



# THE BEACON

Wilkes University - Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania

"The news of today reported by the journalists of tomorrow."

## Programming Board hosts annual "Freak Week" on campus

By Cassidy Brumagin

Contributing Writer

In celebration of Halloween, Programming Board hosted "Freak Week" the week of Oct. 23, with events every day leading up to Fall Fest on Oct. 27.

The week began with bingo on Monday, followed by a Fear Factor event on Tuesday, Haunting for Candy on Wednesday and a hypnotist on Thursday before rounding out the week with Fall Fest.

The first event of the week proved to be a fan favorite: bingo. The event was free to the students, with the opportunity to receive a free additional board for dressing up in costume. It offered the chance to win one of 10 baskets featuring a variety of prizes. The event was hosted in the ballroom of the Henry Student Center.

The event filled the ballroom resulting in standing room only. Students in costumes from superheroes to animals to movie characters were joined by those who chose to participate in casual dress in various rounds of bingo. Each round sent a student home with a gift basket put together by the Programming Board.

The hosts of bingo were two characters from Dr. Seuss' "The Lorax". The orange

painted hosts read the bingo calls out for students to mark on their boards. Winning requirements varied by round, including traditional bingo, an L-shape on the board and an entirely blacked-out board.

"It was bloody amazing," said Heather Brinig, senior international relations and political science major, on being one bingo winner. Brinig's basket was filled with art supplies and cozy gifts. "The crochet narwhal is my favorite."

Some prizes in the baskets for the winners included a Kodak camera, a weighted blanket, a Halloween Squishmallow, Halloween candy, Legos, hot chocolate fixings, a Keurig Mini, art supplies, a 32-inch TV and a mini fridge.

Winners also got to pose for a photo with their new prizes.

On the overall success of the first night's event, one Lorax-dressed host had but one thing to say.

"I just wanna say I speak for the trees," said Kylie Jayne, junior nursing student, without breaking character.

Day two's event was Fear Factor, which was complete with reptiles and basket raffles.

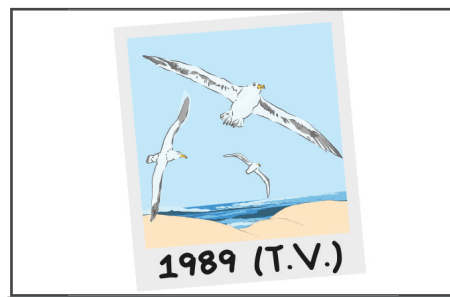
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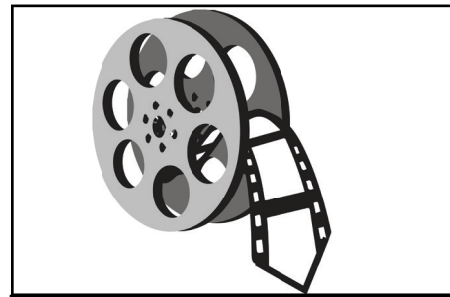
The Beacon/Cassidy Brumagin  
Kylie Jayne, a junior nursing student, dressed up as the Lorax to host bingo.



A taste of Polish food comes to Wilkes, page 5



Taylor Swift's latest re-released album, "1989 (Taylor's Version)," page 9



How indie studios are changing the animation industry, page 17



Wilkes dance team now recognized as a sport, page 21

# News

Have a breaking story or a press release to send? Contact the news editor Amanda Montgomery: [Amanda.Montgomery1@wilkes.edu](mailto:Amanda.Montgomery1@wilkes.edu)

## Student Government notes: Oct. 25 weekly meeting

**By Zach Paraway**  
*Contributing Writer*

Student Government held its weekly meeting on Oct. 25. The remaining amount in the SG account is \$30,330.84

The first order of business was a fund request from the Fly Fishing Club. The presentation was given by club president Jacob Smith.

The Fly Fishing Club is a conservation group that also teaches and takes students fly fishing locally. Members came to request funds to purchase fund raising materials. The group would like to do a clothing sale including, T-shirts, hats and patches.

The money raised would go toward club business such trips, upgrading equipment and sending students to conferences. The total request was for \$490. This is to be voted on next week.

The second order of business was a club report by the Speech and Debate team. The presentation was given by Gracie Giuszak, Emilie Protsko and E.

Alexis.

The third order of business was a club report from Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers. The presentation was given by Micheal Nowak, Evan Feng, Trent Szczecinti and Ian Williams.

The fourth order of business was a constitution update by Student Government. This presentation was given by SG Parliamentarian Francesca Mehl. Many changes were proposed to the constitution beginning with an update to the academic leave policy. The rest of the changes had to do with when a member of e-board and/or student government is removed or leaves. The voting was passed to make these changes official.

The fifth order of business was the emergency election of executive treasurer. This was a second attempt to fill the position by vote and is the first with the changes in the constitution. One vote was held and a new secretary was elected. P2 student Makenzie Psarakis was elected and accepted the

position of executive treasurer.

The sixth order of business was a constitution update from the Resident Hall Council. The presentation was given by RHC President Natalite Hernandez. Changes include language updates, more defined roles for the treasurer and the secretary, move from weekly meetings to bi-weekly and a change in the proposal process down from two weeks to one, unless stated otherwise by RHC E-Board.

This was voted on and passed.

The seventh order of business was a fund request for Casino Night. The presentation was given by SG Corresponding Secretary Marytere Quintana-Avila. This was formerly known as Casino Week and was formally in a request to SG a month ago. SG voted to take Casino Week down to Casino Night. This is the fund request for those festivities. The event will take place on Nov. 10.

The lead up to Casino Night will include giveaways and a performance

by a to-be-determined entertainer. The total budget requested was \$21,000. Last week, the prizes for the event were voted on, totaling at \$6,054.20. This week, the rest of the budget, T-shirt and decorations were to be voted on. The remaining amount was \$14,590.

This was voted on and approved.

The eighth order of business was an overview of the SG bonding trip. This presentation was given by the E-Board. The trip will take place on Jan. 28 to Aquatopia. Minor changes had been made over the week to insinuate this presentation. The cost will come out to be \$2,628.

## Beacon Briefs: Upcoming campus events

Compiled by Beacon News Staff

### Spring 2024 Commuter & Resident Student Parking Applications

Commuter and resident parking permit applications are available now until Monday Dec. 4 at 4 p.m. If you are interested in a Ralston permit, please note your preference in the comments. The applications will not re-open again once they are closed.

The link for parking applications: <https://www.wilkes.edu/campus-life/safety-security/parking/student-parking-permits.aspx>.

Any questions contact parking 570-408-7275, Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

### HPSC Give Kids the World Fundraiser

Join the Honors Program Student Committee in community service by donating children's books and Halloween costumes to Give Kids the World, a nonprofit that helps make dreams come true for Make a Wish children with a critical illness. Monetary donations can also be made. Donations will be accepted in the Honors office until the end of the semester.

Any questions, email [jennifer.mclaughlin1@wilkes.edu](mailto:jennifer.mclaughlin1@wilkes.edu).

### Professional Portrait Sessions

The Center for Career Development and Internships is holding professional

portrait sessions for students on Nov. 7 and 9 during club hours. Spots are limited. The Colonel's Clothing Closet also has professional wear that is free for all students. Link to register: <https://forms.gle/ZHx3rvsGEb2RCXUo8>.

Contact Lois Grimm at [lois.grimm@wilkes.edu](mailto:lois.grimm@wilkes.edu) or 570-408-4060 with any questions.

### Spring Break Trip

The International Business trip is now open for registration. The trip leaves the Philadelphia Airport March 2, 2024, and returns March 9. The total estimated cost is \$3,500, which includes airfare, hotel, breakfast and dinner expenses.

Contact Dr. Matus at [justin.matus@wilkes.edu](mailto:justin.matus@wilkes.edu) for more information.

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### Upcoming Events:

**November**  
2 - Silent Disco  
9 - Giveaway  
16 - Fast Food Bingo  
30 - Break-FEST

**December**  
7 - Bingo

*Want your event featured in the calendar?*

*Email: [Amanda.Montgomery1@wilkes.edu](mailto:Amanda.Montgomery1@wilkes.edu)*

# Who's so honors? Student spotlight: Kaelin Hughes

**By Morgan Steiner**  
Contributing Writer

Kaelin Hughes, a senior political science and history honors student, is this week's honors feature.

Hughes also has a minor in policy studies, is the president of HPSC, an honors peer mentor, an honors small group coordinator, and has been making the most of work study opportunities at Wilkes.

Work study jobs are on-campus jobs that get students involved in the inner-workings of different departments. They can range from jobs related to extracurriculars, like working with student athletes in the weight room or shelving music in the Darte Theater, or jobs related to coursework or major, like the ones Hughes has.

Hughes works as a Supplemental Instructor (SI) for students taking Quantitative Reasoning for the Social Science, which is cross listed as PS-265 and SOC-370, depending on the major. This course focuses on teaching students how to collect quantitative data in research projects. Hughes shared that this was a valuable experience, both for them and students enrolled.

"This is my second year helping with the course. I'm glad I can help make the course material more digestible for students who may not be math or computer-oriented with the Statistical Package for the Social

Sciences (SPSS) database."

For many social science students, this type of data analysis can be difficult. Hughes holds open meetings weekly that allow students to come and ask for help with the content they are struggling with.

Hughes' second job relates to their history major. Over the summer, she began working at the Harold Cox Archives, located on the third floor of the Farley Library.

The goal of her specific role is "transcribing and inventorying the John Jenkins papers, a collection of 18th and 19th century documents concerning our local history."

Similar to how Hughes' SI job helps with her stay engaged with SPSS database, this role helps engage critical thinking and historical research skills. Unlike the clear outcome of helping students maintain good grades, the goals of this role aren't as well-defined.

"Hopefully, once it's all transcribed, we can process it into different sub-series within the collection," said Hughes.

This work aims to make these historical documents more accessible and better organized for future students to utilize.

For those interested in work study, view job postings online at [wilkes.edu/workstudy](http://wilkes.edu/workstudy). It is important to note that some work studies are federally funded, while others are funded by Wilkes University. In short, some job opportunities may

not be available because of Financial Aid eligibility.

Hughes is one of more than 200 honors students on campus. If you're an honors

student and want to share your story, please fill out the Google Form found at the end of the weekly Honors Buzz.



Photo Courtesy Kaelin Hughes

**In addition to these work study jobs, Hughes is also an RA in Waller Hall, a first-year Residence Hall specifically for Honors students.**

## Attention Honors Students

Do you exemplify #ThatsSoHonors? Have you been working on something cool you want to show the Wilkes community? Share it here! Fill out the Google Form found in the Honors Buzz emails to share what kind of projects you've been working on.

The column, which focuses on Honors activities and students, will run in the Beacon every week. Fill out the form and provide your email address so the writers can interview you! Any questions or concerns, please reach out to [morgan.steiner@wilkes.edu](mailto:morgan.steiner@wilkes.edu).

# What is... the University Barre Scholars Program

By **Morgan Steiner**  
Contributing Writer

At Wilkes, there are so many opportunities for students to try something new, from community service with the Bonner Leaders to trips with Wilkes Adventure Education (WAE). There is also a program for students who solely want to focus on academics, without worrying about meeting requirements or extra projects.

The Barre Scholars program was introduced in the fall of 2021 as a way for students to access benefits of the Honors Program, like waived course overload fees, honors courses and special access to research and work study opportunities, without the requirements of the Honors Program. Sydney Farmer, a junior nursing major, was one of the first students to enter the Barre Scholars program.

"The Barre Scholars program was mentioned to me prior to entering my freshman year of college. I was excited to be a part of a program that provided opportunities, such as bringing in speakers for students," said Farmer.

If students qualify, they are contacted before entry their first semester and it is a simple "yes or no". There is no outside application or interview required.

Barre Scholars receive one email a month, full of opportunities for excellence. These opportunities usually include internship opportunities,

research presentations and special "Pizza Plus" events, where students can enjoy pizza and learn about different opportunities, like Study Abroad. In September, current Barre students gave a research presentation to discuss what they have been able to accomplish on campus. Farmer was one of the presenters.

"For me, I was able to discuss research, work study opportunities, and some of the clubs I'm involved in," said Farmer.

During her presentation, she focused on her work study job in the weight room in Marts and her research project with Dr. Angela Jones, which aims to find a correlation between clinical judgment and being a camp nurse. Jones is an assistant professor of nursing.

As for requirements, students are only required to maintain a certain GPA, which raises after each year. By their senior year, Barre Scholars must have a 3.6 GPA.

"I do not believe it's too difficult to maintain," said Farmer.

Should scholars slip below the GPA requirement, they receive an email at the end of that semester and have a grace period to bring it up before being removed from the program.

This spring marks the first time Barre Scholars will be graduating. To keep up with information about the Barre Scholars program, you can follow@wilkeshonors on Instagram.



Sydney Farmer presents at the Barre Opportunities Panel in September.



Scholars attended a social pizza party on Oct. 26, a fun way to get to know each other.

Photos Courtesy of Honors Program



## About Col. Isaac Barre

The Barre Scholars Program is named for Col. Isaac Barré (1726-1802), who was born in Dublin, Ireland, the child of Huguenot refugees who had fled persecution in their native France. After a career in the British army, he rose to prominence as a fierce defender of the freedom of speech and the rights of the American Colonists as a member of the British Parliament. He christened Americans who opposed taxation without representation as true "sons of liberty" and was honored by having his name affixed to the newly founded Wilkes-Barre settlement in 1769.

Barre rose from humble beginnings and earned respect through his scholarly abilities. He valued the free exchange of ideas even when they were unpopular. And he was not afraid to speak truth to power.

-Barre Scholars Program-



# Taste of Polish food, hosted by the Polish Room

By Emma Broda  
Contributing Writer

Students, faculty and alumni gathered recently in the Farley Library to taste a variety of Polish foods.

The second floor of the library is home to the Polish Room, a room dedicated to Polish heritage and culture that has been in the library since 1950. The room features many Polish artifacts and publications which have been collected by the Polish Room Committee.

This same committee holds the annual Polish food tasting event, in which members of the committee bring homemade Polish foods for members of the community to enjoy.

Many students attended as well, ranging from those who are Polish and come every year, to those who were not and were trying the foods for the first time.

"I'm Polish on my mom's side, but I've never been to one of these before," said Mia Decker, junior history major secondary education. "I loved the potato salad and the deviled eggs were very delicious."

There was a range of savory and sweet foods that everyone enjoyed, as well as sharing an appreciation for Polish culture.

"I wasn't aware of it in the past, but I saw it in the email and was really excited," said Lily Hebda, junior English and

secondary education major. "I've never had candied sauerkraut and decided to try it, and it's awesome."

Two members of the committee, Susan Braden and Rose Fritzen spoke about the event as well as the scholarship offered to students of Polish descent.

"It's nice to see everyone's smiling faces, and it's just fun to be here," said Braden.

Both Braden and Fritzen participate in the event every year and look forward to it.

"We enjoy being with all the students and faculty together," said Fritzen.

Fritzen also spoke about a special scholarship.

"We award the scholarship to three

students of Polish descent every year. They have to write an essay, and we award based on those, financial need, and academics. We award the scholarships to the winners in December.

"We get a lot of applications every year."

Students who attend Wilkes and have Polish heritage are invited to apply for the scholarship next year. The criteria is submitting an essay based on their Polish heritage according to the prompt, as well as including financial information and GPA.

Photos: The Beacon/Emma Broda



Top: There was plenty of chatting outside the Polish Room with participants enjoyed a variety of food.

Bottom: A plate filled with some Polish food that was served at the event.



Top: Donna Stankiewicz and Joyce Latowski welcomed students and other visitors to try a variety of Polish food.

Bottom: The Polish Room was set up with tables full of Polish food for visitors to sample.



# James Jones First Novel Competition winner 2023

By **Amanda Montgomery**  
News Editor

Wilkes University announced the recipient of the James Jones First Novel Fellowship. This was done through the Maslow Family Graduate Program in Creative Writing and in collaboration with the James Jones Literary Society.

The prestigious award, established in 1992 to honor the literary legacy of James Jones, recognized outstanding submissions in its latest iteration.

Catherine Carberry of Woodstock, New York, claimed the top spot and a \$10,000 prize for her novel titled, "Bitter Tropic." Carberry's work, inspired by the true story of the women leaders of Puerto Rico's independence movement and the subsequent assassination attempt on President Truman, stood out among 637 submissions.

Anna Badkhen, from Philadelphia,

Pennsylvania, secured the first runner-up position, earning \$3,000 for her novel titled, "The Sound Keeps Coming." Badkhen's work, set against the backdrop of imperial collapse in northwest Russia, explores the complexities of love, loss and memories of violence within a septuagenarian couple and their teenage grand-niece.

Jennifer Deane, from Clifton, New Jersey, claimed the second runner-up position, as well as a \$2,000 prize for her novel titled, "The Eleventh Horse." Deane, with a background in social work, visual design and psychology, weaves a tale set amid rural Tuscany's natural beauty and the edge of New York City, exploring the lives of peasant farmers and the challenges they face.

The James Jones First Novel Fellowship, established to celebrate the unblinking honesty, determination and insight exemplified by James

Jones, author of acclaimed novels such as "From Here to Eternity," and "The Thin Red Line," has been a beacon for emerging writers since its inception.

Carberry, the first-place winner, boasts a rich literary background with fellowships from the Macdowell Artist Retreat, Hedgebrook Writing Retreat and Sewanee Writers Conference.

Her fiction has been featured in prestigious journals, including *Guernica*, *The Kenyon Review*, *Tin House* online, *North American Review* and *Harvard Review*.

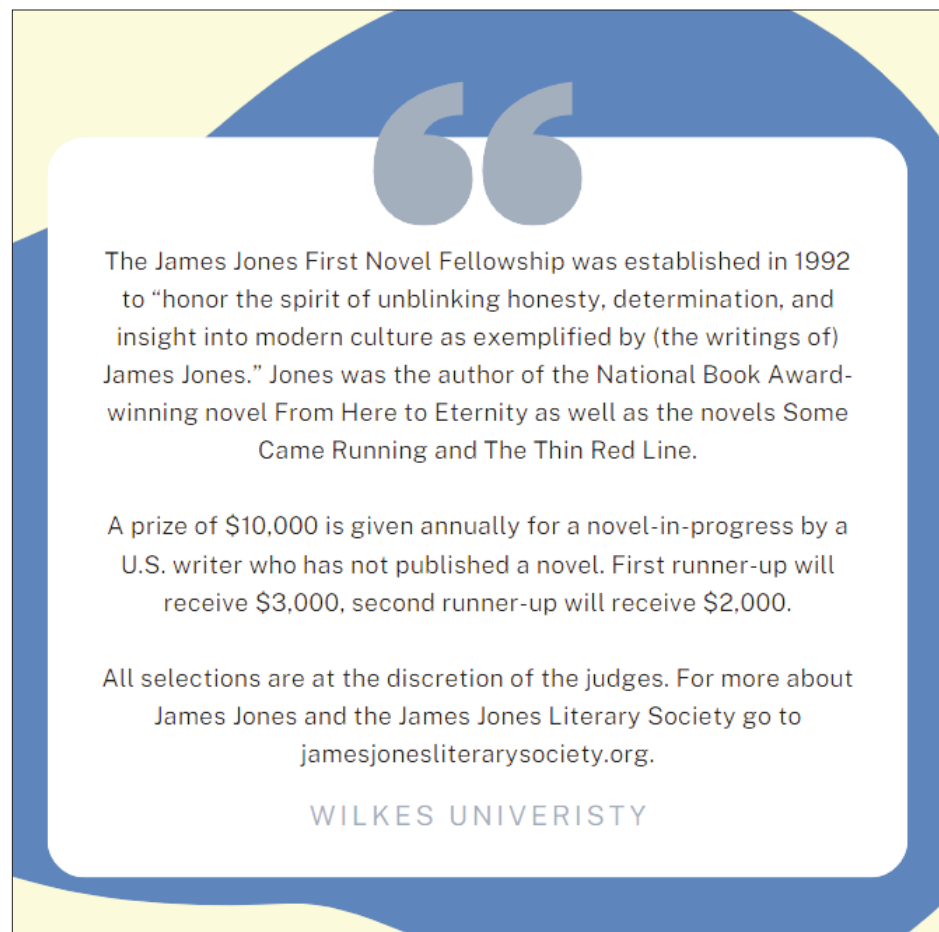
Badkhen, the first runner-up, is a prolific author with seven nonfiction books, including the shortlisted "Bright Unbearable Reality." Her awards, such as the Guggenheim Fellowship and the Barry Lopez Visiting Writer in Ethics and Community Fellowship, reflect her significant contributions to literature.

Deane, the second runner-up, brings

a unique blend of expertise with a master's degree in social work and bachelor's degrees in visual design and psychology. Her diverse writing experiences range from freelance newspaper writing to collecting oral histories from Portuguese whaling men.

The James Jones Literary Society, founded in 1992, aims to promote appreciation for James Jones's writings and encourage academic study of his contributions to 20th-century literature. In addition to the James Jones First Novel Fellowship, the society sponsors an essay contest for high school students and the annual James Jones Symposium at Eastern Illinois University.

For more information about the James Jones Literary Society, visit [www.jamesjonesliterarysociety.org](http://www.jamesjonesliterarysociety.org).



“

The James Jones First Novel Fellowship was established in 1992 to “honor the spirit of unblinking honesty, determination, and insight into modern culture as exemplified by (the writings of) James Jones.” Jones was the author of the National Book Award-winning novel *From Here to Eternity* as well as the novels *Some Came Running* and *The Thin Red Line*.

A prize of \$10,000 is given annually for a novel-in-progress by a U.S. writer who has not published a novel. First runner-up will receive \$3,000, second runner-up will receive \$2,000.

All selections are at the discretion of the judges. For more about James Jones and the James Jones Literary Society go to [jamesjonesliterarysociety.org](http://jamesjonesliterarysociety.org).

WILKES UNIVERISTY

Graphic: The Beacon/Amanda Montgom-



**Catherine Carberry, winner of the 2023 James Jones First Novel Competition.**

Photo Courtesy Kelly Clisham

# Life, Arts & Entertainment

Have any events or artists to be shared? Contact Life, Arts & Entertainment Editor: [Zara.Lantzman@wilkes.edu](mailto:Zara.Lantzman@wilkes.edu)

## ...Freak, continued from Page 1

The event featured a demonstration by the New Jersey Snakesman and eight to 10 of his reptiles. Included in these reptiles was a bearded dragon, a blue-tongued lizard and a 17-foot python. Students were even offered the opportunity to hold one of the reptiles.

In addition to having the opportunity to hold the reptiles, students were offered the opportunity to compete in two food challenges. The challenges involved eating a flavored cricket or a very spicy jelly bean.

Students who either held a reptile or completed a food challenge won a ticket to enter into the basket raffles. Additionally, students who were too spooked to go in and actually see the reptiles themselves were offered the opportunity to participate in a door prize raffle.

Wednesday's event was called Haunting for Candy. The students began in the Student Union Building (SUB) where they picked up their "passport" and then continued on to nine stops around campus.

At each station students got a passport stamp and candy. Once the student earned all nine stamps on their passport, they would return to the SUB to be entered for a chance to win one of five total raffle baskets.

For Thursday's event, a hypnotist by the name of Eric Mina was brought into the ballroom from 7 p.m. until 9 p.m. Mina has done over a thousand shows, including venues in Las Vegas and New York City. Food was also provided at the event with Auntie Anne's pretzels, popcorn, cupcakes and chocolate covered pretzels from Alle's Chocolate Shoppe.

The show began with Mina asking the entire audience to participate in an exercise where they imagined their hands were being glued together to find who would be most susceptible to hypnosis. From there, he gathered his volunteers up to the stage and used his hypnosis



**Bingo was a definite favorite part of the 2023 "Freak Week."**

techniques on them to put them in a dream-like state they would remain in for the rest of the show.

The participants were then told to perform various comedic activities, starting with playing fake instruments and dancing as though they were giving a rock concert performance. Later in the show, they were tasked with believing they were dogs chasing a ball, seeing their favorite celebrity out in the audience and competing on "Dancing with the Stars" all thanks to the conviction of hypnosis.

One of the participants who Mina deemed to be in the deepest state of hypnosis later stated she had a vague memory of what had happened throughout much of the end of the show.

"But the beginning," Becca Earnst, first-year marketing major said before shaking her head. "No, I don't remember anything."

After the show, Mina sent participants home with a complimentary copy of his book on the power of hypnosis for volunteering for the show.

Freak Week concluded with Fall Fest on Oct. 27. Students were encouraged to come and get donuts and cider from

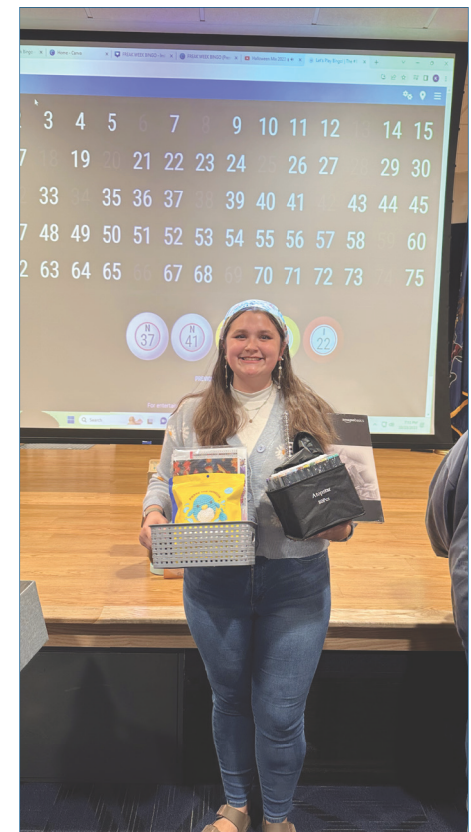
Brace's Orchard. Additionally, the event featured pumpkin carving and painting, making your own scarecrow and decorating your own tumbler.

"Freak Week has been amazing this year," Programming Board president Kim Wheeler, junior pharmacy major, commented.

Punch cards were given out to students who attended the Freak Week events. Students who went to at least three events and brought their punch card were eligible to receive a free Freak Week 2023 T-shirt. Shirts were given out at the Fall Fest event.

"We have had over 500 students at the events throughout the week and seeing the campus community enjoy the different nights has been really rewarding," Wheeler continued. "Planning this week was very much a group effort to make sure we did a different style event for each day. One of my favorite things about campus is that we are able to host these events because I get a lot of happiness seeing students have a good time."

**Photos: The Beacon/Cassidy Brumagin**



**Bingo winner, Heather Brinig, senior international relations and political science major, shows off her basket.**

# Going CLUBBING

**By Anthony Cazun**

*Asst. Life, Arts and Entertainment Editor*

There are many clubs across campus that seek to invigorate students in many types of ways. Advocation, expanding one's understanding of a field or spreading awareness.

In between all those efforts, however, one needs some time to just sit back, relax and enjoy some games with some close friends, or maybe make some new ones. This is the express purpose of the Games & Media Club.

The club does not fail to live up to its name, as there is a large library of different types of games, and media, to participate in.

There are a variety of board games available to play, not just

the classics such as Clue, but also more recent fan favorites such as One Night Ultimate Werewolf.

These classics allow for a more familiar, casual game night, while the newer more experimental games will allow for greater discovery, competition and unexpected fun.

Tabletop games are also a welcome addition. Tabletop games seek to invigorate the imagination of players by creating vast worlds and complex or silly characters. These games create palpable excitement and encourage creativity.

The club is not just limited to games in the physical sense, but also video games are a large part of the club's weekly itinerary. There are spots for people to bring their computers and laptops in order to play games, single player or multiplayer. Members are

also encouraged to bring portable systems such as Nintendo Switch's or Steam Deck's.

Some will even choose to bring a home console and plug it into the television. There are many options to enjoy video games with all members of the club.

If one would so please, members of the Games & Media club are encouraged to bring their own board and tabletop games as well.

The club's collaborative nature goes far beyond just converging with other members, but also other schools and clubs entirely. Just recently the Games & Media club collaborated with the Bloomsburg Smash Club. Together, they all enjoyed eating snacks and versing each other in Super Smash Bros. Ultimate.

While the title insinuates a more

linear, focused club, that could not be further from the truth. The Games & Media club does not act expressly as a club for strictly games and media, but also pop culture as a whole.

Just last week, the club pulled together and ventured to the Movies 14 theater to go see the new Five Nights at Freddy's movie.

The Games & Media club is an excellent way to shed the stress of student life and just have some fun with some friends. The club meets on Mondays and Fridays from 6 to 8 p.m. in the SUB lounge.



**Each week, the Wilkes Beacon staff picks their favorite song of the week. Our very own Anthony Cazun has put together a Spotify playlist where you can scan it and listen to the Beacon's staff weekly picks!**

**Morgan Rich, Editor-in-Chief:**

Suburban Legends (Taylor's Version) -

Taylor Swift

**Amanda Montgomery, News Editor:**

Something to Believe - Weyes Blood

**Emma Broda, News Staff Writer:**

Casual - Chappel Roan

**Anthony Cazun, LA&E Asst. Editor:**

Prove It - Poppy

**Cally Williams, LA&E Staff Writer:**

Harness Your Hopes - Pavement

**Sydney Allabaugh, Opinion Editor:**

Manmade Horrors - Dorian Electra

**"Freeze," Opinion Staff Writer:**

Paulygon - Ghost House

**Adam Grundt, Sports Asst. Editor:**

Style (Taylor's Version) - Taylor Swift

**Sam Mullen, Sports. Asst. Editor:**

S.OS From 'Mamma Mia!' - Pierce

Brosnan and Meryl Streep

**Lara Mullen, Designer:**

Muldur and Scully - Catatonia

**Liz Cherinka, Social Media Manager:**

Now That We Don't Talk (Taylor's Version) (From The Vault) - Taylor Swift

Graphics/Lara Mullen



# Taylor Swift's latest re-released album, "1989 (Taylor's Version)"

By Cally Williams

*Life, Arts, and Entertainment Staff Writer*

Taylor Swift's most recent re-released album, "1989 (Taylor's Version)," dropped on Oct. 27 at midnight to the excitement of "Swifties" everywhere.

Taylor Swift started rerecording her albums in April of 2021 after Scooter Braun bought and sold the master rights to her first six albums: "Taylor Swift," "Fearless," "Speak Now," "Red," "1989" and "Reputation." In 2019 Braun bought the record company, "Big Machine," that she was contracted with. He then bought Swift's masters and later sold them, without her knowledge or consent, to "Shamrock Holdings" in 2020 after having them for a year and a half.

Swift took back her music by rerecording and rereleasing her albums, with some slight changes, rebranding them with the label "Taylor's Version." She started doing this in 2021, beginning with her album, "Fearless."

"1989" was originally released on the same date in 2014. Swift posted "My name is Taylor and I was born in 1989" on Instagram once the album was released for the first time in 2014. "1989" included some of Swift's most popular songs including "Shake It Off," "Welcome to New York" and "Blank Space."

Fans have been looking forward to "1989 (Taylor's Version)" since Swift announced its re-release on Aug. 9.

"She revitalized the pop sound that she had in her original album with a fresh, new tone," said Olivia Scarborough, a senior theatre major. "One that matches her beachy theme within her new era."

Since "1989" was one of the albums that Swift lost because of Braun, she re-recorded it in 2023 and added five songs that she never added to the original album. These songs, which Swift refers to as "vault tracks" are, "Now That We Don't Talk (Taylor's Version) (From the Vault)," "Suburban Legends (Taylor's Version) (From the Vault)," "Is It Over Now? (Taylor's Version) (From the Vault)," "Say Don't Go (Taylor's Version) (From

the Vault)" and "Slut! (Taylor's Version) (From the Vault)"

Swifties have been especially excited and curious about "Slut!" considering its unusual title.

"It is cool that when you look up 'Taylor Swift slut' it is the song and not any articles," said Ella Villani, first-year theatre major, who reported that "Slut (Taylor's Version) (From the Vault)" is her favorite vault track.

"Slut! (Taylor's Version) (From the Vault)" addresses the immense shaming and criticism Swift has received in the past. Because Swift often wrote her music about ex-boyfriends, the public has made many sexist remarks about her, often shaming her for her dating life.

"Slut! (Taylor's Version) (From the Vault)," despite what its title makes listeners assume, is a lighter sounding song with a pretty chorus; this allows



Swift to reclaim the insult in her vault track.

Swift has added her vault tracks in previous re-recordings of albums, but "1989 (Taylor's Version)" stirred much excitement among fans. Swift herself remarked that she could not believe she ever left the five songs in the vault.

"To be perfectly honest, this is my most favorite re-record I've ever done because the five from the vault tracks are so insane," Swift said in a post before the release of "1989 (Taylor's Version)"

"Now That We Don't Talk (Taylor's Version) (From the Vault)" is another of the five vault tracks released in "1989 (Taylor's Version)". There have been speculations that Swift may have written this about singer and former One Direction member, Harry Styles. One lyric made fans think that the vault track was written about Styles: "Now that we

do not talk you grew your hair long."

This lyric made fans wonder, as Styles grew his hair out after the breakup. Swift wrote "Now That We Don't Talk (Taylor's Version) (From the Vault)" around the time that she and Styles broke up, so she may be continuing her theme of writing songs about her ex-lovers.

"Say Don't Go (Taylor's Version) (From the Vault)" is a heartbreaking song about wanting someone to stay with you even though they have fallen out of love. Swift wrote the tragic vault track in 2013 with songwriter Diane Warren. Warren has written many famous hits for popular artists, including Aerosmith and Mariah Carey.

"It is such a popstar kind of song and I love popstar Taylor," said Charley Cain, a first-year theatre major. "It is my guilty pleasure."

"Is It Over Now (Taylor's Version) (From the Vault)" is another break up song by Swift, that talks about a doomed relationship, possibly about one of Taylor's former boyfriends.

One of the lyrics mentions a blue dress on a boat. An iconic image, and meme, of Swift shows her sitting sadly on a boat in a blue dress after her breakup with Harry Styles while on a trip with him. Swifties have theorized that "Is It over Now (Taylor's Version) (From the Vault)" may have also been written about Styles at the time, as supported by her blue dress lyric.

The last of Swift's five vault tracks is "Suburban Legends (Taylor's Version) (From the Vault)." The vault track tells of two lovers in a small town whose success ends up breaking the couple up. Fans have commented on how similar the song is Swift's song "Mastermind" from her album, "Midnights," and some have even referred to the songs as "cousins."

Swift rightfully took back her music and is continuing to do so by re-recording her iconic albums. "1989's" re-release officially made her a billionaire, proving that artists deserve to keep their music.

# "1989 (Taylor's Version)" Word Search

*Celebrate the release of Swift's new album*

**Words To Find:**

- HUNTERS
- CLEAN
- BLUE
- FOXES
- SEAGULLS
- SNOWGLOBE
- BEACH
- BAD BLOOD
- WONDERLAND
- WOODS
- STYLE
- NEW YORK

D	O	H	O	S	E	A	G	U	L	L	S	O	D
F	W	U	O	S	N	O	W	G	L	O	B	E	D
E	L	N	E	W	Y	O	R	K	N	S	E	T	G
L	B	L	U	E	E	W	G	R	R	W	E	S	B
Y	O	E	B	R	U	E	S	E	K	O	N	R	S
T	W	B	L	S	D	E	T	U	D	N	R	E	S
S	U	R	R	N	O	N	L	N	O	D	T	N	S
E	D	G	N	D	U	L	L	A	O	E	O	Y	W
L	O	B	G	H	C	A	E	B	L	R	T	E	W
W	O	S	S	N	O	D	B	F	B	L	N	E	D
L	N	A	E	L	C	N	S	O	D	A	S	G	Y
D	O	X	S	G	O	R	O	X	A	N	E	L	D
N	S	B	A	B	H	O	R	E	B	D	O	E	E
H	O	S	D	O	O	W	L	S	W	R	L	L	E

**Answer Key:**

E	L	L	R	M	S	L	M	O	O	S	O	H			
E	E	O	D	B	E	R	O	H	B	V	B	S	N		
D	L	E	N	A	X	O	R	O	G	S	X	O	D		
Y	G	S	A	D	O	S	N	C	E	L	N	A	L		
D	E	N	E	B	F	B	O	D	N	O	S	S	O	M	
M	E	T	R	L	B	C	A	E	B	H	G	B	O	L	
M	Y	O	E	O	V	L	T	U	L	D	N	G	E	D	
S	N	S	D	O	N	L	N	O	N	R	R	S	U	R	
S	R	E	S	T	U	D	S	D	S	L	T	M	T	B	
S	R	N	O	K	S	E	R	U	E	B	R	O	E	O	Y
B	E	S	B	M	R	G	M	E	E	B	L	E	B	L	E
G	E	T	S	N	K	Y	O	R	K	M	E	M	E	L	N
D	B	E	D	O	B	E	S	N	O	M	O	N	S	O	F
D	O	S	D	O	O	W	L	S	W	R	L	L	E	H	O

Credit for this puzzles goes to:  
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Compiled by Morgan Rich, Editor In  
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# HALLOWEEN WEEK



Trips to Roba's Family Farm, Costumes and More!



Ryan Piekanski (Left), Mechanical Engineering Major  
Zackery Drake (Right) Computer Science Major



Studio 20's Trip to Roba's Family Farm!



Sean Papke,  
Environmental Science Major

Sydney Ruskey,  
Sociology Major



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Have an opinion or want to write a guest column? Contact opinion editor: [sydney.allabaugh@wilkes.edu](mailto:sydney.allabaugh@wilkes.edu).

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## Our Voice

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

# The TicketMaster monopoly needs to end

The dreaded "10,000+ people ahead of you" in a TicketMaster queue is practically a death sentence for fans trying to acquire tickets to see their favorite band.

TicketMaster is a greedy monopoly that consumers want burned and demolished as soon as possible. However, it is often disguised as an American ticket sales distribution company in California.

For years, fans have been suffering at the hands of this large company, facing problems such as hidden fees, the verified fan system and bot attacks. According to The Atlantic, fans even end up paying an additional 60 to 70 percent more money for service fees on top of their actual ticket.

One of the most well known dilemmas that fans faced was getting tickets for Taylor Swift's, "The Era's Tour." This tour was singer-songwriter Taylor Swift's sixth tour in five years. Of course, Ticketmaster ensured Swift and her team that they could handle it. However, they were mistaken.

When tickets went on sale, the site experienced a bot attack, which caused the site to glitch and shut down for

hours, causing thousands of people to stay stuck in a paused queue. When fans were finally able to purchase tickets, no tickets were available and quickly appeared on scalping websites for thousands of dollars.

On Nov. 18, Swift posted to her Instagram story, "There are a multitude of reasons why people had such a hard time trying to get tickets and I'm trying to figure out how this situation can be improved moving forward. I'm not going to make excuses for anyone because we asked them, multiple times, if they could handle this kind of demand and we were assured they could."

From a different perspective, another artist that has had some strong words publicly for TicketMaster is country music superstar Zach Bryan.

Bryan wants his fans to be able to see his shows "without paying \$450 a ticket." The artist wants the working class to be able to afford a ticket to see his show, and rightfully so.

The artist has become so fed up with TicketMaster that he took to Twitter to publicly state his disgust with the popular ticket app.

"I have met kids at my shows who have paid upwards of four hundred and fifty bucks to be there and I'm done with it," Bryan tweeted. "I've decided to play a limited number of headline shows next year to which I've done all I can to make prices as cheap as possible and to prove to people tickets don't have to cost \$450 to see a good and honest show."

Bryan then went further with the matter and released a live album titled "All My Homies Hate TicketMaster," containing his performance from the iconic venue of Red Rocks in Colorado. It was at this moment Bryan became a superstar in the country music industry when he quite literally had 10,000 people at this venue screaming every word to his songs in a snowstorm that lasted an hour and a half.

All in all, artists with such large magnitude such as Bryan are speaking out against TicketMaster and their, for lack of a better term, garbage policies regarding ticket sales. Their words are certainly reaching their fanbase, as many music fans around the world are boycotting TicketMaster as a whole.

**Letter to the editor policy:** *The Beacon* welcomes letters to the editor from differing viewpoints. Letters must contain contact information, including name, city, state and phone number. Phone numbers will not be published but may be used for verification purposes.

**All letters to the editor must be sent using one of the following methods:**

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Mail: 84 West South Street, Wilkes-Barre, Pa. 18766 Attn: *The Beacon*

# Video game spotlight: “Mario Kart Wii” review

By “Freeze”

Opinion Staff Writer

If you’ve read my previous articles, you know that I like to appreciate video games as if they are art. I think it’s appropriate to shine the first spotlight on my favorite video game of all time. You have probably heard of the hit 2008 release: “Mario Kart Wii.”

If you haven’t, well, it’s about time you grabbed that steering wheel. “Mario Kart Wii”, although not the first of its kind, has proven to be the best in its own series. The truth is, this game is not only enjoyable to people of all ages, but it is also a revolutionary contribution to the video game industry as a whole.

First of all, this game is exceptionally entertaining. If you’ve played the game, I’m sure you remember spending hours racing with your friends and family and destroying each other’s relationships with an optimal blue shell or the dreaded lightning bolt.

Anyone can easily pick this game up and enjoy it for what it has to offer, without even being particularly good at it. If you don’t believe me, you can always ask my mother. Believe it or not, my mom is the reason why “Mario Kart Wii” is my favorite. She spent hours unlocking the characters and races using my license... and she still claims I am not her favorite child.

Even though you will notice that the CPU algorithm has a dangerously heavy bias towards human players and practically beats them to death with cruelty, the game is still very inviting. In fact, a lot of players claim that is the fun part.

When compared to the ridiculously simple “Mario Kart 8,” their view of the Wii version makes complete sense. This is similar to how gamers prefer “Super Smash Bros. Melee” over the rest of the installments of the franchise. I can confidently say that “Mario Kart Wii” is the “Melee” of the “Mario Kart” series.

“Mario Kart Wii” also offers a decently-sized roster of characters, all uniquely organized by weight and stat-classes. Most casual players will use whatever vehicle-character combination they prefer, while the professionals can be seen primarily with Funky Kong-Flame Runner, Luigi/Daisy-

Mach Bike or Toad-Quacker/Magikruiser.

Additionally, the game includes a selection of the best tracks from previous games, as well as many great originals. My personal favorites, both for the level design and the soundtrack of the course, are Mushroom Gorge, Toad’s Factory, Daisy’s Circuit, Moonview Highway, Wario’s Gold Mine and the killer Rainbow Road.

“Mario Kart Wii” has been one of the leading video games for speedrunners to really test their limits. The most noticeable thing about this racing experience is the surplus of glitches, specifically known as “ultra shortcuts,” available for a player to take advantage of. Basically, they allow a player to increase speed, swiftly maneuver or even completely skip entire portions of the race course, allowing them to finish in record times.

Two courses with the most iconic ultra shortcuts are Coconut Mall and Grumble Volcano. The former can be completed in roughly 40 seconds, while the latter in only 15 seconds.

Through years of experimentation, optimization, and tool-based analysis, speedrunners have obtained various track records. The modern tool-assisted speedruns (TAS) present ways to match the best possible time using computer-generated movement that is frame-perfect. Human world records for “Super Mario 64” and “Super Mario Bros.” have exceeded the speed of some TAS throughout history, and it’s not surprising for it to happen in this game as well.

The bottom line is that “Mario Kart Wii” has revolutionized the experience of a party game. Many racing games have been inspired to include elements that are similar to “Mario Kart.”

This game has shaped the lives of many of us students, as we were children when the game was released. “Mario Kart Wii” introduced, and made perfect use of, the motion control system that made the Wii so unique.

Without a game like this, I always wonder where I would be and how I could have ended up as a person.

# The Return of The Red Raven: an original story

By Leah Smith

Contributing Writer

## PART 5

“Why don’t I stay with you?” Rick repeated the question.

Isabelle sighed and pressed her fingers against her temples. “Because there’s nothing for us to go off of here. The murderer hasn’t repeated the same crime which means there’s no pattern and also means that your theory is wrong. There’s no reason for you to be here,” Isabelle explained.

“But what if something happens and you need help?” Rick urged.

“The chances of that happening is minimal. Besides, I don’t need your help,” Isabelle replied, coldly.

Nathan scurried out of the room like a sneaky mouse and left Rick and Isabelle on their own. He didn’t want any part of this.

Rick understood Isabelle’s refusal but couldn’t tolerate her cold shoulder any longer. “What’s with you, Izzy? You haven’t seen me in years and this is how you treat me? This is just petty,” he scolded her.

Isabelle’s face lit up and a wave of anger crashed against her. “Petty?! You do not get to call me petty!” she yelled.

“What you did all those years ago was unforgivable and yet you think that I’ll just forgive you and welcome you back like nothing happened? You’re pathetic. You think just because you had more than the average fifteen minutes of fame that everyone will just kiss your ass, but I’m not like that anymore and neither is the world! You’re too damn old to be acting like this and too stupid to actually see it yourself which is why you’re coming up to me and calling me petty even though, deep down, you know I’m right!” she rebuked, tears running down her cheeks. She wiped her eyes with her palms and began to walk out of the room.

“What are you doing?” Rick asked.

“Holding the door. This is the last of my patience for you. Get out, now.”

Rick opened his mouth to object but lowered himself back down where reality was. He took the VHS box and took the walk of shame out the door. Isabelle didn’t say a word to him as he walked up the corridor to the front area. She walked across from

the VHS room to what he assumed to be her office door. She entered the room and slammed the door behind her.

He lowered his head as he left the station. The sun was buried under the darkness and tiny sparks of stars when Rick made it outside. He found his car parked out across the street and placed the heavy box of VHS tapes on the passenger’s seat. He slid the key in the slot which brought the car to life, but he couldn’t feel bothered to move. His hands rested on top of the steering wheel and he started to sob.

He knew that she was right about all of it. He knew that her anger was justified and his selfishness plagued their lives. He bashed his head against his resting hands, which landed on the car horn. The horn beeped twice and Rick perched his head back onto the seat. He didn’t know where to go from here, what to do or how to make amends, if he even could.

Suddenly, his phone buzzed against his thigh where his pants pocket was located. He quickly searched for the phone and pressed the green button before the ringtone ceased.

“Hello?” Rick answered, weakly.

“Hello, Mr. Greenblatt. I’m a big fan of yours. Such a fan in fact, that I met one of your co-stars from The Red Raven the other day. Teddy Flowers,” an indistinguishable, monotone voice answered.

Rick’s body warmed up with goosebumps rising on his arms and legs. “You’re the murderer,” Rick stated.

“Correct, Mr. Greenblatt. However, murderer is such a strong word. I’m just a big fan who likes to express themselves differently,” the voice responded with a darkly joyful tone.

Rick furrowed his eyebrows and gritted his teeth. “You’re no fan in my book, alright? You listen to me, the people at the station and I are going to find you and you’re going to rot for what you did,” he said, raising his voice.

“Well, that meeting didn’t work out quite well, did it? Now, you listen to me, you drive back to your house and don’t hang up this phone or else your husband dies,” the voice demanded.

Rick hesitantly responded, “What?”

“Time is of the essence, Mr. Greenblatt,” the voice said.

*To be continued...*

# Letter to the Editor: Grubhub is effective and convenient

By Class of English 101-M

Contributing Writers

Over the summer, Wilkes made the transition from Dining Sidekick to Grubhub. Grubhub is an established food ordering app with many user-friendly features. Some upperclassmen have exhibited resistance to change but adapting students will find a better dining experience.

The switch to Grubhub has proven to be a positive change, as it is simple, effective and convenient to use.

Grubhub has created a simpler network for students to buy food on the go. When entering the Grubhub app, these students will find the full menu with pictures of the desired items, creating a more simplistic experience while surfing through the app.

Many may find the use of Grubhub as

second nature due to it already being an established app across the U.S., whereas Dining Sidekick could prove to be more isolated to Wilkes students, making it harder for incoming freshmen to navigate.

In addition to its established proficiency, Grubhub allows for better dining customization within the elements of the meal compared to its counterpart which did not. Moreover, Grubhub has made the dining experience more simplistic.

Grubhub has been effective because it is quick and easy to use, especially when someone is in a hurry. Upon opening the app, everyone is greeted with the available restaurants and wait times. Each restaurant has pre-built orders that can be customized to one's liking. Past orders can be reselected to speed up the process, showcasing Grubhub's

speed of use, which has saved many in a time crunch.

Additionally, mobile ordering has streamlined the restaurant business by increasing efficiency and reducing errors regarding a customer's order.

There is no confusion between the cashier and the customer that is caused by verbal miscommunication.

Grubhub offers convenient quality-of-life features that Dining Sidekick lacks. Grubhub's interface has several useful features such as displaying the user's campus card balance. Using this feature, students can see how much they can buy while they order instead of switching to another app.

In addition, Grubhub provides an image and description of most of the menu items, which makes it easier for students to choose what to order. Grubhub also visually displays what

place the user is in line, which keeps students updated on how long they may have to wait for their food.

Furthermore, most students have used Grubhub before coming to Wilkes, so they are already familiar with the platform.

The transition from Dining Sidekick to Grubhub is a significant change.

However, the benefits provided are worth the switch. Grubhub only offers additional improvements and quality-of-life changes to the previously existing Dining Sidekick system. It's simple, effective and convenient interface is the best way for busy college students to order food on the go without wasting their time in line, thus making the best of time management.

**Do you have strong opinions?  
Do you wish you had a platform to share them?**

**Well, look no further than the Opinion section of the Beacon.  
Contact Sydney Allabaugh and get your opinions off your chest.**

**[sydney.allabaugh@wilkes.edu](mailto:sydney.allabaugh@wilkes.edu)**



# How indie studios are changing the animation industry

By **Shawn Carey**  
Contributing Writer

Animation is amazing. It offers us a truly special experience. I've always seen it as a true test of creativity.

The amount of work that goes into a single project is astounding. Writers, artists, musicians and actors are usually all required for a single piece of work. No matter what creative field you work in, there's a chance that it's a necessary part of the animation process.

We have been fortunate enough to be in a sort of animation renaissance as of recent. "Puss in Boots: The Last Wish," "EnterGalactic," "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Mutant Mayhem" and "Spider-man: Across the Spider-verse" are just a few of the impressive projects we have seen in the last few years. These projects received countless praise from both fans and critics alike.

Animation is a long and challenging process, but in the end, it tends to be extremely rewarding. Creating a truly amazing and unique piece of animation requires time, money and talent, three things Hollywood executives have strong opinions on.

Studio execs tend to carry this quantity over quality mindset when it comes to releasing products. This is mainly because releasing

multiple cheap, easy to produce movies tends to be more successful than releasing a single expensive one. If there are two things animation is not, it's cheap and easy.

For example the average filming time for a drama series is two to five days. Meanwhile, the average time for an animated show is a full year. While multiple episodes are usually worked on at once, the team is much smaller and demands more time.

Movies follow the same pattern. Most films take one to two years to complete production while animated movies take four years at the very least to finish.

Let's not forget the budget as well. Animation isn't cheap, especially 2D and stop motion. It takes many skilled animators to make even the simplest scenes. The more expensive the project, the less of a chance it has to make back its cost and be successful.

There's a reason there has been an increase

in remakes and sequels. They are simply known brands and have much better chances of making money. No matter how ingenious a concept is, it will always be second in the eyes of the studio.

With all that being said, I would still say animation is in a pretty good state right now all things considered especially in terms of creativity. I mainly believe this to be true due to the rise of online indie projects.

The internet has always welcomed animated content, whether that be the short and edgy flash cartoons of Newgrounds or the video game parodies of Youtube. The internet allows so many talented creatives to release whatever they want without a studio looming over them. Having grown up on online content, I can say that I have seen some truly fantastic projects that can only truly belong

on the internet, which seems to be a way of thinking many share.

For the longest time, most online animated content was done by extremely small teams. Honestly, that made a lot of sense as most videos would only go on for a few minutes.

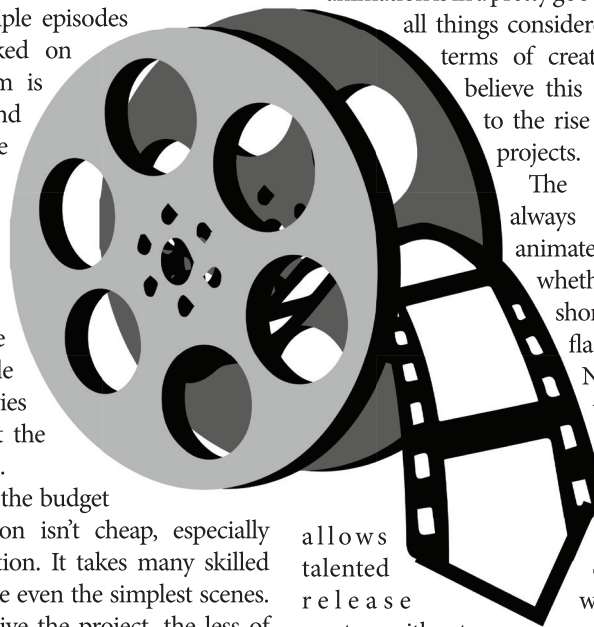
We wouldn't see larger, studio-size teams until 2020. People had a lot of time on their hands due to the pandemic, and because of that, creatives got thinking. They could do so much more, work on larger projects if they were a part of a studio.

"Spindlehorse," "Glitch" and "Iron Circus" are the three biggest studios that formed. These studios were created by actual artists, so there's a bit of a sense of understanding among them about deadlines and creative freedom, which is what I find to be the most impressive part.

Some really cool and interesting projects have already been released. "Helluva Boss," "Murder Drones," "The Amazing Digital Circus" and "Lackadaisy" are just some of my personal favorites. What's even better is that they're all available for free on Youtube.

While I don't think this will ever become the status quo for animation, it's great seeing what can be achieved through a common love of the art form.

Graphic by Lara Mullen



# Do your research before partaking in social media activism

By **Sydney Allabaugh**  
Opinion Editor

Social media has granted the opportunity for anyone, regardless of status or merit, to have a platform to share information and their opinions. The power to influence the masses comes with great responsibility, and it too frequently seems to be wielded carelessly.

In a politically polarized nation in which individuals are presented with instantaneous updates on politics and world events, there are increasingly intense pressures for those with both small and large platforms to choose a side quickly and publicly on each new issue that arises. Audiences argue that a person with a platform has the responsibility to speak out on the issues that matter.

I agree with this sentiment to a degree. Those with a platform should amplify stories and injustices that go overlooked.

A great example of when this was effective

was when those with a platform were sharing information and videos about the unjust killing of George Floyd. Since those with audiences were keeping eyes on the situation and holding the officers involved accountable, perpetrators were tried and charged, and legislation followed to try to prevent another situation like this.

Although social media activism can be effective, issues arise when a situation is more nuanced and requires further research. Celebrities and influencers are so concerned about getting their side out there quickly, they become less concerned about the merit or factual basis of their message. Reposting an Instagram story infographic without conducting further research is not just inadequate and superficial, but it can be harmful.

This can be seen over the past few weeks regarding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Celebrities, influencers and regular people

were quick to choose sides via an Instagram story repost, before quickly deleting them and choosing the other side, then retracting their statements another time and posting an infographic without considering the credibility of the information. Many fail to take the time to understand and develop a nuanced and fully developed opinion before speaking, which can have detrimental effects.

As a result of careless statements and reposts, there has been a slew of misinformation, antisemitism and Islamophobia that likely would be lessened if those with audiences were more careful about their messaging and information they shared.

This new age of democracy has turned many into self-proclaimed social media activists. Although this sounds positive in sentiment, it falls short when these people are only partially committed to issues, do not fact-check information or start talking over the minority groups. Not everyone is cut out

to be an activist and not everybody should be expected to if they're not willing to put in the necessary effort it requires to make adequate and effective messages.

Sometimes the most meaningful and effective thing those with an audience can do is just stop, listen and amplify voices of those who are knowledgeable and committed instead of speaking over them. "I don't know," or "I do not have enough information to speak on this," can be the most intelligent thing to say before blindly choosing a position and realizing it may be the wrong one when it is too late.

More people are relying on social media for news and opinions, so it is more important than ever to be extra considerate and critical of messages shared, especially if you have a large platform. Many argue that silence is violence, but what may be even more harmful is careless misinformation and performance activism.

# A review of Travis Scott's fourth album, "UTOPIA"

**By Logan Colonna**  
Contributing Writer

"UTOPIA" marks Travis Scott's return into the music world as it's his fourth studio album, following the successful release of "ASTROWORLD."

Travis had to really pump out a great album here after the 2021 incident at his Astroworld Festival. The project clocks in at roughly 75 minutes, making it his second-longest album. It also shares features with the likes of Drake, The Weeknd and SZA.

"HYAENA" starts off the album energetic as ever. The drum patterns, bass and other assortments of instruments are in full effect. On top of the overproduction of the track, Travis is back again with his amazing delivery and flow. While he's not known for being the most lyrical rapper by any standards, he still makes this track enjoyable for the average listener.

One of my favorite features on the album is by Teezo Touchdown on "MODERN JAM." He's been making a name for himself as of lately, and this performance from him doesn't disappoint. Travis is having so much fun on this track as his usual autotune is being used here. To pair up with this, we have Teezo's verse that is very reminiscent of David Bowie or Freddie Mercury's soundscape with his vocals. This song is one of the best that "UTOPIA" has to offer.

"GOD'S COUNTRY" is a leftover from Kanye West's "Donda" that was given to Travis for this project. The influence from Mr. West is strong here from the entrancing instrumental to some vocal effects, like Travis's screams, as they sound eerily similar to Kanye. The track as a whole is a great addition to the tracklist.

"MELTDOWN" gives the listener another collaboration between Travis and Drake. The song had big shoes to fill since their last outing together, "SICKO MODE." This track does everything right, from Drake's verse, Travis's verse, and even the chorus is flawless. Drake offers one of his best verses of the 2020s so far. The second half of the song has

a beat switch and has Drake and Travis going back and forth for a bit, before going fully into Travis's verse. All artists' performances here are amazing, making this one of the greats on the album.

My favorite track on the album is "I KNOW?" with good reason. The content of the track is Travis's life as of now with drugs and alcohol tainting it every second of the day. With this, we get the realest he's ever been. With his raw vocal and no autotune, we hear the



fact that he's reflecting on himself. The instrumentation is excellent as well. While it's as simple as some effects being thrown around over a piano beat, I love it so much. The track brings together everything great about Travis, cementing it as the best on the project.

We get one of the few lowlights of the album with "TOPIA TWINS." Everything about this song is just decent at best. I'm not the biggest fan of the Rob49 verse here at all. People just know him for sounding similar to NBA Youngboy, who I also dislike to a certain

extent. Travis's verse is decent but not anything to be in awe over. The 21 Savage verse here is great, but it isn't enough to save the rest of the performances here. The worst part of this song is the chorus. It's just annoying as Travis stretches the syllables in the words within the chorus, which irritates me. On top of that, it's just repetitive.

I often see myself skipping past "CIRCUS MAXIMUS" because it lacks personality. Every other collaboration

doesn't take away from the track. The last verse of the song is my favorite by far. The sample used here, on top of the instrumental, is perfection. It wraps up the whole song excellently.

Yet another highlight is heard with "LOST FOREVER." James Blake is credited on the track but adds little to the overall track besides a short intro and a sample cut used throughout the song. Travis has a great verse per usual. Westside Gunn steps into the scene and blows me away. The beat turns twisted as he begins, making it seem like a complete dystopia. His weird rapping style scratches an itch in my brain. With this, his adlibs, flow and delivery of all of this, he gives us one of the best verses on the project.

"LOOOVE" is yet another one of my favorites. The instrumental is as fun as ever. Kid Cudi takes the cake here as the beat matches his style used here so well. I love the chorus and refrain from Travis. While it is repeated a lot here, it's fine because it's simply so good. You can just tell that both rappers had so much fun on this track, which I appreciate a lot.

Possibly the best outro track on a Travis Scott album is here with "TIL FURTHER NOTICE." James Blake's voice conveys so many emotions of sadness here and gave me goosebumps during my first listens of the song. Travis's and 21 Savage's verses are fantastic as they rap over the beautiful instrumental sent in by none other than Metro Boomin. Metro showed me why he's the best hip-hop producer as of right now. The record is used as a way of telling the listener "until further notice" of new music from Scott.

After all is said and done, this is Travis Scott's best work to date. It may be recency bias speaking, but I believe it'll stand the test of time. While there are some lowlights seen on the tracklist, they're still great at least. The positives absolutely outweigh the negatives. Between the production, performances from the artists and the flow of the overall album, we have an amazing album in front of us.

Graphic by Lara Mullen

# Sports

Want your sport covered? Deserve to be Athlete of the Week? Contact the Sports Editor: [Adam.grundt@wilkes.edu](mailto:Adam.grundt@wilkes.edu)

## Women's ice hockey set to begin season

By Ava Tureen

Contributing Writer

The women's ice hockey team is off to a solid start after winning its first two preseason games. The team carried its momentum into regular season play on Oct. 27 and 28.

Wilkes beat Hockey Training Institute with a score of 6-3 and then followed up that game with a 9-0 shutout against rival King's College. The team then went on to win its regular season games against Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts, with scores of 6-0 and 6-1.

First year player Milica Veleck is excited to get the season started.

"Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts ... (has) never played in this division before. I think we will play well because our team and Coaches have experience in this division. We work great as a team and we are ready to play a great game!"

Although the season is just getting started, some folks were quick to point out some potential standouts for the season. Audrey Milne, #47, is a goaltender. This is her first season as a Colonel, but she was quick to comment on the team's strong bond. Defenseman Allie Spencer, #3, is another first-year player. She has been named by the United Collegiate Hockey Conference (UCHC) as one of their 2023-2024 players to watch.

Other players to watch include, #4 Abigail Barcles, from Hamilton, New Jersey. Barcles is a defender and a graduate student. During the 2022-2023 season she received an all - UCHU honorable mention. Bella Kaczorowski, a junior from Anchorage, Alaska, plays forward and set the Wilkes single-season record: nine goals and 14 points (last season). Finally, Rachel Morey, is a senior from Buffalo, Wyoming. Morey is one of the three captains this year and has 22 career points. She also holds a record of 618 career face-off wins.



Photo credit to Wilkes University Athletics

Coach David Labaff is excited to see what this season brings for the team.

"This year's squad brings its own distinctive characteristics when compared to last season's roster," Labaff said. "Every year is a new canvas filled with unique challenges and opportunities. One significant change is the infusion of 14 fresh faces, boosting our roster size."

"Every player brings their unique set of skills and strengths, and we've got individuals who understand their roles and are committed to daily improvement. The hope is that this depth will serve us well throughout the season."

Labaff was reluctant to name his own players "to watch," but is excited to see what his team member can do this season.

"...(T)here are certainly individuals who are showing the potential to make a significant impact. It's not solely about individual performance; it's about how players mesh within our team dynamics and contribute positively to the collective

effort.

"Every player on our roster understands that you can't shine on the ice as an individual without the other 26 players on our team. Last season they played 28 games including two exhibition games, and they lost 85% of those games."

Labaff continued to state that each year brings a new team with its own "unique challenges and opportunities." This year, the team has 14 new players. Nine of whom are international students.

"We have a lot of international talent, and our team plays as a unit and not as individuals," said Rissa Brazeneau (forward), from Timmins, Ontario. "I enjoy the environment and it's been a good transition."

Lily Zingaro is also a first-year student from (Collingwood) Ontario. Zingaro agrees that the team is very close knit and has "a lot of deep-rooted talent."

Labaff agrees.

"Every player brings their unique set

of skills and strengths, and we've got individuals who understand their roles and are committed to daily improvement. The hope is that this depth will serve us well throughout the season."

This season also sees 13 players return to play.

"We're certainly feeling the excitement for the upcoming year," Labaff explained. "But our approach remains unwavering – taking it one day at a time, delivering our absolute best every time we step onto the ice as we continuously strive to raise our standards."

"In the UCHC, success isn't handed out freely; it's earned through relentless hard work and unwavering dedication. Our commitment to achieving our shared objectives as a team is resolute, and we'll spare no effort in our relentless pursuit of excellence."

For more information on the women's ice hockey program, visit [gowilkesu.com](http://gowilkesu.com).

# Mixed thoughts on switch to the Landmark Conference

By Adam Grundt

Asst. Sports Editor

In December of 2022, Wilkes University was invited to leave the Middle Atlantic Conference and join the Landmark Conference.

According to its website, the Landmark Conference was formed in 2005 and competitions began in 2007. The conference “recognizes, as paramount, the centrality of the academic mission at each institution, while embracing the idea that athletics competition is an important component of the undergraduate experience.”

After considerable discussion, Wilkes accepted the invitation, thus ending the 75-year relationship the university had with their former athletic conference.

The Colonels began competing in the Landmark Conference at the beginning of the 2023 fall sports season. The teams have been finding success throughout the first two

months of the seasons, but there are mixed opinions on the university joining this conference after a lengthy tenure as members of the MAC.

Wilkes joined the Landmark Conference along with Lycoming College, making the two schools the ninth and tenth members of the conference. Other members of the conference include Catholic University of America, Washington D.C.; Drew University, Madison, N.J.; Elizabethtown College, Elizabethtown, Pa.; Goucher College, Baltimore, Md.; Juniata College, Huntingdon, Pa.; Moravian College, Bethlehem, Pa.; Susquehanna University, Selinsgrove, Pa.; and the University of Scranton, Scranton, Pa.

“We get to play new teams in a more competitive conference,” sophomore football player Ben Contella said. “There are more opportunities for us to play in the postseason and compete in the NCAA Division III playoffs.”

As members of the MAC, the Colonels were able to compete against a few schools within 10 miles of campus. With Wilkes departing the MAC, they no longer get to compete in the same conference as schools such as rival King’s College and Misericordia University. Although the schools may still meet in exhibition matches, the ability to compete against schools within an extremely close proximity is lost.

“I like the switch to the Landmark,” said Devin Markert, a sophomore on the Wilkes University baseball team. “We get to travel farther and see new places, but we won’t be able to compete against teams like King’s and Misericordia in conference play anymore, something I really enjoyed being a part of.”

Although the switch to the conference provides new opportunities for Wilkes athletes, some miss being a part of the Middle Atlantic Conference.

“Honestly, I miss the MAC,” said Abby Kuppinger, senior member

of the cross-country team. “I think the Landmark is better competition and I like it from that perspective. But I miss racing against King’s because we are rivals and it was always fun to race against them.”

Currently, the Wilkes University Colonels sports teams are finding some successes in the new conference.

The football team holds a conference record of 3-1 as of Oct. 27, with an upcoming game against Catholic University of America on Nov. 4.

The field hockey team recently clinched the No. 6 seed in the Landmark Conference playoffs with a 1-0 win against Drew University on Oct. 25.

They are scheduled to face off against the No. 3 seed, the University of Scranton, on Oct. 28.

For more information on all 23 of Wilkes’ collegiate sports teams, please visit [gowilkesu.com](http://gowilkesu.com).

*The Beacon is looking for sports writers for the  
Spring 2024 semester*

**If you are interested in sports writing,  
editing, photography or graphics contact  
Adam Grundt at [adam.grundt@wilkes.edu](mailto:adam.grundt@wilkes.edu)**

# Wilkes dance team now recognized as a sport

By Samantha Mullen  
Sports Assistant Editor

Dance has been celebrated as an art form where individuals can express themselves, tell stories, and bring cultures to life. At the start of the year, Wilkes Athletics recognized the Wilkes dance team as a sport.

The team has become an integral part of the campus culture while performing during sporting events, pep rallies and other functions.

Dance teams have long struggled to be viewed as a sport, despite the athleticism and discipline required. Though dance teams cannot officially be recognized as an NCAA sport, the

university has given them a spot as an athletic team.

The official recognition of the dance team as a sport has brought numerous benefits to the team and the university. Junior Morgan Andretta, a pharmacy major, said that being recognized as a sport has led the team to “make routines that are enjoyable for the audience.”

Additionally, it helps her and her teammates to push themselves harder in practice.

Senior captain Carolyn Purdy, a psychology major, said she sees “a bright future for the team and with this continued trajectory for the team.”

Purdy also stated that she and Jeanne Rabel, the team’s adviser, “got the ball

rolling to be recognized on the athletics website last year”.

Rabel also works at the university as an advising coordinator in the University College.

Purdy said that the move by Wilkes acknowledges the training and dedication the members have -- just as other athletes do.

The recognition is not just a milestone for the team, but a celebration of diversity within the athletic department. This achievement allows for the team to be highlighted on the Wilkes athletic page and include a full team roster.

In the next coming years, members hope to continue to push boundaries within their routines. Adding more

challenging movement to their jazz, pom, and hip hop will definitely bring attention to their hard work and dedication.

The dance team will perform at halftime during the Nov. 4 football game.

Their first basketball performance will be on Nov. 9.

This year’s captains include Purdy, Amanda Merrick-Topkins, Katherine Ecker and Mya Corcoran

The dance team posts some of their performances and highlight plays on their Instagram @wilkesdanceteam.



Dance team members are, first row, from left, Amelia Merrick-Tompkins, early-childhood education; Carolyn Purdy, psychology; Katie Ecker, nursing; and Maya Corcoran, English. Second row, Zoë Morley, biology; Morgan Rich, communication studies; Amelia Smicherko, biology; Lauren Stokes, digital design and media arts; and Jennifer Zemet, pre-pharmacy. Third row, Jessica Rushton, political science and history; Bethany Yaskus, neuroscience; Emily Makaravege, digital design and media arts and Morgan Andretta, pharmacy.

# Athlete of the Week

## Cole Jungwirth

Junior, Golf

### ***The Beacon:* Male Athlete of the Week**

Jungwirth shot his season low score of +7 at the Landmark Conference Fall Preview which was enough to get him 7th overall in the tournament.

**Major:** Corporate Finance

**Hometown:** Bloomington, Minn.

**High School:** Thomas Jefferson

**What is your favorite post-game meal?**

*Angelo's sweet sauce*

**What had been your favorite sports memory from your time as a Colonel?**

*Winning MAC Rookie of the Year for golf my freshman year.*

**How do you feel about being selected as the Athlete of the Week?**

*Appreciative and proud. The work and dedication that the team and I have put in and will not on translate to match success, but to life as well.*

**What is your favorite professional sports team (any sport)?**

*Minnesota Wild*

**What is your favorite thing to do away from sports?**

*Completing my assignments and papers three weeks early for my professors.*

**What is your favorite part of being an athlete at Wilkes?**

*The camaraderie and culture that we get to experience and live by every day.*

**What sports movie is your go-to for movie night?**

*Miracle*

*Compiled by Adam Grundt, Sports Editor and Morgan Rich, Editor-In-Chief*

**If you did not play your current sport, what sport would you have wanted to play?**

*Pickleball*

The Beacon/Sam Mullen

*Editor's note: Athlete of the Week selections are determined by the sports staff each week. At the end of the academic year, we will post a reader poll on Twitter @WilkesBeacon to crown an "Athlete of the Year."*

# Athlete of the Week

## Kellie Scott

Junior, Field Hockey Midfielder

### **The Beacon: Female Athlete of the Week**

In a road conference match against Lycoming College, Scott scored the two goals in the game on two shots leading the Colonels to a 2-0 Landmark Conference victory. In retrospect, this performance propelled the Colonels into the 6th seed allowing them to clinch a playoff spot.

**Major: Communication Studies and Psychology**

**Hometown: Northport, Maine**

**High School: Kents Hill**

AUGUST 25 -  
OCTOBER 8  
2023

**What had been your favorite sports memory from your time as a Colonel?**

*Clinching a playoff spot in the Landmark Conference for sure. Our whole motto this season has been to "do hard work well"*

**What is your favorite professional sports team (any sport)?**

*Philadelphia Eagles or Boston Bruins.*

**What is your favorite thing to do away from sports?**

*Watching a good crime documentary or movie in my bed with some good snacks or comfort food.*

**What is your favorite part of being an athlete at Wilkes?**

*Definitely the grittiness of it. The hard work, dedication and overall sense of community that Wilkes athletes bring to campus is unmatched.*

**What sports movie is your go-to for movie night?**

*Creed 2.*

**If you did not play your current sport, what sport would you have wanted to play?**

*Definitely something like cross country or track. Something with running.*

**What has been your favorite sports memory overall?**

*I think this year as a whole. It has been filled with so many great memories. From our wins, losses, practices, or even conversations. All of it has made my experience at Wilkes memorable.*

**What is your favorite post-game meal?**

*Mac and cheese, dinosaur nuggets, and a chocolate chip cookie.*

**How do you feel about being selected as the Athlete of the Week?**

*I feel honored. The field hockey team has worked hard to make a new name for ourselves. We are the embodiment of the new era of Wilkes field hockey. I feel honored to be under a new program, with a new coach, with a new team to help pave the way for future Colonels.*

*Compiled by Adam Grundt, Asst. Sports Editor*



The Beacon/Adam Grundt

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# WILKES FOOTBALL

ALL GAMES BEGIN AT NOON UNLESS OTHERWISE SPECIFIED

9/2

KING'S COLLEGE\*

HOME

9/9

RENSSELAER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE

AWAY

9/16

SUNY BROCKPORT

HOME

9/23\*

ST. JOHN FISHER UNIVERSITY

AWAY

9/30

JUNIATA COLLEGE\*\*

HOME

10/7

LYCOMING COLLEGE

AWAY

10/14

KEYSTONE COLLEGE

HOME

10/21\*\*

SUSQUEHANNA UNIVERSITY

AWAY

11/4

CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA\*\*\*

HOME

11/11

MORAVIAN UNIVERSITY

AWAY

\*MAYOR'S CUP  
\*\*HOMECOMING  
\*\*\*SENIOR DAY

\*4 PM @ ST. JOHN  
\*\*1 PM @ SUSQUEHANNA