



THE BEACON

Wilkes University - Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania

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

Programming Board hosts annual Wing Wars event



Justin Wawrzynek and Brayton Kominsky compete in the hot wing eating competition at Wing Wars on campus. Both competitors persevered all 10 rounds.

Photos by Shannon Slominski



Attendees ranked mild and specialty wings from various local restaurants. Pizza Bella won in both categories.

...WING WARS *cont.* on p.12



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News

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

Student Government notes: Jan. 29 weekly meeting

By Kayla Bicskei
News Staff Writer

Student Government convened for its third weekly meeting of the Spring 2025 semester on Jan. 29. The meeting was held by the Student Government vice president in lieu of the president's absence.

This meeting addressed funding requests from student clubs, organization chapters and internal Student Government sponsored events. The treasurer's report showed a current Student Government budget of \$82,452.

The meeting began with an informal introduction of a new staff member from the Wilkes Marketing Department. Karianne Geist graduated from Wilkes University in 2000 and is currently working in Weckesser Hall. She has worked with social media specialists to market Wilkes University on social media and television commercials.

Geist met with Student Government to introduce herself and offer her support. In response, the Student Government general board members each introduced themselves and their position.

The Education Club began the address of formal external business with their week two of two funding request. The club requested funds for the upcoming Pennsylvania Department of Education Conference at the Hershey Lodge in Hershey, Pa. The conference will begin on Feb. 5 and end on Feb. 7. Students attending the conference

will be given networking opportunities and insight from a variety of speakers.

The Education Club requested a total of \$1,300 for 11 undergraduate students to attend. The club has fundraised for their attendance at the conference with a bake sale, an apparel sale and other fundraising events.

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

The senior nursing class was next to present their week two of two funding request for their yearly Nursing Ball. To plan and fund the event, two nursing clubs are working together alongside their funding request from Student Government. The event has been historically held at the Mary Stegmaier Mansion, but the mansion is under new management and the ticket prices have increased.

The senior nursing class is requesting a total of \$2,000 to lower the price of attendance of the event so all Nursing students will be financially able to participate.

Student Government voted to allocate the full amount of \$2,000.

The Wilkes chapter of Nu Chi, Kappa Kappa Psi, presented their week one of two funding request for their Northeast District Convention. Kappa Kappa Psi shared its mission of being a diverse fraternity that creates a fellowship of brotherhood through music. The chapter has a five-hour community service requirement for all members, participates in club day, and plans to become more active during campus events.

The chapter currently has 14 active

members that held three fundraisers during the Fall 2024 semester. The chapter included that it is not a Student Government recognized club because it is a part of a larger organization.

Kappa Kappa Psi is requesting a total of \$1,300 for its attendance at the Northeast District Convention. Students in attendance will be able to meet other chapters during the three-day convention in Harrisburg, Pa. At the last convention, Kappa Kappa Psi won six achievements and awards.

Kappa Kappa Psi will return to the next Student Government meeting to present their week two of two funding request.

The last official business presentation was the Spring Fling planning committee's week one of two funding request. Spring Fling is an event similar to an informal prom during the spring season. The event will be held at the Mary Stegmaier Mansion, and it will include food, drinks and themed decorations. The semi-formal event will have a hired DJ and semi-formal attire.

The Spring Fling planning committee is requesting a total of \$12,500 to fund the venue, food, drinks, decorations and DJ. The committee will return to the next Student Government meeting for their week two of two funding request.

To conclude the meeting, the Student Government general board separated into their assigned committees to collectively plan upcoming Student Government-sponsored events.

the conclusion of the Fall 2025 semester. For more information contact Stacy Mullen, at stacy.mullen@wilkes.edu

Spring Intramural Sports
Spring Intramural sports will begin in early March. Registration is now open for basketball, flag football, indoor soccer and volleyball. The deadline to register is March 5. Games will begin shortly after spring break.

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Want your event featured in the calendar?

Email: leah.smith1@wilkes.edu

Beacon Briefs: Upcoming campus events

Compiled by Andrew Marshall

Wilkes Alumni Scholarship
Applications are now open for the 2025 Wilkes University Alumni Scholarship. The scholarship is awarded to a current Wilkes undergraduate student who has a parent or grandparent that graduated from Wilkes. The deadline to apply for the award is March 17, 2025. More information can

be found at www.community.wilkes.edu/alumnischolarship

E-Mentor Applications
The Office of Student Development is now accepting applications for e-Mentors for the summer orientation and the Fall 2025 semester. An e-Mentor is a full-time student at Wilkes that supports new students starting during summer orientation and ends after

All the executive orders President Trump has signed so far

By Shawn Carey
Asst. Opinion Editor

President Donald Trump promised to immediately make changes if elected, and he most certainly has.

As of publication, Trump has been in office for nearly two weeks. In that short amount of time, the 47th president has managed to sign off on quite a few executive orders, most of which he signed on his first day.

The orders are a mixed bag. Some ask for big changes, while others have been minor.

One of the biggest proposals was to put an end to birthright citizenship, a legal right to citizenship for all children born in a country's territory, regardless of parentage.

This is already being challenged due to birthright citizenship being protected by the 14th amendment. Any attempt to revoke it will bring immediate legal challenges. The law has actually been temporarily blocked by a judge who called it “blatantly unconstitutional.”

On a somewhat related note, the president also signed to rename the Gulf of Mexico and Alaska’s Mount Denali to the “Gulf of America” and “Mount McKinley,” respectively. The name changes will have no bearing on what names are used internationally.

Trump also declared a national border

emergency. There are limited details about how the administration plans to execute its sprawling set of immigration actions. However, Trump did sign an order suspending the country’s refugee resettlement program.

As part of a broader effort to fulfill Trump’s promise of removing millions of people from the country, he is set to prepare a huge detention facility at Guantánamo Bay. He said it could be used to hold up to 30,000 immigrants deported from the United States.

One of the most surprising executive orders was the decision to leave the World Health Organization (WHO) within a 12-month period. The United States is WHO’s biggest benefactor.

The WHO is not the only organization the U.S. left. The United States recently also withdrew from the Paris Climate Agreement. In 2017, Trump exited the Paris agreement. Upon taking office in 2021, Biden rejoined. Exiting the Paris agreement is part of Trump’s broader efforts to roll back climate protections,

The declaration would allow his administration to fast-track permits for new fossil fuel infrastructure.

Trump is seemingly calling for a reversal of many Biden-era policies. He ordered a total 78 Biden-era executive actions to come to an end. Included are at least a dozen

measures supporting racial equity and combating discrimination against gay and transgender people.

A pause was issued on gender affirming care for those under 19. The order calls for federally run insurance programs, including Tricare for military families and Medicaid, to exclude coverage for such care.

The order reverses a Biden-era executive action on the acceptance of gender identity. It is now official policy that government-issued identification documents reflect sex rather than gender. The order only recognizes two sexes, male and females, and acts under the assumption that “women are biologically female, and men are biologically male.”

A huge effort to reshape the military is also set to take action. Trump signed three executive orders, removing diversity, equity and inclusion efforts, eliminating “gender radicalism” from the military, and reinstating soldiers who were expelled for refusing COVID-19 vaccines.

Development has started on the “Iron Dome,” a “next-generation” missile defense shield. The order calls for a plan from Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth within 60 days. It should be somewhat similar to Israel’s “Iron Dome.”

He also called for the thousands of classified documents on the assassinations of John F. Kennedy, Robert F. Kennedy and

Martin Luther King Jr. to be released to the public. Trump made a similar pledge during his first term.

One of Trump’s most controversial decisions so far has been to pardon the 1,500 rioters who received charges related to the Jan. 6 insurrection. Rioters pardoned include those convicted of violence against police officers and leaders of the Proud Boys, a violent far-right extremist group.

As part of the effort to remove all of Biden’s policies, Trump is to remove policies that “act as barriers to American AI innovation.” A second order called for a working group to start work on crypto regulations. Former PayPal executive David Sacks has been tasked with leading the program.

More so, Trump revoked a non-binding executive order signed by Joe Biden aimed at making half of all new vehicles sold in 2030 electric, another bill that could potentially cause harm to the environment.

Thousands of federal employees have been reclassified as political hires. This, in turn, makes it much easier to fire. His reason for doing so is currently unknown. However, it’s believed that he quickly wants to get rid of those who disagree with him.

Lastly, Trump ordered his attorney general to not enforce the law requiring TikTok’s sale, leaving the app up for an additional 75 days. Trump originally ordered the ban during his first term.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prioritizing Military Excellence and Readiness• Reinstating Service Members Discharged Under the Military's COVID-19 Vaccination Mandate• Restoring America's Fighting Force• The Iron Dome for America• Protecting Children From Chemical and Surgical Mutilation• Additional Measures To Combat Anti-Semitism• Celebrating America's 250th Birthday• Ending Radical Indoctrination in K-12 Schooling• Expanding Educational Freedom and Opportunity for Families• Restoring Accountability to Policy-Influencing Positions Within the Federal Workforce• Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity• President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology• Strengthening American Leadership in Digital Financial Technology• Enforcing the Hyde Amendment | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Restoring Names That Honor American Greatness• Revocation of Certain Executive Orders• Designation of Ansar Allah as a Foreign Terrorist Organization• Declassification of Records Concerning the Assassinations of President John F. Kennedy, Senator Robert F. Kennedy, and the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.• Removing Barriers to American Leadership in Artificial Intelligence• Council To Assess the Federal Emergency Management Agency• Emergency Measures To Provide Water Resources in California and Improve Disaster Response in Certain Areas• Defending Women From Gender Ideology Extremism and Restoring Biological Truth to the Federal Government• Protecting the United States From Foreign Terrorists and Other National Security and Public Safety Threats• Putting America First in International | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Environmental Agreements• Restoring the Death Penalty and Protecting Public Safety• Securing Our Borders• Application of Protecting Americans From Foreign Adversary Controlled Applications Act to TikTok• Clarifying the Military's Role in Protecting the Territorial Integrity of the United States• Reevaluating and Realigning United States Foreign Aid• Reforming the Federal Hiring Process and Restoring Merit to Government Service• Realigning the United States Refugee Admissions Program• Ending Radical and Wasteful Government DEI Programs and Preferencing• Holding Former Government Officials Accountable for Election Interference and Improper Disclosure of Sensitive Governmental Information• Unleashing Alaska's Extraordinary Resource Potential | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Declaring a National Energy Emergency• Establishing and Implementing the President's "Department of Government Efficiency"• Protecting the Meaning and Value of American Citizenship• America First Policy Directive to the Secretary of State• Designating Cartels and Other Organizations as Foreign Terrorist Organizations and Specially Designated Global Terrorists• Unleashing American Energy• Withdrawing the United States From the World Health Organization• Protecting the American People Against Invasion• Initial Rescissions of Harmful Executive Orders and Actions• Ending the Weaponization of the Federal Government• Restoring Freedom of Speech and Ending Federal Censorship |
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**As of Feb. 3 at 4 p.m.*

That's So Honors: Honors abroad trip to London

By Morgan Steiner
Contributing Writer

Over winter break, the Wilkes University Honors program took a weeklong trip to London.

Professor Jen McLaughlin, assistant director of the Honors & Scholars Program, has previously led honors students on both domestic and international trips. She and Dr. Jonathan Kuiken, program director, chose this location very purposefully.

"We wanted to make a trip where we were really immersed in one location, and absorbed as much culture as possible," McLaughlin said. "It was a nice change of pace from our other trips we have taken, which pop around a bit more."

Though honors students spent each night in London, they ventured outside the city during the trip as well, exploring both Bath and Oxford.

Gabbie Moore, a senior political science major, said that she had always wanted to go to London.

"It has been a huge dream of mine and it was something I never thought I would be able to do," Moore said.

In the first week of the year, honors students packed their bags and took to the skies for a trip essential to character development, cultural awareness and community building. Other than the cultural and educational value, the honors trips provide an opportunity for honors students to bond, both across their cohorts and with the directors, starting before the trip even begins.

Before a major honors abroad trip,

students and chaperones meet several times throughout the semester, ensuring students are knowledgeable about geography, history and culture before they embark.

Moore, who has previously taken service trips with the Bonner Leaders, said that the meetings helped them feel less awkward about traveling together.

"By the time a trip abroad is over, all of the students and Dr. Kuiken and myself are all very close, and it is a special type of bonding that occurs," McLaughlin said.

Sydney Farmer, a senior nursing major, has previously gone on service trips with the Honors Program.

"I just enjoyed being able to make memories with fellow honors students alongside Dr. K and Jen," Farmer said. "Everyone on the London trip were different majors and cohorts, so it was nice to engage with like-minded individuals."

"I would say we all got close, which was awesome to build more friendships."

The Honors program went to so many cultural attractions that it was difficult to pick a favorite. Some favorites included the Tower of London, Buckingham Palace, Oxford and Bath.

Farmer, in particular, enjoyed Oxford, as well as the opportunity to step out of her comfort zone and gain more cultural awareness.

Moore added that another unique experience was seeing the locations where some iconic films and TV are shot, like Harry Potter, Wonka and Bridgerton.

McLaughlin said she loved watching her students experience the world.

"When they get excited and their eyes light up, that is really the world to me," McLaughlin said. "I will never tire of the look on their faces when they see a new country or try a new food."

"I love seeing them get outside of the known and enter the unknown."

Students bonded with each other and their professors, illuminating the community feel that is so prevalent within the Honors program. This was a great experience for students to bond outside of their cohorts. Because the spots for the trip are chosen by random lottery, students don't usually know everyone before they go on the trip, but they certainly do afterwards.

Cross-cultural exchange is essential in a globalized world. Even on campus, students are engaging in a cultural exchange, with students from different states and countries. Experiencing this for yourself can be an amazing exercise in challenging yourself, while enjoying the culture of a different place and people.

"The world and all its cultures and countries help shape people into well-rounded leaders," McLaughlin said. "If one never sees other countries or goes somewhere where they barely speak the language, you're missing out on learning from people who think differently than you."

Moore, shared a similar sentiment, saying, "It is one thing to learn about different

cultures and places in a classroom, but it is a whole other, incredibly beautiful, and curiosity-provoking experience traveling to the place you are learning about and seeing it with your own eyes."

Farmer shared a different perspective, echoing the importance of travel in a STEM-based major.

"As nurses, we care for patients holistically, meaning, the inclusion of religion, culture, and beliefs," Farmer said. "We believe that it is important to take everything into consideration to personalize care and ultimately create the best plan of care for the patient. With that being said, being able to experience another culture allows for cultural awareness to occur."

Jumping across the pond can be like jumping into another world, but students feel more well-rounded after taking the trip.

The trip, chaperoned by Dr. Kuiken and Professor McLaughlin, is one of a series of Honors-led trips taking students to places with educational or cultural value. The next Honors Abroad trip will take students to Italy in Summer 2025.

To keep up, or see footage from the London trip, go to @wilkeshonors on Instagram.

Photos courtesy of
Gabbie Moore and Sydney Farmer



Honors students and advisers in the U.K.



Honors students, Brynn Marlow and Sydney Farmer, in front of the London Eye.

Democrats club and Honors students volunteer at Ruth's Place

Leah Smith

News Editor

On Feb. 1, members of the Wilkes University College Democrats and Honors students volunteered to cook and serve breakfast at Ruth's Place shelter for women.

The members and students gathered ingredients and prepared breakfast around 9:30 a.m. and provided residents with pancakes, eggs and bacon.

This volunteering opportunity allowed students to hone their cooking and kitchen etiquette skills, as well as have a chance to interact with residents who appreciated seeing Wilkes students at the shelter providing for them.

Ariaya Brown, an environmental science major and member of the College Democrats, said that she was more than happy to help with the morning's preparations.

"It's always good to help people out and it makes me feel good to help others," Brown said. "People really need that nowadays."

The shelter is provided by the Pennsylvania branch of Volunteers of America and opened its doors in 2003. Ruth's Place is a 24/7 shelter for homeless women that provides not only a place to sleep but also to shape opportunities and

life skills.

The residents of Ruth's Place have access to the Internet, laundry and other amenities to aid them in their journey of finding jobs and a home for themselves.

Dawn is a resident who stayed at Ruth's Place during the COVID-19 pandemic. She said that the shelter helps her with everything she needs.



Democrats club treasurer Jason Oshman holding a plate of pancakes.

"I'm having a very good experience and appreciate all of the help from today," Dawn said.

She added that from living in the shelter, she has had success in landing a job interview at Burlington Coat Factory.

After they made breakfast, the students helped wash dishes and clean up the kitchen area. It was a pleasant experience

for everyone involved, and the residents of Ruth's Place stated their hopes for Wilkes students or any more volunteers to come in the future.

For more information about Ruth's Place, look into their website on the www.voapa.org/ruths-place/.

Photos courtesy of Jace Hynick



Wilkes University College Democrats and Honors students volunteer at Ruth's Place shelter for women.

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Student Government hosts Club Day 2.0 in the MAC

By Shannon Slominski
Photographer



Megan Novak, Haley Zapolski and Jacob O'Boyle display butterflies, books and a poster at the Ecology Club table.



Cheerleaders Maddie Yohey, Katie Yohey, Shauna Evancavich, and Kailee Mitchell perform a cheer stunt at Club Day 2.0.



Brennan Reiner talks to a student about the Wilkes Berries, the Wilkes ultimate frisbee team.



Yeremin Castillo Santana informs attendees about the Student Organization of Latinos (SOL).



Esports Manager Robert Eskra, joined by Esports team members, explains Wilkes' Esports opportunities.

Life, Arts & Entertainment

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

Lunar New Year celebrated with food and crafts

By Natalia Williams
Staff Writer

On Jan. 29, the International Student Ambassadors, Multicultural Student Coalition and the Office of Student Engagement hosted a Lunar New Year celebration.

Lunar New Year celebrates the beginning of the new year on the lunisolar calendar and the arrival of spring. It is an important holiday in China, but it is also celebrated in Vietnam, South Korea, and other countries with a large Chinese

population.

Each year there is a new animal that represents the new year. Every 12 years the animals repeat in a cycle. The 12 animals of the Chinese zodiac calendar include the rat, ox, tiger, rabbit, dragon, snake, horse, goat, monkey, rooster, dog and pig.

2025 is the year of the snake, which represents transformation and new beginnings.

Hosting events like these is important for the Wilkes community to get exposed to other cultures.

"It is important to spread and represent different cultures across campus so students feel like they are heard. It's also good because it helps our campus become more diverse and more inclusive," said Shanelly Hinds, and MSC member.

Hosted in the JPAC students that attended the event were offered food like lo mein, sweet and sour chicken and spring rolls. There were also a variety of Asian snacks available. In addition to the snacks and food, students were able to enjoy a variety of hot tea.

On the final day of Lunar New Year,

lantern festivals are a tradition. To honor this, attendees were given the opportunity to create their own lanterns. With easy instructions, they were able to make colorful lanterns and could decorate them however they wanted.

A lot of research went into this event to make sure the tradition is represented correctly.

"We did a lot of research and the international students helped a lot." Shanelly said.

Photos by Natalia Williams



Samantha Gonzalez was one of the Lunar New Year Celebration participants to make a lantern during the event.



At top, attendees line up to taste foods and make crafts in honor of Lunar New Year. Bottom, paper lanterns could be made in a variety of colors.



Sydney Allabaugh:
EoO - Bad Bunny

Leah Smith:
Rollin' (Air Raid Vehicle) - Limp Bizkit

Andrew Marshallsay:
Sailing - Christopher Cross

Shawn Carey:
Scram! - Jeff Rosenstock

Sam Mullen:
DENIAL IS A RIVER - Doechi

Adam Grundt:
I'm The Problem - Morgan Wallen

Zach Paraway:
It Ain't Over 'Til It's Over - Lenny Kravitz

Brady Melovitz:
Hysteria - Def Leppard

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

PROGRAMMING BOARD EVENTS

SPRING
20
25

EVENTS EVERY
THURSDAY

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

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



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you want
covered?**

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Black History Month

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

1. freedom 2. equality 3. justice 4. civil rights 5. activist 6. leader 7. courage
8. dream 9. empower 10. rosa parks 11. jackie robinson 12. history 13. inspire
14. martin luther king jr 15. community



PROGRAMMING BOARD'S !WING WARS!

Photos by: Shannon Slominski





**WINNER
WINNER
CHICKEN
DINNER**



WINNER



**WINNER
WINNER
CHICKEN
DINNER**



Opinion

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

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Our Voice

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

The Oscars finally recognizes horror films

For the past few years, it seemed that the Oscars overlooked movies in the horror genre. It has been an occurrence that many horror fans have noticed and have argued about for a while.

It has been argued that perhaps the Academy of Motion Pictures and Sciences do not take the horror genre seriously nor do they deem the genre worthy enough for an award. Films such as "Hereditary," "Nope" and "Pearl" are huge fan-favorite horror films that fans hope would receive at least one Oscar nomination.

The last time a horror movie was nominated for any Oscar award was in 2017 when Jordan Peele's directorial debut, "Get Out" was nominated for best original screenplay, directing and best actor. The film won best original screenplay, making it Peele's first Oscar win.

After years of waiting, the horror community's wish came true at last when this year's Oscar nominations list came out on Jan. 23. The deliciously dark reimaging of "Nosferatu" by Robert Eggers received four nominations, and the body horror masterpiece "The Substance" by French filmmaker Coralie Fargeat received five nominations, including best director and

best picture.

This is a massive win for the horror genre because not only are two heavy hitters of that genre receiving their well-deserved accolades, but this also means that the Academy is finally giving its kudos to the modern-day horror genre.

The Oscars have given horror its due diligence before, such as with the aforementioned, "Get Out" as well as "The Exorcist," which was nominated for ten Oscars. "Jaws," "Rosemary's Baby" and "The Silence of the Lambs" also won best picture in their respective years.

So, it is not like the Academy does not like horror movies as a genre. It just seems that the Academy may not enjoy what these modern horror films have to offer in terms of its content or that they are not what the typical Academy member is looking for in a film.

Despite this, it is a pleasant surprise to see that both "Nosferatu" and "The Substance" have been nominated in their respective categories. "Nosferatu" is nominated for cinematography, production design, makeup and hairstyling and costume design.

All of these are highly deserved since Eggers' take on the classic vampiric tale

tackles its dark romantic themes in such an ethereal and dream-like way. The gothic European setting is breathtaking and the costumes look like they are straight out from the time period. Of course, Bill Skarsgard's design as Count Orlok is outstanding. He is both creepy and unrecognizable.

"The Substance" has been nominated for best picture, best director, best actress, original screenplay and makeup and hairstyling. This film being nominated means so much because not only is it from an independent studio, but the movie's themes and content are executed effortlessly.

Demi Moore receiving her first Oscar nomination after working decades as an actress is wonderful to see and extremely deserved for her role as Elisabeth in this movie.

The film is directed in a way that expresses through so much emotion and many angles how one views and defines what is beautiful and what is hideous, which amplifies the movie's story about aging and societal beauty standards.

These two films being nominated is a big win for horror and is a hopeful sign that there will be more horror movie nominations in the future.

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

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

Email: sydney.allabaugh@wilkes.edu

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

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

The Icebox: A review of the hero-shooter game “Marvel Rivals”

By “Freeze”

Opinion Staff Writer

Skip the questions because you absolutely need to play this game. I was blown away the first time I played “Marvel Rivals,” and since then, I have been enjoying it almost every single day.

Unlike other games of its category, it’s actually super fun. As some of you may know, I am not a fan of online-pvp-shooters. However, “Marvel Rivals” takes only the good parts of the genre and smashes them together with their own unique style.

If you are familiar with Marvel-based video games, you will notice a common theme with the soundtrack, user interface, art styles and gameplay mechanics. “Marvel Rivals” pretty much incorporates the Marvel theme while including even more unique elements to separate it from the rest of Marvel media. This includes the art style and appearance of all the heroes in the game and some of their identities.

Now to explain what “Marvel Rivals” actually is... have you ever played

“Overwatch?” If you’ve heard of it then you might know that many people think negatively of such a game, as it is full of toxic players and microtransactions. However, “Marvel Rivals” became the sanctuary for “Overwatch” refugees to escape and enjoy their life as gamers once again. In this 6-vs-6 hero shooter, you can leap into battle as various Marvel heroes and villains to complete a given objective.

In a team of six, each player has an important role to play. There are three categories to choose from: Vanguard, Duelist, and Strategist.

The Vanguard is essentially a tank. If you play a tank character, your job is to cover the front lines and block as much incoming damage as possible. You are also responsible for holding objectives, pressuring healers and creating diversions. The tank rarely is the star of the show, and yet a team cannot win without them.

The next category is the Duelist, also known as the “damage per second” characters. These players are meant to get as many kills as possible by repeatedly damaging opponents

and picking them off one by one. A lot of their abilities are aggressive or movement-based. People have mixed feelings about the Duelist category. Some players are selfish and only lock in as Duelists while avoiding teamwork and ignoring the balance of power in a team. Others are not skilled enough at Duelist but refuse to try more heroes and end up throwing the game. Many Duelist players, including the skilled ones, are arrogant and uncooperative. The unspoken rule is that you should assume that everyone wants to play Duelist by default.

Finally, the Strategist category includes all of the healers. Their job is to stay in the back and heal their teammates and give them boosts in attack power, speed, health or general movement. Healers are extremely important to a team and can often double as Duelists in a match. Any match that is won is because the healer was there, backing up the rest of the force.

There are a few game modes available, some of which are season-based. The quick match and ranked matches include capturing objectives, moving a payload or defending a

site where a payload is being held. Players can also queue into matches against AI as a way of practicing and completing quests.

Quests can be completed for rewards that go toward sprays, emotes, skins and avatar decorations. The season pass only costs \$5 and does not expire if you pay a little extra for the premium season pass. This means even after the season is over, you can claim the rewards, as long as you purchased the premium pass.

You may be wondering what characters you should try out when you first launch the game. The one thing I can tell you is that at this moment people can use the phrase “when everyone is overpowered, no one is.” Pretty much every hero has something really good about them and it’s only a matter of learning what that tool is.

If you couldn’t guess, I am a Venom main. I also play both Peni Parker and Luna Snow as secondaries. I have yet to decide upon a Duelist main. I encourage you to find yourself a main in each category as well. You will have more fun by switching it up and adapting to your team, trust me.

“Better Man” review: The Robbie Williams biopic is worthwhile

By Natalia Williams

Life, Arts and Entertainment Staff Writer

On Jan. 17, the biopic “Better Man” about British pop star Robbie Williams was released, and in my opinion, the film was shockingly amazing.

The film follows the life of Williams from when he was a kid to about the middle of his career. The biopic was done very differently, however. Williams is played as a CGI monkey.

At first I was very confused as to why he was being portrayed as a monkey, but after researching and watching multiple interviews, both Williams and the director, Michael Gracey, explained it was to engage the audience in a more unique way, which I think worked really well.

I personally knew who Williams was due to my extensive knowledge of boy bands and pop stars from the U.K., but for those who aren’t sure who he is, Williams is ultimately one of the biggest artists the U.K. has seen. He holds multiple records and sold millions of albums.

Before his solo career, he started in the boyband Take That. After his time in Take That, he soared to the top of the pop music genre in Europe and tons of other places around the world as well, but he never reached that level of fame here in the United States.

Over winter break I was able to see the film, and to say I was shocked would be an understatement. In my personal rankings of all of the biopics I’ve seen so far, this one has definitely earned a spot in my top five. From the CGI monkey, to the way they told his story, I’ve never seen a film or biopic done like this before.

Starting from the beginning, it started with your typical biopic flow. The film, of course, started when he was a little boy. We got a glimpse of his relationship with his father when he was a child, which throughout the film shows he is the inspiration for him wanting to become an entertainer.

Then we get into his teenage years. We are shown the auditioning process for Take That and his ultimate rise to fame. In this part of the film, it highlights the start of his downfall

with drugs and alcohol, which progressively got worse as he got older. For example, there is a scene where he is on tour with Take That and he is clearly high on drugs and doesn’t do well in the show.

After being kicked out of Take That, he is now on his own and starts his journey to become a solo artist, which is the main chunk of the film.

There is a lot that goes on in this era that I can talk on and on about, but here are some of the highlights. We are shown his first real relationship with Nicole Appleton, which was extremely rocky due to Williams’ addiction. We see him complete his dream of performing at Knebworth, recovering from his addiction, and finally making amends with dad for being absent and performing with him.

The way they told some of the stories was very different from what I’ve seen.

For example, throughout the film, he is shown struggling with himself internally, like his inner demons. There are parts in the film where he is performing, and he is looking out at the crowd and seeing versions

of himself taunting him. I thought this was really cool because it showed viewers what was really going on in his head.

Another example of this is in the scene of him performing at Knebworth. Toward the end there is a battle scene between himself that shows a ton of CGI monkeys from different points of his career that he ultimately fights off. I haven’t seen storytelling in the biopics I’ve seen, so I thought that was very neat and interesting to see.

Another thing I thought was interesting was that they only covered his life from childhood to about the early 2000s. The ending scene is him performing at the Royal Albert Hall and that was in 2001. It would’ve been really cool to see how his life is now. Since the movie only covered up to 2001-ish, it didn’t show anything about his family now. He explained in his Netflix docuseries that his wife changed his life for the better, so I am shocked she didn’t make an appearance.

Overall, I 10/10 recommend this film. The storytelling and the uniqueness of the film is something I believe is 100 percent worth your time and attention.

The underqualified Trump admin and the meritocracy myth

It's time to stop baselessly demonizing DEI initiatives

By Sydney Allabaugh
Editor-in-Chief

When Donald Trump was first elected in 2016, he was the only president in recent history who had no political or military experience before entering the White House.

Now, during his second term, he has already enacted executive orders ditching Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) programs in favor of a “meritocracy,” while simultaneously appointing some of the most underqualified Cabinet members in recent history.

During his first day in office, Trump implemented an executive order titled “Ending Radical and Wasteful Government DEI Program and Preferencing,” which intends to terminate all federal DEI, DEIA and “environmental justice” offices and positions.

In another executive order titled “Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity,” the White House condemned the Civil Rights Act of 1964 for inspiring decades of “dangerous, demeaning, and immoral race- and sex-based preferences under the guise of so-called ‘diversity, equity, and inclusion.’”

The order argues that DEI policies “undermine the traditional American values of hard work, excellence, and individual achievement in favor of an unlawful, corrosive, and pernicious

identity-based spoils system.”

Meanwhile, the Senate confirmed Trump-appointed Pete Hegseth, a National Guard veteran and Fox News host, as defense secretary in an unusual 51-50 vote. Hegseth, who, according to his confirmation hearings, faces allegations of sexual misconduct and intoxication in the workplace, has no senior military, national security, or government experience and has the least overall military experience of any defense secretary in recent history.

He replaces retired four-star General Lloyd Austin, the first Black Secretary of Defense, who served in the military for 41 years and is the recipient of a Silver Star.

Other Cabinet picks include anti-vaccine activist Robert F. Kennedy Jr., who has spread unscientific health misinformation, to lead the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and Trump-ally Kristi Noem, who has little national security experience, to lead the Department of Homeland Security.

Various national security officials and political analysts argue Trump’s picks were selected based on friendship and loyalty rather than qualifications or merit. This can arguably be considered an example of a true “identity-based spoils system,” not a merit system.

Despite Trump’s claims that regulatory hiring initiatives, like DEI programs, prevent a meritocracy, his

administration, at best, demonstrates that a meritocracy cannot exist without regulation, and at worst, reveals that efforts to prioritize merit were a disingenuous ploy to allow and encourage intentional widespread discrimination.

According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, a “meritocracy” is a system in which those moved into positions of success, power and influence based on demonstrated abilities. Despite contradictory claims, meritocracy and DEI programs are not in opposition.

DEI programs intend to ensure fair treatment during the hiring and promotion process and that qualified members of certain identities are not discounted based on identity. These programs also provide additional support for marginalized groups, like flexible schedules for parents or accommodations for people with disabilities.

Some DEI initiatives are somewhat flawed in the execution as some programs fail to adequately address implicit bias, whether that be due to employers’ or employees’ unwillingness to challenge their beliefs or an insufficient budget that prevents the creation of meaningful change.

However, the Trump administration and its supporters do not commonly cite these flaws when condemning DEI programs. Instead, among these groups, the term “DEI” has almost become code

for “undeserving minority,” even when a candidate is qualified, and the values of diversity, equity and inclusion have become entirely demonized.

For example, former Vice President Kamala Harris, the Democratic presidential nominee in the 2024 election, was called a “DEI candidate” by some Republicans because she was a Black woman, despite Harris having decades of political experience in all three branches of government. As previously noted, Trump had no political experience when he was first elected.

On the Shawn Ryan Show podcast, Hegseth also disregarded merit when he claimed that he will fire top generals solely based on involvement in any “DEI-woke s---.”

DEI was to blame, once again, for the California wildfires and the recent D.C. plane crash, somehow.

When Trump was asked why he concluded diversity contributed to the crash, he said, “Because I have common sense.”

With an underqualified presidential administration that spews baseless anti-diversity rhetoric, it becomes obvious that anti-DEI initiatives are not intended to restore “values of hard work, excellence, and individual achievement” but to create a culture in which identity-based discrimination is the norm and power is only given to those who oblige.

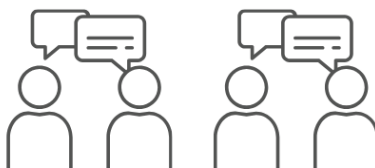
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Politics, culture, social issues

Reviewing music, books, movies

Columns, petitions, letters to the editor

The importance of art during these next four years

By Shawn Carey
Asst. Opinion Editor

As an aspiring author, I often find myself attending writing-related events, whether that be workshops, classes, discussions, etc.

Over winter break I attended one of Barnes & Noble “Midday Mystery Events,” a series of discussions featuring popular horror and mystery authors. The particular discussion I attended was focused around Clay McLeod Chapman’s newest novel “Wake Up and Open Your Eyes,” featuring the author himself.

Much like Chapman’s other works, “Wake Up and Open Your Eyes” is fairly political. One of the core themes of the book is the dangers of radicalization and the helplessness so many of us feel as our elders slip down dangerous fascism-lace rabbit holes. Ones that we cannot pull them out of.

A Q&A was held during the latter half of the discussion, and unsurprisingly, the questions asked were fairly political.

Most of the questions were pretty straightforward. “What events inspired you?” “Thoughts on the election?” “How much of the story was based on personal experiences?”

Out of all of the questions asked, there was only really one that really stood out to me. “How will the next four years affect the publishing industry?”

Clay told the audience member that he believes that we’ll see many new writers in the coming years. Writers influenced by our current political environment. While I agree with him, I believe that there’s more to it.

This goes far beyond just publishing. How will art as a whole be affected?

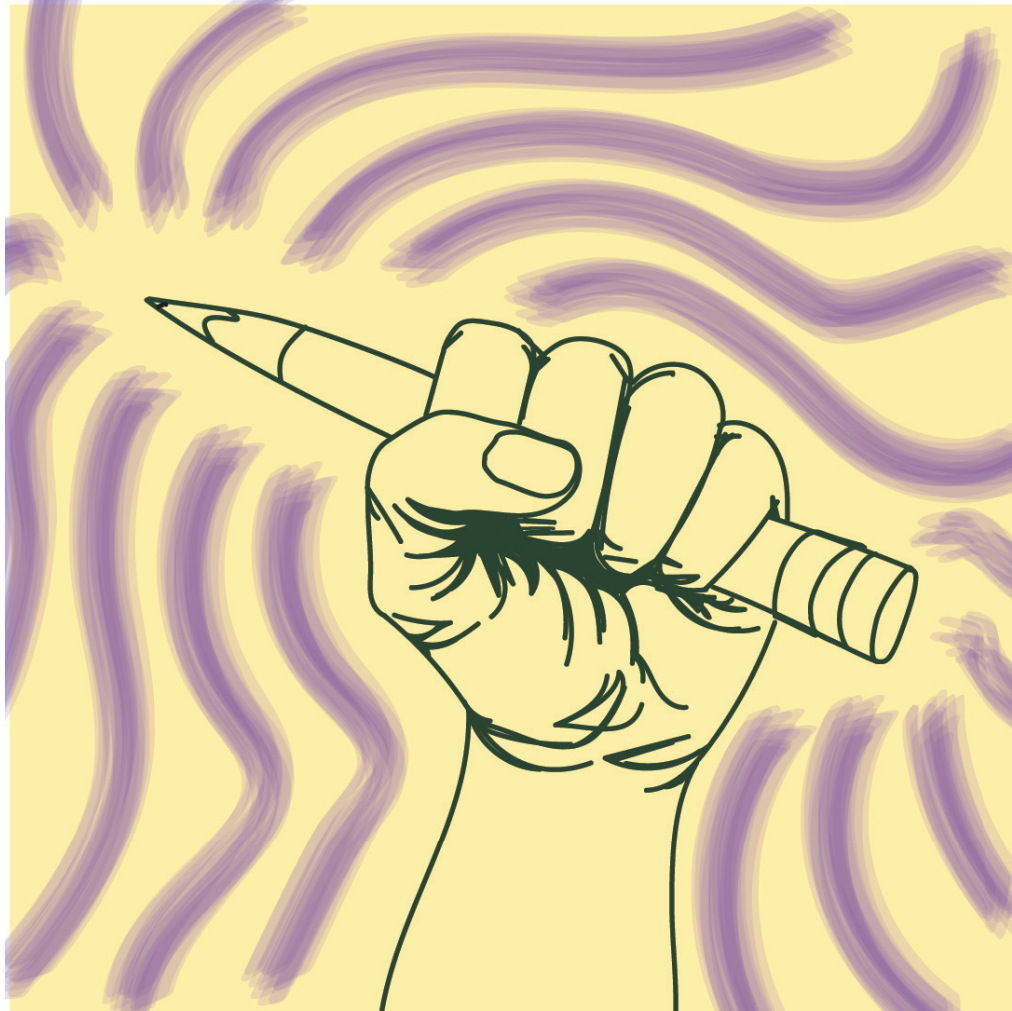
Now, I know, that’s a big question. I’m not a psychic. I can’t see the future. I don’t know for sure how things will change. I do, however, have some opinions on the subject.

Before I begin, I want to get something

out of the way. All art is political.

Every art project holds some political concern to a degree. To be an artist means to transfer everything that you are into your work. Even if you consider

of political cartoons, punk bands came out of retirement to do songs, TV shows were parodying him. Honestly, he was a bit of a punching bag.



yourself to be unpolitical, this in of itself is still a political statement. The simple action of educating yourself is political.

Something doesn’t have to be overly political to be political. I’ll return to this point later.

I believe that we’ll be seeing more of what we consider traditional political angst. Street art, punk music, modernist writing, all that good stuff. I don’t think this comes as a big surprise.

We saw an increase in political art just a few short years ago during Donald Trump’s first term. There were hundreds

I believe that Trump will once again be the main topic of protest. However, I believe that the manner is going to be taken more seriously. Less jokes about his tanned skin and tiny hands, and a greater focus on his followers and ideals.

With that being said, I do still believe that Trump is going to be the butt of many jokes. He has always been an extremely unserious person. He’s not exactly a beacon of hope.

I also believe that we’ll see an increase in creative works from marginalized

groups. People of color, women, LGBTQ+, low-income individuals, those with disabilities, and so on. Many of the orders Trump has signed during his short time in office have proved to be harmful to said groups. For example, he recently signed a bill limiting access to gender-affirming care for transgender individuals less than 19 years old.

Where there is oppression, there’s a story. Art is based on pain. I could see creatives wanting to share their personal feelings and experiences with a wide audience, a vast majority of which are most likely going through the same issues.

America has a long history of “dark ages.” Most of which were created by the elite. The Gilded Era, The Great Depression, The Civil War, and so on.

I would hate to sow fear but I see us entering another one of these dark ages soon. With that being said, there is a light.

Every dark age is followed by an explosion of art. The Modernist Movement, The Harlem Renaissance, Regionalism. There’s always a light at the end of a dark tunnel.

Which goes back to what I said earlier. All art is political.

No matter how hopeless things appear to be, there will always be people creating. The people in power want to be as obedient as possible, listening to everything they have to say. When we create art we create our own voices. No matter how insignificant it seems.

The next four years are going to be difficult. There’s no way around it. However, it’s something that we can get through. Art inspires us. It makes us think, which is what they’re afraid of the most.

As long as there’s people creating, there’s still hope for the future.

Graphic by Carol Stratford

A review of Mac Miller's posthumous album "Balloonerism"

An analysis of performance, features, production, replayability

By Logan Colonna

Asst. Opinion Editor

Coming five long years after his first posthumous album, Mac Miller's "Balloonerism" is finally here.

As some background knowledge on this project: Mac worked on it in 2014, but it was ultimately shelved for other releases. While he never released it on his own accord, the album was near and dear to his heart. Eleven years following the making of the album, we, as listeners, finally have it on streaming services.

If you're new to my reviews, I dive into certain areas of projects, like the artist's performance, the features of the album, the overall production and the replayability of the album, in order to give the album an accurate score.

Lastly, this is all my opinion. I may like or dislike the album more than you do, and that's okay.

I'm starting this off with Mac's performance throughout the record. First, I'd like to point out a few of my favorite songs and showcase them all.

First, "5 Dollar Pony Rides." This track was the lead single for the project, and people were somewhat divided on it. Some loved it while others weren't crazy about it. The main cause of this divide is the outro of the song. In the outro, Mac just kind of rambles, but I like it because of the way it sounds. He makes stupid things like that sound good for whatever reason. Besides that, the vibe he brings to the track overall is also a nice addition.

For any of these tracks, the rapping isn't out of the ordinary, but it's simple, which is much needed from time to time especially in the present.

Next, my favorite track, "Funny Papers." All throughout the track, Mac layers his vocals on top of each other, and I am quite the fan of it. It makes the track sound hallucinating, which is quite a "Mac Miller" thing to do. His vocals are also so calming, which yet again is a thing I welcome into my life after listening to hard rap my whole life.

Finally, we have a guilty pleasure of mine. When it comes to rap nowadays, I love anything that's slightly experimental. With that being said, we get Mac's alter-ego, Delusional Thomas, on the track. Essentially, he's the voice inside of Mac's head. With that, we get high-pitched vocals throughout the entire song. Something about it

Mac.

"DJ's Chord Organ" is much less of a SZA feature and more of her song, but her inclusion on it is beautiful. Per usual, SZA delivers with her vocals when going through her verse. The track as a whole is a nice song to get the listener prepped for what they're about to hear for the rest of the project.



scratches my brain the right way. I say this song is a guilty pleasure of mine because the content matter isn't the greatest. Just about every single line has something obscene about it.

Just from these few tracks, it's apparent that Mac showcased some of his better work here, as I liked just about everything that showed up in the project.

Next, we have a much shorter section as we talk about the features. The only features on the album are SZA and Dylan Reynolds (I'm not including Delusional Thomas here because it's literally just

Dylan Reynolds doesn't offer all too much for his feature. He does the chorus on "Manakins," but it is somewhat hard to pick out since Mac layers his vocals on top of it as well. Regardless, it's a nice inclusion to the track. The chorus definitely brings it all together. Both features bring positive notes to the album and are great additions in my opinion.

I'll admit, there is not all that much to say regarding the production of the project. There are a few standout tracks per usual but nothing that is extraordinary.

For starters, I love the instrumental from "Transformations." It's very sinister in nature, and I can tell the exact vibe that Mac was trying to attain with it. Instrument-wise, only a piano is played. The keys are played in a descending order to create a villainous vibe.

Next, we have "Manakins." Throughout the whole track, there is a harp constantly being strum to create quite the instrumental for the track. Besides that, you have the usual upbeat sounding production that Mac used in this era.

Lastly, I really enjoyed the instrumental from "Funny Papers." Yet again, a piano alongside other instruments are used here to create a chill beat that nearly puts a tear in my eye.

Overall, while it's not the greatest thing known to man, I still greatly appreciate the production we received on the album.

Since the project as a whole is slightly experimental, in regards to present day rap, I see the album as a whole to be very replayable. Even after a few listens of the album, I'm still finding new things to rave over in each track.

The track list is not bloated whatsoever as well. Clocking in at just under an hour with 14 tracks is not long in this day and age. With that, I find it no problem to revisit the album and still be encapsulated during the entire run time.

Because of that, I find the project's replayability to be great. My only complaint is that the run time can be slightly shorter, but it's not a pain to get through anyways.

Overall, this album is one of the better Mac Miller projects. Through the short but great list of features, to the simple vocals that Mac lays on each track, I adore this album from front to back. There are a few things here and there that bring the record down, but besides that, the album is great.

With that, I give Mac Miller's "Balloonerism" an 8 out of 10.

Graphic by Carol Stratford

Sports

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

Wilkes University winter sports catch up and recap

By Zachary Paraway
Sports Editor

Winter break does not signal the end of the sports season for Wilkes as many of the teams continue to compete over the break. Wrestling, men's and women's basketball, men's and women's swimming, men's and women's ice hockey and men's volleyball all competed in competition before students were back on campus.

Starting in wrestling, the team has continued its strong season, holding a 10-7 dual record.

During the break, they competed in the annual Wilkes Open and the Budd Whitehill duals. The Open saw two of Wilkes' wrestlers top home top three finishes in Sr. Cameron Butka in 197 and Sr. Caleb Burkhart in 285. Both had third place finishes. The duals saw the Colonels finish 2-3 with victories over Cortland and Messiah University. It was a break full of records of the team as multiple records were broken by the team.

Coach Jon Laudenslager now has 300 duals wins in his career; the second coach in Wilkes history. He is only behind Wilkes great John Resse for all time wins.

Another record broken came from Butka as the All-American is now the winningest wrestler in Wilkes history, now sitting at 123 wins. Burkhart, who sits at 114, could take second place before the end of his career, needing to reach 122 wins.

The team will compete on Feb. 8 as they travel for the Messiah Open.

On to basketball, where both the men's and women's team have competed over the break.

First with the women, the break was unfortunately rough to the team as they still search for their first win of the year.

Jr. Yamirelis Matos is having a good season, improving on her totals from last year to average 15 points, 7 rebounds, and 1.7 assists. The team will play again on Feb. 5 when they host the University of Scranton

in the first match of a home double header.

The men's team went into the break streaking at 8-1, and while they have cooled off, they are still having a good season. They sit at 14-5 overall and third in the Landmark Conference, only sitting behind Drew College and Catholic University.

Since the start of the break, they have gone 7-4 with close losses to the aforementioned Drew, King's College and Susquehanna University.

The team has multiple strong performers at the moment, none better than Jr. Lucas Lesko. The forward is averaging 21 points per game with 7 rebounds and 2.3 assists. He and Sr. Cayden Merrifield made history recently when they crossed the 1,000 mark for their careers. They crossed the barrier in the Palestra Arena in a win against Elizabethtown College.

The two became the 37th and 38th players in program history to reach the milestone.

The team will play again on Feb. 5 when they host the University of Scranton in the second match of a home double header.

The swim teams just wrapped up their regular seasons, with now only the Landmark Championships left. In meets from this past season, the men's team sits at 8-2 while the women's team sits at 3-6-1

Both ice hockey teams are having amazing seasons, with both teams at the time of writing being ranked in the top 25 by the NCAA PairWise system. Both also sit at first within the MAC on their respective sides.

First to the men; they sit currently at 12-7-2, 12-3-2 in the MAC, and are tied for 23rd by the system. They opened 2025 ranked 10th in United States College Hockey Association's first poll of the year, but have since fallen out. A team thought to be susceptible to taking a step back this year, the team has rallied around with their younger talent, with many of their top performers being juniors.

Among those juniors include Matt

Carlson, who is coming off of being the MAC Offensive Player of the Week. Carlson had four points in the past week, including a one goal, two assist performance in a win against Arcadia.

With four games left in their season, they will travel next to play Lebanon Valley College on Feb. 7.

Not to be outdone, the women's team is sitting at 16-4, sitting at 14th in the PairWise and receiving four votes in the latest USCHO poll.

After a slower start to the season against tough competition, the team has caught fire in the past few months. They were 11-1 in the months of December and January combined, and have been 13-1 since Nov. 16. The wins were in dominating fashion as well, with only one of those wins coming in a one point game. The team has improved off of a strong year last year, doing so with a young core of many first-years and sophomores.

Like the men, the women also have a

reigning MAC player of the week in first-year Nina Hudáková, winning Offensive Player of the Week. She gets her award after a three goal weekend in their sweep of Alvernia. With five games left in the season, they will get ready for a home weekend set of hosting Arcadia and LVC.

And finally, men's volleyball set their season in motion over the break and are off to a rough start. Coming off of two great seasons for the program, they are sitting at 4-7 at the time of writing. This is after a 2-7 start to the season, but they have turned it around with back-to-back wins over Penn State Altoona and Saint Vincent College. It is still early in the season so their story is far from over.

They will play next at home against Virginia Wesleyan University on Feb. 7.

As the seasons are wrapping for the Colonels, follow along online at gowilkesu.com.

Photo by Andrew Marshallsay



Jr. Lucas Lesko and Sr. Cayden Merrifield both celebrate reaching the 1000 point milestone in their win against Elizabethtown.

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Wilkes-Barre/Scranton Penguins: Mid-season recap

By Andrew Marshallsay
News Asst. Editor

With the 2024-25 AHL season past its midway point, the standings are ever changing, and newcomers are making a name for themselves. Here at home, the Wilkes-Barre/Scranton Penguins are making this season one to remember.

The boys in Black and Gold are looking to make the playoffs for the second consecutive season, which would be their first back-to-back playoff appearance since 2018.

Led by a new head coach in Kirk MacDonald, the team is looking to make it to the Calder Cup Playoffs for the second consecutive season and the first time since

2018. MacDonald took over head coaching duties after the Penguins decided against resigning former head coach J.D. Forrester.

Led by a group of newcomers, the offensive side of the game has been highly successful. Boasting one of the youngest forward cores in the American Hockey League, the Penguins have seen high-flying efforts from Emil Bemstrom, Vasily Ponomarev, Boris Katchuk, as well as rookies Rutger McGroarty and Ville Koivunen.

All five players mentioned have registered hat tricks and multiple multi-point games this season. In total, the Penguins have scored seven hat tricks, marking a new franchise record for most in a season. During the Jan. 29 win against the Hershey Bears, the Baby

Pens also recorded two hat tricks in the same game for the first time in team history.

Bemstrom leads the Penguins in points, as well as boasting the second best scoring totals in the league. Katchuk, who has emerged as one of the Penguins' most important leaders at just 27 years old, is third on the team in scoring.

Koivunen is second on the team in points, and leads all AHL rookies in scoring. Ponomarev is fourth on the team in scoring, while McGroarty is tied for fifth in team scoring.

On the defensive side of the game, which has been a historically strong position for the team, the Penguins have another group of newcomers in Mac Hollowell, Filip Kral and

Dan Renouf.

Hollowell currently leads Penguins defensemen in points and games played, while Kral and Renouf are second and third in scoring among defensemen, respectively

The Penguins' goaltender room has seemed like a revolving door at times, but through it all, consistency has been the name of the game. Before being called back up to the Pittsburgh Penguins, Joel Blomqvist (6-4-2) boasted a 2.93 GAA and SV% of .912 before his second call up of the season.

In his second stint of the season with WBS, Tristan Jarry (5-3-0) sits with a SV% of .913 and a GAA of 2.37. Rookie netminder Sergei Murashov is making a name for himself this season as well.

After being called up to the AHL from the ECHL's Wheeling Nailers, Murashov has won every game in his young AHL career thus far. In five games, he has a perfect 5-0-0 record with a GAA of 1.60, a SV% of 0.947 and a shutout. He recorded his first career shutout in the 9-0 win over Hershey on Jan. 29.

Filip Larsson (7-4-1) has been solid as well, but currently is on the injury report after being forced to exit the final game of the Penguins' recent Canadian road trip. Larsson had a SV% of 0.929 and a 2.37 GAA before his injury.

With the All Star Classic this year, the Penguins are represented by Bemstrom and defenseman Owen Pickering. Pickering has spent the most time in Pittsburgh this season, and is currently in his second stint with WBS this season.

The Penguins return to play on Feb. 7 when they host the Bridgeport Islanders. Currently sitting in fourth place in the Atlantic Division, the Penguins currently sit with 52 points and nine points behind first-place Hershey. However, the Penguins have played the least amount of games in their division, giving them six games in hand over the Bears.

B L E E D

2024 2025
G O L D

S C H E D U L E

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| 13 SPR 3:05 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 LV 7:05 | 19 LV 7:05 |
| 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 SYR 7:00 | 26 SYR 6:05 |
| 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 BRI 7:00 | 31 | | |

| NOV _ 24 | | | | | | |
|----------|-----|-----|------------|-----|-------------|-------------|
| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
| | | | | | 1 | 2 HFD 6:05 |
| 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 LV 7:05 | 7 | 8 LV 7:05 | 9 ROC 6:05 |
| 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 LV 7:05 | 14 | 15 | 16 BRI 6:05 |
| 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 BRI 7:05 | 23 |
| 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 LAV 7:05 | 30 HER 7:00 |

| DEC _ 24 | | | | | | |
|-------------|-----|-----|-------------|-----|-------------|-------------|
| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 HER 7:05 | 5 | 6 | 7 HFD 6:00 |
| 8 PRO 3:05 | 9 | 10 | 11 CLT 7:05 | 12 | 13 CLT 7:05 | 14 SPR 6:05 |
| 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 TOR 7:05 | 19 | 20 | 21 LV 6:05 |
| 22 HER 5:00 | 23 | 24 | | 26 | 27 LV 7:05 | 28 HER 7:00 |
| 29 | 30 | 31 | | | | |

| JAN _ 25 | | | | | | |
|-------------|-----|-----|-------------|-----|-------------|-------------|
| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
| | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 CLT 7:05 |
| | | | | | | HFD 6:05 |
| 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 TOR 7:00 | 9 | 10 BEL 7:00 | 11 |
| 12 BEL 3:00 | 13 | 14 | 15 LAV 7:00 | 16 | 17 | BEL 6:05 |
| 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 UTC 7:00 | 25 UTC 6:05 |
| 26 LV 3:05 | 27 | 28 | 29 HER 7:05 | 30 | 31 CLT 7:00 | |

| FEB _ 25 | | | | | | |
|-------------|-----|-------------|-------------|-----|-------------|-------------|
| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
| | | | | | | 1 CLT 6:00 |
| 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 BRI 7:05 | 8 CLE 6:05 |
| 9 | 10 | 11 HER 7:00 | 12 | 13 | 14 LV 7:05 | 15 HER 6:05 |
| 16 LV 3:05 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 HFD 7:00 | 22 SPR 7:05 |
| 23 PRO 3:05 | 24 | 25 | 26 ROC 7:05 | 27 | 28 SYR 7:00 | |

| MAR _ 25 | | | | | | |
|-------------|-----|-----|-------------|-----|-------------|-------------|
| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
| | | | | | | 1 HER 7:00 |
| 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 HFD 7:00 | 8 BEL 6:05 |
| 9 SYR 3:05 | 10 | 11 | 12 HER 7:05 | 13 | 14 LV 7:05 | 15 |
| 16 LV 3:05 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 PRO 7:05 | 22 HER 6:05 |
| 23 BRI 3:00 | 24 | 25 | 26 HFD 7:05 | 27 | 28 | 29 CLT 4:00 |
| 30 | 31 | | | | | |

| APR _ 25 | | | | | | |
|-------------|-----|-----|-------------|-----|-------------|-------------|
| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 CLE 7:00 | 5 CLE 7:00 |
| 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 HER 7:05 | 12 SPR 6:05 |
| 13 BRI 3:00 | 14 | 15 | 16 PRO 7:05 | 17 | 18 HER 7:00 | 19 CLE 6:05 |

HOME AWAY

ALL GAMES ARE LOCAL [ET]

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Athlete of the Week

Nina Hudakova

Freshman, Forward, Women's Ice Hockey



The Beacon: Female Athlete of the Week

Hudakova netted three goals on 10 shots in the weekend sweep of Alvernia. She opened her account on Friday, scoring the winning goal that sealed a 2-1 victory. In the 5-1 win on Saturday, Hudakova added two more on six shots.

Major: Sports Management
Hometown: Kosice, Slovakia

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

Beating our biggest rival in the conference Arcadia twice in a row.

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

Washington Capitals

What is your favorite thing to do away from sports?

Spending time with my family, friends and reading books.

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

Being part of the team which is full of my best friends.

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

"Miracle"

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

Tennis

What has been your favorite sports memory overall?

Winning bronze medal at Youth Olympic Games with my National team in 2020

What is your favorite post-game meal?

Caesar Salad

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

It's a huge honor and I'm really grateful for that, but it definitely wouldn't be possible without amazing support from my teammates and coaches.

Compiled by Samantha Mullen, Asst. Sports Editor

The Beacon//Samantha Mullen

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

Athlete of the Week

Cameron Butka

Senior, Men's Wrestling

The Beacon: Male Athlete of the Week

Butka broke the Wilkes Wrestling record for career wins at the John Reese Duals, extending his win total to 123 with two wins and a forfeit victory against Scranton earlier in the week.

Major: Bio-Chemistry

Hometown: Scranton, Pa

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

My favorite wrestling memory was placing fourth at nationals last year.

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

To be honest, I don't really have a favorite sports team. If I had to choose, it would have to be the Wilkes University Colonels Wrestling Team.

What is your favorite thing to do away from sports?

My favorite things to do away from sports are to go to the gym and play video games.

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

My favorite part of being an athlete at Wilkes is being around my teammates, who are basically my second family.

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

My favorite sports movie is "Happy Gilmore."

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

If I wasn't wrestling, I'd most likely be playing baseball. I have actually been a baseball player longer than I have been a wrestler.

What has been your favorite sports memory overall?

My favorite sports memory of all time was winning my quarter finals match at nationals last year to become an All-American.

What is your favorite post-game meal?

My favorite post match meal is penne vodka with chicken.

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

I am extremely grateful to be selected as the Beacon's Athlete of the Week, and I take pride in representing the Wilkes University Wrestling Team.

Compiled by Samantha Mullen, Assistant Sports Editor

The Beacon/Sam Mullen

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





HOME // FEB. 5TH 8 PM VS UNIVERSITY OF SCRANTON / LANDMARK
FEB. 8TH 4 PM @ SUSQUEHANNA UNIVERISTY / LANDMARK
HOME // FEB. 12TH 7 PM VS DREW UNIVERSITY
HOME // FEB. 15TH 4 PM VS ELIZABETHTOWN COLLEGE (SENIOR DAY)
FEB. 19TH 7 PM @ MORAVIAN UNIVERISTY / LANDMARK
FEB. 22ND 4 PM @ GOUCHER COLLEGE / LANDMARK

WILKES MEN'S BASKETBALL

SPRING 2025



HOME // FEB. 8TH 3:30 PM VS ARCADIA UNIVERISTY (DIFD MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS GAME) / MAC
HOME // FEB. 9TH 3:30 PM VS LEBANON VALLEY COLLEGE / MAC
FEB. 14TH 7 PM @ KING'S COLLEGE (PA) / MAC
FEB. 15TH 6 PM @ ALVERNIA UNIVERSITY / MAC
FEB. 21ST 3:15 PM @ HOOD COLLEGE / MAC

WILKES WOMEN'S ICE HOCKEY

SPRING 2025