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The news of today reported by the journalists of tomorrow.

Daunte Wright's death creates unrest throughout the country

By Sara Ross
Co-News Editor

On April 11, the death of a Black man occurred at the hands of police in Minnesota. After being pulled over in his car, 20-year-old Daunte Wright was fatally shot by an officer who, while reaching for her Taser, pulled out her handgun and shot Wright.

Protests and rallies have arisen in Minneapolis and other cities in support of Wright. A video has been released as well from a body camera, capturing Kim Potter, the officer who shot Wright, firing her weapon.

Wilkes University's Chief of Police Michael Krzywicki commented on how the body camera's footage will help investigators understand how this situation went wrong in a short time frame.

"Police departments have strict policies and procedures when it comes to weapons they use to diffuse situations," said Krzywicki. "A Taser is a weapon, and all police departments require that officers follow strict policies on their usage."

Initially, Wright was pulled over for an expired tag on his license plate, but officers then learned he had an outstanding warrant for a gross misdemeanor. The footage shows Wright stepping out of his vehicle and starting to get handcuffed.

He then gets back into his car to leave the scene, prompting Potter to discharge her Taser. However, she accidentally shoots Wright with her firearm instead. Wright was able to drive his car for a few blocks before crashing into another vehicle. He was pronounced dead at the scene.

A few days after the incident, Potter resigned, along with Tim Gannon, the chief of police for the Brooklyn Center Police Department.

This instance does raise questions about the use of Tasers and police training. Sergeant Leonard Lombardo, another member of Wilkes' campus police department, trains and certifies officers for the university.

"Officers are taught to carry a Taser on their 'weak side,' opposite of their firearm," said Lombardo. "This is done to reduce the risk of an officer drawing their firearm instead of

their Taser. Although there have been some documented cases of this occurring, it is very rare."

Lombardo revealed that there are two methods for carrying a Taser. One is the cross-draw method, where the officer will reach with their dominant hand across to their weak side to draw the weapon. In the second method, the officer draws and uses the weapon with their weak hand; however, Lombardo claims this is typically less effective, and officers can have trouble controlling their weapons in high-stress situations.

Officers are instructed to say, "Taser up," when pulling a Taser from its holster. This is to make all officers at the scene, as well as the suspect, aware that a Taser is activated and may be deployed. According to Lombardo, officers are also instructed to say, "Taser, Taser, Taser" before firing the weapon.

In the case of Wright, Gannon did tell the press that words were shouted by Potter before accidentally firing her handgun instead, and it is heard in the footage. He further explained that his officers are trained to carry their firearms on their dominant side and their Tasers on their weak side.

"The Taser, although not entirely risk-free,

has proven to have less stress on the body than a physical confrontation," said Lombardo. "For that reason, Tasers have greatly reduced injuries in officers, as well as suspects, when attempting to arrest a resistant person."

Wright was killed by a single shot of Potter's firearm, and in the footage, Gannon informed the press that he could hear Potter's reaction and that he believes that it was an accident.

With that being said, there have been conflicting views about what happened. Many, including some Wilkes students and staff, see this event as another death of a person of color due to an encounter with police.

"Daunte Wright's murder is another painful and tragic example of the racism and unfair treatment that black Americans face every day," said Anna Seamon, junior environmental engineering major.

Seamon mentioned how police officers across the United States continuously show that they are unable to remain calm under any sort of pressure. She believes that police consistently fail to protect black Americans and have a long-documented history of actively causing them harm, including killing them unjustly and without cause.

Further, first-year political science student

Katie Ermeus feels drained by the unfortunate news of Wright's death. She claims that this should not be our country's reality.

"Just last year, 10 miles away from where (Wright) was killed, we all witnessed George Floyd's death on camera," said Ermeus. "We are past the 'raise awareness' stage of this. It is very clear what is happening. The videos show it. Now is the time to take reformative action."

Senior digital design media art and marketing major Xavier Abdella recognizes that being a police officer is a difficult task. Still, it is hard for Abdella to understand how Potter, a 26-year member of the police force who has been trained to identify her equipment, made a mistake to this degree.

"Daunte Wright, Adam Toledo and Anthony Alvarez were all young men who have been the victims of police violence this week," said Abdella. "I believe thorough systematic change is needed with law enforcement in this country."

Dr. Helen Davis, associate professor of English, spoke out as well and also noted that the scene occurred roughly 10 miles away from where Derek Chauvin is on trial for the death of Floyd.

"Floyd's girlfriend was Wright's teacher," said Davis. "It's not just individual people or families who are devastated by these deaths; there are communities that have experienced tragic, unnecessary loss over and over while enduring all of the other continuous impacts of systemic racism."

Since his death, Wright's family has not been able to accept that this was an accident and hired civil rights lawyer Benjamin Crump to represent them in court.

The Floyd family has shown their support to the Wright family and joined them in speaking out about Wright's death. Both families are looking for Potter to be held accountable.

Potter has been charged with second-degree manslaughter and made her first appearance in court on April 15. Potter's next court date is scheduled for May 17.



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Graphic by Anna Culver

News

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

Visit from Howard Norman concludes spring writers series

By Sean Schmoyer

Co-News Editor

The Allan Hamilton Dickson Spring Writers Series allows students and community members to meet authors and attend workshops and readings to improve their own creative processes. Howard Norman concluded the series this past week.

Norman is a National Book Award Finalist, a three-time winner of National Endowment for the Arts fellowships and a winner of the Lannan Award for fiction. He has been at the University of Maryland and the New York Summer Writers Institute for 30 years.

On April 14, Norman joined Wilkes students for a fiction workshop. Students were given a prompt from Norman prior to the workshop: "Write the opening paragraph about the most remarkable thing you learned about a member of your family (living or dead) and tell how – exactly – you learned it." Norman added that including dialogue would be beneficial.

Norman later read from his memoir, "The Wound is the Place the Light Enters You," which is a current work in progress about his friendship with painter Jake Berthot.

"Jake Berthot died at the age of 75 in 2014," said Norman. "One of my dearest and closest friends, we had an epistolary life amongst everything else. Of the hundreds of letters and dozens and dozens of visits and times together, this book is really a very brief memoir. Its narrative framework is the last full night I visited with (Berthot), a couple weeks before he died."

Despite focusing on that last visit, Norman explained that it also intertwines other stories of their time together. The section Norman read was from a chapter that focuses on one of their earlier interactions in the 1990s. It focused on the story behind a drawing of Berthot's, which was of a woman staring at a gravestone.

"It was a great opportunity and privilege to hear Howard Norman speak," said Vivian Novitski, sophomore English major. "His reading from his most recent memoir, "The Wound is the Place the Light

Enters You," was raw and a true reflection of the complexities of life, death and the meaning of friendship. Having him share his knowledge and experience in the literary arts was invaluable to me as a student, and I'm grateful to Dr. (Mischelle) Anthony and the English

Department for making it possible."

After his reading, Norman discussed the experience of turning his friendship with Berthot into a memoir.

For his final activity, Norman joined the ENG 397: "Studies in Postmodernism" course taught by Dr. Lawrence Kuhar.

"Since there's only about seven of us in the class, we are really able to interact one-on-one with the writer and share our specific thoughts and questions with them, which is really fun and informative," said Nicole McNelis, junior English major. "(Norman) was awesome at answering questions in great detail and telling stories about his works in a way

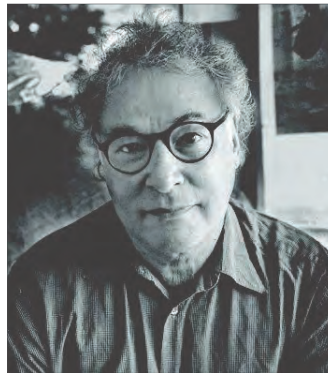
that keeps your attention the entire time. He is a wise writer with a large scope of knowledge and experience, and I can't wait to read more of his works."

During the class, students reviewed and discussed translated work Norman did with Lucille Amorak, a contemporary Inuit poet. The works translated were Amorak's, and Norman emphasized that work involved with translating from a Native language to English is inexact and that conversation is important.

In previous years, authors would join English students and professors for dinner. Norman expressed interest in coming back in the future to have a meal with students.

"It was nice to be back in touch with students," said Norman. "They were lively and direct and talkative, which was great."

English students who attended the events were able to choose between three of Norman's works: either the novel, "Next Life Might Be Kinder," or one of his memoirs, "I Hate to Leave This Beautiful Place" and "In Fond Remembrance of Me."



Howard Norman
Photo from wilkes.edu

Student Government: April 14 weekly meeting notes

By Maddy Kinard

News Staff Writer

Student Government held its 11th virtual meeting, in which there were fund requests for the American Society of Mechanical Engineers car show and Reserve Officers' Training Corps field training, as well as a vote on the Block Party fund request and Executive Board nominations.

ASME presented on its fund request for a mobile dyno to increase entertainment, attendance and profits for the group's 14th annual car show. A portion of the money raised will be donated to Veteran's Promise. ASME is asking for \$2,000, which would include the price to rent the mobile dyno and to create a banner with a "Thank you" message to SG for the dyno sign-up table. SG will vote next week.

ROTC presented a fund request for a field training exercise. This is a way for underclassmen to practice some of the skills they are taught during ROTC training. If they

were able to partake in this exercise, cadets could use all their skills at the same time, which would enable them to be prepared and on par with their fellow cadets who they compete against across the country. Wilkes does not have the facility to hold this type of exercise. ROTC is looking to hold the training at either Paintball Asylum or Skirmish Paintball, where the cost is \$30 a person. In total, the fund request is looking to be between \$500 to \$1,000 to lower the cost of attendance for the cadets. Their request will be voted on at the next meeting.

Block Party will be held on April 24 from 12 to 4 p.m. on both sections of the Greenway. Activities include lawn games and scavenger

hunts, as well as food from Tony Wallace on the grill and Pete Webby's Food Truck. T-shirts will be given away, along with a TV, Nintendo Switch, kayak and other prizes. A motion was made to vote, and it passed, allocating the full amount of \$8,250.

Nominations were then made for the 2021-2022 Student Government Executive Board positions. Justin Glidden, a junior class representative, and Executive Treasurer Ben Wojciechowski were nominated for executive vice president; Allie Faunce, a junior class representative, was nominated as executive treasurer; Danielle Morris, a sophomore representative, and Mia Rubino, a first-year representative, were nominated for executive

corresponding secretary. The position of executive reporting secretary is still open and will be revisited at the next meeting.

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EES students direct a nature event for Boy and Girl Scouts

By Genny Frederick
Asst. News Editor

Senior earth and environmental science students planned, directed and presented an event entitled, “Celebrate a Day in Nature.” The goal of this event was to introduce Boy and Girl Scouts to geoscience concepts and to foster an interest in pursuing geoscience majors as they consider future education.

The day consisted of three different activities for scouts to participate in, with topics including land use, water quality and geology. The event was held at Frances Slocum State Park using on-site

landmarks, such as the Frances Slocum Historic rock shelter and Frances Slocum Lake, to teach scouts.

Macroinvertebrates collected from the lake, along with dissolved oxygen and pH measurements, were taken to explain to students how water quality impacts organisms.

The structure of the rock shelter was used as an in-person diagram for geology lessons, and land cover maps of the park and surrounding areas were used for land cover activities.



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Ryan Wysocki, Colin Ahrensfeld and Eric Mountain, senior earth and environmental science majors, showed Girl Scouts the geologic history of the region.



Girl Scouts analyzed various fossil samples presented by the Wilkes EES students.



Maps of land use and land cover of the Frances Slocum State Park were studied.



Senior earth and environmental science major Lucas Snedeker demonstrated to scouts how to use and read pH meters.



Kayla Eller, senior earth and environmental science major, taught scouts how to find macroinvertebrates within the collected water samples.

Photos courtesy of Dr. Julie McMonagle, lecturer and lab manager for the Environmental Engineering and Earth Sciences Department

Life, Arts & Entertainment

Have any events or artists to be shared? Contact life, arts & entertainment editor: Emily.Cherkauskas@wilkes.edu

Civic Engagement Office hosts various Food Dignity Projects *Bringing love to the community through the means of donating food*

By Jordan Daniel

Asst. Life, Arts & Entertainment Editor

The Civic Engagement Office at Wilkes University has been hosting Food Dignity Projects for about the past six years, and they are always in need of volunteers. Almost every club on campus and many student-athletes have teamed up with the Civic Engagement Office to help with some of the Food Dignity Projects.

“Everyone deserves to have the healthy food they need,” said Clancy Harrison, founder of Food Dignity Projects. “But every day, one in four Americans goes hungry. Worse, many won’t admit it because of stigma and shame. This is called hidden hunger — and when even one person feels it, we’re all worse off.”

Harrison founded Food Dignity Projects in March of 2020. However, the work has been ongoing for 10 years.

The Food Dignity Projects exist through

the Al Beech Food Pantry based in Kingston. The pantry’s location is on a bus route, so if students do not have their cars on campus, they can take the bus. The city buses are free for students if they show their Wilkes ID.

“The Food Dignity Projects are always looking for volunteers,” said Megan Boone Valkenburg, Wilkes’ civic engagement coordinator. “There’s a set schedule and a website for those volunteers to sign-up. But any given Wednesday, if a student has time to go over and distribute meals to families, they can absolutely sign-up and go there.”

If people are interested in being a volunteer for one or multiple events of the Food Dignity Projects, they can contact Valkenburg at megan.boone@wilkes.edu.

Some of the events that are a part of the Food Dignity Projects, in which students have helped out, are Commission on Economic Opportunity, Lasagna Love and Fork Over Love.

CEO fills supplemental food for families

who are often food insecure, but most of the time the food goes to the elderly people in the community who are also food insecure. Usually, clubs of 10 to 12 students will help out with CEO.

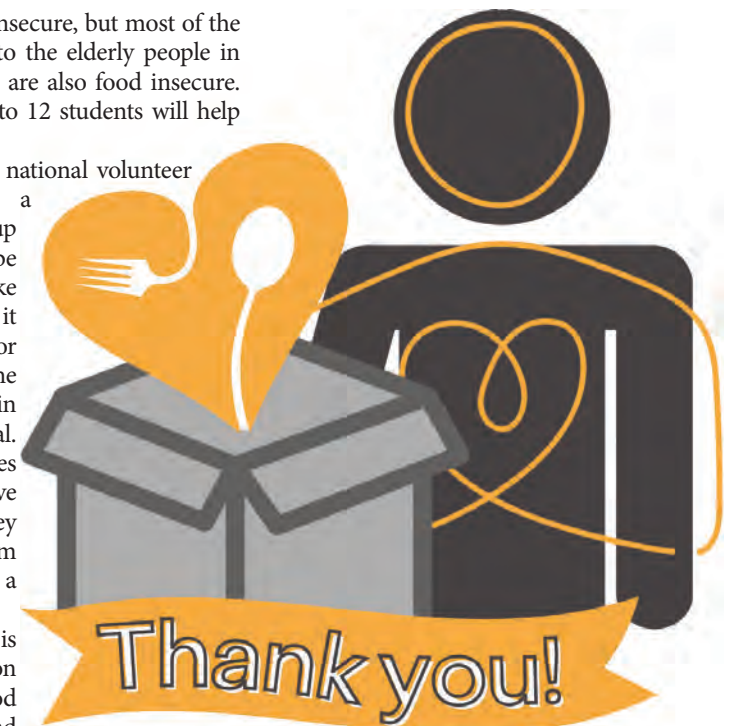
Lasagna Love is a national volunteer organization where a person can sign-up on the website to be a volunteer to bake a lasagna, wrap it up and deliver it for another person in the community who is in need of a hot meal. Students sometimes even sign-up to receive a lasagna when they miss being away from home and having a home cooked meal.

Fork Over Love is a local organization that has free food distribution days, and they partner with area restaurants by paying them a set fee to make dinners for people in the community. Community members sign up online and go on the distribution day where volunteers put the cooked meals in their cars.

Additionally, for \$10 a student can sponsor a family member in the community to receive meals on the Fork Over Love website. This program brings the community together and supports the local restaurants financially, especially since many of them are struggling due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“I knew that we needed to find a way to help those who were struggling in our community as a result of the pandemic, particularly our small, local restaurants and the growing number of people who lost their jobs, as well as those whose lives were turned upside-down by all of the changes that occurred since March of last year,” said Tracy Selingo, founder of Fork Over Love and chair on the Board of Directors. “There is not a person on the planet who has not experienced some type of change over the last year.”

The Civic Engagement Office is working



FOOD DIGNITY PROJECTS

AL BEECH FOOD PANTRY

COMMISSION ON
ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

FORK OVER LOVE

LASAGNA LOVE

megan.boone@wilkes.edu

with the YMCA on another program in relation to the other Food Dignity Projects, which will operate like a free pop-up market. It will be open to the public as well as to students, and they will go to the YMCA where there will be a set list of items for anyone to take.

“With the market idea, you can go see what is being offered and make the choice of what you’re going to take,” said Valkenburg. “There will be dairy and produce and eggs, so there is the ability for you to choose, but it is healthier. It’s not just spaghetti. It’s not just rice-a-roni or ramen. Although, we know you all love your ramen.”

If you want to sign up as a volunteer for any of these programs, you can visit the websites below: Food Dignity Projects, located at fooddignityproject.com; CEO, located at ceopeoplehelpingpeople.org/weinberg_northeast_regional_food_bank; Lasagna Love, located at lasagnalove.org; and Fork Over Love, located at forkoverlove.org.



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Graphics by Emily Cherkaukas

Wilkes accepting nominations for historic Multicultural Awards

By Judah Nicole Lyles
Staff Writer

On a campus like Wilkes University's, recognizing champions of diversity is an essential part of keeping the community intact. Every year since 2008, Wilkes has recognized important figures of the community with Multicultural Awards, and this year is no different with nominations open until April 21.

The nominations have slowly but surely grown from acknowledging only a few students and staff to having acknowledged seven members of the Wilkes community last year. This year, the nominations are continuing in a remote format.

Wilkes has many reasons to continue acknowledging and encouraging diversity within its community, but there is one reason that stands out, as it is crucial to acknowledge Wilkes' status as a predominantly White institution. Predominantly White institutions are classified by the amount of diversity present within the school; this is measured in many different ways, but a crucial system is the Herfindahl Hirschman Index.

The HHI measures diversity within many different environments, including the competitiveness of a business market or the biological makeup of an ecological system.

Priceonomics, a collection of writers, data scientists, engineers and analysts, breaks down multiple aspects of diversity.

"To quantify the ethnic/racial diversity on college campuses, we used five racial/ethnic categories identified in the government's College Scorecard data: White, Black, Hispanic, Asian and Other. The Other category includes anyone who identified as more than one race/ethnicity or a race/ethnicity not included in the list, and anyone who did not provide their race/ethnicity," according to Priceonomics' Data Studio. "We excluded any colleges that were not geared towards undergraduates, had fewer than 500 students or for which the College Scorecard did not have data on the racial composition of their student body."

Wilkes University, while a liberal arts school, is geared heavily toward and known most notably for its STEM programs. This lends itself to marketing toward students who have resources readily available to them to prepare themselves for college. Whether this comes in the form of SAT Prep or the ability to take AP Tests, students of color are inherently at a disadvantage.

In terms of SAT scores, students of color struggle most notably with math scores, which is an essential subject to succeed with any STEM field.

Brookings Institution, a nonprofit public policy organization based in Washington,

D.C., presents an interesting reason for this divide.

"Black and Hispanic or Latino students routinely score lower on the math section of the SAT — a likely result of generations of exclusionary housing, education and economic policy — which too often means that, rather than reducing existing race gaps, using the test in college admissions reinforces them," reported Brookings research assistant Ember Smith and senior fellow Richard Reeves in their December 2020 article.

Wilkes University's enrolled population is reflective of this struggle, according to Data USA.

Per Data USA's findings, "The enrolled student population at Wilkes University is 76.6 percent White, 5.53 percent Hispanic or Latino, 5.36 percent Black or African American, 2.61 percent Asian, 2.56 percent two or more races, 0.15 percent American Indian or Alaska Native and 0.0641 percent Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islanders. This includes both full-time and part-time students, as well as graduate and undergraduates."

Because of this, there is an important need for diversity, as well as acknowledgement of said diversity, and Wilkes' multicultural nominations are the key to bringing

campus awareness to that need.

The nominations are available to many members of the Wilkes community.

The Global Scholar and Citizen Award is for a student demonstrating significant contributions toward raising international awareness at Wilkes through involvement in campus and community activities promoting cross-cultural awareness. The Wilkes Diversity and Inclusion Student Award is for a student who has contributed to improving the diversity climate.

The Wilkes Executive Diversity Award is available for a member of the Board of Trustees or the administration who has contributed to improving the diversity climate. The Wilkes Diversity Staff Award is for a staff member who has contributed to improving the diversity climate.

The Wilkes Diversity Faculty Award is for a faculty member who has contributed to improving the diversity climate. The Global Scholar and Citizen Career Award is for a faculty member who has significantly contributed toward increasing international knowledge and promoting cross-cultural awareness through academics, study abroad and involvement with campus activities.

Nominations are available via a Google Form easily accessible on Wilkes University's website: <https://www.wilkes.edu/multiculturalawards>.



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Graphic by Emily Cherkauskas



A simple delicacy: Moody Foodie's PB banana brownie dessert

By Anna Culver
Staff Writer

This traditional and tasty dessert can be made into a healthy delight with just a few ingredients. This banana brownie recipe is a no-regrets dish, while still managing to bring that comforting luxurious taste with every bite.

Ingredients:

2 bananas
1 cup of peanut butter
1/3 cup maple syrup
1 egg
1 teaspoon of cinnamon
1/2 tablespoon of baking soda
1/4 teaspoon salt
6 ounces of chocolate chips

Directions:

Before getting started, preheat the oven to 325 degrees Fahrenheit.

Next, carefully mash together the bananas with the peanut butter, maple syrup and egg.

Mix together the dry ingredients. Then, add them slowly into the banana mixture.

Add your chocolate chips last, folding them into the mixture.

Put the mixture in an 8x8 pan and bake for 25-30 minutes. Once finished, let cool for a few minutes and enjoy!

Allergies: Banana, peanut butter, chocolate and eggs.



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Graphic by Anna Culver



The Beacon/Anna Culver

Top 10 Athletes

By Dylan Mehl
Co-Opinion Editor

When it comes to any form of competition, the point is to win and be the best of the best. This is no different when it comes to sports. Defining greatness is almost an impossible task to ask of anyone; however, that is exactly what I did. In this list of the Top 10 Athletes of All Time, I looked at individual stats, team success, longevity and essence to decide the best of the best. (Philanthropy was not taken into account.)



10. Floyd Mayweather

What may be a controversial choice in many people's eyes was actually quite an easy one. All-time in the ring, Floyd Mayweather is 50-0, having not once suffered a loss. Additionally, Mayweather's success in his 21-year career is undeniable, as he held the most world titles at one-time with five and 11 all-time. Mayweather's brand, "Team Money Team," and his moniker, "Money Mayweather," go along with million dollar stories and help give Mayweather the edge over other boxing greats like Muhammad Ali, Mike Tyson, etc.



9. Barry Bonds

Yes, the controversy continues on this list at number nine with another pick I feel will stir the pot – this time, in the baseball world. Determining the greatest baseball player of all time may have been the toughest part of this list, but the choice at the end was Barry Bonds. Some of Bonds' achievements include: Seven-time MVP, 14-time All Star, eight-time gold glove winner, and the MLB's all-time home run leader with 762. While for some, these achievements come with an asterisk due to Bonds playing in the steroid era of the MLB, the accomplishments are undeniable.



8. Tiger Woods

Tiger Woods has changed the game of golf ever since he first stepped onto a course. He has been the biggest name in golf for the better part of 25 years, remains the face of the sport and has 82 total PGA championships with 15 of them being majors. Woods popularized the sport of golf in the 2000s and brought it to relevance. "We can argue about major championships and whether (Woods) will ever surpass Jack (Nicklaus') 18 majors, but what can't be argued is this: Tiger Woods is the most dominant, most skilled player we've ever seen," said former professional golfer Arnold Palmer.

7. Usain Bolt

The fastest man to ever live on planet earth is Usain Bolt. Bolt is the appropriate last name for him, as he is as fast as lightning. Over an eight-year Olympic career, Bolt has won 19 gold medals, while only competing in 21 events. Bolt's only two non-gold medals were a disqualification for starting too early and a second place photo finish. Bolt is clearly the greatest sprinter of all time, which is good enough to earn him the seven spot on this list.



6. Serena Williams

Serena Williams is the first and only female to make this list and calling her the greatest female athlete of all time is far from a stretch. Williams has dominated the sport of tennis for years, turning pro at the age of 14 and winning her first Grand Slam at the age of 17. Yes, you did read that correct: Williams won a Grand Slam title before she was legally able to buy a lottery ticket. Williams has gone on to win a total of 23 Grand Slams and 73 singles titles, as well as an additional 14 Grand Slams and three gold medals in her doubles success alongside sister Venus Williams.



Of All Time



5. Michael Phelps

The human fish and the greatest Olympian of all time, Michael Phelps, earns the fifth spot on this list. “I feel most at home in the water. I disappear. That’s where I belong,” said Phelps. The numbers back-up Phelps’ claim with 28 Olympic medals – 23 of them being gold (the most all-time) – which put him on a pedestal above the rest. His longevity to be at the peak of his game from 2002 until 2016, winning gold after gold, speaks to not only his excellence at his craft but his sustained greatness.



4. Wayne Gretzky

“The Great One” – Wayne Gretzky – holds just about every hockey record in the NHL one can imagine. A four-time Stanley Cup winner, 15-time All Star and nine-time Hart Trophy winner, Gretzky’s accolades speak for themselves. There has never been anyone close to touching Gretzky when it comes to hockey, and being so dominant for 20 years is just the icing on the cake.

3. Michael Jordan

“If you look up the definition of ‘greatness’ in the dictionary, it will say Michael Jordan,” said NBA Hall of Famer Elgin Baylor. Jordan was the most polarizing athlete to ever play the game of basketball, and possibly to ever play a sport. In the 1990s, and even to this day, everyone that picks up a basketball wants to be “like Mike.” And who wouldn’t? Jordan went 6-for-6 in the NBA Finals, winning all six times he went. Additionally, he won six Finals MVPs, five regular season MVPs, two Defensive Player of the Year awards, 14 All Star selections, 10 scoring titles and two Olympic gold medals to his credit. However, during his highlight-filled NBA run, he did retire not one, not two, but three separate times, severely hurting his longevity. What he lacks in longevity, Jordan makes up for in essence by being the biggest sports icon of all time.



2. LeBron James

The best basketball player to ever step on a court is the only way to properly describe LeBron James. James is a player who can truly do it all on the court, from scoring to playmaking to defending. Currently, James is on track to have the most points of all time, be top five in assists and have over 10,000 rebounds, leaving nobody able to touch James’ individual stats. In terms of team success, James has won four NBA championships in 10 trips to the Finals,

and while the winning percentage may not seem in James’ favor, his ability to win has actually taken some subpar teams on Finals runs when they really had no business being there. In terms of awards, James has four regular season MVPs, four Finals MVPs, 17 All Star selections and two gold medals. James has been unmatched for 18 NBA seasons, has shown no signs of slowing down and has truly earned his nickname of “The King.”



1. Tom Brady

In the top spot on this list, it is the winningest athlete of all time: Thomas Edward Patrick Brady Jr. This NFL quarterback’s 21-year-long career has been the definition of excellence from the start. Winning a Super Bowl in his first season and most recently in his 21st season, Brady has not lost a step. Looking at Brady’s resume, it reads seven-time Super Bowl champion, five-time Super Bowl MVP, three-time regular season MVP and 14 Pro Bowl selections. Brady’s seven Super Bowl wins are more than any other NFL Franchise, and the franchise in second is the New England Patriots who had the greatest dynasty in NFL history due to – you guessed it – Brady. The scariest part Brady is that he still is not done yet, as he just won his seventh Super Bowl this past season. With his whole team returning and Brady having the goal of playing till he is 45-years-old, he is on track to lead the NFL in all-time yards, touchdowns and whatever other quarterback stat you can think of at the pace he is currently working at. With all of that taken into consideration, Brady could be at the number one spot on this list for a long, long time.



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2020-21

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Shades of Jim Crow in Georgia's new voting law

By Liam Flynn
Staff Writer

The Election Integrity Act of 2021, originally known as Georgia Senate Bill 202, is a Georgia law overhauling elections in the state. It imposes voter identification requirements on absentee ballots, limits the use of ballot drop boxes, expands early in-person voting, bars officials from sending out unsolicited absentee ballot request forms, reduces the amount of time people have to request an absentee ballot, makes it a crime to give food or water to voters waiting in line, gives the state legislature greater control over election administration and shortens runoff elections, among other provisions.

The bill is part of a broader nationwide push by Republican lawmakers to make voting laws more restrictive, following unsuccessful efforts to overturn the victory of Democratic candidate Joe Biden in the 2020 presidential election (which focused in particular on Georgia and several other swing states) by using false claims of widespread election fraud. Additionally, it follows a major upset for Republicans in the traditionally red state after voters narrowly went for Biden in the presidential election and elected Democrats to both of the state's Senate seats.

According to The New York Times, the bill “will, in particular, curtail ballot access for voters in booming urban and suburban counties, home to many Democrats.”

The bill gives the state legislature greater control over election administration. Ordinarily, important administrative decisions, like ballot disqualification and certification of results, are made by county boards of elections. Under the new law, the State Board of Elections is empowered to replace county boards with an administrator chosen at the state level, if the State Board deems a county board to be performing poorly.

It simultaneously gives the state legislature greater control over the State Board by replacing the Secretary of State as chair of the Board (he is made an ex-officio, non-voting member) with an official appointed by the legislature. The legislature already appoints two of the five seats on the board, so under the new law, the legislature appoints a majority of the board.

According to the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, this enables “state takeovers of local election offices” — including deciding which ballots should be disqualified, which could “change the outcome of future elections, especially if they’re as hotly contested as (the 2020 presidential election) between Democrat Joe Biden and Republican Donald Trump.”

The provision has been linked to unsuccessful attempts by Republicans to overturn election results in Georgia, especially in heavily Democratic counties like Fulton County during the 2020 presidential election. In that election, many Republican state lawmakers parroted unfounded allegations of widespread voter fraud, claimed that the State Board of Elections had exceeded its authority in approving certain new rules to make voting more accessible during the COVID-19 pandemic, pushed for election results to be overturned and attempted to call an emergency special legislative session to award the state's electoral votes in the Electoral College to Trump.

As Zack Beauchamp explained in Vox, the bill “allows Republicans to seize control of how elections are administered in Fulton County and other heavily Democratic areas, disqualifying voters and ballots as they see fit.”

It has also been alleged that the provision removing the Secretary of State from the Board of Elections is targeted at Brad Raffensperger, the Republican Secretary of State who oversaw the 2020 election in Georgia and famously rebuffed attempts by Trump and state lawmakers to overturn Georgia's election results.

Major League Baseball announced that it is moving the 2021 All-Star Game out of Atlanta in response to the new law that is enabling voter suppression.

“Major League Baseball fundamentally supports voting rights for all Americans and opposes restrictions to the ballot box,” said Commissioner Rob Manfred. “In 2020, MLB became the first professional sports league to join the non-partisan Civic Alliance to help build a future in which everyone participates in shaping the United States. We proudly used our platform to encourage baseball fans and communities throughout

our country to perform their civic duty and actively participate in the voting process. Fair access to voting continues to have our game's unwavering support.”

Policies are enacted to solve problems. In the case of SB 202, the alleged “problem” is simple: Voters have had a crisis of confidence in the results of the 2020 vote and the integrity of Georgia's elections.

“The way we begin to restore confidence in our voting system is by passing this bill,” said Georgia Rep. Barry Fleming, the bill's sponsor, during a floor debate on his proposal.

This is a problem entirely of Republicans' own making. From Trump on down, key party leaders and operatives have worked to sow doubt about the validity of the 2020 results. By passing SB 202, Georgia's Republicans are merely ratifying their own lie.

Think about this from the point of view of someone who believes the Trump story of the 2020 election: that mail-in ballots were fraudulent, that in-person votes are the only reliable ones, that local election officials in heavily Democratic areas like Atlanta cheated and that feckless state-level Republicans like Raffensperger refused to intervene to stop them out of cowardice.

These are all falsely-made statements of ignorance, of course. However, if you really believed it and wanted to prevent it in the future, then you would have designed a bill like SB 202, which is one that makes mail-in voting harder and takes power away from voting officials who failed to “stop the steal” in 2020.

It is fair to say at this point though, that the Republican Party is engaged in a long-running, and at times systematic, attempt to change the rules in their favor. Not every tactic they have used in the fight has been equally effective though. Gerrymandering, at both the state and national level, has a much clearer partisan effect than voter ID laws.

We can expect more attacks on election integrity in the coming months from GOP-controlled state houses because the Republican Party, as an institution, seems perfectly willing to use Trump's big lie as a pretext to seize more power.



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Reviewing Thunder Force: A passing (and forgettable) storm

By **Matt Matrisciano**
Staff Writer

Every once in a while, we are blessed with a movie that can only be described as “perfect.” These movies have scenes that are so realistic, a plot that is so intriguing and acting that is so good that you feel like you are in the film yourself. Some movies seem to have it all.

This is not one of those movies.

Netflix’s new attempt at a superhero comedy, “Thunder Force,” is about two estranged childhood friends, Emily (Octavia Spencer) and Lydia (Melissa McCarthy), who live in an alternate timeline where super villains called “miscreants” have been wreaking havoc on the planet since 1988.

Emily, who grew up to be a genius scientist, has devoted her life to creating a formula to turn everyday people into superhumans to fight back against these monsters, who are destroying present-day Chicago.

Lydia, who did not grow up at all, has devoted her life to drinking and Van Halen. On the night of their high school reunion, Emily decides to show the half-drunk Lydia around her lab. It takes about five seconds of

being alone in a room for Lydia to accidentally inject herself with the serum that Emily worked so hard to create.

Now that Lydia’s future of having super strength is set in stone, Emily decides to take a dosage herself, giving her invisibility. Next, the duo begins their training before they go out to save the city from miscreants like Laser (Pom Klementieff) and The Crab (Jason Bateman). Get ready for friendship, corruption and the urge to cancel your Netflix subscription with “Thunder Force.”

I will be fair about this and highlight the very few good aspects in this movie. As much as I disliked it overall, some scenes did get to me. It made me laugh, or at least snicker, a few times. McCarthy is one of the best comedic actors of this era. It is next to impossible to not laugh at her work. Her body language, voices and basically everything else she gives us is truly amazing. She is just inherently funny. So, if nothing else, at least “Thunder Force” has that going for it.

Although the main characters are obviously Lydia and Emily, someone who almost steals the show from McCarthy is Bateman as The Crab, a miscreant and hopeless romantic with

a heart of gold and the arms of a crustacean. As another widely known actor in the comedy world, Bateman was hysterical. His scenes with McCarthy were priceless, but they may make you want to never eat crab legs again.

McCarthy said in an interview with CinemaBlend that she “had a blast” filming her scenes with Bateman, and you can really see the chemistry the duo has when they are together. However, chemistry was one of the film’s biggest problems. Outside of Bateman and McCarthy, the actors seemed to have no chemistry with each other whatsoever.

The film’s director and writer Ben Falcone also starred in a small role as Kenny, one of The Crab’s goons. He made a couple of otherwise unfunny scenes somewhat enjoyable, but it was nowhere near enough to help the movie.

“Thunder Force” had a few good jokes sprinkled into the script, but most of them were driven into the ground. One would think McCarthy could carry any comedy to infinity and beyond, but this flick just dragged her down. The plot was cliché, and the acting outside of McCarthy, Spencer and Bateman was corny at best.

It is not impossible to make a superhero

movie that makes people laugh, but the jokes in “Thunder Force” were incredibly forced – no pun intended. Even Marvel found a way to make superhero action thrillers that also have a few flashes of comedy in them, but this movie missed the mark.

Falcone messed up with “Thunder Force” by making comedy the biggest aspect of the film. Nobody wants to see someone in a super suit tell cheesy one-liners for two hours. This movie seems like it was doomed from the start.

Superhero comedies are risky, and “Thunder Force” might honestly be the nail in the coffin of that genre. Perhaps it should be. Is this movie worth watching? If you have two hours to kill and nothing better to do, then sure, but I would not cancel plans for it.

It received a measly, but accurate, 24 percent on Rotten Tomatoes, and that is about the best rating the movie has gotten. It really pains me to give anything starring McCarthy a bad rating, but “Thunder Force” was a swing and a miss — by about a mile. My final rating is a 3/10.



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Traveling to the savage land of New Jersey during COVID-19

By **Rudy Urenovich**
Staff Writer

These days, I find myself looking back at pictures of the good old days more and more. And by “good old days,” I mean 2019. Now, I am astonished at how much I traveled back then. I mean, I was not an international jetsetter or anything and a plane was not my second home, but I took multiple vacations with friends and weekend trips with family.

For the past year, however, I have not left Pennsylvania. And to be honest, when I left Luzerne County, I considered it a trip.

These days, we are not in the grip of a total lockdown like we were last year, as more and more restrictions are being lifted. With this, some people have been returning to their regular travel habits.

Now of course, some people did not change their traveling plans at all this past year, but I digress.

To be totally forthcoming, I myself have made vacation plans for this summer. As we continue to learn more about COVID-19 and millions of other Americans continue to receive vaccines, I am optimistic that we are starting to get this pandemic under control. That being said, we are still in a pandemic, and I think making the decision to travel anywhere

should be carefully thought out.

As mentioned, I think traveling now is somewhat safer and more doable than it was a year ago. Getting a COVID-19 test last spring was next-to-impossible, but now we have moved far beyond just testing for the virus, and we actually have a vaccine to combat the virus.

As such, I will be traveling this summer with family members who have been vaccinated already or are planning on being vaccinated beforehand, as well as those who are familiar with getting tested for COVID-19.

Now I know when many people our age travel, they like to go to beaches and towns that are popular and jam-packed with their peers, stay in crowded houses and go out partying every night. In a normal world, there is nothing really wrong with this, but it is not my thing, and who am I to judge?

Obviously, if travelers were to do this today, it would be totally irresponsible and inexcusable – to say the least.

Another important thing that I feel should be considered when it comes to traveling

today is the “where.” In my case, I am planning on going to New Jersey — right next to Pennsylvania.

And I know that for the most part, they have similar COVID-19 precautions, as I have personally researched them, and I have friends from both work and school who are from the state. I have gone there every year since I was born, except this last year, so we are fairly familiar with this kind of routine trip.

That being said, I do not think this is the best time for an impromptu, last-minute trip to a new location. Furthermore, there are many states that have different rules, some being stricter than others or comparatively lax. So, I advise everyone to use their best judgement when deciding where to travel and what they need to feel safe.

When I go on vacation, I like to keep it lowkey. I like to go with a few close friends or family – never a huge crowd – because chances are that by the end of the trip I will be utterly sick of them.

I like to visit a few tourist spots, but mostly I like to have a nice place to stay and a beachfront where I can keep to myself. I like

eating in general, so going to new and exciting restaurants is a big part of traveling for me. However, this year, I will probably be dining outside on my own a lot more on vacation. I would argue that I can make the whole traveling experience during the COVID-19 pandemic work because I have always been an introvert who likes to avoid large crowds and impromptu social situations.

With that being said, everyone has had to make compromises to remain healthy themselves and to keep others healthy.

So when I get annoyed that I cannot go somewhere or do something I once would have taken for granted, I remind myself everyone has to make these allowances. For me personally, just being in different surroundings and leaving Pennsylvania temporarily will thrill me to bits, which is why having to abide by COVID-19 rules will not frustrate me at all. I have missed traveling quite a bit this past year, and I do hope to slowly get traveling back into my life – something I feel others are also trying to do.

So wherever you travel, near or far, be sure to wear a mask and remember that the pandemic is not quite over yet.



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Graphic by Zoey Rosensweet



Sports

Want your sport covered? Deserve to be Athlete of the Week? Contact sports editor: Ariel.Reed@wilkes.edu

MLAX: Albright slips past Wilkes 11-10 in O.T. on Senior Day

By **Ariel Reed**
Sports Editor

EDWARDSVILLE, Pa. -- The men's lacrosse team battled against non-conference opponent Albright University on April 17, where Wilkes fell in an overtime thriller, 11-10, on Senior Day.

Seniors Jacob Kadis, Nico Lorenzo and Jamison Shaw were recognized prior to the start of the contest.

Junior midfielder Luke Palladino, charged with energy from having parents allowed back in the stands, scored within the first 30 seconds of the contest, pushing Wilkes out to an early 1-0 lead.

"I think it's awesome that parents are allowed back at the games," said Palladino. "They definitely have an impact on the game with the energy that they bring. When you look up into the stands and see your family and friends, it makes you want to play your best and put on a show for them. You can really feel the momentum swing when you have the parents in the stands."

Unwilling to bow-out early, Albright's Cole Genneken got the Lions on the board almost exactly two minutes after Palladino's goal to tie the game.

Wilkes began to step-up their physicality

by forcing ground balls and turnovers.

"I think we just came out and wanted to set a good tone for the game, especially for our seniors," said Palladino. "Emotions were running high, and we just went with them and played without thinking, and good things happened."

Wilkes grabbed their second and third goals around the end of the 9-minute mark with parents cheering in the stands.

"It's great to have the Wilkes lacrosse family back in the stands," said head coach Curtis Jaques.

The Colonels locked down on the defensive end against the Lions and extended their lead to 5-1 with two more goals.

The Lions battled back and were able to find the back of the net twice before the end of the first quarter.

Heading into the start of the second quarter, Lorenzo, a senior attacker, recorded a highly contested shot around the 13-minute mark to get the 100th point of his career.

"Especially after having last season cancelled and this season up in the air, I've just been trying to enjoy every second I have left playing this sport," said Lorenzo. "We're never guaranteed another practice or game, and I was very happy to reach this



Photos: The Beacon/Ariel Reed

Senior attacker Nico Lorenzo looked to his family in the stands after scoring his 100th career point.

milestone with my family here on Senior Day."

Albright would creep back into the game and try to gain the lead heading into halftime. They would come up short by one, as the score stood at 7-6 after one half of play.

The third quarter was low scoring for both teams, as the Lions scored one and the Colonels snagged two.

Heading into the fourth, Albright was still slightly behind Wilkes waiting for their opportunity to pounce. For every goal that the Lions had, the Colonels had an answer, as they fought to maintain their one-point lead.

With one minute remaining in regulation, Albright's Harrison Bodwell would score to tie the game at 10 apiece.

Scrambling to find a goal before time expired, junior defender Jake Chittem picked up a ground ball and attempted to get it across the field, but an untimely turnover would smother the Colonels

offensive hopes in regulation and send the contest into overtime.

Having all the momentum on their side, the Lions took early control of the ball and fired off four shots within the first minute of overtime. The fifth and final shot of the game came off of the stick of Albright's Jon Alvarez, finding its way past the goalie and into the back of the net.

The Lions would win 11-10.

"We like to see the assisted goals, and we will build on those looks," said Jaques. "I think these games are so much fun to compete. We didn't finish today, and we had a lot of fundamental mistakes. The late penalties and time in the box hurt. Most importantly, we walked away healthy and motivated for the next one."

The Colonels will return to the field on April 21 at 7 p.m. against Lycoming College in Schmidt Stadium.



Assistant coach Gerard Setteducato (far left) and head coach Curtis Jaques (far right) posed with seniors Jacob Kadis (18), Nico Lorenzo (6) and Jamison Shaw (13) on Senior Day.



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WVB: Non-traditional season opens opportunities for growth

By Jason Eberhart
Staff Writer

WILKES-BARRE, Pa. -- Wilkes returned to the court at the Marts Center for the first time since Fall 2019. The Colonels were defeated by crosstown rival King's, 4-1.

"It was great to have the girls back in here," said head coach Joseph Czopek. "The enthusiasm level was up. They played hard for a young team. We are excited as things are getting better and better."

During this non-traditional season, all five sets of each game are being played, rather than the normal best of five series where the first team to three sets wins the match.

"It was amazing," said senior captain Kristie Najdek. "It's been way too long. It was great to get back out there on the court and play the game that I've always loved."

The Monarchs were able to capitalize off of the attack errors from Wilkes. King's took the first three sets with scores of 25-15, 25-22 and 25-17, respectively.

In a normal season, King's would have won the match after those three sets; however, two



The Beacon/Ariel Reed

First-years Nicole Fitzpatrick (left) and Hope Ousey (right) looked to block a hit from King's College.

more sets were allowed under this season's guidelines.

Wilkes got off to a fast start in the fourth set and did not look back, earning their first set win, 25-19.

"Our communication and energy definitely

picked up as we started to go on a big run," said Najdek. "We just took it from there and ran with it."

As Wilkes' offense started to gain fluidity, the strengths of the team were able to shine. The team is dominated by underclassmen who

needed the first three sets to gain confidence in themselves.

"Coming in as a first-year starter, I just wanted to prove to coach that I have earned my spot on the team, so I was just trying to do the best that I could," said first-year Nicole Fitzpatrick.

The fifth and final set was a back-and-forth battle, being played to 15 points per this season's rules. The Colonels found themselves tied with the Monarchs at 14, before King's won the final two points, taking that set 16-14 and the match 4-1.

"This season is going to be great for the experience because when we come back in the fall, there are going to be four new girls (the first-years) that have a ton of experience," said Czopek. "With the incoming recruits coming in to balance us out, it will take a lot less time to get out of the blocks."

Wilkes will have two games at Misericordia before having their final match at home on Senior Day against Albright on April 24.



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SOFT: Wilkes snaps eight-game losing streak against Lycoming

By Chris Gowarty
Asst. Sports Editor

EDWARDSVILLE, Pa. -- As they celebrated their graduating seniors on Senior Day, the softball team split their doubleheader against Lycoming College on April 17. The Colonels won the first game 4-3, while dropping the second game 6-4.

"Each senior has made such a great connection with our first-year players," said head coach Jackie Klahold. "That's huge because as players move through a program, you want to show first-year players what the program is all about. I'm really proud of this group of seniors."

Wilkes honored seniors Haley Boyd, Sarah Gibson, Jordyn Kondras and Rachel Pritchard prior to the start of the contest.

In the first game, Lycoming opened the game with a 1-0 lead in the first. It was not until the fourth when Wilkes got on the board when Gibson tied the game on an RBI-single.

Lycoming got their second lead of the game after an error, a single and a double gave them two runs in the top of the sixth.

Down 3-1 in the bottom of the same frame, the Colonels rallied together to put themselves ahead 4-3. RBI-singles from junior first-baseman Jessie Smith, first-year pitcher Hope Mullins and Boyd allowed Wilkes to get their



The Beacon/Ariel Reed

Senior Rachel Pritchard threw a pitch at the top of the first inning in the second game of the double-header on Senior Day.

third win of the season.

"It was so great to see the team continuously respond throughout the game," said Klahold. "(Mullins) pitched a great game, and the girls really responded to that. They played well – it was a great atmosphere."

Mullins was the winning pitcher, throwing seven innings and allowing three runs (one

earned) while striking out six.

"It really meant a lot to me to be able to help the seniors win on their day," said Mullins. "Coming in as a transfer student was hard, but (Pritchard), (Gibson) and (Kondras) have all helped me in different ways by being team leaders. Overall, they've all inspired me to want to become a future leader for the team."

In the second game, Lycoming opened up the scoring again with two in the first.

In the bottom of the first, Wilkes quickly earned the lead with RBI-doubles from junior Erin Cabry and Pritchard. Pritchard was able to score on a throwing error.

The Colonels added on to their lead in the bottom of the second, as Boyd crushed a pitch up and out of the ballpark for her first home run of the season.

Despite the 4-2 lead heading into the top of the third, the Colonels found themselves in a 6-4 deficit after a four-run rally in the top of the third by Lycoming. No more runs would score in the game, as Lycoming improved to 10-9 and Wilkes fell to 3-15 on the season.

Kondras batted .500 on the day, as she went 4-for-8 overall, going 2-for-4 with two singles in each game.

"I couldn't be happier that we pulled out a win today as a team," said Kondras. "I was happy I could help my team at the plate. My team made Senior Day very special, and it definitely made the successes today feel even better."

The Colonels wrapped up regular season play on April 18 with a doubleheader against Lycoming College.



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The Beacon/Ariel Reed

Getting to know...

Daniel Cox

Junior Lacrosse Player

The Beacon: Male Athlete of the Week from April 8 to 15
Why Daniel Cox was selected: Cox recorded a .649 save percentage and earned MAC Freedom Defensive Player of the Week honors.

Major: Financial Investments
Hometown: Stratford, Conn.
High School: Stratford H.S.
Position: Goalie

because cue *Owen Wilson voice* – “Wow.”

Other interests or hobbies off of the field?
 A hobby of mine is having fish tanks/aquascaping.

When/Why did you first begin playing?
 I started in 6th grade because my friends began to play and suggested that I give it a try.

If you could have dinner with a famous person from the past, who would it be?
 Julius Caesar.

Post-graduation plans in terms of a career?
 I want to own my own business.

Favorite memory as a Colonel?
 Making playoffs for the first as a team during my freshman year.

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

I would want Owen Wilson to play me

– Compiled by Ariel Reed, Sports Editor

Getting to know...

Laura Bayzick

Junior Lacrosse Player

The Beacon: Female Athlete of the Week from April 8 to 15
Why Laura Bayzick was selected: Bayzick was recorded a four-goal game against Delaware Valley to secure the Colonel win.

Major: Criminology
Minor: Sociology & WGS
Hometown: Hazleton, Pa.
High School: Hazleton Area H.S.
Position: Midfielder

want to play you and why?
 Emma Watson because she is such a good actress. I also love every role she plays.

When/Why did you first begin playing?
 I began my freshman year of high school because my field hockey teammates played, and I figured it would keep me in shape.

Other interests or hobbies off of the field?
 I enjoy hanging out with my friends.

Post-graduation plans in terms of a career?
 I plan to go into law enforcement.

If you could have dinner with a famous person from the past, who would it be?
 Patrick Swayze.

Favorite memory as a Colonel?
 Winning our very first conference game this season against Arcadia.

If your life was a movie, who would you

– Compiled by Ariel Reed, Sports Editor



The Beacon/Ariel Reed