



# THE BEACON

Wilkes University - Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania

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

## It's war in the battle of whose wings are best

By Anthony Cazun

Life, Arts and Entertainment Editor

With the spring 2024 semester in full swing, the Programming Board recently held one of its student-favorite weekly events.

With mouths watering, the group presented Wing War to the campus community.

Students of Wilkes University took part in the annual event that requires them to taste test various wings from various restaurants around the Wilkes-Barre area. The restaurants included North Slope, Frog Pond Club, Pizza Bella, Franklin's, R Bar and Grill, Grotto's Pizza, Whiskey Business, Tommy's Pizza Corner, Januzzi's and Anthracite Cafe.

The event is especially helpful to new students, as it allows them to find out about local spots to eat, restaurants that may have been hidden gems. Opening up people new to the area to brand new culinary experiences that they may not have known about otherwise.

"For wing wars there are two sides, the mild side and the specialty side," said Maggie McHenry, digital design and media arts major and Programming

Board member. "For each side, there's a different toothpick color for each type of wing, and you use the corresponding toothpick color to pick one of those wings. After that, you rate which wing was your favorite depending on the toothpick color."

The participant then scanned a QR code that took them to a Google form. It is there that the participant voted for their favorite wings from one of the various restaurants.

Fried and baked drums and flat wings covered in savory sauces filled several dozens of tables. For those not interested in meat, or who wanted to try something different, there were vegan options as well.

Many participants leisurely enjoyed their wings and engaged in raffles that included gift cards, air fryers and more. However, there was a much more competitive and intense element to the event: The Hot Wing eating competition.

Contest participants had to endure a gauntlet of spicy wings in various rounds. Each round increased the scoville count which increased the spiciness, ending with The Last Dab, a hot wing sauce with a scoville count of



over 2.5 million.

Throughout the competition, participants were eliminated one by one from the table. Despite the number of contestants, the final contestant, the winner of the wing wars hot wing gauntlet was Anthony Veach, who won various prizes including a cooler, three hot sauces and chips.

"It took a lot of willpower, a lot of mental toughness," Veach said. "I am just glad I came back on top."

Veach, a sophomore business major, chatted with a reporter in between large gulps of milk.

Another contestant who nearly had the victory was Logan Seling, who was also given milk to help diminish the pain of the hot sauce.

*see wings,  
cont. on pg. 9*



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# 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)

## Programming Board's spring semester schedule of events



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## Beacon Briefs: Upcoming campus events

Compiled by Beacon News Staff

### HPSC Donut Sale

The Honors Program Student Committee is selling donuts on Tuesday, Feb. 1 and Thursday Feb. 8 in the SUB from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. All donuts will be sold individually for \$2 each. In addition, there will be supplies ready to create Valentine's Day cards.

All profit will directly support the Honors Program.

### Movie Channel: Pick the February Movies

Use this link to vote on the February movies <https://forms.gle/iagYrzjEsJdtxZvL6>.

### Free Rock Climbing in the MAC

On Mondays and Tuesdays from 6 to 8 p.m., Wilkes Adventure Education (WAE) hosts free rock climbing in the MAC. There is no registration required, and anyone can participate.

### Become an e-Mentor

The Office of Student Development is now accepting student e-Mentor applications for the Fall 2024 semester.

A First Year Student e-Mentor is a full-time, undergraduate student trained to provide support to 12-25 new students. e-Mentors are student leaders who have a variety of campus experiences.

Fill out the application using this link: <https://www.wilkes.edu/campus-life/student-development/leadership-opportunities/e-mentors/index.aspx>.

Contact Stacy Mullen at [stacy.mullen@wilkes.edu](mailto:stacy.mullen@wilkes.edu) or 570.408.4645 with any questions.

### Spring Intramural Sports

Registration is now open for spring intramural sports. The season begins Feb. 19 and ends March 27. Sports offered are soccer (Mondays/Thursdays), basketball (Tuesdays), dodgeball (Wednesdays) and volleyball (Wednesdays).

Register yourself and your team on

[IMleagues.com](http://IMleagues.com) before the start of the season. Any questions contact casey.carpenter@wilkes.edu.

### Transgender Day of Visibility Ball

The Gender & Sexuality Alliance (GSA) will be celebrating Transgender Day of Visibility in March with a ball.

Voting for this year's theme is now open and can be found using this link: <https://forms.gle/vbdshUnESomuk5xb8>.

### Patagonia Quarter Zips for Sale

Industry Pharmacists Organization (IPhO) is selling Wilkes Patagonia Quarter Zips. Sales will close on Feb. 14. Jackets will be available for pick up on campus at select dates/times.

Use this link to purchase: [wilkes.edu/IPhOSweaters](http://wilkes.edu/IPhOSweaters).

### Upcoming Events: 2024 Spring Semester

#### February

1 - Puppies & Plushies  
8 - Pickles-Barre  
10 - King of Prussia Shopping Trip  
15 - Music BINGO  
22 - Family Feud  
25 - Ice Skating at Revolution Ice  
29 - Giveaway One

#### March

14 - Adventure BINGO  
17 - Orangetheory Fitness Class  
21 - Laser Tag

#### April

4 - Everything but the Kitchen Sink  
7 - Bye Bye BINGO

*Want your event featured in the calendar?*

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

# Student finds 'home' and mentorship at Wilkes

## News@Wilkes

From a news release

Brahim Hamid Oudjana came to Wilkes from Oman intending to study for one semester and stayed a year.

Now in his second year in the United States, he's participating in the Disney College Program, which brings students to work at Disney World in Orlando, Florida. He credits Wilkes with making it all happen.

Oudjana, an international business and service management major at German University of Technology, came to Wilkes in fall 2022 as a senior on an exchange program.

"I loved Wilkes and I extended my time there for spring 2023. And then I paid my own tuition for the summer," he says. "This speaks to how attached I was to the University and the culture and community there."

Studying in the United States had always been a dream, Oudjana said, but the Omani government only awarded him scholarships to study in that country. Then he learned the German university he attended had a partnership with Wilkes.

Oudjana says he found a family at Wilkes even before classes started. He was on campus just two days when Tom Hansen, another international student from the University of Birmingham, suggested he attend a Wilkes Adventure Education (WAE) event. WAE organizes outdoor activities such as hiking and camping and facilitates the climbing wall

and ropes course in the McHale Athletic Center.

Jill Price, WAE coordinator, asked the newly arrived Oudjana to help facilitate WAE Day, an event for new students. Since then, he has participated in WAE hiking and camping adventures at the Pennsylvania Grand Canyon, New Mexico, Death Valley and eventually the famous Grand Canyon.

"With WAE, it's like I have a big family. And when I say family, I cannot stress that enough. It's a big part of me," Oudjana said.

Price says that Oudjana – who is known as Ibra to his friends – brought special qualities to the group.

"Ibra is very even keeled. He's a very introspective guy," Price said. "I was so glad to hike side by side with him on some of our trips and get to know him as a person.... He had an air of gratitude about him. He had humility and was connected to discovering his purpose. You just can't beat it."

Oudjana also excelled academically at Wilkes. He noted faculty in the Sidhu School of Business and Leadership went out of their way to help him to take the classes he needed by allowing him to do them as independent studies. These included classes like revenue management with Anu Ghai, assistant professor of accounting.

He also completed a research project studying a heritage site that is part of Oman's tourism industry. The project, done under the supervision of HyeRyeon Lee, associate professor of hospitality,



**Brahim Hamid Oudjana**

earned him second-place honors in the Sidhu School's annual research symposium.

"His research idea and approach demonstrated a high level of innovation, which earned him second-place recognition," Lee said. "He attempted to provide insightful solutions to complex issues in Oman's tourism industry. While the current operational system cannot be fixed immediately, his research results offer valuable suggestions for long-term development. His outstanding research approach is particularly noteworthy considering he is an undergraduate student."

Oudjana credits Wilkes for helping him get into the prestigious Disney College Program. Carol Bosack Kosek,

director of career services, told him about the opportunity.

"If it wasn't for her, I wouldn't have even heard of the program," Oudjana said.

Oudjana is working at one of the Disney resorts until February – a perfect opportunity for someone interested in the tourism industry – and hopes he will be able to continue for a second semester to work in marketing. He also wants to come back to Wilkes-Barre to see his Wilkes family.

"I always thought if I came to the states, I would want to go to a big university ... I'm really glad that I landed at Wilkes," says Oudjana. "If I went to one of those schools, I don't think I'd have the sense of community, the warmth of Wilkes."

## We're Looking For News Writers!

Join our team and build your resume

If you are interested, contact our News Editor  
Amanda Montgomery at [amanda.montgomer1@wilkes.edu](mailto:amanda.montgomer1@wilkes.edu)

# What is... Wilkes University's Student Government?

By Morgan Steiner  
Contributing Writer

Of all the student organizations on campus, none have as far a reach as Student Government, or SG. Because the organization doesn't have a traditional "general board," most students do not know what exactly Student Government does.

SG is responsible for major events on campus. Carter Henritz, a senior psychology major and SG President, has a soft spot for "spring fling," an upcoming dance that is usually held at the Mary Stegmaier Mansion.

"It's a great chance to bring students together for a night of dancing, socializing, and great food," said Henritz.

SG also hosts other events, including the upcoming Casino Night, Big Event and Block Party. Michael Santini, an undeclared first-year student and treasurer for the class of 2027, explained what block

party might look like come spring.

"Block Party is still very early in its planning stages, and I would hate to give too much away so early in the semester. That said, we have a ton planned, and the whole committee is excited about what's to come," said Santini.

One thing most students do not realize about SG is that every member serves on at least one committee that focuses on different projects -- both SG events and general campus projects. For example, the Capital Projects committee helped fund the renovations to the basement of the Farley Library. In addition to the Block Party committee, Santini is also on the food committee.

"Although we primarily serve as an avenue of feedback for the food services, I can share something brand new this semester: the vending machine directly next to Which Wich on the first floor of the SUB, which offers a few additional food options," said Santini.



Though familiar now, the updated Student Union Building (SUB) lounge on the first floor is also a Student Government project.



Student Government members at this year's Winterfest.

In addition to serving on committees, SG members sit in on weekly meetings.

"An average meeting can vary depending on who we have coming into the meeting," said Henritz. "Usually, we have one or two clubs that are asking for funds for their club and a couple of club reports a meeting."

More than anything else, the passion its members have for the body speaks to the efficacy of SG. Students are not supposed to join an organization for the way it will look on their resume, but for the love of the group and for what they want to provide for the community.

"I wish people knew that SG is more than just meeting in a room every Wednesday," said Henritz. "We are involved in many things on campus. All of our members contribute to every event we hold for the students. Each individual class does great things for their classes as well. SG is here to make student's enjoy Wilkes to the fullest.

We love to see all the students enjoying everything we hold for the students."

It may be too late to join SG this year, but students can still get involved. Santini and Henritz echoed the same sentiment: Student Government needs students' input.

"SG thrives on engagement and feedback, and I encourage the student body to participate and voice their opinions as much as possible," said Santini. "You can do this by reaching out to your class representatives or making your voice heard at one of the open meetings we hold throughout the semester."

Keep an eye out for the SG table at next year's Club Day and in the meantime, students can follow them on Instagram @wilkessg to keep up with their events during the semester.

# A love letter to the Wilkes University e-mentor program

By Morgan Steiner  
Contributing Writer

Everyone on campus knows someone who is or was involved in e-Mentoring.

An e-Mentor reached out to you when you arrived on this campus, whether or not you responded to that email, joined the groupchat and engaged during orientation, Welcome Weekend and your first semester, was up to you. Regardless of whether or not you wanted or needed an e-Mentor, you can and should apply to be an e-Mentor. Here's why.

Stacy Mullen, Director of Student Development and e-Mentor boss explains the program best.

"The program serves as a valuable resource for incoming students, pairing them with an upperclassman mentor who (most often) shares the same major," said Mullen. "The support and guidance provided by the e-Mentors begins during summer orientation and extends throughout the fall semester. The e-Mentor Program not only helps our incoming students establish their first friendships on campus but also offers a chance for the e-Mentors to share their knowledge of campus life, provide guidance and support and help others find their place here at Wilkes."

But what do e-Mentors actually do? They attend a few training sessions, work Orientation and Welcome Weekend and engage with their mentees throughout their first semester at Wilkes. They do this in a variety of ways, including sending emails or texts to their mentee groups, inviting them to sporting and campus events and by working one of four e-Mentor supported events: Family Day, Hall Brawl, Registration Bingo or Bowling Night.

Emma Freels, who has been a mentor for two years and most recently served as the Social Media Coordinator for the program, is proud to have engaged with her e-Mentor during her first-year and applied after the program was recommended to her.

"I really enjoyed attending the events that my e-Mentor, Kait Falco, held for us as well," said Freels. "I met one of my best friends by being part of that group,

and after struggling a bit my first-year, I realized that I wanted to be able to give other students the same welcoming community that was there to support me."

In addition to the traditional e-Mentor duties, Freels took on even more responsibility as the Social Media Coordinator.

"I applied for this additional leadership position because I love designing and planning, and it allowed me to keep my role as an e-Mentor which was really important to me," said Freels. "I created and uploaded content for the organization's social media accounts and promoted events through flyers and posters."

This is not the only coordinator position available. There is also the e-Mentor coordinator, who works directly with the mentors, creates the training sessions and keeps tabs on the e-Mentor's work during the semester, and the orientation coordinator, who plans New Student Orientation and Welcome Weekend. This year, a new coordinator position is being introduced: the Civic Engagement coordinator.

"As part of the revitalization of our Office of Civic Engagement, incoming students will have the opportunity to kick off their Wilkes experience with a day of service, a tradition that has been embraced by many classes in the past (pre-COVID)," said Mullen. "E-mentors will play a significant role in organizing and leading this day of service, and there are also discussions about incorporating service as a regular part of the programming throughout the fall semester."

Mullen shared that she would have appreciated an experience like this during her undergraduate experience.

"As a transfer student, my orientation experience wasn't very comprehensive, and I didn't have the privilege of being assigned a student mentor," said Mullen. "Reflecting on it now, I believe that a program like this would have made a huge difference in ensuring that I had the necessary tools and resources to navigate a new campus and my academics with support and confidence."

But why should students apply to be an e-Mentor?



**The 2023 Mentor cohort at the Colonel Carnival, one of the hallmarks of Welcome Weekend.**

As valuable as it is for first-year and transfer students, mentors gain just as much and have even more fun. Mullen shared that, while witnessing first-year students grow is fulfilling, she also loves to see the mentors grow and step out of their comfort zone.

"I really wish people knew just how fun the e-Mentor program is," said Freels. "Truly, it is such a welcoming group of people that no matter how different you might be you will always feel included. It's also a great way to get involved on campus. I can't express how much it makes my day when a mentee or mentor waves hello," said Freels."

Speaking not as the author of this article, but as the girl who entered college friendless, confused and overwhelmed, e-Mentoring has been crucial to the formation of who I am today. Though I did not utilize my e-Mentor, I knew I wanted to help students who needed the

assistance.

Students do not have to be the bubbly, outgoing person that may come to mind when they hear "orientation guide". It is one thing to be a student and have an e-Mentor available to help, but it is entirely different to be a mentor. I have met and grown closer to so many wonderful people through this program.

If students want to make new friends, use knowledge to help incoming students, get more involved or just have something to do over the summer, e-Mentoring is for them. Students can apply to be an e-Mentor on the Wilkes University website and navigating to the mentoring page. Students can also follow the e-Mentors on Instagram and TikTok, @wilkesumentors.

Love truly is the best word to describe how those involved feel about the program. Just ask your e-Mentor.

Photo Courtesy Stacy Mullen

# Dr. Ashrafur Rahman joins Wilkes as assistant professor

By Lexi McHugh  
Contributing Writer

Dr. Ashrafur Rahman is an assistant professor for pharmaceutical sciences here at Wilkes University. Rahman is from Bangladesh.

He completed his masters at North South University, Dhaka, Bangladesh. After graduation he moved to Japan where he completed his PSD of neuroscience. Shortly after he moved to Texas and completed his post-doctoral degree.

Before working at Wilkes he worked in Bangladesh at a Renowned University as an assistant professor for four and a half years at the department of pharmaceutical sciences.

“I have worked on various research projects such as memory dysfunction, mechanism of learning and memory, memory disorder, COVID-19 treatment, polycystic ovary syndrome and stereotaxic surgery,” said Raham.

He loves to talk to his students and help them in any way he can. Raham said that Wilkes University provided him with a grant to build his new laboratory.

“I chose Wilkes because of their high rate in faculty retention, its healthy work environment and the one on one engagement from professor to student,” said Raham.

Raham says he always wanted to be in the pharmaceutical field and loves to fish.

“What I love most about his job is the ability to be able to teach,” said Raham.

He’s passionate about his students’ learning and he always likes to give them ideas that are helpful to them being a good researcher as well as their academic performance.

Right now Raham is teaching anatomy, physiology, pharmacology, CNS and endocrine. His students are currently doing a poster presentation on microbiology.

“It helps them improve their confidence and deliver to the scientific community,” said Raham. He does lab experiments with his students as well.

Raham’s goals are to do more research that benefits people and helps mankind.

“I hope my research can help people get rid of a disease they have or bring them closer to it,” said Raham.

His future plans consist of being the best possible teacher he can be. He never wanted to be a teacher or a researcher, but right now those two things are his main focus.

His most enjoyable part so far here at Wilkes is last year when he published ten papers. He also mentions his research team who is doing excellent in research and writing scientific articles. He also enjoys the teaching aspect of it all.

Raham’s advice for all his students is to never give up: “If you miss your events today or anything today, you’ll miss it forever.”

# Dr. Kelly Sklanka returns to Wilkes as assistant professor

By Amanda Montgomery  
News Editor

Dr. Kelly Sklanka joined Wilkes last fall as assistant professor of pharmacy practice. She was an adjunct faculty member for the Nesbit School of Pharmacy before coming back to her alma mater.

Sklanka is from Old Forge, Pa., and now lives in Wyoming, Pa. with her husband and 10-month-old daughter.

She received her doctor of pharmacy degree from the Wilkes University and Nesbit School of Pharmacy in 2018.

“The experience that I had as a student and the impact that the faculty had on me during my time at Wilkes was something that I really can’t even put into words.

“It was just such a wonderful experience, and they really shaped me into the pharmacist and professional that I am today, so I wanted to be able to return the favor to current students and help shape them and guide them in their career,” said Sklanka.

Sklanka explained that the healthcare system can be hard to navigate, especially with making appointments.

“I saw a pharmacist as a provider

who was so accessible and ready to help patients and answer questions and make them feel comfortable, that was something that I wanted to do,” said Sklanka.

While she never imagined her career would lead her to teach pharmacy students, Sklanka explained that she was fortunate enough to have been that type of healthcare provider for patients.

“I was very accessible and helped make them feel comfortable in navigating the healthcare system, taking their medications and really taking control of their own health.”

This semester, Sklanka is teaching in a pharmacy care lab, where third year pharmacy students learn motivational interviewing. Additionally, Sklanka is also teaching in the foundations for pharmacy practice class.

“I think in pharmacy, it’s really

unique because I have the opportunity to work with students both in the classroom and then out in pharmacy practice,” said Sklanka.

Her favorite part about teaching is getting to see her students interact with patients, or examining their charts and making connections to what they have learned in the classroom.

During her time at Wilkes, Sklanka hopes to create

relationships with her current students through mentorship, just like she had with her past professors.

“I kind of hope that I can have that same relationship with current students that I serve as a mentor to them and help them decide what they want to do with their career and maybe shape the way that they

practice and care for patients based on things that I’ve learned myself,” said Sklanka.

Sklanka participated in the New York City Marathon. This was also done as part of fundraising for Allied Services, which has a special place in her heart as her grandmother had gone to allied care after she had a stroke.

“It kind of was some additional motivation that I needed to conquer the task of running a full marathon, but also was just really an important way to raise awareness for the wonderful things that allied services have done and kind of give back in that way,” said Sklanka.

In the next few years, Sklanka is contemplating on pursuing an additional degree, including her masters in either health informatics or business administration. She also has a goal to become board certified in ambulatory care.

Sklanka offers some advice to students, encouraging them to keep an open mind about the different courses they are taking, whether they are relevant to their major or not.



Photo courtesy Dr. Sklanka

# Life, Arts & Entertainment

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

## Art in Context film screening: A Choice of Weapons

By Cally Williams

*Life, Arts & Entertainment Staff Writer*

Art is often used to tell a story for those whose story is rarely told. Gordon Parks used his photography to elevate African American voices.

Parks would refer to his camera as his “weapon of choice...I could have picked up a gun” said Parks, but instead he chose the camera and gave us some of the most famous and eye opening photography that exists.

The concept of art as a weapon is interesting and Parks used his weapon well. The camera makes change and makes people change in ways that a gun or a knife cannot.

The Sordoni Art Gallery’s current exhibit, Framing Moments: Photography from the Kalamazoo Institute of the Arts, actually has one of Parks’ pieces on display. The exhibit opened on Nov. 7 and will be up until Feb. 4.

On Jan. 25, The Sordoni Art Gallery held a screening of “Choice of Weapons: Inspired by Gordon Parks.” The documentary follows Park’s life and career and his role as a trailblazer for African American artists. The screening took place in the Karambelas viewing room. About 20 people registered to see the film, filling up the entire space.

Parks was an influential photographer, filmmaker, poet and composer. He is best known for his photography for Life magazine, specifically for his photographs of everyday American life. Parks was also the first African American man to write and direct a major Hollywood film.

Dan Kimbrough came to the screening as a special guest. After the film, Kimbrough even led a discussion about Parks and his role as an African American artist. Kimbrough works as a DI practitioner and is the owner and founder of Park Multimedia. He is also a podcast host and a former filmmaker.

Kimrough spoke on the influence Parks

had on African American artists now.

“Without him we would not have what we took for granted,” Kimbrough said about Parks, referring to all of the black filmmakers, photographers and artists of today.

“It was an attack on white cinema. He

himself.

Parks started his photography career in the 1940s His first job was for a department store in Minnesota. After that he set up a portrait studio in Chicago. He won a fellowship for his photography and started working for the government in 1942.



The Beacon/Cally Williams

started a movement with his one film,” said Kimbrough.

Parks started the “Blaxploitation” genre of film with his movie 1971 “Shaft” and its sequels. Park’s movie, “The Learning and Tree” was one of his biggest successes as a filmmaker. It is known as the first major Hollywood movie to be directed by an African American artist, that being Parks

front of an American flag while holding a mop. The title, “American Gothic,” and pose reference the well known painting of the same name. The photograph sheds light on black working women, like Watson.

“It says so much about America’s treatment of black women,” said Melissa Carestia, assistant director of the Sordoni Art Gallery. “They are the backbone of America,” she stated, “and are treated terribly.”

Parks spent four months capturing photographs of Watson, her family and her everyday life. Another photo that Parks took while working with Watson shows her with her three grandchildren and her adopted daughter in her home.

Parks formatted his subjects in a way that not just shows Watson’s home and life but shows four generations of this family. Watson holds her grandchildren while her adopted daughter is shown through the mirror of the vanity.

Sitting on the vanity is a picture of Watson’s parents. Parks managed to capture four generations of one family in a single photograph.

In 1948, Parks was hired by LIFE magazine. This made him the first black staff photographer for the magazine. He worked for LIFE from the late 1940s to the 1970s. Many of his photographs dealt with issues like race, social issues, and poverty.

The pictures that he published in the magazine during his years there showed wide audiences aspects of society they do not often see or hear about, like the life of a young gang leader or a poor African American family.

Parks’ contribution to photography and African American art brought to light what society takes for granted. His art gave voices to those who do not often get the chance to speak. His influence gave birth to new generations of black photographers and writers who are inspired by his work and what can be said in pictures, not words.

The photo features Watson, an African American working woman, standing in



**By Anthony Cazun**

*Life, Arts and Entertainment Editor*

There are some albums that truly stand the test of time. Albums across all genres, whether it be rock, hip-hop, electronic, country or any of the hundreds of sub genres those contain. Each genre has its own batch of classics.

Dance and electronic music have many beloved records, but there are some that are considered pillars of the genre, one of the most notable being "Cross" by the electronic french duo Justice.

In 2003, Justice was formed by Gaspard Augé and Xavier de Rosnay. The two graphic designers, soon to be music producers met in Paris and first collaborated on a track for a college radio station remix contest. The rest is history.

They were quickly signed by Ed Banger records and began working. After doing a handful of remixes for other artists such as Britney Spears, N.E.R.D. and even one of their largest influences, Daft Punk, they went to work on their own record, "Cross."

"Cross," released in 2007, was described as an intensive process by the french duo. That sentiment can be heard in the tone and intensity throughout the album itself. "Cross" can be a dark and moody experience, with its abrasive tone and bass heavy distortion found on several tracks, including the opening track "Genesis."

The track begins with heavy brass instrumentation and timpani drums, creating a tone that evokes similarities to old monster flicks such as "Godzilla," creating a feeling that something large

## Album of the Week: "Cross" - Justice

is emerging on the horizon. This is right before a heavy crash of distorted bass slams onto the track, being shadowed by an extended elevating sound, making each thump hit harder. A perfect introduction to the duo.

The song evolves into synths, vocal samples, pitch shifts, guitars and much more. These tools and tactics are found through much of "Cross" runtime. Justice used unique methods of audio capturing in order to gain the distinct sound found throughout much of "Cross."

One of them being layering various effects on top of a sample and then resampling it so it gains a type of crunchy fuzziness to it.

Other tracks such as "Newjack," "Phantom," "Waters of Nazareth," etc. all utilize this unique, harsh sound. However,

that does not mean the album lacks a softer, more genuine side. Songs like "D.A.N.C.E.," a tribute song to many of the great works by Michael Jackson, Valentine and One Minute To Midnight all sport softer edges.

The album was a critical and commercial success, being nominated for dozens of awards and gaining top spots on many essential albums of the 2000's lists.

"Cross" would turn Justice into a household name within the electronic scene. It would go on to inspire many others similar artists such as Carpenter Brut, Skrillex, Le Castle Vania, etc. along with various other established acts that would dip their toes into Justice's harsher, distorted sound.



Graphics/Lara Mullen

**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:**

Silver Springs - Fleetwood Mac

**Amanda Montgomery, News Editor:**

Neon Pill - Cage The Elephant

**Emma Broda, News Staff Writer:**

Get Gone - Fiona Apple

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

Generator - Justice

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

Falling Behind - Laufey

**Brooke Lare, LA&E Staff Writer**

Pistachios - Brent Faiyaz

**Sydney Allabaugh, Opinion Editor:**

HISS - Megan Thee Stallion

**Samara Carey, Asst. Opinion Editor**

Any Day Now - Zac Brown Band

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

Swing - Earthgang

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

Hours in Silence - Drake & 21 Savage

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

Tummy Hurts - Reneé Rapp

**Lara Mullen, Designer:**

Pure Morning - Placebo

**Liz Cherinka, Social Media Manager:**

Paul Revere - Noah Kahan



**wings,  
continued from pg. 1**

“It was a fight until the very end. Those wings were something else but we persevered” the mechanical engineering major said.

The wing wars event typically has a very positive reception, allowing students to either simply come by and enjoy some wings, or engage in an intense challenge to test conviction, strength and endurance.

“I feel like what’s fun about these types of events is we get a good turn out,” said McHenry. “People love free stuff, and we are able to meet and experience new people.

“It is also just fun to see how we are all the same in this one spot, we are all enjoying the same event. It is fun to see the reactions, it helps them forget about all the stress of classes.”

The next Programming Board event will be Puppies and Plushies, held on Feb. 1.

**Photos/Anthony Cazun**

**RIGHT:** Participants at Wing Wars were able to taste a variety of wings from throughout the area. Toothpicks helps tasters know heat levels and flavors.

**BELOW:** Students packed the Jean and Paul Adams Commons, located in the Student Center, to participate in the battle known as Wing Wars. Wing Wars is a highly-anticipated event put on by the university’s Programming Board.



**The event full of students who were eating wings at their tables, while figuring out the contestants for the hot wing contest.**

# Number Sudoku

*Start the spring semester off strong with sudoku*

**Challenge your brain with some sudoku!**

*How to play: Fill in the missing number. Each row should have 6 different numbers, no repeats. Each column should have 6 different numbers, no repeats. Each 2x2 quadrant should have 6 numbers, no repeats.*

	8		2		5	6	1	
1			3	6				8
		6		1		4		3
5		2			1	9	8	7
	9				7			4
	4		6	8	9		3	
	2		7		3	8		
				4	2			6
	1				6	3		

**Answer Key:**

4	1	7	8	5	6	3	9	2
9	3	8	1	4	2	7	5	6
6	2	5	7	9	3	8	4	1
7	4	1	6	8	9	2	3	5
8	9	3	5	2	7	1	6	4
5	6	2	4	3	1	9	8	7
2	5	6	9	1	8	4	7	3
1	7	9	3	6	4	5	2	8
3	8	4	2	7	5	6	1	9

**Credit for these puzzles goes to:**  
[www.sodokutodo.com](http://www.sodokutodo.com)

Compiled by Morgan Rich, Editor In Chief

# Academy Award nominees and drama during award season

By **Anthony Cazun**

*Life, Arts and Entertainment Editor*

As 2023 has come to a close, it is time to take a look back and rummage through all of the films peppered throughout the year and collectively give praise to them through mankind's favorite method of appreciation, awards.

Award season has begun and as usual, plenty of discussion and drama has ensued. Before all of the juicy details, it is important to remember what award season is about and appreciate all of the fine craftsmanship that artists have created throughout the year.

The 96th annual Academy Awards, commonly referred to as The Oscars, is to be held on March 10. Weeks before the ceremony, is the unveiling of all of the Oscar nominations. Many of which are not surprising, some of which are and there are some decisions that have been controversial and have caused a stir in the film world.

To no surprise, the film that is dominating the nominations is Christopher Nolan's atomic box office hit "Oppenheimer." Leading the charge with 13 nominations, Nolan's film is gaining heavy favor from the academy.

The success has given way for the film's lead, Cillian Murphy, acquiring his first ever academy nomination, despite being a prestigious and seasoned actor.

The film also allowed actor Robert Downey Jr., front runner for best supporting actor, to greater flex his more sophisticated acting muscles after dedicating over a decade to his more comedic role as Tony Stark in the Marvel universe.

In second place comes is Yorgos Lanthimos' "Poor Things" with 11 nominations. The film stars Emma Stone and Mark Ruffalo, both of which are nominated for best lead actress and best supporting actor respectively. Despite releasing at the tail end of 2023, the film was received incredibly well by critics and audiences alike.

The film with the third most amount of nominations is Martin Scorsese's "Killers of the Flower Moon." The film follows Leonardo DiCaprio and Lily Gladstone as they are embroiled in a conflict involving indigenous people, their land and murders surrounding them. The film nominated for 10 academy awards, including best lead actress for Lily Gladstone, the first Native American woman to ever be given

the nomination.

In a surprising turn of events, DiCaprio was not nominated for lead actor, despite the film's large amount of nominations. Some say it's a mistake to not nominate DiCaprio, others say it is beneficial for the academy to leave more best leading actor spots for actors below A-list.

Another film within the top five most academy award nominated films of 2023 is the biggest movie of the summer, "Barbie." Coming in with eight nominations, Barbie may be the most curious case of all, as while the film has gained unprecedented success both commercially and critically, the academy did not deem the director herself, Greta Gerwig, as worthy of an academy award for best director. This is despite the film being nominated for best picture.

Not only was Gerwig locked out of a nomination, but so was Margot Robbie, the actress of the titular Barbie herself. While both of these decisions certainly turned heads on their own, it was the decision to continue to nominate Ryan Gosling for best supporting actor for his role as Ken in the Barbie film. This sparked a bit of outrage from fans of the film, as one of the various themes of

"Barbie" is society's constant tearing down of women in order to hold up men, something that many are accusing the academy of doing.

Gosling released a statement on the matter.

"There is no Ken without Barbie, and there is no Barbie movie without Greta Gerwig and Margot Robbie," said Gosling.

America Ferrara, who was nominated for best supporting actress for "Barbie" also gave a response.

"Greta has done just about everything that a director could do to deserve it," said Ferrara, "It feels disappointing to not see her on that list."

Other celebrities also weighed in on the matter, including Michelle Yeoh, who won best lead actress for her 2022 best picture film "Everything Everywhere All At Once." The discussion was so widespread that even Hillary Clinton gave her thoughts.

Despite the drama, it is important to celebrate those that create impactful pieces of art, regardless of award recognition. The Oscars air March 10.

## "Anything But You," nostalgia and the state of romcoms

By **Brooke Lare**

*Life, Arts and Entertainment Staff Writer*

"Anyone But You" was released Dec. 22, 2023, and is still affecting the box office, social media spaces, the charts and even radio play. Sydney Sweeney and Glen Powell star in the corny enemies to lovers romcom that is unexpectedly leaving its mark.

The film follows a duo that spend a night together, then thought they would never see each other again, until they coincidentally end up both being invited to the same wedding. The two pretend to be together to keep their families happy since everyone is aware of their mutual hatred.

Following romantic comedy cliches, the two end up falling for one another. The storyline is as old as time, recycled plenty of times, but a simple Google search will fill your screen with the

word "refreshing" as one of the main descriptors. The trajectory of movie-going changed drastically in a post-COVID-19 world.

The previous theater experience is almost in the past, as the option of streaming is very alluring. However, describing the film as refreshing when the storyline has been recycled countless times in Hollywood, is speaking directly to the emotion felt with the overall movie going experience, and the romantic comedy genre gave it that extra push of nostalgia.

Something that is becoming increasingly prevalent.

The movie, amongst critics, is a throwback to the romcoms that dominated the early 2000's, which was the ultimate goal of the film. In the movie, Glen Powell's character, Ben, listens to "Unwritten" by Natasha Bedingfield in

times of added anxiety. The song was first released in the early 2000s, and it has hit the Top 20 for Official Charts on Jan. 18 due to the movie's release.

As people are gravitating towards the song in response to the popularity of the movie, the nostalgia reappears, the feel good and predictable time. With the heavy action and horror theme occurring in theaters, the change of pace allows for people to sit down and relax, instead of gripping at their popcorn.

With "Unwritten" going back on the charts and the recent success of the "Mean Girls" reboot, it shows how mutually nostalgic the public is for the feel good era of the early 2000s. The romantic comedy genre has been at a standstill for years according to the boxoffice, but "Anyone But You" instills hope back into the genre.

The trajectory of the movie using old-

school movie tactics and the public responding so well to it, is leaving room for Hollywood to get a new perspective on what the public is really looking for. A shift in what general audiences desire after action blockbusters reigning supreme for over a decade.

After social media dives on the hashtag and Google searches, what the public wants seems simple. Younger moviegoing audiences seem to want a time they were barely alive for, where everything felt good and predictable. Where they are no longer stressing hard over deadlines, dealing with coworkers and learning what it means to be independently responsible.

One can fully expect more and more romantic comedies to pop up in theaters in the coming years.

# CLUB DAY 2.0

A closer look at  
Wilkes' Club Day  
Spring 2024!

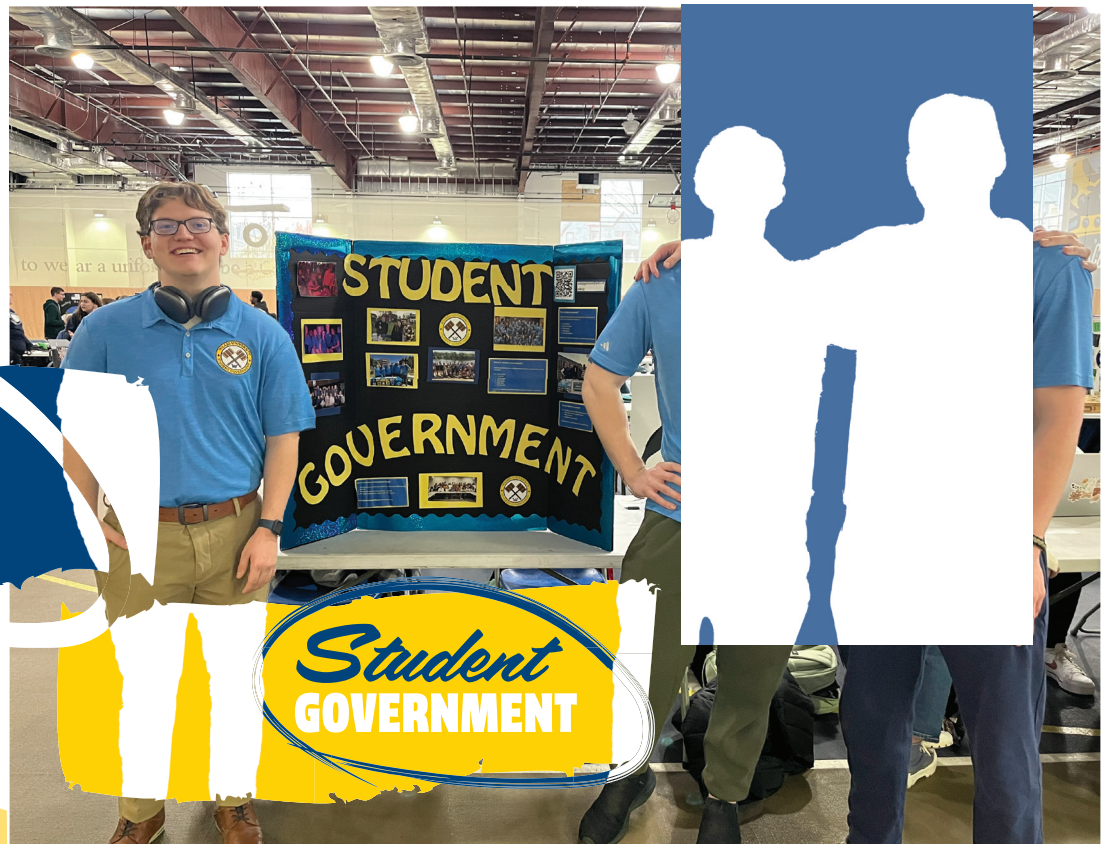


*Photos:*  
Samara Carey

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# Opinion

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.

# Snowy conditions call for school cancellations

Sun, snow, ice, rain, sleet, earthquake, zombie apocalypse, Wilkes University will keep its doors open. To top it all off, students will have to fight off the zombies while slipping on the ice, without the courtesy of a condensed schedule.

Dramatics aside, the first two weeks of the spring semester in good old northeastern Pennsylvania were filled with snow, ice and below-zero wind chills. With inclement weather on the rise, students were glued to their phones, anxiously awaiting some type of cancellation or delay.

However, despite local school closures and warnings of the weather, Wilkes remained open. On the first day of classes, students were met with at least four inches of snow that they had to walk through. Students felt fortunate to receive a condensed schedule; however, as they got to campus, there were hardly any sidewalks shoveled and the parking lots were barely plowed.

The weather, although inconvenient for students on campus, was a little more manageable than it was for commuter students. On the first day of classes, many commuter students were unable to come

to class due to the terrible road conditions.

Bad weather also attacked the campus that same Friday with another few inches of snow and slippery sidewalks. However, students were met with no condensed schedule, and, once again, the sidewalks were hardly shoveled and the parking lots were barely plowed. Students also reported there being little to no salt on the sidewalks.

Luckily, the university stated that all classes after 1 p.m. would be canceled. Although this felt like good news, the issue was that this alert came to students at 12:45 p.m., which was far too close to 1 p.m. Many commuter students were already on campus when the alert was issued, and many faculty members who had afternoon classes were already on campus or on their way to campus to teach.

According to the Department of Transportation, over 1,300 people are killed and more than 116,800 people are injured in vehicle accidents due to snowy, icy or slushy roads and pavements annually. Many students are concerned that without the proper action taken by the university in inclement weather, these statistics could someday include our students, faculty and staff.

Some may say students on campus are overreacting; however, the argument among the students is that they would have no problem coming to class in inclement weather if they felt the campus was able to keep up with taking proper precautions.

If people have to come to classes in inclement weather, parking lots should be properly plowed, salt should be continuously placed on the sidewalks and the sidewalks should be properly shoveled. This way, no students are injured on their way to class and feel safe.

During the first two weeks of classes, the argument around campus was that students felt unsafe on campus during the inclement weather because the university seemed to not have taken enough precautions to ensure their safety during this weather.

Wilkes University, if there is inclement weather, please ensure that the students feel safe on campus and take the necessary precautions. If these precautions cannot happen, then please cancel class.

The commuters need to be considered, especially since many commuters attend the university. It is always better to be safe than sorry, after all.

**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*

# The Icebox: A review of Insomniac's "Spider-Man"

By "Freeze"

Opinion Staff Writer

Welcome to the Icebox, where you can learn to stay cool, although I think you are probably doing just fine in this weather. As you try to warm back up for the spring semester, don't forget to keep it cool once in a while with some video games.

Over break, I did plenty of gaming on my new PC. Today, I want to talk about a game that I recently played for the first time, which is Insomniac's "Spider-Man."

Amazing. Spectacular. Superior. Ultimate. You see what I did there? This experience lets you swing around as the one and only friendly neighborhood web-shooting vigilante: Spider-Man. The entire game revolves around the life of Peter Parker during a very difficult time of his life, where he has almost no room for Peter and spends most of his time behind the mask. This is reflective of the game in that you, the player, can't seem to put the controller down.

The mechanics of the game are very straightforward, yet there are so many combat options for every player. You can choose to stick with the basic combat skills, and it would be more than enough to get you through the majority of the missions. If you get bored of that, you can switch it around by practicing combos, which can take you into the air or keep you on the ground.

Spider-Man can zip up his opponents with his webs, stick them to walls, hang them from the ceiling and even use them as objects to toss at other enemies. He can dodge attacks and perform special finishers, which charge based on how many hits have been landed in a fight.

Although the enemies can be overwhelming at times, it is no problem for a well-prepared Spider-Man. Players have the option to equip three of several gadgets at a time, which greatly enhances fighting ability and always helps during critical moments. If you get bored of the old spidey look, you can select from several suit styles, some of which are references to other spiders.

The neat part about these suits is that they each come with a special ability, but they are customizable so a player does not have to wear a certain suit in order to use the

associated ability. The ability itself charges over time based on combat status, and it is both a great way to enter a fight and to end it quickly. My personal favorite ability is the Web Blossom, which is where Spidey leaps into the air, spins rapidly and releases large web shots that force enemies to be stuck to the wall or be incapacitated. This ability is unlocked early in the game and remains one of the best ways to quickly clean up a criminal mess.

Aside from the innovative beat-em-up genre, this game includes side missions and a few minigames. Players can help NPC by taking photos of New York City landmarks, capturing pigeons or even trying to outsmart the Taskmaster through his tedious challenges, which help the player hone their swinging and combo skills. Some of the main missions even require that Peter be a sneaky spider to take out his enemies one at a time. Speaking of stealth missions, did you know you can play as Mary Jane in the game too? That's right, she works for the Daily Bugle and will do anything she can to get some good coverage. Unfortunately, since this game takes place years after Peter leaves the Bugle, the infamous J. Jonah Jameson is retired, but you can still hear his thoughts on his latest podcast!

Finally, the plot remains one of the most enjoyable parts of the game, which is impressive because Insomniac's Spider even appears in a lot of Spider-Man power scaling discussions. I would not want to spoil too much, but let's just say the opening act with Wilson Fisk is the least of Peter's worries. From an early introduction of Miles Morales to a mythological plot twist, the story of this game keeps a player interested in the main story and wanting to come back for more. In fact, most players end up getting strongly attached to the characters, which have been given great depth.

I am looking forward to playing the other installments of the Insomniac franchise, which would be the story of Miles and the latest sequel that features my favorite villain, Venom. If you haven't already, put on the mask and swing into action!

# The Return of The Red Raven: an original story

By Leah Smith

Contributing Writer

## PART 8

The killer was inside the house. Rick placed his hands on Cameron's bloody face and tried to comfort him.

"Are you okay?" he asked, caressing Cameron's cheeks.

"N-no, I need h-help," Cameron mumbled. "Of course, but first, I need to get that freak. They're in the basement," Rick stated.

"Rick-" Cameron tried to shout but couldn't from the blood choking his voice.

Rick ran downstairs, grabbed an old fire poker from the bottom of the steps and readied himself for a confrontation.

"I got you now, you psycho! Come out and face me!" he said with gritted teeth.

Rick walked past the line of boxes on the wall. He regretted having so many at the moment since it blocked his vision on the next turn. He lowered himself at the end of the path of boxes and tried to peek at the next turn.

From what he could see, the chair the killer had Cameron tied up in was still there. Cameron's blood stained the floor in red slashes and drops. Rick assumed the killer was waiting for him to pounce and that they wouldn't move until he moved.

He thought about what weapon they would have on them. An alphabet block to continue the pattern of murders? A Colt .45 pistol like Father Destiny used on the show? Whatever it was, Rick didn't have time to contemplate anymore. He leapt out of the path and stabbed the air with the fire poker.

Rick blinked as he realized that he didn't actually stab anyone. It was a familiar feeling but never felt quite like this. He scanned the area and carefully checked behind the final tower of boxes that were still lining the wall. The killer was nowhere to be found.

A warm glow of light rubbed his neck, causing him to turn around and realize how the killer left. The window was wide open and greeted Rick to a feeling of disappointment and annoyance. Rick ran back up the stairs, dropped the fire poker by the basement door and returned to Cameron. He looked pale and his eyes were fighting to stay awake.

"I got you, honey, we're going to a hospital

right now," Rick said.

He carried Cameron all the way to his car and opened the back seat door for him.

He made sure to comfortably lay him out on the seats and slammed the door. Rick opened the door to the driver's seat and got the car moving. His knuckles burned red as his eyes kept playing hot potato with the road and Cameron's body. The hospital wasn't too far from where they lived. He was sure Cameron was going to make it.

Nothing but white noise and the sound of his heartbeat was heard through Rick's ears. He kept repeating to himself that Cameron would be okay and that he would make it before he would die. Sometimes, he would prevent himself from saying that word.

Finally, his eyes caught the giant red cross that hung above the words "EMERGENCY" and merged to turn left where those words were located. He parked at the emergency parking lot, grabbed Cameron's body and shoved the door open with his back.

"Help! Someone help! My husband needs help!" Rick shouted.

The people in the waiting room line gawked seeing Rick clinging onto Cameron's blood-soaked body. A group of three doctors rushed in, grabbed a stretcher and ripped Cameron out of Rick's arms. Rick tried to trail behind them, but one of the doctors instructed Rick to stay back and sit in the waiting area. Rick reluctantly listened and stood solemnly behind the emergency doors.

"What have I done?" Rick asked himself.

He slowly walked into the waiting area and took a seat. He examined the encrusted blood on his hands as tears began to race down his cheeks. He scratched at his hair anxiously and kept trying to relax. His teary eyes slowly began to clear up. Everyone in the waiting room was staring at him. He felt frightened by all of these eyes digging into him. It was as if they were all pointing at him, pointing at Cameron's body and chanting, "It's all your fault."

Rick left the room and walked into the bathroom. He locked the door and started to thoroughly wash his hands. He washed his face and looked at himself in the mirror to see a face he could no longer recognize as the man he wished he still was.

*To be continued...*

# Otto von Bismarck: the overlooked and forgotten statesman

By Noah Garraoui  
Contributing Writer

“The great questions of the day will not be settled by means of speeches and majority decisions but by iron and blood.” With this famous quote, we understand the policies and legacy that defined one of history’s chronically overlooked greats: the Iron Chancellor, Otto von Bismarck.

Unlike the rest of history’s greats, Otto von Bismarck is seldom known or addressed. For a man so cunning and of high stature, it is almost tragic his overcoming of great odds is not recognized.

Despite being the youngest in Europe, the nation Bismarck created arguably was and still is the most capable and powerful on the continent. Despite his monumental achievement, Bismarck remains overlooked.

A brief history is necessary to understand the times Bismarck lived in. Bismarck was born into post-Napoleonic Europe that was still recovering from the recent wars and was locked in a delicate balance of power. For Bismarck to turn 39 small German states into a united empire without upsetting the other great powers would pose a significant challenge for the statesman.

His ability to maneuver in this political

theater would prove Bismarck’s mastery of *realpolitik*, a political philosophy of pragmatism. By way of careful diplomacy and decisive military campaigns, Bismarck successfully unified the German Empire, while at the same time, weakening its enemies without turning Europe against it.

Bismarck’s Germany was a monumental achievement, considering what came before. The 39 states of Germany formed a loose confederation similar to the large but divided Holy Roman Empire. Compared to all the great empires surrounding Central Europe, these states were powerless and would have been forced to accept hegemony from the Austrian Empire.

Likewise, without Bismarck reviving the authority of the Kaiser, Prussia would have likely fallen victim to the revolutions of 1848. Instead, guided by the doctrine of iron and blood, Prussia rose to match and surpass the increasingly backward states around it.

It is essential also to consider that Bismarck did not wield war lightly or without extensive forethought. He would choose his targets carefully and with an extensive plan.



Bismarck always had a plan. Each campaign he embarked on had a set goal, and Bismarck, unlike Napoleon Bonaparte, knew when to stop. On his first campaign against Denmark, he aligned Prussia with Austria and offered territory in exchange for military aid. The war was short, but it set Austria up as failing to uphold its end of the Prussian-Austrian agreement, giving Bismarck a justification to go to war with them.

With this campaign, Bismarck also unified North Germany and formed the North German Confederation, but there was no harsh peace imposed on Austria despite having lost pathetically. The Iron Chancellor knew Austria would be a valuable ally, but it would only set the other powers against Germany to impose strict terms.

In his final significant campaign, France and Germany were poised to go to war, but neither wanted to be considered the aggressor. To force France into aggression, Bismarck commented on the succession of the Spanish crown in such a way that outraged the French but without explicitly

saying anything. Inspired by nationalist zeal, the rest of the German states joined the North German Confederation, creating the German Empire. In a decisive campaign, the German Empire defeated the Second French Empire, cementing Germany as the new great power on the continent.

As renowned as he was in the political theater, Bismarck made a concerted effort aimed at the well-being of the German people, creating the first welfare state. Besides the first social security system, he also introduced bills for insurance for the sick, elderly and victims of accidents. His peacetime influence would also permeate throughout Europe, maintaining the balance of power and perpetuating the second-longest European peace.

There is a very evident reason that Bismarck has not been remembered in the same way as or as much as other significant figures from the modern history of the world. The Germany Bismarck created would, in the 20th century, twice attempt the conquest of Europe and the world. It is also doubtless that Bismarck was an authoritarian and militarist and suppressed opposition. Nevertheless, Bismarck’s *realpolitik* and strategic vision set the stage for modern European politics.

Graphic by Lara Mullen

## Campus Suggestions: pros and cons of being back from break

By Samara Carey  
Asst. Opinion Editor

“Welcome back Colonels!” is a phrase that I have heard one too many times recently. Obviously, there is a reason for it. The spring 2024 semester has begun, and break is officially over. While I like to think of myself as a person who likes school, I cannot think of a single soul who would be thrilled to start a new semester after a month-long break.

However, I will admit that I would much rather be in school procrastinating on my assignments than lying in bed doing nothing over break. But of course, there are pros and cons to this.

To start with the positives of being back on campus, I have once again found a routine that works for me. Over break, I practically went stir-crazy staying in my house all day. At home, my routine was as follows: wake up, lay in bed, go to work and lay in bed some

more until I fell asleep. Now that school is in session, I find myself much more organized, and I am following a proper schedule. If I did not have this routine, keeping up with everything that I am involved in would be a struggle.

Another positive of being back from a break that I think everyone can agree with is that we get to see our friends. While I am still fortunate to have hometown friends, you cannot deny that special bond that you have with your college friends. It is especially hard when your friends at school live in different counties, states or even countries. It is hard to see them over even if you wanted to and time allowed, which makes seeing them over the school year more special.

Let us dive into the negatives, and believe me, there are several. The first one that comes to mind is the tragedy that is the weather. I like to make the joke that it is ironic that we are currently in the “spring” semester, despite

us trudging through the depths of winter the last few weeks. As I am writing this, the snow around campus is currently melting, and the number of times I have almost slipped is two. This is not necessarily a negative for everyone, since the weather has been giving us compressed schedules, class cancellations and overall campus closures. But I cannot imagine people preferring the wintry weather over the nice summer weather that we so graciously endure during the fall semester and end of spring.

Another negative about being back from a break that I personally hate more than anything is waking up early. For my last two semesters, I have unfortunately experienced the horrors of having an 8 a.m. class. While I do enjoy these classes, I would like them a lot more if they were later in the day. Especially since I need to wake up, get ready, drive to campus and then take the hike around Wilkes-Barre at the crack of dawn. It is not

that I hate waking up early in the mornings, but I do think my quality of life would increase drastically if I were able to wake up at 9 a.m. at the earliest on weekdays.

Lastly, one of the negatives that I think everyone can agree on is having to survive solely on campus food. Being home for break, we were spoiled with actual home cooked food to the point that we were sick of it. But now, we took our mothers’ homemade lasagnas for granted and are now stuck with burgers, sandwiches and chicken tenders every day. Oh, also, try not to forget about “Fish Friday” every week in the dining hall. You will not want to miss it!

I will admit, it is nice being on campus every day again, since it truthfully keeps me sane, but there are small things around here that make me go insane. I am still trying to navigate my way through my classes this semester, but I believe I will make it through. Hopefully, you all are too.



# Marvel's Spider-Man 2

## Is there a correct way to adapt a story to a different medium?

By Shawn Carey  
Contributing Writer

If you're a fan of a popular franchise I'm sure you are familiar with the idea of an adaptation. In case you aren't, the Oxford dictionary definition of adaptation reads as follows, "The process of making a work of art upon the basis of elements provided by an earlier work in a different medium."

A good example would be the "Dune" and "Hunger Games" movies. Both franchises originally started out as book series that received theatrical adaptations years after their original release.

While it's most common to see a book get adapted into a film or television series, pretty much anything can be adapted into something else. A show can be turned into a game, a toy line can turn into a film series, and so on.

When it comes to adapting a story there's a lot of questions you have to ask yourself. There's the obvious ones, like how to translate a specific element or finding the right actor for a character. However, after a while, you'll find yourself running into much more pressing issues, one of them being, "what do I change?"

Due to the nature of translating a story into a different media, it's almost impossible to do an absolute perfect adaptation. There will likely be something you have to replace, move around or outright get rid of. As you can imagine, this can have a significant impact on the story and characters.

While most adaptations try to be as faithful as possible to the original source material, every so often you run into one that tries to do something wildly different. This is most often seen in comic book related media, especially when it comes to Spider-Man.

Oct. 20, 2023 marked the release of "Marvel's Spider-Man 2," the newest entry in Spidey's long running series of video games. I spent my winter break playing through the game's story. As much as I enjoyed it, I was left feeling disappointed at how the game handled many of its main characters, leading me to write this article and ask the question,

"Is there a correct way to adapt something?"

Before we start I would like to drop a quick spoiler warning. I will be talking in great detail about the story, especially the third act.

First I will be talking about the parts of the adaptation that I honestly consider bad. Unlike previous games, "Spider-Man 2" has dual protagonists, Peter Parker and Miles Morales. Both Spider-Men have their own supporting cast and list of villains, meaning this game has an awfully large amount of characters. When you're writing a story with a large ensemble cast, there's a pretty high chance that some characters will get more attention than others. However, one would think that wouldn't apply to the leads.

I believe the game could've handled the characters of Venom and Mary Jane Watson in a much better and more respectful way. I would like to praise the game before I speak negatively of it. Peter Parker was handled amazingly well, the game did a fantastic job showing off his personality and inner struggle. His undying love for MJ, the questioning of his morals and just everything about black suit was all great. He may not be a

one-to-one replica of his comic counterpart, but the game was still able to keep his most important traits.

Now, let's talk about the character who is the complete opposite of Peter. Both in terms of character and writing, Venom. The

interesting thing about Venom is that he cannot exist attached to another character. Venom by himself is a shapeless alien symbiote that is incapable of speech, however, once he finds himself a host to bond with he becomes an antihero with attitude.

In most Spidey adaptations the symbiote bonds to disgraced journalist Eddie Brock. "Spider-

Man 2," however, decided to do something different with its version of the character. Instead of joining forces with Eddie, the symbiote is attached to Peter's best friend Harry Osborn, which on paper, isn't a change I hate. I will say, however, that I believe it was handled extremely poorly.

Unlike Peter, Venom pretty much has nothing in common with his comic version outside of his name and design. He may look and sound like the character but I assure you, he is not. First of all, let's talk about the

relationship between Harry and the symbiote. The symbiote and the host tend to share the same goal, usually being to ruin Peter's life. The game, however, goes for a different approach. Venom's main goal is now to take over the planet, explaining the symbiote hive mind. This is extremely out of character.

While Venom may be an alien, it isn't a character trait that's often mentioned. That's because it isn't really important. I always believed that the beauty of Venom comes from the idea that two separate entities can hate a single person so much that they literally come together for the sole purpose of making that person's existence a living nightmare, an honestly pathetic reason to become a villain. Making him this big bad world destroyer takes away from that.

Adding on to that last point, the symbiote and host don't share the same hatred for Peter. As I mentioned before, Harry is Peter's best friend. He doesn't really agree with what the symbiote wants to do, making the entire relationship one sided.

His name doesn't even make sense within the context of the game. Eddie and the symbiote gave themselves the name Venom due to seeing themselves as the poison that inflected Peter's life. However, the game just sort of gave him the name for no apparent reason. Yes, the player may know them as Venom, but the in game characters have no real reason to call them that, especially when you consider the fact that Harry's main goal is to "heal the world."

Moving on from the main villain, let's discuss the main love interest, Mary Jane Watson. Non comic readers tend to misinterpret MJ's character. General audiences seem to believe that she is nothing more than a damsel in distress, someone that Peter has to constantly save. This couldn't be more wrong.

MJ has always very much been her own distinct character. In the comics she was

*see spider,*  
*cont. on pg. 24*



# Mr. Rager's return: A review of Kid Cudi's album "INSANO"

By Logan Colonna  
Contributing Writer

Kid Cudi is back again with a new release titled "INSANO." I cannot speak for all listeners and fans, but I for one was ecstatic to hear about this album. From the numerous singles that have been released, I knew I wanted more of what I heard.

Before this, he last released a studio album all the way back in 2020, with "Man on the Moon III: The Chosen." Soon after this, in 2022, he released a decent soundtrack to his Emmy-winning movie "Entergalactic," which shares a name with the movie (I legit just watched it after I typed that sentence and it's so great. I advise all to watch it). After numerous singles and leaks, the album was finally released on Jan. 12.

Starting off, "OFTEN, I HAVE THESE DREAMZ," begins with DJ Drama yelling into the microphone, acting as a hype man for Kid Cudi here and throughout the rest of the album to come. In the background, you can hear these enchanting voices making up the instrumental which Cudi starts to rap over after DJ Drama's introduction. If you have ever listened to Kid Cudi before, you'd know he's known for his melodic and entrancing hums and vocals. Here, however, he displays his rapping ability and absolutely sells it.

As the next track "KEEP BOUNCIN'" plays, Cudi continues his rapping performance. As for the chorus, it's not an extreme show of talent, but you can tell that Cudi is actually having fun with this project this time around. I personally like to see Cudi's fun side because based on this alone, you can tell he isn't struggling as much mentally compared to his previous work. We continue to see this playful nature throughout the whole record.

"GET OFF ME" displays the first of many features. The feature here is none other than Travis Scott. I really enjoyed his performance here as it is much like how he was on his 2018 album, "ASTROWORLD," which is a fan-favorite for all the right reasons. The last verse contains bars being traded back and forth between Cudi and Scott, allowing a dynamic duo to collide. I love when artists do this, most notably on "Bad Meets Evil" by Eminem and Royce Da 5'9", "Welcome to the Midwest" by Tech N9ne and Krizz

Kaliko and "Pete VS Andre" by Westside Gunn and Conway the Machine.

"MOST AIN'T DENNIS" immediately sets itself apart from the rest of the tracks as it is a raging beat. This lets Cudi have the most fun he's definitely had in a while. The whole song, especially the chorus, makes me hyped just off of the way Cudi presents himself alone. Apart from this, the track doesn't bring much to the table. It is still a great addition nonetheless.

Then we have "WOW" featuring A\$AP Rocky. This is such a feel-good song and I love it. I wish this album as a whole was released in the summer because it would have been such a mood booster, especially during the hot months. I love everything about this track. From Cudi and Rocky enjoying themselves, to the catchy chorus. Rocky especially does a great job here and makes me want to drop his highly awaited album "DON'T BE DUMB," even more now.

"A TALE OF A KNIGHT" starts off by blasting the bass into the listener's ear. This track, like many others off of this project, is meant to just get you up and moving, and it does this perfectly. I love how Cudi switches his flow often, which sounds great over this instrumental as well. It really shows off his rapping capabilities.

Next, we have "CUD LIFE." Nothing is outstanding here, but I still like the way the song sounds. Still, the song has little to offer and is overall just average. I don't know how to feel about the chorus as it's just a little boring and lacks excitement when compared to the rest of the tracklist. Overall, this isn't the worst this album has to offer, but it certainly is not the best.

We have an amazing feature on the way with "TOO DAMN HIGH." The feature in question is Lil Yachty. Lately, he's been on a resurgence as he released an amazing comeback album with "Let's Start Here" last year and has been on an insane feature run ever since. He even released incredible singles throughout the year as well. Yachty's vocals match with Cudi's too well, which made me surprised as to why they haven't had more songs with each other. Revisiting this track over and over again has me thinking that this is one of the best to come out of "INSANO."

"MR. COOLA" instantly puts me off

because of the production. Throughout the whole song, the listener is forced to just endure piano chords that are similar to that of the "Halloween Theme," and it's just incredibly annoying. Besides this, I enjoyed Cudi's rap performance. This just goes to show how much production matters for songs.

Now while the next song, "FRESHIE," might be biased towards me because I use it purely for "hype" purposes, I still love this track nonetheless. I say this because while the production is constantly booming in the listener's ears, we have Cudi being harsher than usual and showing slight anger through his verses. Even his ad-libs here convey a sense of anger. That being said, I love listening to this song whenever in the gym just to get hyped for my next exercise. Even outside of the gym, I think this song has a lot to offer sonically.

"TORTURED" is a slight return to form as we immediately hear Cudi's hums that made him what he is. Overall, the song does keep the same sound as the rest of the album but incorporates similar styles to what he's used to doing, like how the instrumental is floaty like the past but has powerful, new-age 808s pumping through every second.

Next, we have a feature from the late XXXTENTACION on "X & CUD." This song, yet again, is a significant return to form. If you enjoy the old Kid Cudi, you are sure to love this song. I enjoy what both artists have to offer to this song, and I wish we could see more from these too, even if X has passed away.

On "SEVEN," we have yet another feature. This time it was from the rap legend, Lil Wayne. If you've read my previous review of his latest EP, "Tha Fix Before Tha VI" then you'd know that I'm truly a hater of his newer work. The same stays true here as he adds little to nothing to the track. He includes one verse that equates to 20 seconds of the two-minute-and-a-half track. Cudi, however, did pretty well. I honestly would prefer if he left the song as is with his verse and chorus.

"RAGER BOYZ" showcases the masterful synergy between Cudi and Young Thug. They work perfectly together which makes the fact that they only have one other released song with each other. From an outside perspective, you'd think the two



have been working together for their whole lives. Both performances verse-wise are some of the best on the album. As for the chorus, I'm honestly in love with it. This is easily at least within the best three songs on "INSANO."

After covering all of the highlights, lowlights and some in-betweens, I can say that I adore this album. From the exuberant production and vocals to the amazing features, apart from Lil Wayne, this album has just what I was looking for from Cudi. It's even great to see him having fun after being in such despair during his whole career.

While this album is mostly positive, the only thing that it can improve upon is being less bloated. The project is at 21 songs, which is just way too much for my liking. I'd personally keep all of the features, yes, even Lil Wayne, to keep variety. I would get rid of some average tracks like "CUD LIFE" and "MR. COOLA" to shorten the playtime. In a perfect world, this album would be best at 17-ish songs.

This being said, I'm confidently giving this album an 8.5 on a 10-point scale.

# 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)

## Winter sports: Where teams are at the start of 2024

*Winter break seems far behind and spring semester is up and running. Wilkes athletics are eager for fans to catch up on the performances and exciting moments that unfolded on the winter sports scene.*

**By Samantha Mullen**  
Sports Assistant Editor

From the ice rinks to the courts, Wilkes University athletes showcased their talent and determination in various winter sports competitions. To see how you can continue to support the teams, check out Wilkes Athletics.

### Men's Basketball

Before ringing in the new year, the men's basketball team traveled to Florida to face Centre College and Hamline University. The Colonels were able to come out with two wins, beating Centre College 56-53 and 81-76 against Hamline University.

With the new year starting, the team started conference play. Being in a new conference can mean unknowns, but Coach Izzi Metz has "enjoyed playing new teams and seeing different gyms. It's been a great challenge so far."

So far, the team is 7-4 in the conference, making them 14-4 overall. Metz has expressed his confidence in the team and is hopeful they'll make it into the playoffs.

"We are hoping to earn a home game in the Landmark Conference playoffs," said Metz. "We know we have a lot of work to do in order to accomplish that goal, but the guys are motivated."

This week, the Colonels will travel to the University of Scranton at 7 p.m. on Jan. 31. On Saturday, the team will play home against Susquehanna University at 2 p.m.

### Women's Basketball

The women's basketball team also started conference play over winter break. They were able to secure a 50-

48 win over Drew University and a 66-60 win over Moravian University. The team is currently 3-8 in the conference, making them 7-11 overall.

The season isn't over yet, however, so there is still hope for a strong finish. Coach Al Berger feels confident that the players can finish out the rest of the season strong.

The Colonels have two home games this week.

On Jan. 31, they will play the University of Scranton at 7 p.m. On Saturday, the team will host Susquehanna University for their Ovarian Cancer Awareness game at 4 p.m.

### Women's Ice Hockey

The women's ice hockey team has been off to a strong start this year and that did not stop while most students were on a break.

The Colonels started the new year with a tough double header loss to number 13, Nazareth University. They were able to get back into their groove with a 2-1 and 4-1 win over Chatham University.

When the spring semester started, the Colonels were able to dominate over Stevenson University, securing a 4-1 win on Jan. 20 and a 6-1 win on Jan. 21.

Many of the first years have been dominating their time.

"They have definitely had an impact on the score sheet, but I am most proud

of the growth I have seen in them as people," said Coach Dave LaBaff. "When you have 13 freshmen walk in the door there will inevitably be some 'freshman hiccups', but this group has grown tremendously since September and there is no doubt to me that our upperclassmen have been pivotal for the growth."

The team currently has a 8-6-1 record in the UCHC conference and an overall record of 10-6-1.

This upcoming week, the Colonels will face cross-town rival King's College home at 2:30 p.m. on Jan. 30. At 5 p.m. on Feb. 2, they will face Hilbert College. They'll meet again at 3:30 p.m. the following day when the team will honor the seniors for their Senior Night.

### Men's Ice Hockey

The men's ice hockey team is also off to a great start this season. They currently have a 1-3-0 record in the UCHC conference and an overall record of 13-6-0. The Colonels started the new year strong with a double win over Arcadia University. The first game was a 3-2 overtime win and the second was a strong 7-0 win.

Coach Tyler Hynes feels good about the rest of the season starting.

The Colonels will continue play this upcoming week with a double-header

game against Nazareth University. The games will be at 7 p.m. on Feb. 3 and at 4 p.m. on Feb. 4.

### Wrestling

The Wrestling team hosted the 90th Wilkes Open on Dec. 22. During the open, junior Christopher Nuss continued his undefeated season making him 8-0 and earning his second title of the year. Junior Caleb Burkhart earned second place honors at heavyweight. Burkhart was also recently ranked No. 12 in the latest NWCA Division III rankings. First year Lucas Miller earned his career tournament placement as a Colonel where he placed sixth at 184 pounds.

The Colonels also participated in the Budd Whitehill Duals where they earned wins over York College of Pennsylvania and Oswego State.

The team finished 13th overall in the tournament with wins from graduate student Jack Bauer, first-year Connor Kerwin, sophomore Jarlyn Hartranft, Senior Trevor DuBoff, first year Melquan Warren, junior Cameron Butka, Nussand Burkhart.

The Colonels went 3-0 at the 2024 John Reese Duals on Jan. 28, finishing off the day with a 34-16 victory over Oneonta. The Colonels will travel on Feb. 3 to Berea, Ohio for the John Summa Invitational. The John Summa Invitational is hosted by Baldwin Wallace University.



# Wilkes swimming sees major strides this season

By Ava Tureen  
Staff Writer

This swim season, the men's and women's team have had massive accomplishments. Every swimmer on the team has beat one of their own personal bests during competition, and team wins have grown.

"This season is going very well, especially compared to last year," said head coach Christopher Paynter. "Just looking at our record alone the men's and women's team have both improved incredibly. Last year the men were 2-11 to finish the season, and they are now 8-5 with one meet left to go."

Paynter touched upon the recent success of the women's program in particular.

"The women didn't win a single meet last year and now stand at 5-8 on the year. A lot of that improvement is because of the student-athletes that we brought in for this season. They are an incredible group of kids who work hard everyday and are such a joy to be around and it shows in the results that they are getting. They definitely have a bright future ahead of them."

Coach Paynter said that a change in their training has led to an improved season. Recently, there has been more emphasis on racing. Athletes are swimming fast in

practice two or three times per week and doing pacework throughout.

In addition, swimmers also spend time in the weight room and doing resistance work.

During the tri-meet against Juniata and Lycoming, the team's lone senior, Stephen Verosko, won in the 400 IM and had a time of 4:52.71. During this meet first-year Owen Lewis won first in the 50 freestyle.

"One really memorable moment that has stuck with me and tends to be a highlight of any swimmer's experience on a competitive team is the winter training trips," Verosko said. "Specifically for me, our 2023 training trip to Englewood Florida. It was our first since I came here in 2020 and it was such an enjoyable experience of hard training and fun moments with the small team we had at the time.

"Being in Florida with your closest friends and fighting through tough practices is truly an unforgettable experience and I hope that Coach Paynter can deliver that for the team for many years into the future."

Verosko has had a solid swimming career through his time at Wilkes. He has worked to shave eight seconds off his 400

IM.

"This year, Coach Paynter and I really wanted to hit on the aspects of intentional swimming in my races while also not trying to force too much. We tried to integrate a lot of technical changes with all four strokes while maintaining the strength and aerobic longevity needed for both the 200 and 400 IM.

"We have really been focusing on those aspects from the beginning, starting the season off with a bang, and I think so far it has really paid off. We have made pretty big strides in not only the technical aspects but also race strategy that have contributed towards the time drops you mentioned."

Owen Lewis is a first-year athlete on the men's swim team and has dropped times throughout the season.

"Since swimming at Wilkes I have almost completely changed my technique making changes to my sprint freestyle by working with Coach Paynter on changing my catch and hand placement in the water. Additionally, I have made changes to my start and turns to be faster in those areas which has helped me drop time from the beginning of the season."

Currently Wilkes stands at 8-5 overall

after the tri-meet. They compete against rival King's College on February 3. With the important meet coming up, Coach Paynter has split practice into 3 groups: sprint, distance and IM (individual medley). Each of the groups does something different each day at practice.

"(W)e are very specific with what we are training for in each practice session. So, if we are running a race pace session for that day our sprinters are focusing on those shorter events of the 50's and 100's where our distance group is focusing on the 500 and 1000. This emphasis on specificity and race training this year I believe is what has played a huge part in the team's improvement. It also makes training a lot more enjoyable and if the athlete enjoys what they are doing they are usually going to put more effort into it and ultimately in the end swim faster."

Paynter believes that it's old-fashioned to believe athletes have to train hard every single day. He views the team as a big family that does many activities together outside of swimming. He is ecstatic for the remainder of the season and to see what the team will achieve.

## Interested in covering sports?

The Beacon is looking for sports writers, photographers and videographers.

Email [adam.grundt@wilkes.edu](mailto:adam.grundt@wilkes.edu) or [kalen.churcher@wilkes.edu](mailto:kalen.churcher@wilkes.edu)

# Super Bowl matchup set after exciting championship weekend

**By Adam Grundt**  
*Asst. Sports Editor*

The AFC & NFC Championship games were played on Jan. 28, and they were certainly filled excitement and stardom.

In the earliest of the two games, Lamar Jackson and the Baltimore Ravens took on Patrick Mahomes and the Kansas City Chiefs in Baltimore, Md. The Chiefs, a perennial Super Bowl contender appearing in their sixth consecutive AFC championship game, prevailed over the Ravens by a score of 17-10.

Travis Kelce led the way for the Chiefs. With girlfriend and pop superstar Taylor Swift in attendance, Kelce caught 11 passes for 116 yards and a touchdown. Isiah Pacheco

was responsible for the other Chiefs touchdown in the game, and he also ran for 68 yards on 24 carries. Patrick Mahomes did what he does best: he threw for 241 yards, 1 touchdown and 0 interceptions. The Chiefs return to the Super Bowl this season following their victory in “the big game” last season over Philadelphia.

The Ravens had a bit of a slower day on offense. Lamar Jackson threw for 272 yards and a touchdown. Jackson also threw one interception on the day and rushed for 54 yards. Zay Flowers, who injured his hand in frustration in the later portion of the game, tallied one touchdown on the day with 5 catches and 115 yards receiving.

In the later game, the Detroit Lions took on the San Francisco 49ers. This season, Detroit won their division for

the first time in 30 years, had not won a playoff game since 1991, and had never appeared in a Super Bowl in their franchise’s history.

The game began with the Detroit Lions taking a commanding 24-7 lead going into halftime. But it was the 49ers who stormed back in the second half putting up an impressive 27 points to ultimately defeat the Lions, 34-31.

The Lions spent most of their offensive day on the ground. As a team, the three main running backs tallied 182 yards on 29 carries. David Montgomery, Jahmyr Gibbs, and Jameson Williams all got into the end zone during the game. Jameson Williams also caught a touchdown pass late in the game to make it a 3-point game.

Christian McCaffrey had a

sensational game for the 49ers. He ran for 90 yards on 20 carries and scored 2 touchdowns on the day. Brandon Aiyuk caught three passes for 68 yards and a touchdown, and Deebo Samuel caught eight for 89 yards.

Elijah Mitchell also found the endzone for the 49ers. Brock Purdy, who was picked with the final pick fo the 2022 NFL Draft, led his team back to the Super Bowl with 267 yards passing and a touchdown. In addition, he rushed for 51 yards.

On Feb. 11, the Kansas City Chiefs will take on the San Francisco 49ers in Super Bowl LVII held in Las Vegas. This game is a rematch of Super Bowl LIV which was played in 2020. The Chiefs came out victorious in that game, 31-20. The game will be broadcast on CBS.

## Is your team in the Super Bowl?

### Do you consider yourself a Super Fan?

**If so, email sports editor Adam Grundt and let him know. You could be featured in an upcoming Beacon story!**  
**[adam.grundt@wilkes.edu](mailto:adam.grundt@wilkes.edu)**

# Athlete of the Week

## Haylee Bouchard

First Year, Forward, Women's Ice Hockey

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

Haylee Bouchard tallied 6 points (2 goals, 4 assists) in a pair of Colonels UCHC conference victories against Stevenson University. One of these goals Bouchard scored was a highlight reel backhand goal in Sunday's contest.

**Major:** Business  
**Hometown:** Sioux Lookout, Ontario, Canada

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

My favorite sports memory as a Colonel was when we swept Lebanon Valley. It was a great moment for our returners, breaking their previous win record and being part of that was very moving.

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

Montreal Canadians

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

Work. I work at a hospital back home with the elderly and it is a blast.

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

How helpful the school has been focusing on how the athletes are treated and how important the academics are.

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

"Greater" or "Remember the Titans"

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

Gymnastics. Then I could finally touch my toes.

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

My freshman year of high school when we won against our rivals for the first time in years. The crowd was going bananas. There were only 20 of them but they made it roar.

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

Here, Chick-Fil-A. In Canada, it has to be Wendy's.

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

Being selected as athlete of the week is pretty cool. It is definitely a shared mention as I couldn't have achieved these records without my linemates and overall team.

The Beacon//Ava Tureen

*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

## Lucas Mages

### Junior, Men's Volleyball, Opposite

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

Mages finished up a tri-meet against Bard and Mount Aloysius with some impressive statistics. He finished the tri-meet with 27 points, 21 kills, 4 digs, and 2 blocks over the two matches.

**Major:** Mechanical Engineering  
**Hometown:** Buffalo, N.Y.  
**High School:** Iroquois Central

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

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

Our first conference win of the season last year against Widener University.

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

Buffalo Bills

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

Visit Cedar Point with my friends and family

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

Creating lifelong friendships through a sport I love.

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

The Sandlot

*What has been your favorite sports memory overall?*

Playing club volleyball against Klistan Lawrence on 352 Elite Volleyball at the Rochester Can-Am Boy's National Qualifier

*What is your favorite post-game meal?*

Sharing a pizza with my twin brother after an away tri-match.

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

I am honored to receive such a prestigious award. After countless hours of off-season preparation, I am grateful, blessed, and humbled to be recognized as the Male Athlete of the Week.



The Beacon/Sam Mullen

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## Interested in joining The Beacon?

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### *spider,* *continued from pg. 17*

introduced as a lively, energetic, fun and irresponsible party girl who ran away from her problems, someone who was the exact opposite of Peter. Later on she would learn the same lesson about responsibility that Peter did and leave her life of partying behind.

She would go on and become a world famous model, actress and businesswoman. She would find success through her own skills and merits, learning to move on from her past struggles, keeping her carefree and extroverted nature.

The game's MJ is much different. She is a lot more like Peter in terms of personality. She seemingly has a lot more in common with her partner. Instead of being lighthearted and relaxed, she's more awkward and worryful.

Her career even changed. Instead of having any of the previous jobs I listed, she's now a reporter, much in the same as Superman's love interest Lois Lane, with the only difference being that she isn't successful.

With all of that being said, I have to say, I didn't hate MJ's character like I did with Venom. Sure, she has very little in common with her comic counterpart but overall she is still a fun character to see on screen. This raises the question, is heavily changing a character fine just as long as they're still written well?

I don't have a simple answer to this. Yes, I would like the character to be similar to how they were originally portrayed. However, what if it clashes with the tone of the story? "Spider-Man 2" tells a pretty dramatic story, so I can see if the writers thought that it would be more fitting if MJ had a more serious personality.

While I can sort of agree with this, why adapt Many Jane at all at that point? If they wanted Peter's love interest to be more serious than why not adapt someone like Gwen Stacy, a character who is known for being angsty and broody?

So, is there a correct way to adapt a story? Writing is extremely subjective, so there's no such thing as right and wrong answers. Some people may desire a perfect recreation of the original story, while others may want to see something new.

In my very personal opinion, I want to see a mix of the two. I want the characters to share traits with their original counterparts while offering something new. I want to experience a story that is familiar, yet new. What I'm saying may sound a little bit greedy, but I believe it's the least the writers could do for the fans.