



THE BEACON

Wilkes University - Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania

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

Geisinger nurses rally in Wilkes-Barre amid stalled negotiations



Photo by G. Wayne McCormick

Nurses and supporters at the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) rally at the Wilkes-Barre Public Square on Wednesday, Feb. 5.

By G. Wayne McCormick
Contributing Writer

“Be fair to those who care” was chanted by dozens of nurses and supporters at the Service Employees International

Union (SEIU) rally at the Wilkes-Barre Public Square on Wednesday, Feb. 5.

There were over a dozen speakers, all airing grievances, sharing experiences and demanding action from the nurses' employer, Geisinger. The rally

was organized in response to stalled negotiations that started Jan. 31.

Chief complaints involved better pay for staff recruitment and retention, affordable healthcare benefits and practical solutions to safety and care.

Wilkes graduates around 100 nursing students per year from its undergraduate programs. The nursing programs' website lists potential employers. Geisinger is at the top.

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News

Have a breaking story or a press release to send? Contact the news editor Leah Smith at leah.smith1@wilkes.edu

Student Government notes: Feb. 5 weekly meeting

By Kayla Bicskei
News Staff Writer

Student Government met for its fourth weekly meeting of the Spring 2025 semester on Feb. 5. This meeting addressed multiple funding requests and an analysis of the Spring Semester Club Day.

The Student Government Treasurer’s report showed a current budget of \$78,976.

To begin the meeting, the Kappa Kappa Psi chapter of the Ni Chi national fraternity returned for their week two of two funding request. Kappa Kappa Psi presented their mission to maintain a diverse fraternity dedicated to advancing university bonds and create a fellowship of brotherhood.

Since its foundation in 2019, the Kappa Kappa Psi chapter has inducted a total of 36 brothers and currently has 14 active members. The Chapter is requesting a total of \$1,300 to fund their three-day Northeast District Convention in Harrisburg, Pa. Twelve members will be attending the conference.

Student Government voted to allocate the full amount of \$1,300.

The next organization to present was the Lambda Kappa Sigma’s week one of two funding request. Lambda Kappa Sigma is a professional pharmacy fraternity whose mission statement is to provide lifelong opportunities for women in pharmacy through professional excellence and personal growth.

The organization is requesting either \$2,652 or \$3,757 at the discretion of the Student Government. Lambda Kappa Sigma is requesting funds for their National Convention in Pittsburg, Pa.

Lambda Kappa Sigma will return next week for their week two of two funding request.

The Pharmacy and Nursing schools collaborated to present their week one of two funding request for their yearly Late Night Lift Event. The event will take place at the YMCA from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m. on Mar. 24.

At the event, the two schools will be hosting a giveaway for the first 150 students in attendance. To fund their giveaway and educational benefits of the event, the two schools are requesting a total amount of \$2,250.

The Pharmacy and Nursing schools will return next week for their week two of two funding request.

The planning committee of the Spring Fling was next to present their week two of two funding request. Spring Fling will be held at the Mary Stegmaier Mansion and will include a DJ, food, drinks, themed decorations and semi-formal attire.

The Spring Fling planning committee was requesting a total amount of \$12,500 to fund the event. During voting, the Student Government Executive and General Boards decided that the event should include a photo booth for students.

Student Government voted to allocate more than the total requested amount to include the cost of a photo booth. Student Government allocated a total of \$13,000.

The Student Advocacy Committee is a new committee within Student Government, and they presented their week one of two funding request. The Committee aims to give representation to the student body to speak up for student’s rights, empower student’s voices, promote equity and fight for policy changes.

The Committee will hold four events for students, including a Whine and Cheese Night event, a Discussion Panel event, and two Tell Us Day events. To fund the food, drinks, and utensils for the events, the Student Advocacy Committee is requesting a total of \$200.

The Student Advocacy Committee will return next week for their week two of two funding request.

The last business of the meeting was presented by the Pronoun Advocacy Committee of the Student Government. The Committee aims to create a feeling of safety and security in presenting their gender identity.

The Committee is requesting a total of \$402 to provide students with pronoun pins or ally pins. The Pronoun Advocacy Committee will return next week for their week two of two funding request.

Student Government will meet again on Feb. 12.

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Want your event featured in the calendar?

Email: leah.smith1@wilkes.edu

Beacon Briefs: Upcoming campus events

Compiled by Andrew Marshallsay

WAE Free Rock Climbing

WAE is offering free rock climbing on Mondays and Tuesdays during the Spring semester from 6-8 p.m. No skill or sign up is required to climb. For more information, you can contact benjamin.campbell@wilkes.edu

Residence Life Glow Run

Clubs who want to participate in the 2025 Residence Life glow run can now sign up. The event benefits the Victims Resource Center of Wilkes-Barre. For more information, contact kaitlin.pasternak@wilkes.edu.

Blood Drive

The first on-campus blood drive of the semester will be taking place on Feb. 18 in the JPAC. The event goes from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. If you are interested in donating, you can sign up at redcrossblood.org and use the code ‘WILKESU’.

...*NURSES cont. from p.3*

Debru Cartha, a speaker at Wednesday's rally and an elected union member of SEIU-UHW (United Healthcare Workers West) from Modesto, Calif., gave current nursing students advice.

"Get an understanding of what a union is [while in school]," Cartha said. "The union is us, and we are the heartbeat of the healthcare system."

Lauren Harris, a local ER nurse of nine years, also reinforced Carthan's advice for more education regarding unions in the classroom setting. "The first union contact they have isn't until hiring," Harris said.

She would like nursing students to hear a few examples of different unions to have a better understanding of how they work before they are confronted with the decision to join one or not.

Further highlighting issues in their community, she noted that any nurse who graduated in 2024 and was hired by Geisinger would not be eligible for a raise until 2026.

"They [students] don't receive education about collective bargaining per se as a topic," explained Emily Havrilla, chair of undergraduate nursing. However, the program does discuss professionalism/professional issues and this would be an example.

She guarantees Wilkes teaches evidence-based practice, advocacy for their patients, health policy and interfacing with the legislative process for healthcare change or broad patient advocacy.

She wants the Wilkes nursing program to help students cultivate their own philosophy of nursing. Students should consider an organization's philosophy and mission and to determine if it is a good fit with their own philosophy, she said.

Patricia Dittman, PhD program coordinator, had worked through union contract negotiations in the early 2000s.

"Nurses felt they needed a representative to be their voice when dealing with administration," Dittman said.

She continued to explain that while the

nurses took the first step to vote in union representation, the staff went almost two years without an agreed upon union contract.

Union reps and management met weekly during that time, yet after dozens of meetings, negotiations were still at an impasse. While the unfortunate reality can be that the cogs of power grind slowly, Dittman maintains "what better way to fix something than to ask the person who does it every day."

That position comes from her knowledge of Magnet Hospitals, a designation given to health care facilities by the American Nurses Credentialing Center.

This status is given to facilities with excellent nurses' satisfaction and patient care. It equips nurses with a higher level of autonomy over their practice. Magnet Hospitals are both union and non-union.

Speakers and messages at the rally ranged from experienced healthcare professionals, elected union bargaining representatives, elected officials and activists.

The topics discussed at the event covered a wide breadth of issues currently plaguing our Geisinger nurses.

Constant exhaustion and high turnover rates due to inadequate staffing, pay cuts, substandard benefits and safety concerns were brought up by multiple speakers.

The cost of a nurse's healthcare is on the rise. One speaker mentioned the premiums, co-pays and deductibles of their insurance have reached the point where many staff are unable to afford it.

"A single medication I take for a chronic issue comes with a \$1500 monthly co-pay," lamented a speaker.

They went on to point out that insurance monthly premiums often exceed \$500 per month and that it is not uncommon for healthcare workers to be on a payment plan to Geisinger for medical debt.

"It's like a company store," said Angela Ferritto, President of Pennsylvania AFL-CIO. She finds the situation of inadequate working conditions baffling as "everyone has been cared for by a nurse at least once."

Geisinger's pay and investment preference to travel nurses over residential ones is another huge friction point for the union. On average, a travel nurse makes double what a residential Geisinger nurse

will, along with equal or better benefits.

In July, Geisinger announced a \$880 million expansion of Danville facilities on top of a \$900 million expansion of Geisinger Wyoming Valley that began in 2024.

Nurses and union officials find this outrageous in the face of 300 vacant resident healthcare positions in the Geisinger system, some of which have been open for more than five years.

Ethan Ruskin and Debru Carthan traveled over 2000 miles to join the rally. They are both representatives of SEIU-UHW. Strongly reinforcing that all nurses are in this fight together, their organization donated \$500,000 to the Geisinger nurse's strike fund.

Multiple speakers said it is not just about money and benefits. The system allows for no recognition of their work or value, adding to retention issues.

A local ICU physician preached the need for solidarity between doctors and nurses.

"They are not a cog," the doctor said, going on to press the need to view nurse provided care equally crucial to care provided by a doctor.

Politicians are also voicing their concerns. Pa. Rep. Eddie Day Pashinski spoke about the days of smaller health care systems and warned of the dangers that come with for-profit-healthcare.

Sen. John Fetterman was unable to attend but a message was passed to the crowd illustrating his support.

It is important to note that this is not a strike, but the rally attendees want Geisinger to know that a strike is likely if demands are not met.

The rally ended with a request to take action by contacting Geisinger CEO Terry Gilliland to push for the company to meet worker demands. The CEO's phone number and email address were distributed to the crowd via flyer.

SEIU had a bargaining meeting with Geisinger on Feb. 6 that yielded no results and has another scheduled for Feb. 11.

Geisinger was acquired by Risant Health in March 2024, a nonprofit health organization owned by Kaiser Permanente.

Efforts to reach Geisinger for additional comments were unsuccessful.



Rally attendee holding up a sign. Nurses at the rally demand better pay, affordable healthcare benefits and practical solutions to safety and care.

Photo by G. Wayne McCormick

Computers remain missing from labs after system outage

By Sydney Allabaugh
Editor-in-Chief

Wilkes University cancelled classes on Jan. 27 due to a “system outage.” Two weeks later, some computers have yet to return to on-campus labs.

The computer lab in Karambelas Media and Communication Center, classroom 137, appears to still be missing seven computers.

G. Wayne McCormick was in the classroom when the computers were taken out.

“It would have been the first Tuesday back from the system issues, just before 8 a.m.,” McCormick said. “An IT employee came in and was pulling certain computers out.”

“I haven’t heard anything around campus about what might be causing it,” McCormick added.

Lab computers were not the only computers effected by the outage. Faculty and staff computers were also impacted.

Enrollment Processing Advisor Jennifer Williams said her computer was of the few that were compromised.

“Staff was advised not to try to log into the system on Jan. 27, and then we got

word that we would be able to access the system,” Williams said. “When I came in, I had a message that my laptop had been one of the few that were compromised and that IT would be over to collect it. IT did take my laptop and replaced it.”

Williams said that although her laptop was replaced, “almost eight years of data was lost and unretrievable.”

Although some computers were impacted during the outage, security risks no longer remain, according to Kerianne Geist, the Associate Vice President of Marketing Communications at Wilkes.

“The campus closure was a proactive and preventative measure taken out of an abundance of caution,” Geist said. “Our staff is working with external information technology experts and has restored services to campus (last Tuesday [Jan. 28]) and ensured the security of our systems.”

In a statement issued on Jan. 28 at 9:45 a.m. to students, faculty and staff, ITS Executive Director Gerald Korea announced that service was restored and that schedules could continue as normal.

Korea also said that organizational accounts would be required to change

their passwords to a new 12-character minimum.

In terms of what may have caused the outage, Geist said, “At this point, no

additional updates are available.”

Efforts to reach Korea for additional comments were unsuccessful.

Photo by Sydney Allabaugh



Computers from a computer lab in Karambelas Media and Communication Center are still missing two weeks after the system outage.

Former Wilkes professor gets probation for felony charge

By Sydney Allabaugh
Editor-in-Chief

A former Wilkes University psychology professor pleaded guilty to a felony charge of attempted dissemination of sexually explicit materials on Friday and was sentenced to three years of probation, according to his lawyer, Nanda Palissery.

Edward John Schicatano, 60, of Plains Twp., was charged in August 2023 for trying to set up a sexual encounter with a fictitious 15-year-old girl during an online citizen-sting operation conducted by Musa Harris, the self-proclaimed Luzerne County Predator Catcher.

According to an article published in

The Beacon in 2023:

Schicatano, under the alias of “Lora Smith,” asked for the girl’s age. Harris, posing as the teenage girl, said “almost 16 years old.” Schicatano then replied, “I’m sorry. Too young.” The online conversation continued, despite Schicatano repeatedly expressing concern over the girl’s age and potential FBI involvement.

According to police, Schicatano sent the girl a photo of two men engaged in a sexual act. He eventually wanted to meet the girl and in doing so, was met by Harris. Police said Harris provided them with video of the confrontation, and they were able to identify the man in the video as Schicatano.

After the confrontation had been posted on social media, Wilkes University President Greg Cant announced in an August 2023 statement that a “longtime member” of the Wilkes faculty was no longer employed at the university following “very serious accusations.”

This faculty member was ultimately identified as Schicatano.

“We are very pleased with the sentencing,” Palissery said.



Edward John Schicatano.

Photo from Beacon files.

Inoperable elevators raise questions about accessibility

Leah Smith

News Editor

Since last semester, a few elevators around campus have been inoperable due to repairs, and students and faculty have had various issues with the accessibility around campus before and during this issue with the elevators.

Students who park their vehicles at the campus parking garage next to the Public Safety building have had a difficult time transitioning to taking the stairs regularly as opposed to the convenience the elevator once provided.

Emma Gaul, a junior nursing student, is one of the students who have had difficulty with both elevators being down in the parking garage as well as the first floor elevator located at the Cohen Science Center.

Gaul has stated that she leaves early in the morning to drive to campus.

"I leave at 5 in the morning and at 7 I'm working in the hospital," she said. "It's all an inconvenience."

Gaul added to the concern that has been an issue around campus for a while, that being accessibility for certain buildings around campus.

"It's like if you can't take the stairs, what are you supposed to do?"

In addition to the elevator in Cohen currently not operating, the historic Kirby

Hall does not have an elevator and is only accessible via stairs. Accessibility has been a prevalent issue but there are plans to make going to class a little easier.

Dr. Mischelle Anthony, an associate English professor who teaches at Kirby Hall, has acknowledged that the building must improve accessibility.

"I know that a lift to the back porch (Greenway side of the building) is supposedly coming at some point to Kirby," Anthony said. "That way people can easily access the first floor rooms."

Anthony added that accommodations professors in Kirby make are to move classroom activity to accessible buildings and rooms.

According to a statement from the Executive Director of Facilities Charles Cary provided by the Executive Director of Office of Academic Success Learning Center Katy Betnar, facilities have put the elevators on high priority.

"Regular maintenance of all elevators in university buildings is conducted to minimize the chance of failure," Cary said in a statement. "However, from time to time, elevators do go out of service and the facilities department puts a high priority on these issues as they can directly affect access to classrooms and offices."

Some repairs can be handled by Wilkes employees, but many require assistance from

an outside contractor."

The replacement electric board for the Cohen elevator that failed will not be delivered until March despite the order being expedited.

As for the parking garage elevators, Cary

did not provide an update about the process.

Anyone who may need accommodations while the elevators are down can reach out to Betnar at (570) 408-4233.

Photo by Leah Smith



Inoperable elevators in the Wilkes parking garage on S Main St.

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Life, Arts & Entertainment

Have any events or artists to be shared? Contact editor-in-chief Sydney Allabaugh at sydney.allabaugh@wilkes.edu

Honors students celebrate Taco Tuesday at Ruth's Place

Photos courtesy of Honors Program

Honors students, accompanied by Lindsey Scorey, a Wilkes alumnus and current graduate assistant with the honors program, were on dinner duty Tuesday night at Ruth's Place in Wilkes-Barre.

The crew served up dinner in the "Taco Tuesday" theme. Ruth's Place is a 24/7 emergency shelter for women experiencing homelessness.

Top row left to right is Ciara Williams (soph, poli. science), Kensington Edmond (soph, environ. engineering), Cassie McGinley (1st-year, pharm), Lindsey Scorey, (Grad assistant, master's student creative writing), Jordan Chepalonis (jr., math), Sydney Ahrberg (jr., English), Ava Wahlers (soph, bio). Front row, Liz Keller (soph, poli. science), Zoë Morley (jr, bio), Kailey Vogel (1st-year, English & history), Analiese Monteiro (soph. pharm).



Ciara Williams, a sophomore honors student (political science), brown up the meat for Taco Tuesday.



From left, Cassie McGinley (pharm) and Kailey Vogel (English and history), both first year honors students, help with some of the veggie chopping at Ruth's Place.



Sydney Allabaugh:
DIET_ - Denzel Curry

Leah Smith:
Like a Prayer - Madonna

Andrew Marshallsay:
Breaking up My Bones - Vinyl Theatre

Shawn Carey:
NISSAN ALTIMA - DoeChii

Sam Mullen:
WHATCHU KNO ABOUT ME - GloRilla, Sexxy Red

Adam Grundt:
Truth in the Lies - Central Cee

Brady Melovitz:
Good for You - Third Eye Blind

Each week, the Wilkes Beacon staff picks their favorite song of the week. Check out this week’s bops!

PROGRAMMING BOARD EVENTS

SPRING
20
25

EVENTS EVERY
THURSDAY

1/30	Wing Wars	3/13	Sweet Treat Bingo
2/6	Scavenger Hunt	3/20	Movie Drive-In
2/13	Cupid’s Carnival	3/27	Skateaway
2/20	Black History Month	4/3	Giveaway
	Bingo	4/10	Hobbies Bingo
2/27	Paws & Unwind	4/24	WUPB County Fair

Black History Month begins with Pan African flag raising, events to be held throughout month



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you want
covered?**

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know
WHEN
and
WHERE
and we'll do
our best to be
there!

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CORRECTION: Due to an editing error, the Pan African flag was misidentified in last week's edition of The Beacon. The paper is re-running the photo with the correct headline on this page.

Two-time Pulitzer Prize winning journalist to give Max Rosenn lecture

By University release

Nicholas Kristof, a two-time Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and bestselling author, will deliver the Wilkes University Max Rosenn Lecture in Law and Humanities at 2 p.m. on March 16.

The lecture will take place at the Dorothy Dickson Darte Center for the Performing Arts.

After working in France, Kristof began backpacking in Africa and Asia, writing articles to cover his expenses. He has lived on four continents, reported on six and traveled to more than 150 countries. During his travels, he has caught malaria, experienced wars, confronted warlords, encountered an Indonesian mob carrying heads on pikes and survived an African airplane crash.

Kristof not only managed to survive and press on, he also won two Pulitzers in the process — advocating human rights and giving a voice to the voiceless.

In 1990, Kristof and his wife, Sheryl WuDunn, then also a New York Times journalist, became the first husband-wife team to win a Pulitzer Prize for journalism for their coverage of China's Tiananmen Square democracy movement.

Kristof won his second Pulitzer in 2006 for what the judges called "his graphic, deeply reported columns that, at personal risk, focused attention on genocide in Darfur and that gave voice to the voiceless in other parts of the world."

Kristof and WuDunn have written

five bestselling books: *Tightrope*, *Half the Sky*, *A Path Appears*, *China Wakes and Thunder from the East*. Oprah Winfrey devoted two full programs to their work, and they have been on countless other television programs.

Half the Sky and *A Path Appears* each inspired a prime-time PBS documentary series. Kristof is also the author of *Tightrope: Americans Reaching for Hope* and his newest book, a memoir entitled: *Chasing Hope: A Reporter's Life*.

After joining *The New York Times* in 1984, Kristof served as a correspondent in Los Angeles, Hong Kong, Beijing and Tokyo. He has covered presidential politics, interviewed everyone from President Obama to Iranian President Ahmadinejad and was the first blogger on *The New York Times* website.

The Max Rosenn Lecture in Law and Humanities was established at Wilkes University in 1980 in recognition of Judge Rosenn's exceptional contributions to public service. It was established by his former law clerks, his law firm, Rosenn, Jenkins & Greenwald, family and friends. Past speakers include Jill Lepore, Jon Meacham, Terry Gross, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Bryan Stevenson, Anna Deavere Smith, Cory Booker and Bob Woodward.

The Rosenn Lecture is free and open to the public, though registration is required.

For more information and online registration, visit wilkes.edu/rosenn.

Wilkes theatre presents new musical *Between the Lines*, Feb. 20-23



Photo illustration by Wilkes Theatre Department

The Wilkes University Theatre Department will present *Between the Lines*, the new musical based on the novel by bestselling author Jodi Picoult & Samantha van Leer, featuring a book by Picoult and Timothy Allen McDonald. The production runs at 8 p.m. on Feb. 20, 21, 22 and at 2 p.m. on Feb. 22 and 23. Tickets available at wilkes.edu/theatre.

Is your club launching a fundraising event? Looking for new members?

Let us know. You could be featured in an upcoming edition of The Beacon.

Email kalen.churcher@wilkes.edu with details and contact information.

WORD SEARCH

Valentine's Day Edition

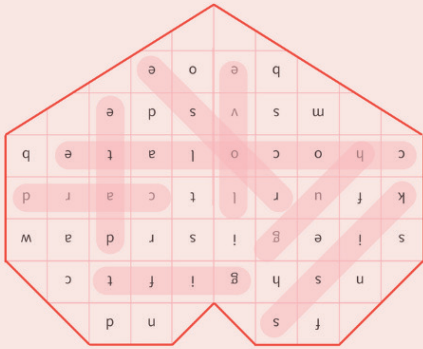


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WORDS

- ROSE
LOVE
DATE
CARD
- KISS
GIFT
HUG
CHOCOLATE

KEY





NATIONAL GIRLS AND WOMEN IN SPORTS DAY

Photos by Zach Paraway and Josh Ermeus







Opinion

Have an opinion or want to write a guest column? Contact assistant opinion editors: shawn.carey1@wilkes.edu or logan.colonna@wilkes.edu.

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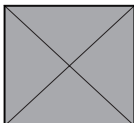
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Our Voice

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

Inoperable elevators limit accessibility

Elevator repair shutdowns in the parking garage and on the first floor of the Cohen Science Center are more than just an inconvenience.

For most students and faculty, it might seem like a temporary increase in time and energy needed to commute, but for those with temporary or permanent mobility issues, inoperable elevators can make the use of these facilities impossible.

Although elevator malfunctions are not inherently the fault of the university, repeated breakdowns and lack of urgency to mitigate or fix them may be viewed as an indication that accessibility may not be of utmost importance.

Accessibility has been an issue on campus for a while. Historic buildings such as Passan Hall and Kirby Hall do not have elevators or an alternative for people to take if they are unable to take the stairs. In Kirby Hall, even the first floor is only accessible via stairs, with only a small classroom accessible from the ground.

There have been plans for Kirby to

add a lift to the greenway side of the building to make accessing the first floor rooms easier, but the implementation of this addition has not yet begun. Again, the lack of urgency to implement accessibility accommodations shows a lack of consideration for impacted groups.

Wheelchair users are not the only ones who rely on elevators. Those with temporary injuries or mobility using crutches or other mobility devices may find using the stairs to be straining, difficult or even impossible.

Elevators also allow individuals, regardless of ability, to transport heavy items vertically, which can be important. In the case that an individual on an upper floor needs medical attention, emergency services may need to use the elevator to transport equipment and the patient.

The inconvenience of elongated elevator shutdowns in and of itself can create challenges.

In the case that classes are held on the second and third floors of affected

buildings, professors are forced to switch classrooms in order to accommodate, when they should not need to in the first place

In the parking garage, students and faculty now have to lug all their items up and down the stairs to enter or exit campus.

For students who have to wake up early and drive to campus, they now have to take the stairs and risk running late to class. The roads around campus and parking are already difficult enough, but with the elevators not being operable, students will have to move around the confusing roads to find a spot that will accommodate them.

Students and faculty should not have to struggle to access buildings and facilities on campus.

The lift coming to Kirby Hall is only one step and as mentioned, there is no date yet as to when the lift will be available for use. Accessibility is a right, not a privilege, and it should be treated as such.

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:

Email: sydney.allabaugh@wilkes.edu

Phone: (570) 408-5903 (Voicemail: 30 seconds or less, please.)

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

The Icebox: Presenting a sleeper masterpiece... “Balatro?”

By “Freeze”

Opinion Staff Writer

A roguelike poker game? Right off the bat it might sound complicated, but it really isn't.

Players around the world were surprised by its many nominations at the Game Awards 2024. Balatro won awards for “Best Debut Indie Game,” “Best Independent Game” and “Best Mobile Game” with nominations for both “Game of the Year” and “Best Game Direction.” It also won “Game of the Year” for the Indie Game Awards 2024.

As mentioned before, Balatro is a roguelike poker game. A roguelike game is any adventure-type game where a player must fight a bunch of enemies at different levels, with the chance to upgrade abilities between rounds. It's sort of like a champion's road where you get stronger the more you accomplish. You may be familiar with some of the popular titles of this genre: “Slay the Spire,” “Dead Cells,” “Enter the Gungeon,” “Binding of Isaac” and Hades. An extension of this category could be

sandbox-esque games like Bloons Tower Defense. That's right, even the classic Bloons could, by technicality, be called a sandbox roguelike game.

The other part of Balatro, which is its distinct feature, is poker. Don't worry, there is no real gambling involved at all. The only money you spend for the game is the price to purchase a copy of the software.

The format is simple. You start with a deck and you play through eight antes, or levels, which are progressively harder. There are three “blinds” per ante. The small blind is usually a place for you to check that your combos are sufficient. The big blind might be challenging or just as easy. The boss blind has some trait which changes the gameplay mechanics for the round, forcing a player to adapt to whatever nerfs or modifiers are present. Basically, you are dealt a hand and need to pick out a good poker hand to gain a certain amount of chips. Once you've reached the required chips for a blind, they are defeated and you move forward. Each type of hand has its own starting multiplier. The better the hand, the

higher the multiplier and the more chips yielded.

By default, you start with four playable hands and three playable discards. Both can range from one to five cards. If you can't defeat a blind before running out of hands, you lose the entire game and have to start over.

After defeating a blind, you gain a certain amount of money and are taken to a shop where you can purchase various items. The first thing you would want to purchase is a Joker card. You can hold up to five Joker cards by default. Each Joker has a unique ability that greatly enhances how powerful your hands become. They can involve bonus multipliers, bonus chips, or even modify which cards count as what. Some Jokers can completely save you in tight situations. It's a good idea to stack Jokers based on synergy so that you can fly through rounds with only one hand.

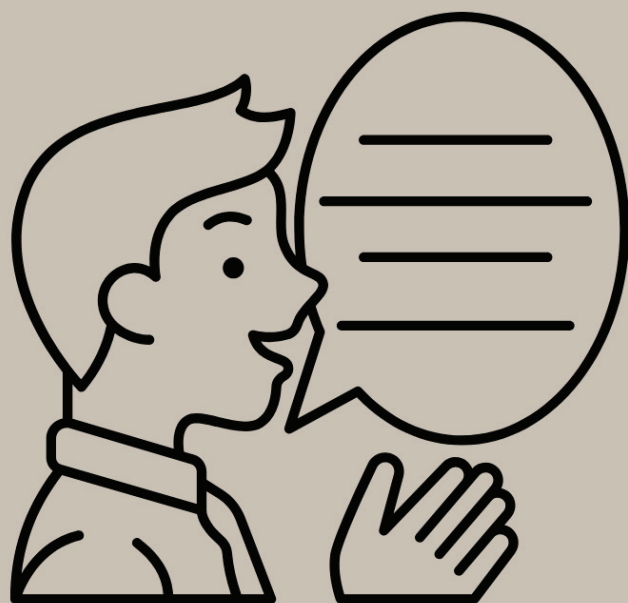
The next item you might want to consider are Tarot cards. They can be purchased from the shop to hold on to or from packs to be used immediately. Tarot cards mostly enhance the cards in a deck

to increase their value or offer bonuses. A lot of Tarot cards enhance monetary gain to make it easier to earn between rounds.

Planet cards are available the same way as Tarot cards. Each Planet card upgrades the multiplier for a different hand. If there is a hand you seem to be playing a lot for any reason or another, you can find the Planet cards for that hand. You can check how many times you've played a hand with the “Run Info” button.

There are also Spectral cards which are rare but offer extremely valuable bonuses to cards and Jokers. Another item is the Voucher which changes each ante, whether you buy it or not, and changes important mechanics like ante number and the amount of hands or discards you have. Finally, you can purchase cards to add to the deck that also have their own modifiers.

You can be assured that all of the above items can be used together in many ways to maximize your chips and defeat blinds. The best part is that Balatro is available on mobile devices. If you are ever bored in class, you can start a quick game and keep yourself entertained.



WHAT'S YOUR OPINION?

The opinion section can be your outlet!

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Reviews. Politics. Culture. Social Issues. Columns.

Baseball is broken, and there is no easy solution

By Andrew Marshallsay
Asst. News Editor

Let's face reality for a second: baseball is broken.

Whether it be the Los Angeles Dodgers buying superheros for sport and making their future kids pay for it. Or the power of owners that only see the bottom line in dollars, and not the bottoming out of records. The economic landscape of America's pastime is changing. And not for the better.

In January, the Dodgers completed the signing of Roki Sasaki, a 24-year-old right-handed pitcher from Japan. After signing, Sasaki quickly became the number one prospect in baseball according to MLB Pipeline.

This comes after an offseason where they signed Shohei Ohtani to the then biggest, now second biggest, contract in sports history. The defending World Series winners go into the 2025 season with the largest payroll in baseball history.

However, the Dodgers are only

paying Ohtani, among others, a fraction of their salary. Most of the Dodgers' contracts are deferred until long after the contracts expire. Ohtani will make only \$2 million a year until 2034. Then, the contract goes to a whopping \$68 million a year until 2044.

Is it a smart move though?

Absolutely. On the other hand, is it completely annoying that all 29 other teams in the Major Leagues are letting one team dominate the sport? Also yes.

Teams like the Chicago White Sox, Pittsburgh Pirates, Athletics (formerly Oakland A's), and Miami Marlins have consistently spent little to none in the free agent market over the last two to three years.

It's understandable for the White Sox, as they are in the middle of a rebuild that will take some time to complete. The Pirates are not excused from this though.

Boasting the best starting rotation in the NL Central, and arguably top five in baseball, the team refuses to spend. Instead of going for one of the big bats

on the market like they so need, they have decided to turn back the clock and run with roughly the same team that finished dead last in the division last year.

The A's began to spend this offseason after securing their future in Las Vegas. The Marlins, after making the playoffs in 2022, will enter this season with arguably the worst team in baseball and the lowest payroll, according to FanGraphs.

Is there a solution to this? There sure is.

However, it will probably never happen.

The only logical solution would be to introduce a salary floor and salary cap. A floor would force the bottom of the barrel teams, like the Marlins, Pirates and White Sox, to spend money to be somewhat competitive. A cap would make sure that teams with the richest owners like the Dodgers and Mets are not monopolizing the market.

Alas, this will never happen. The MLB Players Association has gone on

the record before, firmly opposing any idea of a possible floor and cap. Instead, the teams that have the highest payrolls pay a luxury tax. Teams like the Philadelphia Phillies are in the third tier of this tax and now have a 110% tax on all signings, regardless of how much or how little they are. The Dodgers are also past the third tier, but because of deferred money, they pay far less overall per season.

Owners as well have said they oppose the salary floor/cap. With the current collective bargaining agreement coming to an end after the 2026 season, we could be in for a long ride once again. The 2021 offseason saw a lockout that was centered around various issues including the luxury tax. Don't be surprised if another lockout occurs in a year and a half.

Time will only tell if the economic landscape of baseball will improve. With the way things are going, don't count on it happening anytime soon.

The 67th Grammy Awards outshined previous years

By Natalia Williams
Life, Arts and Entertainment Staff Writer

The 67th Annual Grammy Awards took place on Feb. 2, and I believe this was the best Grammys in a while.

When nominations for this year's grammys were announced, I was super excited. The works that were submitted were some of the best pieces of music by the most talented artists, so I knew it was going to be a very competitive year. With artists like Sabrina Carpenter, Charli XCX and Chappell Roan nominated, there was no telling who was going to win, unlike other award shows in the past. I truly enjoyed the suspense.

Starting with the beginning of the awards, there was a heavy emphasis on donating to a relief organization founded by the CEO of The Recording Academy called MusiCares, which I believe was the right thing to do due to the fact that

the award show was happening during the L.A. wildfires.

I also liked that they did this because it didn't make the Grammys seem tone deaf to what was happening around them. They truly cared about raising money and providing resources for relief to victims, while giving viewers at home an opportunity to help.

The award show was opened by a performance by Dawes, John Legend, Sheryl Crow, and Brad Paisley. Brittany Howard and St. Vincent sang "I Love L.A." as a tribute to the city, which was very heartwarming to see.

Other performers included Billie Elish, Sabrina Carpenter, Chappell Roan and a surprise appearance by The Weekend. Something I thought was really cool was the medley performance of the artist nominated for Best New Artist. It was super cool to see each artist perform. Overall for performances,

my favorite was definitely Sabrina Carpenter and Charli XCX. They were such fun performances and I look forward to seeing them perform at the Grammys again.

Another performance that got me very excited was the Quincy Jones tribute. It featured Will Smith, Cynthia Erivo, Janelle Mone, Stevie Wonder and Herbie Hancock. I am a huge fan of Quincy and his work, so it was something so fun to see and I feel they honored him well.

The aspect that made me shed a few tears was the way they honored the service men and women. They showed clips of them providing tremendous help to the community and even had some of them present album of the year. On the red carpet when they arrived, they were welcomed with applause and it showed them how appreciative they are and I thought that was amazing.

Something I did not enjoy was how

long it was. As expected, there were a lot of commercial breaks and I'm not sure that would change. In my opinion, I believe there was a good performance to award ratio, but in the future I'd like to see a bit more awards shown in the actual award show.

This year I actually watched the premiere ceremony which presents the awards that aren't shown in the main show. I feel that a lot of the awards could have been presented in the main ceremony.

For example, the R&B and Rap awards were presented there, and I wish they were during the main show.

Overall, the 67th Grammys was something that I really enjoyed watching. Between the performances and the suspense of the awards, it was one that I believe was one of the best in a while.

Hobby stores are important and build community

By Shawn Carey
Asst. Opinion Editor

Everyone has a hobby. At least I hope so.

There's all the obvious ones. Gardening, journaling, cooking, reading, playing video games, etc. The ones that everyone knows about. These are the hobbies that you constantly see posted about online and listed on dating profiles.

With that being said, what about the hobbies that you are embarrassed to admit you like? The more niche hobbies? The ones focused around role playing and creature collecting? The ones that cause you to line up outside Target at 6 a.m.? The ones that put you in credit card debt? The hobbies that are often considered "nerdy."

You probably know what I'm referring to. Collecting trading cards, playing tabletop games, painting miniatures, building model kits, and so on. How do you express your love for these hobbies? You go to hobby stores.

A hobby store is a retail establishment that sells materials and equipment related to a specific hobby or set of hobbies. These can include items such as model kits, craft supplies, board games, card packs, TTRPG books, miniatures and other related merchandise. They're also often referred to as game stores.

Apart from selling the materials needed for these niche hobbies, they also host events related to them. Tournaments, competitions, game nights and launch parties. During these events, they also tend to hand out prizes and hold special promotions.

Now, I think there's something really special about hobby stores and the niches they represent. They offer a totally unique experience, an experience that you really can't get anywhere else.

Hobby stores are built upon the idea of having a "third place." A third place is a public space where people can connect with others and build community. A place outside of home and work where people can relax and socialize.

Coffee shops, bars and bookstores are

traditional examples of "third places." Hobby stores fit that description pretty closely. However, they offer something that the locations previously listed don't.

Third places are often associated with comfort and quiet areas. Hobby stores, on the other hand, offer a challenge. You don't go to hobby stores to relax. You go to be faced with a challenge.

As mentioned earlier one of the main things you do at hobby stores is play. Let that be card games, tabletop games, board games, whatever you want. Customers go to these stores with the sole purpose of playing against an opponent. Oftentimes, they're only places where you can find people with the same interests.

You can play against fellow trading card players, or join together with a party and participate in the "Dungeon and Dragons" campaign. Oftentimes these activities work on a pick up and play type system, meaning that you can join in whenever you want as well leave.

This also causes them to be a safe space from scalpers. For those who know, a scalper is someone who buys something at a normal price and then sells it at a higher price when it becomes difficult to obtain, such as tickets.

The trading card hobby is full of hundreds of scalpers. It's pretty much impossible to pick up a new set the day of release. Scalpers buy up tens of hundreds of new packs and booster boxes, selling all the high value cards in the set for a ludicrous price. Making things harder for customers and employees.

The scalper outbreak has gotten so bad that Target, Walmart and other retailers now have signs up warning against them. They usually

say something like "due to high demand, we had to start limiting the amount of packs a single customer can buy."

Hobby stores on the other hand, they don't really have to worry about them. Most store owners set a limit for how much a single person can buy. This is done to ensure that everyone gets a chance to start collecting.

They also tend to hold on to some packs and use them as tournament rewards. This way, customers can own packs based on skill levels. As much as I hate saying, it's a good way to separate real fans from resellers.

Since these nerdy hobbies tend to be rather niche, it's difficult to find others who share the same passion. Which in

turn, actually helps to foster a greater sense of community. A sort of haven for hobbyists. The fewer the numbers, the greater the connection.

Hobby stores are also almost always local small businesses. There isn't really a big box conglomerate. The only one I can really think of is Hobby Lobby, and still they only really have models. Pretty much every single store is local.

If you're interested in hobby stores, there's actually two located close to Wilkes. First there's Sword in the Stone located in the Wyoming Valley Mall. Second, there's Dragon Knight Games in Kingston. I highly recommend you check them out, maybe you'll even pick up a new hobby.



Graphic by Carol Stratford

Reviewing the director's cut of JPEGMAFIA's 2024 album

An analysis of "I LAY MY LIFE DOWN FOR YOU (DIRECTOR'S CUT)"

By Logan Colonna

Asst. Opinion Editor

Out of nowhere, my favorite album of 2024 received its own deluxe edition.

In 2024, JPEGMAFIA released his fifth studio album, "I LAY DOWN MY LIFE FOR YOU." Half a year later, the album received its own deluxe edition, or Director's Cut in this case.

It shows off 14 brand new tracks, some of which being skits or instrumentals. The large bulk of the tracklist is thankfully songs though. The original tracklist offers new tracks sprinkled in as well as a second disk-worth of tracks.

Starting things off, JPEG did great per usual.

I must admit though, there is a track that I do straight-up dislike though. This track being off of the second disk, "HATE," featuring FREAKYMAFIACULT. The whole track doesn't even include JPEG, but I still think it's crucial to point out in this section. That's because if he were to put out some vocals on the track, I can see the song being somewhat listenable. I won't get too much into it now, but the track offers FREAKY just mumbling over the instrumental.

As for the good of the album, there's quite a bit. My favorites off of the deluxe alone are "CULT STATUS," "Boy You Should Know!" and "Bloodline Freestyle." All of these tracks showcase why JPEG is currently my favorite rapper to stay in tune with.

On "CULT STATUS," we get the JPEG that we had on his 2023 collaboration project, "SCARING THE HOES." I've been waiting for this kind of JPEG to return. While I love the rock-inspired beats and vocals we get from the rest of the original album, I easily enjoy this kind of sound so much more.

On the next track, "Boy You Should Know!" we get a performance that resembles that of a few tracks from one of my favorite albums from JPEG, "OFFLINE." The album easily shows off JPEG at his best in terms of his rapping, and I'm glad he returns with that kind

of performance. With that, I do believe that this is one of the best tracks off of the deluxe.

As for the absolute best track, we have "Bloodline Freestyle." The track opens with JPEG getting more melodic than usual. I, for one, love this style that he uses. The entire track has that "floaty" vibe which is helped by the background

incredibly soft and make for the perfect addition to JPEG's calmer vocals. She gives us both a verse and the outro on the title track "i lay down my life for you," both of which are beyond amazing. I suppose that 1 for 2 good features isn't all that bad.

As for the production, it's A1 per usual.



vocals too. There's not much I can say besides the fact that the track just sounds great to me.

JPEG delivered on a lot of the tracks we received in the deluxe, with a few tracks sticking out like sore thumbs.

Looking over things, the record only has two features. One of which was the horrid FREAKMAFIACULT feature. The other feature was yet another one from Buzzy Lee, in addition to her feature on the original record. Yet again, her vocals blew me away. They're

One of my favorites is easily "CULT STATUS." While it's very abstract and experimental, I can't help but feel overly positive about the instrumental. It uses the same sound that listeners heard off of the outro of "New Black History." When I first heard that outro, I, and many other listeners, wished for JPEG not to scrap this beat and actually do something with it. Thankfully, we received just what I was wishing for.

Another instrumental I enjoyed quite a lot was off of the lead single for the

deluxe, "PROTECT THE CROSS." It incorporated a lot of the same production style that was used for the original album, using a lot of rock-inspired instrumentation. Throughout the song, we get sudden bouts of calmness as well, which is really cool to see the production act as a roller coaster from the start to the end of the track. There's also a beatswitch near the end of the track that I absolutely love. With it, we get even more of that rock vibe that I enjoyed off of the original album. It's easy to say that this track got me overly excited for the rest of the deluxe.

Lastly, how replayable is the deluxe of the record? I personally think it's one of the best instances of great replayability I've seen recently.

If you count just the deluxe tracks, the runtime is a short 32 minutes. While I wish that it was its own album, instead of being lumped together with the original project, the added tracks still only put the album at a one hour and 16 minute runtime.

This is still obviously long and I get it if you were to complain about it, but the way the tracks are intertwined with the already existing record makes the hour and change go by noticeably quicker. To go along with that point, each track sounds so distinct, that it keeps the listening experience feel fresh, even if it's your 10th time listening to the record. Lastly, the deluxe edition being released made me appreciate the album for what it was originally even more than I already have. It has been relistening to the entire project, front to back, over and over again.

With all that has been said, I believe that this deluxe edition of the record has done the original project justice. While it's not 100% necessary, I'm more than happy because of the fact that it was released.

Because of that, "I LAY DOWN MY LIFE FOR YOU (DIRECTOR'S CUT)" gets an 8 out of 10.

Graphic by Carol Stratford

Sports

Want your sport covered? Deserve to be Athlete of the Week? Contact the Sports Editor: zachary.paraway@wilkes.edu

Pickering scores OT winner, Penguins beat Monsters 5-4

By Adam Grunt

Asst. Sports Editor

"Just how we drew it up," said Penguins head coach Kirk MacDonald sarcastically.

The second-place Wilkes-Barre/Scranton Penguins overcame a three-goal deficit on Saturday night at Mohegan Arena at Casey Plaza to defeat the Cleveland Monsters 5-4 in overtime.

Cleveland's Joseph LaBate found the back of the net at the conclusion of a Cleveland powerplay to give the Monsters an early one-goal lead. The Penguins answered back to tie the score rather quickly when Jack St. Ivany tallied his first of the season almost four minutes later.

The Penguins then committed a flurry of minor penalties in a short period of time. Rocco Grimaldi and AHL all-star Trey-Fix Wolansky each tallied power play goals to extend the Monsters' lead by two, and Joseph LaBate's second marker of the evening gave Cleveland a three-goal lead heading into the first intermission.

"There are games where you're down after the first, and it's 4-1, and you're like 'that was a tough night,'" explained MacDonald postgame. "It just didn't really feel like that tonight."

After Sam Poulin took a big hit at the end of the first period and Avery Hayes stepped up to the task and defended his teammate, thus turning the tide in favor of the Penguins. Needless to say, Wilkes-Barre/Scranton answered the offensive pressure put forward by Cleveland after the first intermission.

Five minutes into the second frame, Joona Koppanen finished off a slick passing play by Valtteri Puustinen, cutting Cleveland's lead to two. The score remained the same until halfway through the third, when Jonathan Gruden stuffed home another phenomenal play, captained by the relentless forecheck of Sam Poulin.

The Penguins pulled the goalie with two minutes left in regulation and maintained

the puck in the offensive zone for the majority of the final moments. After a net-front battle, Sam Poulin was able to sneak the puck past Cleveland's netminder, Jet Greeves, forcing overtime for the Penguins.

"When we came back in the locker room [after the first], we believed that the game was far from over," said Sam Poulin. "I think it just shows the character in our locker room. Everybody just battled through it together."

Penguins forward Marc Johnston ended up getting called for a delay of game penalty in the dying seconds of regulation after Poulin's game-tying marker, forcing the Penguins to start the overtime period on the penalty kill.

After the Penguins were able to kill off the penalty, Avery Hayes was able to settle down a saucer pass from Mac Hollowell. Hayes then found an open Owen Pickering at the front of the net and tapped it home, sealing the deal for Wilkes-Barre/Scranton.

"It was a great pass by Hayes," said Pickering. "I'm glad I scored. I was out there for a while on the PK, and I probably didn't have a back check in me. It's a great feeling to get an overtime winner."

The Penguins clinched an undefeated, brief homestand after a victory over the Bridgeport Islanders the night before. Wilkes-Barre/Scranton is currently on a nine-game point streak at home, dating back to a mid-December matchup with

the Toronto Marlies.

The Penguins travel to Hershey for a matchup with the first-place Bears at Giant Center on Tuesday, and then return home for another two-game homestand against the Lehigh Valley Phantoms and the Hershey Bears.

"We feel like the sky is the limit for this group," Pickering said.

Single-game tickets are now on sale for the remaining home games during the 2024-25 AHL season. For more information, please visit wbspenguins.com, or the box office at Mohegan Arena at Casey Plaza.

Photo courtesy of KDP Photography



Penguins crowd Owen Pickering after scoring game-winning goal in win versus the Bridgeport Islanders on Feb. 8.

NBA: Crazy Deadline sends ripples across Association

By Adam Grunt
Asst. Sports Editor

The NBA Trade Deadline is seemingly one of the most hectic times of the season, and this past deadline was one for the history books.

On Feb. 6, at 3 p.m., the National Basketball Association essentially placed a ban on any trades until the conclusion of the regular season. Teams that are contending for a championship had one final chance to improve their roster, while struggling teams looked to increase their draft capita by acquiring picks and trading their productive players to teams atop the standings.

In a league altering swap of players, the Dallas Mavericks sent Slovenian-born superstar, Luka Dončić, to the Los Angeles Lakers in exchange for their all-star caliber power big, Anthony Davis. The late-night move on Feb. 1 began what was a hectic week of trades throughout the league, but this move in particular was a shock to all fans, including those here on campus.

“This trade is a lot deeper than a one player for one player swap,” senior business

major and die-hard basketball fan Colby Butczynski said. “The potential ramifications if one of these players don’t work out is severe. There are perspectives within the game of basketball and as long as you are blind to them, you’ll never understand the reality.”

Other smaller-caliber moves were made throughout the week after the big trade between Dallas and Los Angeles, but none had an impact that even compared to the potential ramifications of this trade. Dallas was unable to win a championship with Dončić during his time as a Maverick, and general manager Nico Harrison was quoted saying “defense wins championships”. Harrison has caught a lot of heat for dealing away one of the league’s most deadly shooters, but time will tell if Anthony Davis is able to fit into the Mavericks’ roster that includes multiple NBA championship winning players.

On the other side of the deal, Dončić travels out west and now calls Crypto.com Arena home, where he gets to play alongside a generational talent in LeBron James. The betting odds for Los Angeles to win the

NBA Championship this season prior to the trade were over +3000. Now, since the team’s acquisition of Dončić, their odds have significantly decreased to below +2000. Dončić coming to Los Angeles basically guaranteed a deep playoff run for the Lakers, if not a bid for the team’s 11th championship in history.

“I think, for the time being, the Lakers won the trade,” senior elementary education major Tegan Shortlidge said. “The Lakers will be contending for a title with LeBron, and Dončić certainly boosts their odds for the championship this season. I think Dallas still needs one more elite level player to compliment Davis and Kyrie Irving.”

Elsewhere, after a turbulent end to his tenure in Miami, Jimmy Butler was traded to the Golden State Warriors in exchange for a package including former number one overall pick Andrew Wiggins. Basketball fans remember when the “big 3”, Stephen Curry, Klay Thompson, and Kevin Durant played for the Golden State Warriors in their era of dominance. Now, with Durant and Thompson no longer playing in Golden State, some fans are calling the new Warriors

trio in Curry, Draymond Green, and Butler the “new big 3”. The Warriors will pose a threat in the always competitive Western Conference come playoff time.

Other teams, such as the Chicago Bulls, found themselves on the wrong side of a trade. In a three-team deal with the Sacramento Kings and San Antonio Spurs, the Bulls gave up their best player, Zach LaVine, and sent him to Sacramento, thus reuniting him with former teammate Demar DeRozan. The Spurs ended up acquiring De’Aaron Fox, and the only notable thing the Bulls got in return from either the Kings or Spurs was their own first round pick that they traded away back in 2021. The Bulls now hope to just squeeze into the NBA’s play-in tournament as a best case senario.

Time will tell in regards to who won this season’s trade deadline. Come June, the trophies and accolades will be awarded, and some teams have improved greatly in their quest for the Larry O’Brien Championship Trophy. Others have set themselves up for a rebuild that could potentially last up to a half decade.

Wilkes hosts basketball doubleheader against Scranton

By Andrew Marshallsay
Asst. News Editor

Both of Wilkes’ basketball teams were back home on Feb. 5 for a mid-week doubleheader against the University of Scranton. The women’s team came into the contest looking for their first win of the season, and the men’s team were looking to make it a third consecutive victory.

Facing off against the Royals for the second time this season, the Colonels were looking to get a win over the third-ranked team in D3 women’s hoops.

However, things were not going to go in favor of the Blue and Gold. Early on, the Royals came out hot from three-point range. Dominating the first half, Scranton went into halftime with a 43 point lead.

The second half was more of the same. The Colonels were unable to stop the high-scoring Royals as Elizabeth Bennett ended the night with 26 points. #3 Scranton improved to 20-0 on the season

Yami Matos led the Colonels with eight points while Nadia Evanosky had a team-high five rebounds. With the defeat, the Colonels fall to 0-20 on the season.

Next on the schedule, the Colonels travel to Susquehanna for a weekend contest. After that, the team will face Drew University away from home on Feb. 12. Tip-off is set for 7 p.m. from the Baldwin Gymnasium in Madison, N.J.

In the men’s game, it was the Royals who started hot early on. After two consecutive field goals, the Colonels got their scoring started and went on a 14-0 run to make it a 22-6 lead halfway through the first frame. At halftime, Wilkes had a 40-20 lead.

Like the first half, Scranton opened the scoring in the second. A 20-6 run in the first 10 minutes of the frame saw the Royals cut the deficit to six points.

The Colonels got their momentum back when Mason Fedor hit a three-pointer to stop the Royal run. The game remained close, with the Colonels’ lead staying under

ten points in the remaining minutes of the game.

The Colonels and Royals continued to trade points until the home side went on a run to make it an 13 point game with less than 20 seconds to play. The game ended in a 71-58 Colonels victory. With the win, Wilkes improved their record to 15-5 on the season.

Lesko led the Colonels with 22 points and one block. Cayden Merrifield scored 14 points and led with six assists in the win. For the rest of the starters, Jack Argento, Joey Zvorsky and Eli Becker each scored eight. Off the bench, Fedor finished with seven points.

The team improved to 15-5 on the season

with a 9-4 record in Landmark play.

The team also made the trip to Susquehanna on Feb. 8. They are back at home on Feb. 12 when they also face Drew. Tip-off against the Rangers is set for 7 p.m. from the Marts Center.

Photo by Andrew Marshallsay



Jack Argento scoring a layup against Scranton.

WIH: Strong weekend put team at First Place in MAC

Women's ice hockey holds mental health awareness game

By Ava Tureen
Sports Staff Writer

The women's ice hockey team played two home games this past weekend as their season is coming to an end; only three games remain as of Feb. 12.

In the first match, the team played against Arcadia University, with the contest being dedicated in support of mental health awareness and partnered with the "Do it for Daron" campaign.

According to the group's website, Do It For Daron supports education, awareness, and research initiatives at that encourage young people to talk openly about mental illness.

Before the game started, they held a

ceremonial puck drop with University President, Dr. Greg Cant.

It was a challenging game that went into double overtime, but in the end, Wilkes won in a shootout. Neither team was able to score within the three periods of regulation or the extra overtime.

First-year Audrey Milne denied all goals during the regulation periods and overtime for the shutout.

Sr. Bella Kaczorowski had two shots on goal during the second period, and Gr. Lida Laitinen and first-year Haylee Bouchard both had four shots on goals, tying for the most in the game for any player.

On Sunday, the team played against Lebanon Valley College. LVC took the lead early on, but from there, it was all Wilkes.

Wilkes scored three times, one coming in each period. This included one of those points coming from a Colonel powerplay.

This was the third matchup between Wilkes and LVC, and was the first win for Wilkes this season against them. Multiple players had a hand in the strong win for the team.

First-year Chayce Hyndman had the first goal for Wilkes and went unassisted with it. The next period saw a goal from Sr. Rachel Morey, with the assist from both Bouchard, first-year Nina Hudakova. Finally, Wilkes capped the scoring in the third with a goal from first-year Gianna Pacillio, with the assist from Bouchard.

Wilkes is now 17-4-1 overall, getting their first tie this late into the season

against Arcadia. This continues to be a great season from the team, and after this weekend they are now sitting at number one in the MAC conference. The team had already clinched their spot in the MAC playoffs, and with this past weekend, have put themselves in a great spot of the top seed.

The regular season is coming to an end, but they still have three more regular season games, none of which will be at home.

The next game will be on Feb. 14 at 7 p.m. against our rival school, King's College.

Follow all Wilkes teams at gowilkesu.com

HOME // FEB. 8TH 3:30 PM VS ARCADIA UNIVERSITY (DIFD MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS GAME) / MAC

HOME // FEB. 9TH 3:30 PM VS LEBANON VALLEY COLLEGE / MAC

FEB. 14TH 7 PM @ KING'S COLLEGE (PA) / MAC

FEB. 15TH 6 PM @ ALVERNIA UNIVERSITY / MAC

FEB. 21ST 3:15 PM @ HOOD COLLEGE / MAC

WILKES WOMEN'S ICE HOCKEY

SPRING 2025

Athlete of the Week

Jordan Ferry

Sophomore, Center, Women's Ice Hockey



The Beacon//Samantha 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."

The Beacon: Female Athlete of the Week

Ferry led the Colonels to wins over Neumann and Stevenson this week, scoring three goals on 12 shots while going a combined 14-20 from the faceoff circle

Major: Civil Engineering
Hometown: Bohemia, NY

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

My favorite memory as a colonel was playing in the Utica tournament.

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

New York Islanders

What is your favorite thing to do away from sports?

I love to watch movies. Specifically comedies.

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

I love being able to represent a great culture and school with amazing people.

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

My go-to sports movie is Water Boy

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

I think I would play rugby

What has been your favorite sports memory overall?

My favorite sports memory was winning states

What is your favorite post-game meal?

My favorite post game meal is a cheese burger

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

I am so honored to be recognized as athlete of the week and represent all the hard work our team has done so far this season!

Compiled by Samantha Mullen, Asst.

Athlete of the Week

Jackson Shafer

Graduate Student, Outside Hitter, Men’s Volleyball

The Beacon: Male Athlete of the Week

Shafer totaled 52 kills, 3 aces, 8 blocks, and 18 digs for a total of 61.5 points as the Colonels went 2-1 on the week, including two wins in a tri-match against Penn State Altoona and Saint Vincent College.

Major: Financial Investments
Hometown: Milford, Pa.

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

Beating Elmira in five sets last season in our last game to break 20 wins.

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

All Philadelphia Sports (Go Birds)

What is your favorite thing to do away from sports?

I enjoy reading and pondering with my roommates of 404.

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

Having the opportunity to meet so many amazing teammates and friends.

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

Rocky 2 or Friday Night Lights

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

Football or Golf

What has been your favorite sports memory overall?

Getting to see my parents after every game.

What is your favorite post-game meal?

Wawa

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

It’s awesome being selected as Athlete of the Week but I always view these things as team awards. Without having great teammates and coaches, getting selected for this wouldn’t be possible. It means that WE had a great week!



Compiled by Samantha Mullen, Assistant Sports Editor

The Beacon/Sam Mullen

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WOMEN'S BASKETBALL SCHEDULE

DEC. 4TH 7PM @ LYCOMING COLLEGE / LANDMARK

DEC. 7TH 2PM @ JUNIATA COLLEGE / LANDMARK

HOME / DEC. 14TH 3PM V. KEYSTONE COLLEGE

JAN. 4TH 1PM @ ALVERNIA UNIVERSITY

HOME / JAN. 8TH 5PM V. GOUCHER COLLEGE / LANDMARK

JAN. 12TH 12PM VS. ELIZABETHTOWN COLLEGE

@THE PALESTRA/ LANDMARK

HOME/ JAN. 15TH 7PM V. DREW UNIVERSITY / LANDMARK

HOME / JAN. 18TH 2PM SUSQUEHANNA UNIVERSITY / LANDMARK

JAN. 23RD 7PM V. MORAVIAN UNIVERSITY / LANDMARK

JAN. 25TH 1PM @ CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA / LANDMARK

HOME / JAN. 29 7PM V. LYCOMING COLLEGE / LANDMARK

HOME / FEB. 1ST 2PM V. JUNIATA COLLEGE / LANDMARK

HOME / FEB. 5TH 6PM V. UNIVERSITY OF SCRANTON / LANDMARK

FEB. 8TH 2PM @ SUSQUEHANNA UNIVERSITY / LANDMARK

FEB. 12TH 7PM @ DREW UNIVERSITY / LANDMARK

HOME / FEB. 15TH 2PM V. ELIZABETHTOWN COLLEGE / LANDMARK

HOME / FEB. 19TH 7PM V. MORAVIAN UNIVERSITY/ LANDMARK

FEB. 22ND 2PM @ GOUCHER COLLEGE/ LANDMARK



MEN'S LACROSSE SCHEDULE

- FEB 15 1:00 P.M. - VS ELIZABETHTOWN COLLEGE (LANDMARK) - SCHMIDT STADIUM
- FEB 22 1:00 P.M. - VS UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH AT BRADFORD - SCHMIDT STADIUM
- FEB 26 4:00 P.M. - VS MARYWOOD UNIVERSITY - SCHMIDT STADIUM
- MAR 5 5:00 P.M. - AT VIRGINIA WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY - VIRGINIA BEACH, VA
- MAR 8 1:00 P.M. - VS LEBANON VALLEY COLLEGE - SCHMIDT STADIUM
- MAR 12 7:00 P.M. - AT KING'S COLLEGE (PA.) - WILKES-BARRE, PA
- MAR 15 1:00 P.M. - VS HOOD COLLEGE - SCHMIDT STADIUM
- MAR 19 7:00 P.M. - AT ALVERNIA UNIVERSITY - READING, PA
- MAR 22 1:00 P.M. - VS MORAVIAN UNIVERSITY (LANDMARK) - SCHMIDT STADIUM
- MAR 26 7:00 P.M. - AT MOUNT SAINT MARY COLLEGE (NY) - NEWBURGH, NY
- MAR 29 1:00 P.M. - AT JUNIATA COLLEGE (LANDMARK) - HUNTINGDON, PA
- APR 2 7:00 P.M. - VS DREW UNIVERSITY (LANDMARK) - SCHMIDT STADIUM
- APR 5 1:00 P.M. - AT GOUCHER COLLEGE (LANDMARK) - BALTIMORE, MD
- APR 9 7:00 P.M. - VS LYCOMING COLLEGE (LANDMARK) - SCHMIDT STADIUM
- APR 12 12:00 P.M. - AT SUSQUEHANNA UNIVERSITY (LANDMARK) - SELINGSGROVE, PA
- APR 16 6:00 P.M. - AT UNIVERSITY OF SCRANTON (LANDMARK) - SCRANTON, PA
- APR 26 1:00 P.M. - VS CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA (LANDMARK, SENIOR DAY) - SCHMIDT STADIUM

