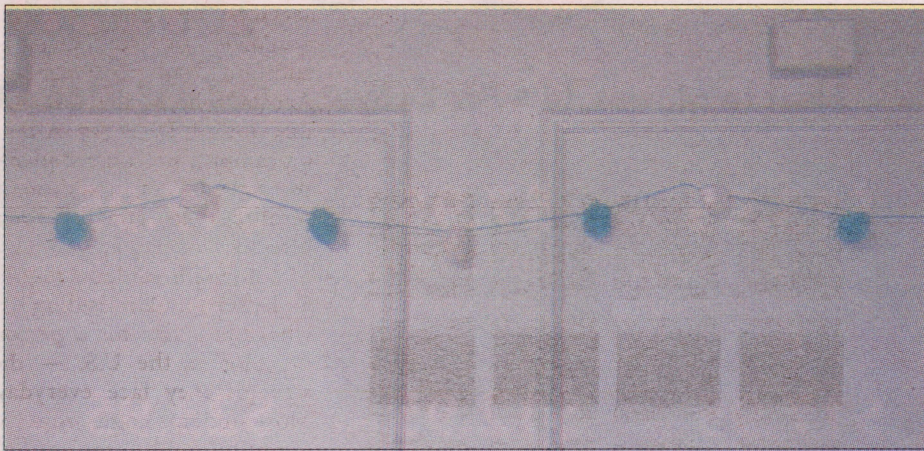
Step 2: Once your spool is to the desired size, cut through the yarn. Then, run a string of yarn tightly through the middle prong of the fork.



Step 3: Carefully slide the spool of yarn off of the fork. Remember, the pom-pom will fall apart if your yarn is not tied tightly enough.



Step 4: Grab a long strand of yarn and tie each pom-pom to the string, leaving space between each pom-pom.



Step 5: Once completed, hang anywhere on your wall and accessorize with pictures and lights to add pizzazz to your dorm room.



Photos: The Beacon/Liz Cherinka

One-act plays “Chainz” and “Broken” held via Zoom

Calling attention to racial injustice and gun violence

By Maria DiBuo
Life, Arts & Entertainment Editor

A Zoom production of two one-act plays was held over the weekend through the Center for Global Education and Diversity. “Chainz” and “Broken,” two pieces performed by the Act 1, DeSales University’s performing arts company, illustrated racial injustices seen in society presently, while also emphasizing the role of gun violence.

In response to the pandemic, Act 1 is featuring their 2020-2021 season virtually, employing social distancing, while still offering quality artistic productions, according to information from DeSales University. The troupe has been in existence for more than 50 years and has been critically acclaimed numerous times.

The first one-act play, “Chainz,” centers around a young teen who has been “gunned down and his killer set free,” according to information submitted to Today at Wilkes. The killing then leads to a series of protests across the country, with one escalating. Four black men from different walks of life are then found in a

holding cell with one another and learn about themselves, as well as “what it is to be an endangered species in America.”

“Broken” revolves around the stories of five women who have lost a child due to gun violence, with stories imagined by the playwright, however inspired by real events.

For Georgia Costalas, executive director for the Center for Global Education and Diversity, the screening of Act 1’s “Chainz” and “Broken” were chosen in response to the current social climate, as well as the troupe’s involvement in current events.

“The theatre troupe is Act 1 of DeSales University, and those are the plays they are opening with,” explained Costalas. “Erica (Acosta) and I have been working on topics, like racial injustice issues, so the productions were chosen specifically for that reason. We want students to feel affirmed or develop that competency.”

“Chainz” and “Broken,” written by Paris Crayton III and directed by Kalif Troy, primarily feature men and women of color, whose struggles — physical, societal, political or emotional — have been relevant for more than 400 years, according to information from DeSales University. Further, gun violence is a theme throughout both the one-act plays.

As the material in the Zoom Production could be considered triggering, resources, such as counseling services on campus, were available to students. In addition, both Costalas and Acosta, who is the associate director of Diversity Affairs on campus, welcome students in need of additional resources to contact them directly.

“I hope for students to gain a better understanding of what life is like for a person of color in the U.S. — the struggle they face everyday. Most students come from the majority,” said Costalas. “We also want students of color to know that we’re here for them. We want the best for



Courtesy of DeSales University

“Chainz” and “Broken,” the two one-act plays featured via Zoom, detail issues of racism and gun violence in the United States.

you, and you are welcome.”


Sign-up for the event was free, presenting a high-quality production, which would typically be quite pricey according to Costalas, in an affordable fashion.

While other events of this nature are not yet planned for the future, Costalas hopes to call attention to other movements for social equity on campus, such as the recent silent Black Lives Matter protest held on Sept. 25 by the Multicultural Student Coalition and the upcoming Racial Justice Vigil on Oct. 1.

The Racial Justice Vigil, held by the Wilkes Football Team, will include a walk beginning at 7 p.m. that starts at Evans

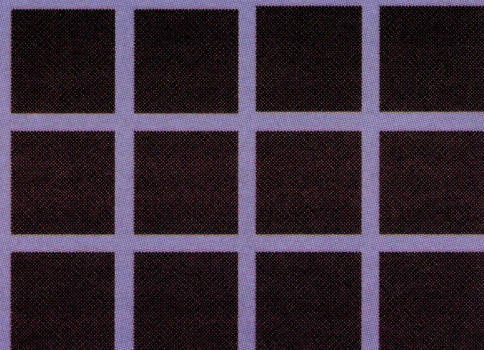
Hall and concludes at Ralston Athletic Complex and Schmidt Stadium. Students are encouraged to drive, in addition to walking. The event, described as a peaceful statement of unity, will then start at 7:30 p.m.

More information on the production, as well as the Act 1 theatre troupe, can be found on desales.edu. Additionally, those seeking more information on the Racial Justice Vigil can contact Acosta at erica.acosta@wilkes.edu, or football coach Jonathan Drach at jonathan.drach@wilkes.edu.

 Maria.DiBuo@wilkes.edu
Graphic by Anna Culver

Wilkes University
Playbill

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“I hope for students to gain a better understanding of what life is like for a person of color in the U.S. — the struggle they face everyday. Most students come from the majority. We also want students of color to know that we’re here for them. We want the best for you, and you are welcome.”

— Georgia Costalas

BLM

MULTICULTURAL STUDENT COALITION BLACK LIVES MATTER SILENT PROTEST

By Judah Lyles & Kirsten Peters
Staff Writer & Editor-in-Chief

On Sept. 25, students and faculty at Wilkes University marked the first Black Lives Matter protest on campus. Multicultural Student Coalition (MSC) President Brianna Rowland and Vice President Morgan Burton took on the responsibility of organizing and coordinating the protest.

By ensuring that the word got out to students and staff alike, posters and handouts were present around campus. For MSC, it was not an event to miss.

“It meant a lot to stand with my friends and peers to help silently get across the message that, at the end of the day, we just want the black community to finally be treated fairly,” said Aidan Sinisgalli, a senior marketing student. “We know that this was only a baby step in a good direction, but by doing nothing that means nothing is going to change.”

With COVID-19 restrictions in place, the usual image of a protest was not possible, but with the support of President Greg Cant, the MSC was able to host the protest. By sending out a spreadsheet to all interested students, the MSC was able to keep control over numbers and ensured social distancing protocols were followed. Masks were required and customized BLM masks were handed out at check-in. The MSC was also able to accommodate students who had not signed up beforehand by taking their name and handing them a mask.

Members of the Wilkes community were able to support the protest — even if they couldn't participate — by aiding to stand in solidarity with protesters. Members were encouraged to, and did, send in designs for posters, as well as wore black around campus. By doing this, students and staff were able to identify with each other to feel a sense of unity on campus, even if they were not able to attend the actual protest.

“Even though our country feels divided, the silent protest on campus was a great act of solidarity amongst the Wilkes community,” said Xavier Abdella, senior marketing student.

With masks on faces and posters in hand, each group of students took their shifts protesting. With signs designed by students, provided by the MSC, all participants had to do was show up and stand for their cause. Protests took place in the Fenner Quad, Henry Student Center and Stark Learning Center, though the Stark protests moved to join the protest in Fenner Quad. There, students and staff were lined up along the main pathway that cuts through the middle of campus, holding signs and standing silent.

Then, the signs did the talking.

With signs like “No Justice, No Peace” and “This Is A Movement, Not A Moment,” protesters make their message clear. Students and staff stood side-by-side and supported one another with few words but rather with actions.

Organizers Rowland and Burton were more than willing to divulge upon what the protest meant to them.

“We think this event shows the University's stance on the BLM movement and support for our Black community on campus,” said Rowland and Burton, offering a joint statement.

For them, this

protest was all about community and the strength of it when they all stand together. The turnout at the protest more than proved their point to be one that held true in the Wilkes community, as almost 200 members of the Wilkes community were in attendance.

Caitlin Klinger, a senior in sports management and attendee of the BLM protest, holds the same belief.

“I came to the protest because I stand for equality for all. It's not every day that you find something so powerful on such a small campus, and being a part of that was incredible. It was a great experience,” said Klinger. “The energy there was so powerful, and I loved seeing the amount of different students, faculty and staff that came to stand together.”

Klinger was also an advocate about the safe practices and followed protocols at the protests.

“Wilkes does a great job monitoring COVID-19 protocols, and I feel very safe.”

Everybody wore a mask, hand sanitizer was provided and social/physical distancing was observed very well,” Klinger explained.

Klinger's account was one of many positive affirmations received about the protest and its success.

Wilkes Athletics was also in attendance, as members of various sports teams protested as Black athletes themselves or alongside their Black teammates.


“It brings me great joy and honor to say that I attend Wilkes University. The sense of community and inclusion here is amazing. Hosting the silent protest shows how Wilkes supports their students and ensures that we all feel welcomed,” said Richard Ermeus, senior marketing student and wide receiver for Wilkes football. “From this point on, we must move forward. We can't just protest, we must make progress. Standing up for one another and encouraging equal opportunity. Together. Make the world a better place starting here at Wilkes.”

The protest was an historic milestone for the Wilkes community and will forever mark the moment that Wilkes made its first stand for Black lives.

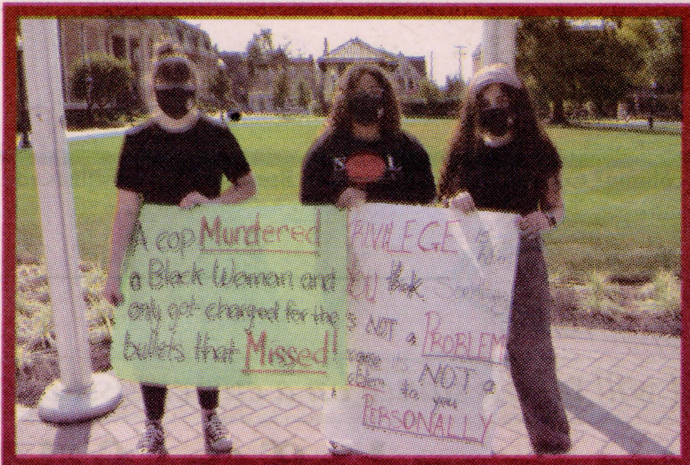
The MSC intends to send out T-shirts to all participants from the protest in thanks for the support that was demonstrated. The MSC hopes for continued support and the organizers were grateful for the stand that Wilkes University took with them and wanted to offer a special thanks to Dr. Cant.

“It means a lot to me to feel the support from my teammates, fellow students, as well as faculty and staff,” said Abdella, who is a member of the men's ice hockey team. “Sometimes change seems a long ways away, but the protest was a great reminder that change is happening right now.”

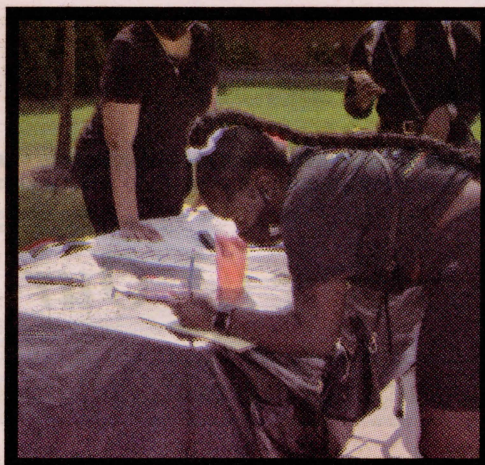


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Photos: The Beacon / Emily Cherkauskas & Kirsten Peters
Page Design/Layout: Mia Walker



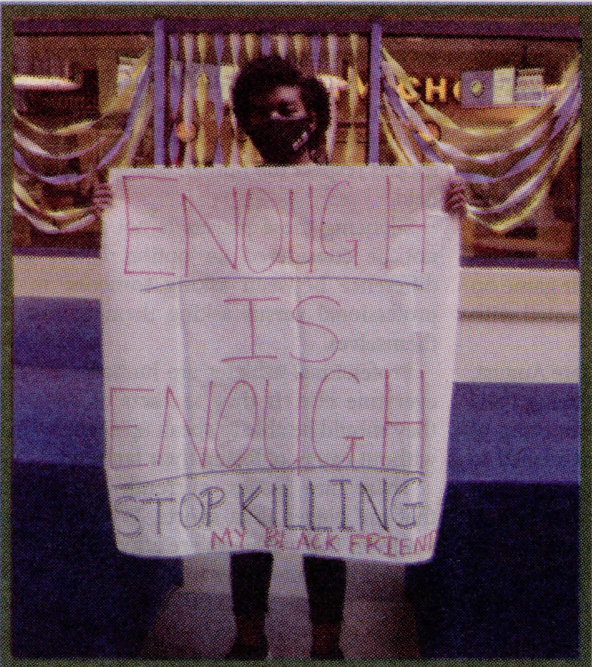
Logan Biechy, Cindy Peralta and Alena Lateef represented the Wilkes community with BLM signs and masks.



Students signed up the day-of and received pre-made signs.



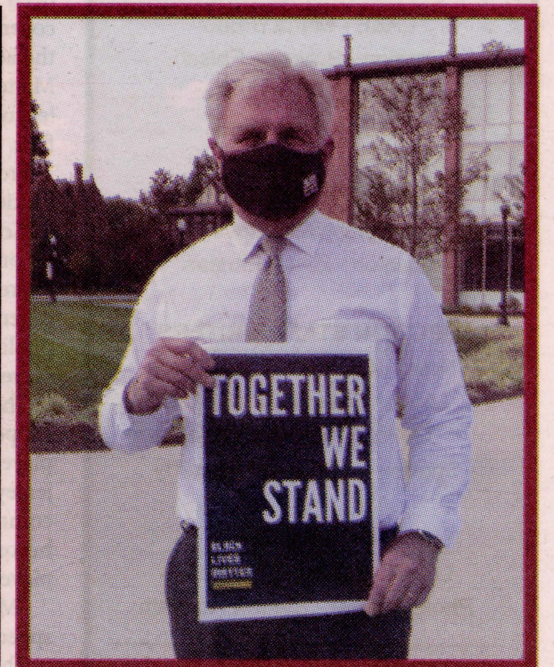
Five musical theatre students congregate on the Fenner Quad in support of the silent protest.



Morgan Burton, vice president of MSC, wore one of the masks being distributed at the protest.



Members and coaches of multiple Wilkes Athletics teams joined the protest on Fenner Quad.



Vice President Paul S. Adams stood in solidarity with students and faculty.



Brianna Rowland, president of MSC, was interviewed by WBRE Eyewitness News.



Graduate Sarah Lalla and three members of Wilkes men's ice hockey partook in the silent protest.



Anmarie Lebron and Leroy Thomas held signs in the Henry Student Center.

Opinion

Have an opinion or want to write a guest column? Contact the opinion editor: Breanna.Ebisch@wilkes.edu

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Interested in joining The Beacon? To learn more about what you can do, contact: Kirsten.Peters@wilkes.edu or Kalen.Churcher@wilkes.edu

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Our Voice

Each week, The Beacon's editorial board will take a stance on a current issue.

Validating social activism on and off the field

Social justice activism and sports have been connected since before mainstream coverage of the sporting world. This is why the actions taking place with the Black Lives Matter Movement and professional sports leagues should come as no surprise to sports fans.

From the likes of Muhammad Ali and Jackie Robinson to current day activists such as Colin Kaepernick and LeBron James, stars of professional sports leagues have always expressed their opinions publicly. The only difference between now and then is the public backing from the leagues that these players are a part of.

The NBA has made it a point to show support for the BLM Movement and let players express their own causes on their jerseys. Since Adam Silver took over as commissioner for the NBA, the league has become forward-thinking and very much a player-first association.

"My job is to protect NBA players' free speech," said Silver, per CNN.

The NBA has shown time and time again that it is not afraid to push the boundaries when it comes to social injustices. From the "I Can't Breathe" shirts in honor of Eric Garner, to players wearing their hoodies up in honor of Trayvon Martin, all the way to now where we see "Black Lives Matter" painted on every court, the NBA has been a stout example

of how to use athletic platforms for social activism.

As Silver said, players in the NBA are entitled to claim their First Amendment rights, but this should extend to other leagues such as the NFL, MLB and more.

Some fans of sports believe the athletes should not demonstrate their political views during their respected sporting events and instead should leave sports and politics to be separate. When the players on the Texans and Chiefs locked arms before their game on NFL's opening night, they were greeted with a series of boos from the crowd.

Over the course of two days in late August, 20 MLB teams refrained from playing their scheduled games to protest the shooting of Jacob Blake. Not shortly after, fans rushed to social media voicing their displeasure that they were not going to be able to watch their favorite baseball team play, with statements such as "Stick to sports," "Keep politics out of this" or "These games are my escape from reality."

Players are not going to let the fact that their protests are met with hate slow them down. For the NFL, players continue to lock arms at midfield at the beginning of games and have the names of victims of police brutality on the back of their helmets.

Athletes have celebrity status in today's world, giving them a huge platform to express

their opinions. While nobody can control how they use their off-court platforms, such as their social media accounts, their in-sport platforms should not be limited either.

If individuals want to be fans of an athlete like Odell Beckham Jr., they should not only appreciate his athletic abilities, but they should respect the human being he is off the field.

Silencing these players is not and should not be considered an option. There is a difference between asking someone to be professional versus asking them to not be themselves.

Professional athletes are human, just like everyone else. If they see acts of injustice, they should be able to speak up against them without worry of losing their fanbases.

There are issues currently happening that are bigger than sports. With the large platform these athletes are afforded, it's easy to send their messages to millions of people.

This reason alone is exactly why they should not be silenced, so that athletes can reach those who watch them. They have their own opinions and beliefs, and if they want to stand up for what they believe is right, they should be allowed to do so, even when they are on the field.



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Voting-by-mail: Studies deem the process to be efficient

By Liam Flynn
Staff Writer

Postal voting in the United States, also referred to as mail-in voting or vote-by-mail, is a form of absentee ballot in the U.S. in which a ballot is mailed to the home of a registered voter who fills it out and returns it by postal mail or drops it off in-person into a secure dropbox or at a voting center.

Postal voting reduces staff requirements at polling centers during an election. All-mail elections can save money, while a mix of voting options can cost more. In some states, ballots may be sent by the postal service without prepayment of postage. Vote by mail is available in both Democratic and Republican states.

Voting by mail began in the U.S. during the Civil War. It has been increasingly utilized in recent elections. A surge in mail-in ballots is expected this November, as Americans avoid polling places for fear of contracting COVID-19.

President Donald Trump will be seeking a second term in November. Trump is using his executive powers to sabotage the vote-by-mail system. Other leaders of the Republican Party are doing what they can to support getting rid of it. Trump has suggested delaying the election until the pandemic eases. He has started to sabotage the efficiency of the U.S. Postal Service. The fight is playing out in state capitals and courtrooms across the country, as states have authority to carry out elections.

Conservative groups are taking action to limit mail-in voting. Some federal judges seem reluctant to defend voters' rights, even if it means intervening in state-level decisions. The president's re-election campaign is suing to block mail-in voting, at the same time it pushes his backers to be ready to vote-by-mail.

However, fraud is rarely found when citizens vote by mail. It does not give an advantage to one political party over another.

It can, in fact, inspire public confidence in the voting process. As far back as 2001, Oregon's vote-by-mail system has not disproportionately mobilized or discouraged voting by Democrats or Republicans.

A recent survey conducted by the political science department of Oklahoma State University found that people of all political stripes who are concerned about the coronavirus pandemic support letting everyone vote by mail.

A database of election fraud reports from the conservative Heritage Foundation website reports approximately 1,200 allegations of voter fraud since 2000, of which 1,100 were criminal convictions for voter fraud. Of those, only 204 allegations, and 143 convictions, involved mail-in

correcting election returns and prosecuting those responsible. That's what happened in North Carolina in 2018, when a Republican political activist paid others to collect incomplete absentee ballots so they could be filled out to vote for the Republican candidate. The activist was arrested, charged

Recent studies have shown that people are concerned that their vote will not be counted, as compared to voting in person. One 2008 MIT study found that white voters were less confident their vote would be counted if they voted by absentee ballot rather than in-person.

Research from 2015 mostly confirmed those findings, revealing that people in states with more absentee voting tend to believe that various types of voter fraud are more common. That same study also found that absentee voters are less confident their vote will count than people who voted in-person either before Election Day or on the day itself.

Some concerns about mail-in ballots not being counted may be legitimate: A 2018 study in Florida found that mail-in ballots from younger voters and voters who needed assistance marking their ballots were rejected more often than others. This indicates that standards for rejecting mail-in ballots may not be uniform, or that some voters' signatures change over time in ways election officials may not expect or accept.

All this evidence leads to some clear conclusions. Voting-by-mail is just as honest as in-person voting. By training election officials and using common standards, absentee ballots are an effective option. Officials can ensure public confidence by being transparent and communicating their plans and preparations.

People are more interested in voting-by-mail in 2020 than ever before. November's election will likely involve far more mail-in voting because of the pandemic. To retain voters' confidence in its integrity, local election offices and the U.S. Postal Service will need to make substantial additional preparations to provide mail-in ballots and to handle the increased volume of mail.

The public needs to understand that the results of the vote may not be available on the day of the election. It takes longer for election workers to open, verify signatures, and count mail ballots than it does to run voting machines, and some states do not permit mail ballots to be opened until Election Day.

When the tallies are announced, even if large numbers of Americans have voted by mail, the public can feel confident that the process was fair, and the results are accurate.

Do not let Trump scare you. Feel free to vote by mail this November.



ballots. That is a tiny fraction of the roughly 250 million mail-in ballots cast over those two decades.

In addition, problems are extremely rare in states that rely primarily on vote-by-mail. Of course, any voting system must be protected against fraud – something that election officials are already doing, including prosecuting fraud attempts.

When fraud does occur, election administrators identify it and take action,

and convicted – and the entire election was invalidated and run again.

But, overall, election fraud is rare.

There is one issue with mail-in voting, but it's a concern about voting overall. A 2019 Gallup poll found that 59 percent of Americans lack confidence in the honesty of elections for a range of reasons, including concerns about interference from foreign powers or domestic political elites, security worries and general frustration.



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Graphic by Zarqua Ansari

Voting-by-mail: Inefficient for having your voice heard

By Ariel Reed
Co-Sports Editor

Fear is the driving force behind the concept that one will contract a virus with a 97.2 percent survival rate while attempting to participate in one's legal duty as an American to vote. This fear of contracting COVID-19 is what surged the amount of mail-in voting options, which frankly opens up the door for potential voter fraud.

This election has created a vast amount of problems, since the people of the country are looking for ways to vote out President Donald Trump, even though the numbers show that he has revamped and boosted our economy and made it more efficient.

Mail-in voting is not the move to get behind when it comes to this election. Sure, you can hide in fear over a virus – that you are not likely to contract – by voting through mail, but does this mean your vote will actually count?

According to The Hill, there were a handful of ballots cast by members of the military for Trump that were found discarded in Pennsylvania. This was announced by the Justice Department on

Sept. 17.

Guess where these ballots were from? State College? Erie? Bedford? Nope. They were found in Luzerne County. The county in which Wilkes University and a lot of its students reside in.

District Attorney Stefanie Salavantis asked the DOJ and FBI to open an investigation into the discarded ballots on Monday, following reports of “potential issues with a small number of mail-in ballots at the Luzerne County Board of Elections.”

“I don't think it's a good idea,” said Haley Greshko, a sophomore political science major. “I think it highly increases the chance of ballots getting stolen or forged. There's tons of research behind it supporting this. We don't all trust the postal service either; it is run by the government. I personally don't trust my government. I don't think it is a good idea at all.”

Echoing Greshko, where is the safety in that? How do you know your voice will actually be heard if you vote through mail? The only way to ensure that your voice will be heard is by voting in-person.

The recent movements of all major athletic teams to push people to vote has

been ridiculous. If a person really cared about doing their civic duty, they would get off their couch and go vote. Mail-in voting is not a guaranteed method of having one's voice be heard because of the current cases of missing ballots.

“The simple thing to do to be an active citizen is voting. Doing mail-in voting makes it harder to know your voice is heard,” said Dr. Benjamin Toll, assistant professor for political science. “That is what concerns me. We know over the last few weeks, the postal service has had trouble getting things delivered on time. It is a concern I have.”

In addition to the missing ballots found in Luzerne County, according to Fox News, the U.S. Postal Service has launched another investigation looking into how three trays of mail, including absentee ballots, ended up in a ditch line in Wisconsin – which, needless to say, is a crucial swing state in the battle for the electoral college votes.

The repeated cases of missing votes prove that this system is not entirely effective for someone to feel completely ensured that they did their civic duty with voting.

In addition to the ability for ballots to be lost, there is also a chance of voting


fraud when ballot gets mailed to multiple addresses.

Over the summer, my strength and conditioning coach told me that he received four vote-by-mail ballots. He and his wife are the only eligible voters in his household. He received two extra ballots because the state had counted the previous owners of the house to still be living there.

“They only go through registrations every so often, so there are tons of errors,” said Greshko. “People who have moved and don't reside in their former house: ballots will be sent to them. In the 2016 election, there were a ton of cases where people were listed as voting in their previous state and their current one. I am ashamed that something like that can happen.”

Voter fraud can happen in any form of election, but the outdated information used by the polling places is an easy way for the election to get slighted in one direction.

If you want to feel that your voice is truly heard, and you want to feel that you have done your civic duty by voting, then you will vote in-person on Election Day.

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What are the best movies to watch to get into the fall spirit?

By Jordan Daniel
Opinion Staff Writer

Fall 2020 is among us, and what better way to get into the fall spirit during the middle of a global pandemic than staying inside, getting cozy under warm blankets, eating some tasty snacks and watching movies with your friends? If you are having trouble deciding what to watch, here are some of the best movies to put you in the fall mood.

“Dead Poets Society” is at the top of the list. This movie dates back to 1989 and stars Robin Williams. It is a classic American teen drama film about a controversial, yet encouraging, English teacher and his students. The back-to-school setting of the movie will definitely make you feel nostalgic about the fall. You can stream this movie on services such as Amazon Prime, iTunes Store, YouTube, Vudu or Google Play.

“Remember the Titans” is next on the list. Although many of us are unable to attend football games due to COVID-19, we can reminisce on the times when we were able

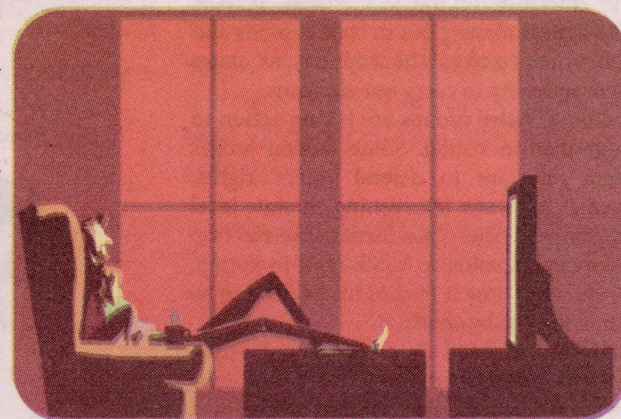
to by watching this American biographical sports film from 2000. This movie is based on the true story of African-American coach Herman Boone, played by Denzel Washington, and the integration of the T.C. Williams High School football team in Alexandria, Va., in 1971. Streaming for this movie is available on Disney+, Amazon Prime, iTunes Store, YouTube, Vudu, Google Play and more.

“It's the Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown” is third on the list. Watching this 1966 American prime time animated television special will certainly transport you back to your childhood. The Peanuts and friends will help get you excited about fall festivities like pumpkin picking, pumpkin carving, seeing the leaves change color and several other autumn activities. This cartoon is perfect to watch with friends or family on iTunes Store, Vudu or FandangoNOW, and it can most likely be found on a VHS tape somewhere at home.

If you are in need of some fall romance, then check out “When Harry Met Sally.” This 1989 American romantic comedy begins


with the two characters meeting in Chicago before they share a cross-country drive and follows them through 12 years of chance encounters in New York City. The beautiful autumn scenery in the background of the movie will have you planning a trip to the iconic city. This rom-com that raises the question of if a man and a woman can just be “friends” is available to stream on CBS All Access, Amazon Prime, iTunes Store, Vudu, YouTube, Google Play and other services.

The final movie is “Sleepy Hollow.” Although it is a little early in the season to start watching horror movies, “Sleepy Hollow” also offers beautiful scenes of the New England foliage. It is a popular 1999 American gothic supernatural horror film, directed by Tim Burton, and is loosely based on Washington Irving's short story “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow” with Johnny



Depp and Christina Ricci as lead characters. Watch this movie on a chilly autumn night on Netflix, Amazon Prime, iTunes Store, Vudu, YouTube, Google Play and other streaming channels.

Watching these movies will make you appreciate the fall time and feel nostalgic about your past falls spent with friends and family.

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Graphic by Zarqua Ansari

Raising awareness about suicide, how to be a helping hand

By Breanna Ebisch
Opinion Editor

Throughout the year, different months get the honor of being dedicated to particular movements, causes and issues, whether they be health-related or focused on bringing awareness to certain times in history.

American Heart Month, Women's History Month, National Breast Cancer Month and National Bullying Prevention Month are only a few examples. During those 30 or so days, various kinds of events occur in support of these numerous causes in order to help fight against or for the issue.

September is Suicide Prevention Month, and the month dedicates time to an issue that affects millions of Americans on a daily basis in different ways.

Suicide Prevention Month focuses on uniting mental health advocates, organizations, survivors, community members and more to promote suicide prevention awareness. Countless resources, social media posts and campaigns are shared over the first fall month's 30 days, which bring more attention to the efforts than usual.

According to The American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, "Suicide is the 10th leading cause of death in the U.S. In 2018, 48,344 Americans died of suicide, and there were an estimated 1.4 million suicide attempts. The age-adjusted suicide rate in 2018 was 14.2 per 100,000 individuals, and on average, there are 132 suicides per day."

Yet despite the staggering numbers, the fight to prevent suicide is one that is seen as less important due to the topic remaining "taboo" to the general public. Lives could be saved if the stigma around mental health was removed, and that needs to be the main goal.

Almost all topics and conversations surrounding mental health have been neglected for years and have left little to no room for these uncomfortable, but necessary, discussions to take place.

In a world where many people are struggling with some sort of mental illness or disorder, it is instrumental to help create an understanding and bring awareness to mental health issues in today's society.

Suicide is included and connected to many aspects relating to mental health. Anyone experiencing the common signs of suicidal thoughts, such as various kinds of depression, substance abuse or an excessive amount of stress, may find admitting to needing help is harder than it sounds. However, it is important to remember that you are never alone and getting help is only one step away.

By bringing awareness to suicide prevention, our society cannot only end the stigma around all mental health, but save thousands of lives by offering the support needed for people struggling with suicidal thoughts.

Building a community of members who have either personally struggled with suicide, know someone who attempted or died of suicide and allies who are ready to fight for the people who need it most in regards to mental health and suicide is one of the most influential ways we as a society cannot only raise awareness but be there for those who are struggling.

According to The National Alliance on Mental Illness, "Every year, thousands of individuals die by suicide, leaving behind their friends and family members to navigate the tragedy of loss. In many cases, friends and families affected by a suicide loss (often called 'suicide loss survivors') are left in the dark. Too often the feelings of shame and stigma prevent them from talking openly."

Besides the victims of suicide, there are many others who are directly affected by the deaths. Bringing the awareness of prevention to the forefront, not only during September but during the entire year, will also benefit the thousands of people who don't feel welcome to open up about what they are going through.

Losing someone to suicide is never something anyone should have to go through alone, but society has created a space where those emotions and experiences are not welcomed.

Despite the inaccurate and harmful connotations that have become closely related to suicide and mental health in general, the support and importance of these issues is more glaring than ever before.

By not providing open outlets of help, guidance or proper medical assistance when needed, the ones struggling with suicidal thoughts or mental illnesses are unable to find the resources to recover and feel suicide is their only option.

According to the Centre for Suicide Prevention, "The taint of the stigma associated with suicide is no simple metaphor for those who are stigmatized. Many victims suffer from very real psychological scars inflicted by the hurt and shame of attempting suicide or knowing someone who has died by suicide. Misunderstanding, ignorance and fear are at the root of stigmatization, and these factors have inflicted immense suffering on those who are in any way perceived as 'not normal.'"

Young people are arguably the most affected group in regards to mental health

and illnesses, as they are coming to age and growing up in a world where they have to manage their social life, social media, peer pressure, constant changes and live up to countless expectations all while experiencing the violence and ever changing aspects to our complicated society. Everyday can seem like a battle, and it isn't easy to combat the dark thoughts that are likely to develop through those times.

According to The World Health Organization, "Globally, depression is the fourth leading cause of illness and disability among adolescents aged 15-19 years and fifteenth for those aged 10-14 years. Anxiety is the ninth leading cause for adolescents aged 15-19 years and sixth for those aged 10-14 years. Emotional disorders can profoundly affect areas like school work and school attendance. Social withdrawal can exacerbate isolation and loneliness. At its worst, depression can lead to suicide."

This alone explains why Suicide Prevention Month is necessary and increasingly important.

How can we as a society, as human beings, willingly sit back and watch others take their own lives because of an age-old stigma that should not continue to exist in the 21st century? How many "unfortunate" or "too soon" deaths will it take to wake us up in order to recognize a problem that affects millions of people in various ways on a daily basis?

It is a shame that something relatively preventable can be changed if the negative stigma around mental health in general was broken. Thousands of lives are claimed each year, leaving even more in the dark to struggle with the heartbreaking decision, because our society feels we cannot help those in danger due to twisted ideas that are being torn down bit by bit everyday.

Although that might only be the first step in creating a more welcoming world that is able to address issues such as suicide without being fearful, raising awareness and working toward that future are all acts we need to be participating in now.

Any loss of life is devastating, but the lasting impact of suicide is a pain like no other and one we can help prevent. Thousands of amazing souls leave us too soon because they feel as if there is no other solution to how they are constantly feeling or what they're struggling with.

The question remains: Why is the idea of educating others on how to help break the stigma and generate support for suicide prevention so difficult?

This is an issue that, if we all banded

together, we could potentially reduce the high numbers of suicides that occur every year within the United States.

Setting aside 30 days out of an entire year to raise awareness, donations and host events does not seem unrealistic when it comes to the lives being saved with these efforts.

Suicide prevention needs to be prioritized much more than it currently is, along with other aspects of mental health that our society more or less pushes to the side.

During Suicide Prevention Month and beyond, there are an immeasurable amount of ways everyone can contribute and support suicide prevention. Like many other social movements and specific times to spread awareness, social media continues to play a large role in how millions get their information and that still applies to this particular issue.

From simply sharing a post on social media about the resources available (including the National Suicide Prevention Hotline), getting involved with events, donating to local and national organizations or simply having conversations that promote suicide prevention, every effort counts.

Organizations such as the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP), Suicide Awareness Voices of Education (SAVE) and many more are always accepting donations, encourage promotions of their services and are always working to educate the general public about ways to help when it comes to suicide prevention.

Suicide Prevention Month is more important than ever before with a large portion of the population struggling with some aspect of mental health. Taking a stand is not something to be ashamed of; instead, it should be seen as an act of courage for someone in need. We cannot afford to lose anymore lives due to being scared of a hurtful stigma.

Take this time to reach out to your friends, family and even your classmates or co-workers. We never know what another person is going through or if they're struggling with the events unfolding in their life. Offering that line of support can be life-saving to someone and that simple moment of checking in with someone can make the world of difference.

Breaking that stigma and offering help to those who need it most is crucial. It is something we can all do year round, and not just during the month of September.



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Full STEAM ahead: The unknown value of art in science

By Zarqua Ansari
Asst. Opinion Editor

We have all been in an art class at one point or another where the art teacher seems to balk at the possibility of someone picking a career in a science or math field. A lot of people say, "I'm not a math person." Conversely, any non-art teacher we have had, when drawing a diagram, exclaims, "I'm no artist, so bear with me." I have always liked science and art and did not understand why there was a divide.

For example, Leonardo da Vinci, known for painting the Mona Lisa, was also a large contributor to science. According to James S. Ackerman, an author for the *Daedalus* journal, "Leonardo conceived ideas vastly ahead of his own time, conceptually inventing the parachute, the helicopter, an armored fighting vehicle, the use of concentrated solar power, a calculator, a rudimentary theory of plate tectonics and the double hull." He utilized the scientific method in all aspects of life, including music and art. The reason the

Mona Lisa is considered so groundbreaking is because it utilizes linear perspective, acute understanding of human anatomy and depth perception to create shadows and highlights, claims Ackerman. By using science, da Vinci was able to put his work above others.

It does not stop there. According to the University of St. Andrews, lots of Greek architecture has been credited for using the Golden Ratio to be aesthetically pleasing. The pillars are built to taper towards the bottom to give the illusion of a uniform column. The use of rivets allows the eye to see various shades and depth in the uniformly colored stone.

During the Renaissance, plants, animals, human anatomy and stars were sketched with incredible skill. The lack of cameras made these sketches the only form of visual aid to convey the observations to viewers.

According to Lian Zhu, around the start of the 19th century, with the coining of the term "scientist," the two fields began to split. There has been a recent movement to bring art back into the STEM field. "There has been a

widely held view that an education grounded in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) leads to professional and personal success; however, the added emphasis of the study of arts to that equation is gaining momentum – stretching the acronym to STEAM," as according to the School of Education.

I have always been interested in art. When I found out that Wilkes had a studio art minor, I was elated. I use art as a coping mechanism. It helps me focus negative energy into positive energy. I plan on using art as one of the mechanisms to prevent medical school burnout, a dreaded phenomenon I have heard medical school students talk about.

Art allows one to express creativity and originality, which are important aspects of life. The STEM to STEAM approach that I took in college sparks insight and creativity. Being trained in art, a fresh set of eyes enable one to find unique solutions. Skills acquired increase perception. Art is detail-oriented, which enables one to notice things others overlook.

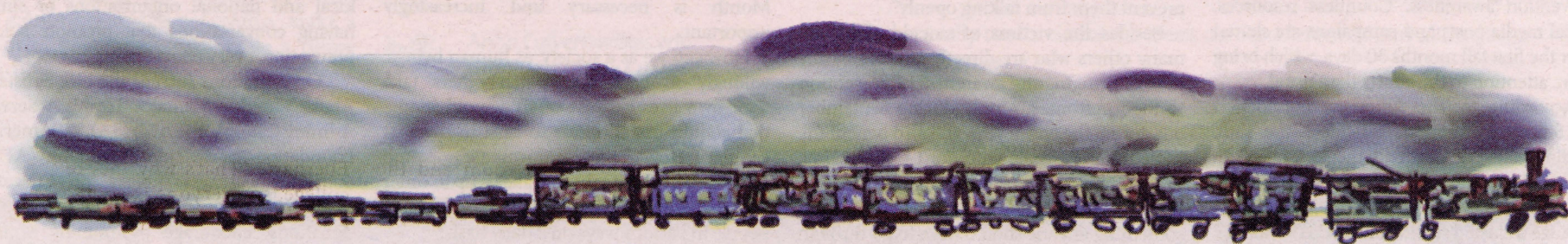
Since art projects rarely go how the artist plans, art enables one to adapt to new situations. I have had many projects turn into something entirely different than what I started with. The spontaneity of art reflects quick thinking and adaptable nature.

Art gives people flexibility without sacrificing results, which means goals are met, even if initial plans do not work. Some forms of art are irreversible, and this trains one to be careful to avoid making mistakes and to own up to it when something goes wrong. As an artist, I have learned to incorporate mistakes into my work, as well as improve upon situations that might seem hopeless to others. Art has taught me a great deal of patience and perseverance, qualities that people look for in STEM students.

All in all, art has many transferable skills that are valued in the STEM field. Jump on board the STEM to STEAM approach.



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Graphic by Zarqua Ansari



Unjust decision in Taylor's case leaves doubts on U.S. justice

By William Billingsley
Staff Writer

On Sept. 23, a Kentucky grand jury finally reached their long-awaited conclusion. As many have no doubt heard by now, the grand jury's only charges for the officers in the death of Breonna Taylor were ... three charges of "wanton endangerment" for Officer Brett Hankison. That was it. According to the Associated Press, the maximum sentence for each charge is five years.

And whew, where do I even begin?

Over the last six months or so, I've kept a close eye on what kind of events were transpiring in the aftermath of Taylor's killing. Sadly, this was not the only high-profile case of police negligence and brutality in 2020. However, time and time again, I am left bewildered at how these officers arrived at their lethal conclusions. Whether it was to press a knee to George Floyd's neck for almost nine minutes and killing him or

shooting Jacob Blake in the back seven times and paralyzing him from the waist down, it is simply indisputable that when it comes to dealing with Black people, the police are, apparently, utterly incompetent.

'But they're only human, they can't possibly be expected to be perfect all the time.'

Wrong. I can expect perfection when your job involves matters of life or death. It's one thing to be human when someone's life isn't on the line, and a very different matter entirely when your actions determine who lives and who dies. And as we've seen repeatedly, police across the country have shown that they don't especially care much for the lives of Black people.

'But surely the actions of a few bad cops aren't representative of all cops, right?'

Once more: Wrong. As a 2018 study from the National Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI) concluded on the rate of fatal police shootings across 17 different states from 2009 to 2012: "Victims were majority

white (52 percent), but disproportionately black (32 percent) with a fatality rate 2.8 times higher among blacks than whites."

Given the high-profile cases in 2020 alone, I do not think the information that this study presented back in 2018 was terribly shocking about just how often black people are killed by the police. Here is a further statistic from their study: "Most victims were reported to be armed (83 percent); however, black victims were more likely to be unarmed (14.8 percent) than whites (9.4 percent)."

Not only is the fatality rate for Black people almost three times higher, they are also more likely to be unarmed. Is that not strange?

"The circumstances were fundamentally against their favor: What were they expecting from a "possible drug dealer" if they were to ram into their apartment in the middle of the night? What would any officer expect if they forced their entry into any home in the middle of the night? That the people, drug dealers or not, are not armed?" said Freddy Del Rosario,

Wilkes '20.

Del Rosario is absolutely right. For far too long, the police have acted with broad impunity thanks to their qualified immunity protections. But what strikes me as absolutely ridiculous is how police flagrantly target people of color in almost every aspect of our judicial system. Whether it is gunning them down at higher rates or sentencing them for disproportionately longer sentences than their white counterparts, the system has long been stacked against minorities.

Shortly following the grand jury's decision, enlightened intellectual and Kentucky's Attorney General Daniel Cameron said that "criminal law is not meant to respond to every sorrow and grief."

I think what he meant to say was that "criminal law is not meant to respond to every sorrow and grief for crimes committed by the state."



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Sports

Want your sport covered? Deserve to be Athlete of the Week? Contact the Sports Editors: Ariel.Reed@wilkes.edu or Dylan.Mehl@wilkes.edu

Men's basketball freshmen are eager to start their first season

By Baylee Guedes
Staff Writer

Starting a new chapter in the journey of life is a challenging experience for any person, while adjusting to the new circumstances in the college athlete scope is arguably even more difficult.

The freshmen on men's basketball team are confident coming into the potential upcoming season. The leadership found in seniors Derek Heiserman and Landon Henry has guided the freshmen to an easy start on their season.

"Derek has kind of adopted me since we got here," said freshman Jackson Shafer. "He's definitely been a person that I can go to for help with basketball, school, or anything."

Heiserman and Henry both serve as excellent role models in the weight room, gym and classroom, which motivates the freshmen and the rest of their teammates to strive to be in the best shape both physically and mentally.

"They really push us," said freshman Joseph Zvorsk. "They're good examples for us to follow."

Heiserman and Henry have made the freshmen feel at home and welcomed into the Wilkes University community.

"We hit it off ever since day one that I met him (Henry) here the first time I visited," said freshman Trent Fisher. "Landon is a good guy."

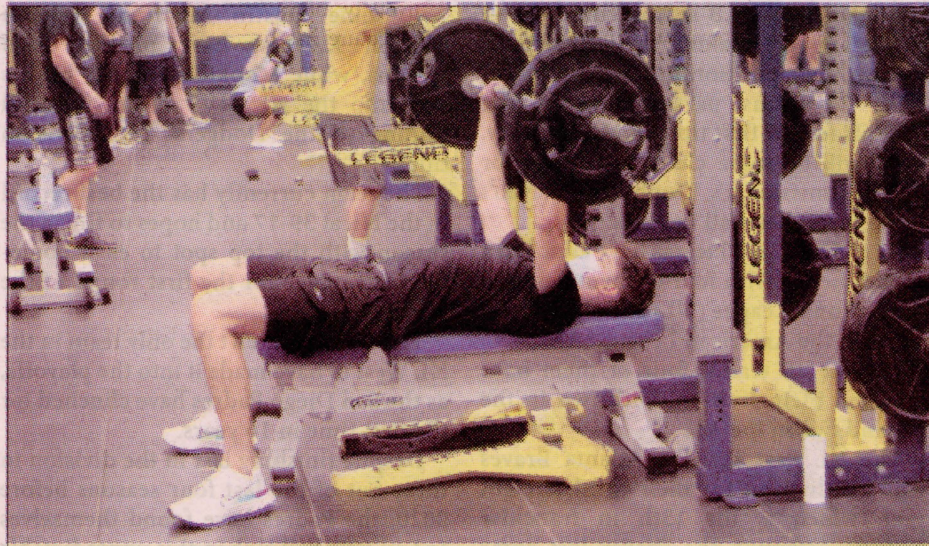
With the upperclassmen paving the way for the freshman, head coach Izzi Metz and assistant coach Scott Robinson brought in the best of the best when it came to their recruiting class. They are invested in their recruits, not only as players, but as the young men that they are becoming.

The players are yearning to play a game under Metz's instruction.

"Coach Metz has a great basketball mind, and he knows what he's talking about," said freshman Jason Eberhart. "I wanted to be with that for four years."

The dedication and time that the coaches put into their players is a reflection of what Wilkes basketball represents.

In preparation for this upcoming season, the men's team is putting in all of the necessary work, not only on the



Photos: The Beacon/Ariel Reed

Freshman Jackson Shafer lifted weights during one of his 7 a.m. lift sessions with his team.

court, but in the weight room and the classroom.

"Knowing that the season now starts later, we have more time to prepare," said Fisher. "Getting in the weight room four times a week, eating right, making sure I'm getting my sleep and getting shots up as much as I can are some of the steps I am taking."

The freshmen are taking on this new challenge of being collegiate student-athletes head-on, as they are excited to get onto the court and play games.

"I'm excited to just finally compete again because it's been so long," said Shafer. "Being able to play with new people, it's fun and exciting."

The team is starting to gel together, with high hopes to dominate the competition.

The team is confident in their skills and believe that they have a chance to make it far this season.

"I know that we're going to have a very good team," said Fisher. "Just knowing what we can do, it's going to be fun to just watch everyone play."

Eberhart reflected on the maturity of college basketball as well, as they have been learning to adapt to their new environment.

"Everyone wants to be here," said

Eberhart. "That's why they're playing in college, so everyone is going to be ready to compete."

The jump from high school to college athletics is not easy. The game becomes faster, more intense and competitive. Collegiate basketball is not easy. The freshmen will be exposed to new opponents who have already had experience under their belts.

"Knowing that you could be playing against guys that are four or five years older than you, how much stronger they can be and how much more developed they are than anyone else," said Fisher. "In high school, you're playing against kids that are a year or two older, so you just have to be ready for more."

The freshmen bring a lot of versatility to the court for Metz. They are eager to step into their new roles on the team.

"I am taller, so I can play like a guard, which gives us an advantage to spread the floor with more and more scoring opportunities if we can run," said Shafer.

The men's team will be beginning practices on Oct. 1.



From left to right: Freshmen Shafer, Trent Fisher, and Jason Zvorsk shot from various spots on the floor to practice their offensive skills.



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MLB: What are the rankings with playoffs on the horizon?

Dodgers hold best record in the NL, and Rays hold best record in the AL

By Chris Gowarty
Sports Staff Writer

As the 2020 MLB season comes to an end, teams are making their final push to earn their position in the postseason. With 16 teams participating in the playoffs for the first time in MLB history, there will be some clubs competing for the Commissioner's Trophy that haven't seen playoff baseball in years.

As of Sept. 24, 10 teams have clinched a playoff berth, with four of them being in the National League (NL) and six of them being in the American League (AL).

Of the 10 teams, four of them have clinched their division, with two in the NL and two in the AL.

The NL East saw the Atlanta Braves win the division for their third straight year, which is the 15th in franchise history. Although the Braves lost some of their best starting pitchers, as Mike Soroka and Cole Hamels both went down with injuries, a few of their young arms stepped up for the team.

Left-hander Max Fried is a Cy Young award candidate, and rookies Kyle Wright and Ian Anderson are showing they have what it takes to pitch at the big level.

Atlanta's offense is having yet another strong season, even though Ronald Acuna Jr. and Ozzie Albies have missed some playing time.

Offseason free agent acquisition Marcell Ozuna is leading the NL in home runs, and Freddie Freeman is one of the leading NL MVP candidates.

The NL Central currently has no division champion, but the Chicago Cubs have clinched a berth for the fifth time in six years. Yu Darvish is throwing well this season and is in the Cy Young race.

Even though star hitters Javier Baez, Kris Bryant and Anthony Rizzo are underperforming, role players like Jason Kipnis, Ian Happ and Jason Heyward are helping carry the offense. Chicago hopes to win one more title with its core players, as Rizzo, Bryant, Baez, Jon Lester and Kyle Schwarber will all be free agents by 2021.

For the NL West, the Los Angeles Dodgers have won the division for the eighth year in a row. Despite 2019 NL

MVP Cody Bellinger having a down year, the Dodgers were the first team to clinch a playoff berth in 2020.

Rookie Dustin May and veteran Clayton Kershaw have pitched solid seasons, while Mookie Betts has hit his way into the NL MVP discussions, all leading to the Dodgers' 19th division title.

The team currently has the best record in the NL at 39-17 and hopes to finish the season with the top spot to earn home-field advantage for the first round of the playoffs.

The Dodgers aren't the only team in the NL West to have made it into the playoffs, as the San Diego Padres have clinched for the first time in 16 years.

Despite finishing last in the division in three out of the last four seasons before 2020, the Padres have found themselves to be a new ball club in this unpredictable year.

"I have them right with the Dodgers," said hall of fame pitcher Pedro Martinez, per MLB Network. "With the way they're playing, the energy they have, and the swagger they have everywhere they go, they can pick it. Don't get surprised if they get close to the Dodgers."

Veterans Manny Machado and Eric Hosmer are putting together solid campaigns, and emerging super star Fernando Tatis Jr. is proving that the sophomore slump does not exist in his world.

Cy Young candidate Dinelson Lamet and trade acquisitions Zach Davies and Mike Clevinger are all pitching well for the team.

In the AL East, the Tampa Bay Rays won their first division title in eight years, with their last being in 2010. At 37-20, the Rays have the top record in the AL and intend to keep that pace to earn the number one seed for the first round in the postseason.

Brandon Lowe, who finished third in AL Rookie of the Year voting last season, has been a consistent hitter for the team. Relief pitchers Nick Anderson and Diego Castillo have been highlights in what is considered to be the best bullpen in baseball.

The New York Yankees accompany

the Rays as one of the two teams in the AL East who have made the postseason. Despite many of their stars missing some time due to injuries (Aaron Judge, Giancarlo Stanton and Gleyber Torres) and some even being out for the rest of the season (James Paxton and Luis Severino), the Yankees are competing in October for the fourth consecutive year.

Luke Voit, who is leading all of baseball in home runs (21), and DJ Lemaiheu, who is leading all of baseball in batting average (.360), have helped lead their team to the playoffs.

In the AL Central, three teams have clinched a berth despite not one of them being the division champion.

The Minnesota Twins currently have the top spot in the division, thanks to an MVP-caliber season from veteran Nelson Cruz and Cy Young award candidate Kenta Maeda.

The Chicago White Sox aren't too far behind the Twins, as they only trail by a half game in the central division standings.

With their postseason clinch this season, the White Sox have snapped a 12-year playoff drought. Jose Abreu is putting together one of the best seasons of his career since his 2014 Rookie of the Year campaign, while rookie Luis Robert is becoming one of the many young superstars in the game.

"The scary part for everybody else in baseball is that this (White Sox) core is locked up for almost half a decade," said Jeff Passan, per ESPN. "Tim Anderson has a long-term contract, Yoan Moncada has a long-term contract, Luis Robert and Eloy Jimenez are signed for eight years, the list goes on and on. 'Oh my goodness' – that's what everybody says when they look at the White Sox lineup this year with the damage that they've been doing."

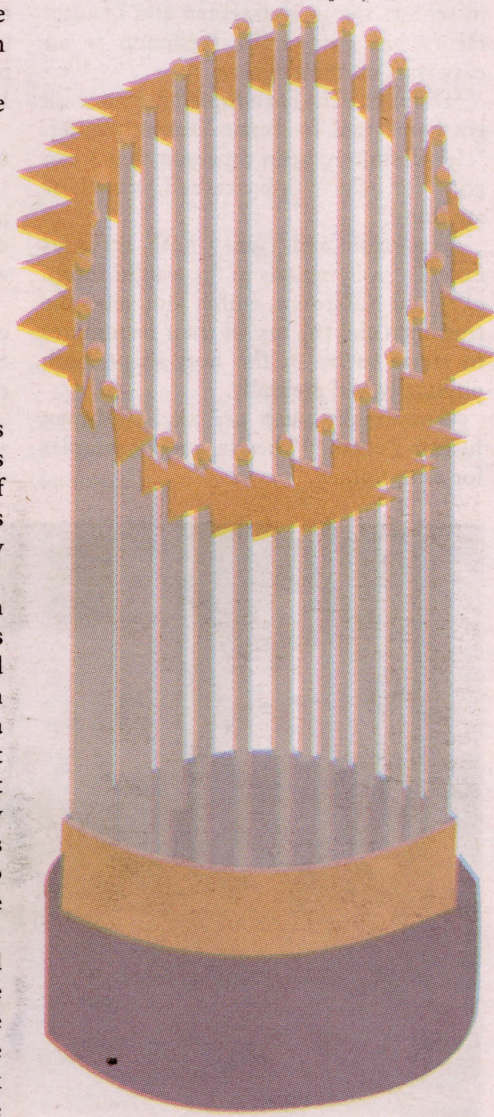
The Cleveland Indians are the third AL Central team to have a spot in the playoffs. AL Cy Young candidate Shane Bieber and slugger Jose Ramirez (whose walkoff home run over the White Sox clinched Cleveland's spot) led the Indians to their fourth playoff berth since 2016.

In the AL West, the Oakland Athletics

have won the division. The Athletics are going to play in October for the third consecutive season, but this is their first division title since 2013.

Matt Olson and Matt Chapman continue to bring their stellar defense to the field, and closing pitcher Liam Hendrik remains to be an important piece to an impressive bullpen.

According to ESPN's David Schoenfield, "It will be an MLB postseason like we've never seen before: 16 teams, no fans, played in neutral-site ballparks after the first round of the MLB playoffs with a



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Graphic by Mia Walker

Joseph Czopek reflects on his career, upcoming seasons

By Ariel Reed
Co-Sports Editor

Men's and women's head volleyball coach Joe Czopek has found his niche in his hometown of "The Valley," pursuing his passion for coaching volleyball.

Besides being born in New Jersey, Czopek has spent all his life in Wilkes-Barre. He got his start in coaching while he was still a student at King's College.

Next, he spent seven years coaching at Nanticoke Area High School. From there, he found himself making the jump to Wyoming Valley West High School for 20 years, and then finally ending up at Wilkes University after a high school referee with connections to Wilkes recommended him to the position.

"I coached high school volleyball throughout my collegiate career," said Czopek. "I have coached for 27 years at high schools. I started at Nanticoke Area for seven years, and then I went to Wyoming Valley West for 20. When I was in business, I was an outside sales rep which allowed me to continue my coaching career. I was recommended to this position by one of the high school referees who had connections with the administration here."

Czopek dabbled in multiple coaching positions before falling in love with

volleyball.

He was initially a swimmer and diver in high school and only played volleyball recreationally. Before making the dive into the volleyball coaching sphere, he coached swimmers.

"I used to coach swimming and diving because I was a diver when I was in high school," said Czopek. "I played volleyball recreationally until I went to college. I fell in love with the sport. I was then given the opportunity to coach a high school team."

With the delayed season start due to COVID-19, Czopek will now have two seasons that run concurrently.

Normally, he would find himself coaching women's volleyball in the fall and men's volleyball in the spring.

The delayed seasons have resulted in Czopek being shorthanded, since he only has one assistant coach. Despite not having a graduate assistant, Czopek is handling the management of two seasons fairly well.

"Without the hiring of a graduate assistant coach, I am not sure what exactly will happen," said Czopek. "I guess this will be learned later on once we get the schedules. I do know, though, that I will be extremely busy."

The delayed women's season has made things difficult for Czopek, but that has not paused their practice schedules.



Photos: The Beacon/Ariel Reed

Head coach Joseph Czopek got ready to take a recruit on a tour of campus in hopes of inspiring them to join his team.

He believes that this additional time to prepare will allow them to build a stronger team.

"Since the semester started, we do participate in our nontraditional seasons," said Czopek. "We have been practicing four nights a week between both programs. The nice thing about the season being pushed back is I have a longer time to evaluate the freshmen and create a line-up."

The additional time will allow for players to develop a better team chemistry and understanding of how each person plays.

"I think it was nice because last year when I came in as a freshman, we started off with captain's open gyms and lifting," said sophomore setter Casey Shipman. "This year, that transition was slower, and I feel like it helped the freshmen out a little bit. Slowly getting back into things is a better way to start off the semester instead of getting thrown right into the fire."

Although Czopek's schedule will become hectic, the additional time that is able to be devoted to the teams will pay off when their regular seasons start.

"I think Coach is very under-appreciated, in the fact that not only is he coaching a successful guys program,

but he is also coaching a successful girls program," said Shipman. "He is constantly working, constantly trying to make each program better, and I feel that people don't recognize that. That's one thing I really admire about him. His drive, love for the game and knowledge are something I want to have. You can tell he loves what he is doing – he's not in it for the paycheck."

Czopek's passion for volleyball pours out of his soul. His words, knowledge and leadership makes a lasting impression on his players, and it is often cited as the driving force behind their reasons for committing to Wilkes.

"After my interview, my dad and I talked about how he was a good person and you weren't just getting a coach, you were getting a mentor," said sophomore setter Zach Shay. "He played a big role in my commitment here. He's definitely taught me a lot. When it is time to work, he does get on us, and he holds us to a high standard."

The men's and women's volleyball teams are looking forward to their successful seasons starting in the spring semester under Czopek's leadership.



Sophomore setter Zach Shay and his teammates celebrate after a crucial hit from sophomore outside hitter Zach Evans.



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The Beacon/Ariel Reed

Getting to know...

Richard Ermeus

Senior Football Player

The Beacon: Male Senior Spotlight

Why Richard Ermeus was selected: Ermeus has been a leader and a figure to look up to throughout his career in at Wilkes. His selflessness, leadership and success on the field are among the many reasons he was selected for this accolade.

Name: Richard Ermeus
Year: Senior
Major: Marketing
Minor: Computer Information Systems
Hometown: Hillside, N.J.
High School: David Brearley HS
Position: Wide Receiver

Favorite building on campus?
UCOM.

Favorite meal to eat on campus?
Chicken tenders and French fries.

What color/flavor of Gatorade is your favorite?
Glacier Cherry is the best Gatorade in the entire world.

Driving force for your decision to come to Wilkes?

My driving force that tailored my decision to come to Wilkes was the great sense of belonging and community here.

If your life was a movie, who would you want to play you and why?
My younger brother because we are very similar in reference to personality.

Post-graduation plans in terms of a career?

I'm looking to get my MBA at Wilkes, and hopefully acquire a graduate assistant position, which will bolster my resume throughout the duration of completing the program.

Most influential person in your life?
Franklin Ermeus. My dad is the most calm, cool and collected guy in the world. He doesn't talk much, but when he does, it's in your best interest to listen. He never shows weakness, and even at his lowest points, he can put a smile on anyone else's face. He came from literally nothing and now is a successful COO of a multi-million dollar corporation and the best dad a kid could ever ask for.

Favorite memory as a Colonel?

My favorite memory as a Colonel was catching my first touchdown in the 2019 Homecoming game.

Hopes for this season as a Colonel?

To get bigger, faster and stronger to overcome all opponents in our schedule when the time comes.

A quote you live your life by?
"Everything happens for a reason. There's no way you made it this far for God to leave you. Just keep working because you will make it."

When/Why did you first begin playing?

Wanted to feel connected, and learn accountability, unity, respect and all the other great things sports teach athletes every day.

What does "Be Colonel" mean to you?
Be Colonel means to exceed limitations, redefine standards and always better yourself gaining one percent every day.

Favorite thing to do during practice?

Encourage my teammates to get better and scream and shout bringing the 'juice' to every practice.

Anyone to give a shout-out to?
Grace Margaret Evan, my beautiful, smart and courageous girlfriend.

Other interests or hobbies off of the field?

My other interests and hobbies off of the field entail computer programming, playing instruments and making money.

-Compiled by Ariel Reed, Co-Sports Editor

Getting to know...

Kristie Najdek

Senior Volleyball Player

The Beacon: Female Senior Spotlight

Why Kristie Najdek was selected: Najdek has been a solid player in the volleyball lineup. Her vocal leadership on and off the court combined with her drive to succeed has earned her this recognition.

Name: Kristie Najdek

Year: Senior

Major: Early Childhood and Elementary Education

Minor: Reading and certificate in Special Education

Hometown: Bethpage, N.Y.

High School: Island Trees High School

Position: Defensive Specialist

Favorite thing to do during practice?

My favorite thing to do at practice would definitely be queen of the court.

Other interests or hobbies off of the field?

Off of the court, I enjoy shopping, going to the beach and spending time with friends/family.

Favorite building on campus?

UCOM because of Starbucks.

Favorite meal to eat on campus?

A grilled cheese from Grille Works.

What color/flavor of Gatorade is your favorite?

Light Blue/Glacier Freeze is my favorite.

If your life was a movie, who would you want to play you and why?

Jennifer Aniston because I feel she is an exciting and energetic actress who can play me well.

Most influential person in your life?

My parents.

A quote you live your life by?

"Everything happens for a reason."

What does "Be Colonel" mean to you?

To me, "Be Colonel" means to be a leader and represent Wilkes with nothing but your best.

Anyone to give a shout-out to?

My volleyball girls and my family.

Driving force for your decision to come to Wilkes?

I decided to come to Wilkes because of the small classes sizes and the welcoming campus. As soon as I stepped foot on the campus, I knew it was the perfect fit for me, and the ability to continue my volleyball career was just a plus.

Post-graduation plans in terms of a career?

I hope to find a job back home as a first or second grade teacher.

Favorite memory as a Colonel?

My favorite memory is from sophomore year playing at Rutgers-Camden, one of our rivals that we play every year. The amount of energy and positivity on the court was the greatest we ever had to contribute to our win.

Hopes for this season as a Colonel?

With the pandemic going on, just a chance to play at least one game in the spring and to be able wear our brand uniforms is what I'm hopeful for.

When/Why did you first begin playing?

I started playing in the beginning of seventh grade when my friends and I decided to try out for our school team.

-Compiled by Ariel Reed, Co-Sports Editor



The Beacon/Ariel Reed

Week two of NFL season witnessed multiple injuries, surprises

By Dylan Mehl
Co-Sports Editor

Two weeks into the NFL season, and there has already been a plethora of injuries, surprises and plenty of combinations to look forward to.

While it is great to have football back, this risk of the faces of the league getting injured increases without a normal offseason. A prime example of this was week two, when star running back for the New York Giants Saquon Barkley tore his ACL and is officially done for the season. Additional players who are out for the rest of the season include 49ers defensive end Nick Bosa, Denver Broncos wide receiver Courtland Sutton and Indianapolis Colts wide receiver Malik Hooker.

The San Francisco 49ers may have been bitten by the injury bug more than anyone else in week two, as they lost several starters. Bosa is gone for the year along with defensive tackle Solomon Thomas. Many offensive players were injured as well, including quarterback Jimmy Garoppolo, running backs Raheem Mostert and Tevin Coleman and the already injured tight end

George Kittle.

Browns wide receiver Odell Beckham Jr. even took to Twitter saying, "My prayers are up for all of my brothers that went down today. May God place his healing hand of grace upon y'all! Hate to see it!"

For Beckham Jr., his Browns team may have gotten back on track for Thursday night football, as they picked up the win against division rival Cincinnati.

The Browns had high expectations going into the season. They seemed to have figured out a ground and pound offensive strategy with the running back duo Nick Chubb and Kareem Hunt, who totaled 210 rushing yards together, per ESPN.

Philadelphia is off to a disappointing 0-2 start to the season after losses to both the Washington Football Team and the Los Angeles Rams. Quarterback Carson Wentz is not looking like the MVP version of himself from 201 as the offense continues to struggle. For the Rams, they are looking like the team that made the Super Bowl just two years ago. They have been controlling the tempo on the ground and allowing quarterback Jared Goff to make plays when needed.

The NFC West may be the best division in football with the Seahawks, Rams and Cardinals all at 2-0 and San Francisco at 1-1. Seattle Seahawks quarterback Russell Wilson has been on fire this season. Through two weeks, he is at 910 passing yards with nine touchdowns and only one interception. Wilson has been impressive that now, according to DraftKings, he has the best odds to win the MVP.

The Pittsburgh Steelers picked up a 26-21 victory over the Denver Broncos. The story of this season for the Steelers is their defense. They arguably have the best in the league, with a front seven slowing down the opposing team's run game.

Baltimore's offense and defense continue to look impressive, as they picked up the win against the Houston Texans in easy fashion.

For the Chiefs, their win did not come easy against the Chargers; however, both teams head into their anticipated week three matchup undefeated, which could be the best Monday night football game of the season.

Tom Brady earned his first victory with the Bucs against the Carolina Panthers.

Brady did not look exceptional throwing two interceptions; however, starting slow is nothing new for Brady. The Panthers suffered a noticeable loss in Christian McCaffrey, as the star running back suffered a high ankle sprain that could see him out for four to six weeks, according to The Charlotte Observer.

Brady's old team, the Patriots, are off to a 1-1 start to the season behind quarterback Cam Newton, who already has four rushing touchdowns and has the Patriots looking like a potential playoff team.

To conclude the week, The Las Vegas Raiders picked up an upset win over the New Orleans Saints on Monday night in the first game at their new stadium. The Raiders relied heavily on tight end Darren Waller. Waller had a stat line of 12 receptions for 105 yards and a touchdown.

New Orleans appears to be missing receiver Michael Thomas, and quarterback Drew Brees looks like he may be regressing, as he is refusing to throw the ball deep.



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Graphic by Mia Walker

