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THE STUDENT VOICE OF YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY SINCE 1931
THURSDAY 02 • 22 • 2018



TWO-DAY FALL BREAK TO BEGIN IN 2019

Photo by TANNER MONDOK/THE JAMBAR

RACHEL GOBEP

Beginning in the fall 2019 semester Youngstown State University will implement a fall break into its academic calendar.

The break will consist of two weekdays in October, which will create a four-day weekend for students to visit their families and relax.

Rayann Atway, president of the YSU Student Government Association, said the idea of fall break at YSU came to life in the fall 2017 semester when SGA executive members attended a conference for the Ohio Student Government Association at Ohio University.

She said students from other universities were discussing fall breaks and she realized it is something that should be looked into.

Ernie Barkett, vice president of SGA, said the fall break will solve two problems at the university.

First, the fall semester will no longer begin on a Wednesday in August like it has in the past and students will have two days off in mid-October, he said.

Atway said the timing of the break is perfect because it will be right after midterms.

“By that point students need a refresher from the height of school, classes and their workload,” she said. “It also gives faculty an extra two days to catch up on grading midterms or any papers that they assigned, so it’s really the best of both worlds for everyone.”

Barkett said student success is a benefit that will be seen through giving students a break and possibly going home to see their family.

He also said first-year students are not used to attending college classes and having a heavy workload, so the extra two days in the middle of the semester can be beneficial.

Martin Abraham, YSU provost and vice-president for academic affairs, said he also has heard the argument for improvement of student success, especially for freshman.

“I don’t actually know the data on that matter, but if it can be effective in promoting student success, then I’m happy to see us move to this model,” he said.

Abraham said there was support for the fall break proposal because the number of teaching days will remain the same.

“I believe that one of their goals in creating the fall break is to provide students with an opportunity to ‘catch

a breath’ around the middle of the semester, and generally after mid-term exams,” Abraham said. “The same is true for faculty, who might want to have this brief pause so that they can grade those exams and begin the second half of fall refreshed.”

Michael Raulin, assistant professor of psychology, said there is extensive evidence that breaks from work including vacations and short coffee breaks have the ability to enhance performance and morale in the work place.

“Many companies insist that their top managers, many of whom are workaholics, take periodic vacations,” he said. “It is the belief of top management that executives are more productive and creative with such breaks.”

The Labor Management Council, International Student Administration and Housing and Residence Life supported the idea to begin having a fall break in 2019, according to Atway.

The SGA also received an endorsement by the Academic Senate on Feb. 14.

Comparable universities in Ohio such as The Ohio State University, University of Toledo and Miami University currently have a fall break.

Additional reporting by David Ford.



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FEATURES



4



6



8



15

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

NEWS

- 3 | Human Trafficking
- 4 | YSU Author
- 5 | Academic Senate/World Wide Wrangle
- 6 | Flu Cases are on the Rise

A&E ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

- 7 | Jambar Crossword Puzzle
- 8 | DNA Studios/Rock Lemon Grove
- 9 | DNA Studios Review

OPINION

- 12 | Jambar Editorial/Sappy Music
- 13 | Mario's Movies: Black Panther

SPORTS

- 14 | YSU Men's Basketball
- 15 | Pressbox Perspective/YSU Softball
- 16 | YSU Women's Basketball

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**PRAY FOR VICTIMS
OF
HUMAN TRAFFICKING**

HUMAN TRAFFICKING: HOW TO BE AWARE, SAFE AND PREPARED

Photo by JORDAN UNGER/THE JAMBAR

MORGAN PETRONELLI

The young girl passing by you in the grocery store, the middle aged man working in the local vineyard, the boy sitting in your class, your neighbor, your cousin or your friend – these are some of the unlikely faces of human trafficking. This issue can affect anyone, including the people you know.

Human trafficking is a rising problem not only in Northeast Ohio, but around the country.

Rumors light up social media like wildfire and only induce more fear into the population. A few of these viral rumors include traffickers tying a shirt to a car windshield wiper, leaving a drug-laced \$100 bill in a door handle or the “God the Mother” religious group scare.

There are two types of human trafficking: sex and labor. Both have similar red flags when it comes to identifying possible trafficking.

The Polaris Project, a nonprofit organization fighting to eliminate modern slavery and human trafficking, said some potential indicators of someone being trafficked include poor physical health, lack of control, poor mental health and poor working conditions.

The U.S. Administration for Children and Families (ACF) said traffickers utilize coercion, fraud and force to influence their victims into labor and commercial sex acts.

Susan Laird, part-time faculty member for the sociology, anthropology and gerontology departments at Youngstown State University and manager of the Northeast Ohio Coalition Against Human Trafficking (NEOCAHT), said the best way to fight the epidemic is prevention.

She said changes in behavior are an important warning sign, especially in young adults and teenagers. Some of the behavioral changes she suggested were going to school late, being withdrawn, being secretive and falling asleep in class.

Laird also said her organization tells people to look for signs in the community such as a young woman and a much older man who controls her looks, what she eats and her every move.

However, she warned this possibly might not be human trafficking and to not intervene.

“One of the things we try to do through the coalition is to teach people to be aware. If it doesn’t look right, don’t intervene, but call 911. It gets logged and after so many

calls on the same day or in the same area, the police will have to respond,” Laird said.

Although human trafficking is on the rise in the area, especially due to the opioid epidemic, progress is being made in congress.

The Protecting Rights of Those Exploited by Coercive Trafficking (PROTECT) Act of 2018 was introduced by Senators Rob Portman, Sherrod Brown, John Cornyn, Dianne Feinstein, Amy Klobuchar, Bill Nelson and Thom Tillis.

This bill aims to specify the utilization of prescription and illegal drugs as a way of coercion for victims to participate in human trafficking. The bill is also set up to hold traffickers accountable for aiding in the victims’ addictions for the purpose of trafficking.

Laird said the best way to prevent human trafficking is to educate yourself and be aware. A class informing students about human trafficking is now offered at YSU as an upper division sociology course and is taught by Laird.

An attempt was made to contact YSU Police about this issue occurring in the YSU community, but, by the time of publication, the police department had not responded.

A PROFESSOR WITH A LOVE FOR WRITING

DAVID FORD

In a dystopian future, everyone in New York City must carry a gun.

Mari Alschuler, a social work associate professor at Youngstown State University, predicted a dangerous future for New York in her story, "Revealed," recently published in "Lock n Load: Armed Fiction," by the University of New Mexico Press.

"The characters are faced with the reality of the city's new policy, which was if you want to live anywhere in New York City, you had to carry a gun," Alschuler said. "In this future society, the guns were issued to you through the mail, just like a simple voter registration card, or a jury duty notice."

Alschuler said as a young college student she walked through the city, rode the subways every day and experienced "the dangerous aspects of it, including the rampant drugs and prostitution."

Her other story, "Patsy Cline Rolls Around in Her Grave," took place in the town of Gulfport, off the coast of Florida.

The story was published in 2017 in the anthology "Dispatches from Lesbian America."

According to Alschuler, it follows a single woman who visits her two friends, a lesbian couple, on Valentine's Day. The friends attend a show put on by a Patsy Cline impersonator, which is based somewhat on Alschuler's real-life experiences.

"I really did go to this Patsy Cline impersonator with two friends of mine, and the impersonator was horrible, so I built that into the story," she said. "Most everything else about the story is entirely fictional."

Last week, Alschuler read her two stories to an audience at the YSU Barnes and Noble. She said the audience really enjoyed both stories and "laughed at all the right points."

"It was a totally different mood for each story, almost an entirely different atmosphere, like night and day," she said.

Alschuler said there was much more discussion following "Revealed" since much of the audience felt the themes were still relevant.

"The point the audience got that I agreed with was that, considering I wrote the story more than 30 years ago, how prescient the story was," Alschuler said.

Alschuler said one audience member mentioned there would be a much different reaction had she published the story back then rather than today.

"We just had another shooting in Florida where I'm from," Alschuler said. "It's like I wrote this story around 1982 or 1983, and yeah it wasn't published until 2017, but it's still relevant today."

She said she developed a passion for writing at around eight years old. She grew up in a "household full of literature" and loved to write poetry.

Alschuler said she became more serious about writing in junior high and high school, where she began to publish in the school paper.

"I decided to do my MFA after my bachelor's degree, and at that point, I spent nearly two years doing nothing but writing. Those were probably the best years of my life."

While finishing her Master of Fine Arts program, Alschuler worked in publishing, but said she could not stay.

"Publishing pays worse than almost every



Photo by TANNER MONDOK/THE JAMBAR

profession; it's amazing how poorly paid you are," Alschuler said. "At that point, I said to myself 'I can't live in Manhattan and work in publishing.'"

She then worked for a management consulting firm as a "glorified secretary," until going back to school to get another master's degree.

"At this time, I went back to school and got a master's in organizational psychology," Alschuler said. "One year after, I added a counseling psychology degree to complete my double major."

During this time however, the only job she said she could get was in a methadone clinic. Alschuler said she worked at the clinic in the mid 1980s, when New York was becoming a center for heroin and crack use.

Alschuler said she has seen things in her life most people couldn't stomach.

Upon completing her master's at Fordham University in 1990, the AIDS epidemic was affecting New York City. Alschuler was an AIDS social worker at Bellevue Hospital, which she said was "emotionally and spiritually jarring."

"I was an AIDS activist leading up to getting hired. I was involved with Gay Men's Health Crisis and ACT UP," she said. "Working with the patients in the hospital was a totally different thing, because at that point, it was a terminal diagnosis. If you tested positive for HIV, you were dead."

Alschuler said Bellevue was most notable as a psychiatric hospital, but opened an inpatient AIDS clinic around 1989. At the height of the AIDS epidemic, almost all patients were gay men, she said, with a number of other patients contracting HIV through drug use.

"The hospital made you wear Hazmat suits to go into the patient's room. You were not allowed to touch the patients, and when patients died, they would go straight to the morgue, where funeral homes would refuse to go pick them up," Alschuler said. "The parents disowned their children who died."

After three months at Bellevue, Alschuler said 90 percent of her patients died.

"That was especially hard to deal with. At the time, I was drawn to working in hospitals and hospice care," Alschuler said. "But I was not prepared for that much death that quickly, especially of such young men."

Following those three months, Alschuler worked primarily in psychiatric social work, where most of her clients dealt with severe and persistent mental illnesses, she said.

"I became comfortable working with people with schizophrenia," Alschuler said. "I specialized in poetry therapy and I was able to use creative arts and expressive therapy with all my patients."

Theresa Swindler, the internship coordinator for the social work department, said it is common for social work students to get jobs or internships working with adults and kids in hospitals, mental health facilities, and drug and alcohol abuse facilities.

Alschuler said she continued her career as a social worker in New York for about 10 more years before moving to South Florida, where she had grown up. She then obtained her doctorate and worked as an adjunct English professor for about eight years.

During her time in Florida, Alschuler said she never lost her writing passion.

FIRST PART-TIME FACULTY ELECTED TO ACADEMIC SENATE

RACHEL GOBEP

For the first time in Youngstown State University history, part-time faculty have been elected as members of the Academic Senate.

Rachel Faerber-Ovaska, a part-time French instructor, and Joe Nuzzi, a part-time criminal justice and forensic sciences instructor, will be serving on the senate for a one-year term. They were elected by other part-time faculty members at YSU.

Nuzzi said their new position is to represent the adjunct faculty, but they both agreed they have a true passion for students and their success at the university.

“Our primary job is to speak on behalf of those part-time faculty that cannot speak for themselves,” he said.

Faerber-Ovaska said they also believe in the integration of part-time and full-time faculty on campus.

“Our goal, naturally, is to bring the voice of the part-timers, but also we want to help the whole community with issues that affect us all,” she said.

Nuzzi said the part-time faculty wants to be accepted on campus. Faerber-Ovaska elaborated and said they have good things to offer.

“The value that a society places on things tends to be reflected on how much they are paid ... We look at our pay and it tells us how much we’re valued,” Faerber-Ovaska said.

Currently, part-time faculty who have bachelor’s degrees earn \$650 per credit hour taught. Part-time faculty

with master’s degrees earn \$800 per credit hour taught, while those with a PhD make \$1050.

Nuzzi said quality teachers should be paid a quality income.

Faerber-Ovaska said they are being proactive and thought of a solution to solve the problem of part-time faculty pay, which will be presented to the Board of Trustees in March.

Faerber-Ovaska graduated YSU with a bachelor’s degree in French in 2015. She also serves as an advisor for the student French club.

She is a member of the Youngstown Excellence Steering Committee at YSU, which evaluates suggestions for improvement and facilitates the implementation of initiatives at the university.

Faerber-Ovaska has lived, studied and worked in Finland, Germany, Canada, Switzerland and Estonia.

She is experienced in teaching German, French and English as a Second Language. She also has official translation endorsement for Finnish to English.

Nuzzi is also a YSU graduate and received a bachelor’s degree in police administration in 1973 and a master’s degree in police management in 1978.

He is a retired social studies teacher who taught in the Youngstown School District for 31 years.

He is also a retired Master Sergeant who served with the United States Air Force for 31 years and a former Warren police officer. He served as the police commander for the Choffin Career Center Police Academy in Youngstown and served on the Board of Directors for the

YSU Police Academy.

Nuzzi has been a part-time instructor in the Criminal Justice and Forensic Science Department at YSU for 40 years.

Chet Cooper, chair of the YSU Academic Senate and an associate professor of biology, said part-time faculty were elected to the senate a result of the 2017 Campus Climate Survey.

“We realized that for shared governance to be all-inclusive, we needed to include the ranks of the part-time faculty in the various procedures,” he said.

Cooper said Faerber-Ovaska and Nuzzi bring a differing perspective to some issues, which gives the senate an inclusive way to look at the function of academics at YSU.

“They are superb individuals that have the best interest of the students at heart. Being part-time faculty they have a slightly different way to look at things than full-time faculty,” he said. “They also have different expectations and different pressures.”

Cooper said he is looking forward to hearing the two speak in front of the Board of Trustees in March about issues regarding part-time faculty. He also said full-time faculty supports part-time faculty.

“We understand their plight and that they’re in special situations and we’re going to do the best we can to make things right for them,” Cooper said.

The Academic Senate has the primary responsibility for the development of new polices and changes of existing policies at the university concerning academic functions and activities.

WORLD WIDE WRANGLE: A LOOK AT POLITICAL DISCOURSE ON SOCIAL MEDIA

ELIZABETH LEHMAN

According to Statista in 2017, 81 percent of Americans had a social media profile and that percentage is predicted to increase.

Social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook are often a stage for many political and social debates.

A study published in *The Sociological Quarterly* in October 2017 examined a theory by German sociologist and philosopher Jürgen Habermas, who said social media could be the new public sphere.

He defined the public sphere as where “private people come together as a public,” using reason to further critical knowledge which can lead to political change.

The study found that social media does not live up to this potential. In the study, 72.4 percent of participants reported a lack of civil discourse on social media and 3.4 percent of participants reported successfully engaging in civil political discourse on social media.

Daniel O’Neill, communication profes-

or at Youngstown State University, said the immediacy of social media is not always the best way to examine the truth of an argument.

He said people need room to develop arguments and to examine claims and the evidence and reasoning to support those claims.

“A lot of people just are exchanging their feelings and that’s a big problem,” O’Neill said. “I have a lot of confidence in the internet but I just don’t have very much confidence with those other means by which people communicate in really short, terse, immediate kinds of responses. I don’t think they help understanding at all.”

Ryan Weaver, a part-time faculty member in communication, said social media often allows people to live in bubbles, surrounding themselves with others with similar opinions.

“That creates this extreme polarization where I’m just digging in more into my beliefs and I never have to see anybody that I disagree with. Now occasionally, these worlds might interact, where I might see a comment from someone from a different sort of bubble and that’s when I have

this tremendous conflict, and that’s when friendships might break down,” Weaver said.

Weaver said the ability to easily click unfriend or unfollow allows people to cultivate a social media newsfeed which only exposes them to ideas they agree with. He said he does that himself and is probably not alone.

“We only let in the people that we like and the things we want to hear and this is only going to make us more polarized,” Weaver said. “This is only going to make us dig in deeper to the things that we think are true and want to be true. And that really worries me.”

Weaver said to combat this, he has taken to following people and news outlets in his Twitter feed who share viewpoints he is not ideologically aligned with.

“I at least feel like I owe it to myself and to them to listen, to at least hear what they’re saying. People are generally not malicious, evil people,” Weaver said. “If people disagree with you and have different worldviews, they usually do so because they have rational explanations for it and why they believe certain things.”

Michael Jerryson, associate professor

of religious studies, said getting through to someone is a matter of learning how to speak the language which that person thinks and sees the world in, particularly in terms of using the appropriate metaphors.

Jerryson said a study published by the *Social Psychology Bulletin* in 2016 found that liberals tend to think in terms of equality and fairness, while conservatives tend to think more in terms of loyalty and purity.

“You have to begin to learn how to speak the language of what that person has now become conditioned to think and see in,” Jerryson said. “So, a liberal is trying to talk to a conservative and convince them of their point. If the liberal is trying to talk about equality and fairness, it’s not going to reach them.”

He said it affects the way a person sees and understands things.

“[If] you’re not aware of how other audiences can use different language, then you’re never going to be able to connect,” Jerryson said. “That can create what can be seemingly irreconcilable differences when it’s not, it’s a matter of communication.”



Photo by TANNER MONDOK/THE JAMBAR

MELISSA TUROSIK

Cases of the flu have been on the rise compared to previous years and is forcing people to miss school and work.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the H3N2 strain of Influenza A virus has caused people to seek medical care at levels that have not been seen since the swine flu in 2009.

Diana Fagan, professor in biological science at Youngstown State University, said that one way people can reduce their chances of contracting the flu is by washing their hands.

“Generally, while influenza can be airborne, it’s more common when someone touches their face and then touches somebody’s hands and by doing that, they’re transmitting the virus,” Fagan said.

Fagan said the flu vaccine is redeveloped every year and the immune system responds within one or two days and people never would’ve known they’ve been affected.

“If you don’t have the flu vaccine, it stimulates your immune response naturally and it takes about a week which is while you’re sick,” Fagan said.

Fagan said the flu that occurred the previous year mutates, so it’s different enough and a person’s immune system is not ready to defend against the new virus.

Gloria Patricia Johnston, Spanish professor at YSU and an aquatic ecologist, said if any of her students are suffering from the flu they shouldn’t come to class at all.

“I tell my students to stay home. There is no need to be a source of infection in the classroom. I mean viral infection. If there is an exam or any type of assignment I can always accommodate, and the student can take it later,” Johnston said.

She said students can email her and tell her they are under the weather. Johnston said being home is a better public health policy than infecting more people in a classroom environment. She considers the flu to be a serious health risk, but believes it can be minimized by taking precautions.

Johnston said to stay home and drink a lot of fluids, rest and monitor body temperature and symptoms. She also said isolating the sick person is the best way to decrease spreading viruses.

“I am a microbiologist and I am well informed of the consequences of not addressing viral problems,” she said.

Evan Downing, a senior criminal justice major, said his

mom had the flu and the experience at the hospital made him nervous.

“When we entered the lobby of the hospital, the whole place was filled with people coughing and wearing face masks,” Downing said.

Downing said he had to cover his face with his shirt and rushed through the lobby to make sure he didn’t catch anything from any of the other patients.

Dan Wallace, sophomore in chemical engineering, said he’s seen a change in his classes due to the rise in sickness.

“I’ve seen less students show up for classes and with this flu going around, it’s scary,” Wallace said.

Nicole Kent-Strollo, director of student outreach and support, offered tips for staying healthy during this unpredictable season.

“The small pieces really add up. If you’re always eating junk and try to pull all-nighters, you can increase your chances of getting sick,” Kent-Strollo said.

Kent-Strollo said the simple things really help and the importance of taking care of yourself cannot be overstated.

Additional reporting by Jambar Contributor Ian Frantz.

NEWS BRIEFS

ACE UNION AND YSU REACHED TENTATIVE AGREEMENT

The Association of Classified Employees Union at Youngstown State University reached a tentative agreement with the university regarding union members' labor contract.

According to an article published by The Jambar, the union is made up of 260 support staff at the university, including secretaries, IT and facilities and grounds workers.

The ACE union and YSU have been negotiating for an equitable contract since last year.

YSU Public Information Officer Ron Cole said the ACE membership will be voting on the agreement. If the ACE members vote in favor of it, the contract will go to the board of trustees for review and ratification.

The next board of trustees meeting will be held March 14.

ABRAHAM CHOSEN AS FINALIST FOR CLARION UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT

Youngstown State University Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Martin Abraham is one of three finalists in the run to become the next president of Clarion University in Pennsylvania.

He has served as YSU's provost since 2014.

Abraham has been invited to an open forum by the Clarion University Presidential Search Committee. He is scheduled for the forum March 5 from 3 p.m. to 4 p.m. at Clarion in the Suites on Main North Theater.

Community members, employees and students are encouraged to attend the forum and provide feedback via a survey that will be available on the Clarion University presidential search webpage.

The other candidates are David Urban, dean of Jennings A. Jones College of Business at Middle Tennessee State University in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, and Robert Glenn, president of Athens State University in Athens, Alabama.

GABBY GIFFORDS AND MARK KELLY SPEAK AT YSU SKEGGS LECTURE

Former Congresswoman Gabby Giffords and her husband, retired NASA astronaut Mark Kelly, spoke at the Youngstown State University Skeggs Lecture in the Stambaugh Auditorium Feb. 15.

Giffords has difficulty speaking due to being shot point-blank in the head in 2011, so Kelly presented most of the lecture — telling the story of his experience with NASA and as a Navy pilot, his relationship with Giffords and how their life was altered after tragedy.

Prior to the event at Stambaugh, Kelly held a Q&A session with YSU students in the Ward Beecher Planetarium about his time in space.

Read the 20 best quotes of the lecture at www.thejambar.com.

YSU ALUM NAMED TO BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Michael A. Peterson was named to the Board of Trustees at Youngstown State University by Gov. John Kasich.

Peterson, a former YSU football player, earned a bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice at YSU.

He is the director of Global Investigations and Security Services for Goodyear and will serve a nine-year term on the board.

Peterson has almost 30 years of experience in security consulting, human resources and investigative services, including work as a court investigator, an intensive probation supervisor and a law enforcement officer.

He will replace Sam Grooms who resigned from the board this year because he and his wife now have official residence in Florida. According to state law, trustees must live in Ohio.

WHAT'S GOING ON CROSSWORD PUZZLE SOLUTIONS:

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

JAMBAR CROSSWORD PUZZLE: MR. PRESIDENT

ROBIN STEARS

- Across**
1. "The Passion of the Christ" setting
 6. "___ & Stitch"
 10. Brewski barrels
 14. Seoul man
 15. Sign for the superstitious
 16. Wyatt of the Old West
 17. Former home of President James A. Garfield and 65 Across
 19. Enjoying a cruise
 20. City known for its Heat
 21. ___ -do-well
 22. Eminently qualified to pass a Spanish final
 25. President David Morehouse's NHL team and a team once led by 65 Across
 29. Sought a spot on SGA
 30. Q neighbor
 32. URL punctuation
 33. Michelle Obama, ___ Robinson
 34. The E in HOMES
 36. Tiki bar order
 39. Visits Christman
 40. Former title for 65 Across
 41. Semester
 45. Fancy-schmancy neckwear
 47. ___ gin fizz
 48. Encryption spec formerly known as Rijndael (Abbr.)
 51. Number at the bottom of the first page of a 1040 form (Abbr.)
 52. The S in GPS, CBS, and iOS (Abbr.)
 55. "The Sword in the Stone" witch, Madam ___
 56. Team that met President Obama in April 2015 that was once led by 65 Across
 59. Peter who voiced Anton Ego in "Ratatouille"
 61. "Monopoly" token
 62. One-eighty
 64. So over it
 65. Pollock House resident and President of YSU
 70. Olympic fencing sword
 71. "___ can you see..." (2 wds.)
 72. Self-___
 73. Backtalk
 74. Table salt, in chemistry class
 75. Some dorm rooms

Down

1. Spontaneous session in Bliss Hall
2. Take advantage of
3. Hullabaloo or hubbub

4. Words on a Wonderland cake (2 wds.)
5. Consecrate with oil
6. Weaving machine
7. "Gotcha, dude"
8. Hawaiian necklace
9. Yoko from Tokyo
10. Neo in "The Matrix"
11. Enter slowly and carefully, as a parking spot (2 wds.)
12. Former trustee for whom a scholarship is named, James B. ___
13. Few and far between
18. ___-tat-tat (snare drum sound)
22. What a college education should be but often isn't
23. "___ Croft: Tomb Raider"
24. The U in BTU
26. Decrees from the king's office
27. Chris who was Mr. Big on "Sex and the City"
28. Open-world game with the voice talents of Ray Liotta and Debbie Harry, informally
31. Film that's not quite up to Mario Ricciardi's standards (Hyph.)
35. PC bailout key
37. Penlight battery size
38. "___ alive!"
40. Shrewd and clever
42. "Tickle Me" toy from "Sesame Street"
43. Get under one's skin
44. Grumpy Cat or Scumbag Steve
46. Judith ___ Solomon Gallery
48. "The Dude ___"
49. Princess whom Zeus carried off to Crete or moon of Jupiter that is named for her
50. "The Great British Baking Show" challenge
53. The Y in BYOB or MYOB
54. Mental strain around mid-terms
57. They fit under desks
58. Shrub that may be poisonous
60. Commencement (not that one)
63. Best-selling 2004 young adult novel that was written entirely in the form of instant messages
65. Hamm, Stewart, Voight or Lovitz
66. Dora the Explorer's iguana friend
67. ___ Lanka
68. Night before the big party
69. Former YSU president Cochran, to his pals

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THE PIERCING AND INKING WORLD OF DNA STUDIOS

MARAH J. MORRISON

Located on Lincoln Avenue in Youngstown, DNA Studios is a piercing and tattoo parlor owned by Roy Schmidt. DNA Studios is open for the public to experience the inked and pierced works of the Fellows family.

Joshua Fellows, a tattoo artist and piercer at DNA Studios, said he started this line of work in high school. He said he was noticing tattoos on people that caught his eye, but was also exposed to people getting bad tattoos.

"It made me sad," Joshua Fellows said. "I was doing good art, but I didn't know how to tattoo, so I just kind of dove in."

Joshua Fellows said he started tattooing himself, family members and friends and has learned along the way from mentors. When it comes to creating an idea for a tattoo, he said some people bring in references to be taken as an idea, and they will add their own twist to it.

"Each artist is definitely going to have their own feel, their own style in their artwork," Joshua Fellows said.

Joshua Fellows said he generally tries to steer people

toward art. He said a lot of people think that something may look good on paper, but it might not look good on skin.

"I try to educate people in just getting good artwork," Joshua Fellows said. "I think that every artist here is going to do that for you."

Joshua Fellows said he and the rest of the DNA Studios employees are here to serve the community through piercings and tattoos to make sure they're giving people the best.

"Every day, we're in 100 percent," Joshua Fellows said. "We also want to do collaborations with different art galleries, artists, whatever it is."

Joshua Fellows said collaborating on projects as a community and benefitting certain non-profit organizations are goals, but DNA Studios' main drive is art.

"That is our goal," Joshua Fellows said. "Good art, all the time, consistently."

Joshua Fellows said if anyone is interested in learning more or contributing to DNA Studios, they shouldn't hesitate to either stop in or just hang out.

Mark Fellows, father of Joshua Fellows and a tattoo



Photo by MARAH J. MORRISON/THE JAMBAR

artist at DNA Studios, said he's been in this line of work for 14 years. He said he's been an artist ever since he was a kid, and although he is a musician as well, he said he has kind of kicked that aside for the art.

"This is really what my passion is. I'll do anything, but I really enjoy black and gray work," Mark Fellows said. "You can't pick and choose what you want, but you just gotta do what comes along."

Mark Fellows said he and his son Joshua Fellows have been wanting what they have now for years. He said they used to work in other shops together, but when the DNA Studios opportunity opened up, they took it.

"This came along and it's like, this is us," Mark Fellows said. "This is us, so we're digging it."

Emily Exists, who is also a part of the Fellows family and is currently learning the art of piercing at DNA Studios, said the work created at DNA Studios is beautiful and from the heart. She said they put everything they have into everything they do.

"We want to make sure people are getting quality ink and quality piercings," Exists said. "We're able to provide that."

MORNING TELEPORTATION, PICNIC DAY SET TO ROCK LEMON GROVE

JOHN STRAN

Penguin Productions is holding a two-band rock show tonight at 7:30 p.m. at the Lemon Grove located on the second floor of the Knox Building downtown.

The first act is a Youngstown two-piece known as Picnic Day. The duo have been making noise since 2011, and according to band member Dave Tamulonis, they're going full circle and playing where they had their first show.

Tamulonis said their first appearance as a band was at the original Lemon Grove, where O'Donold's Pub is currently located, where they performed covers of The Beatles and The Doors songs.

Since their first show, Picnic Day has created some original music and released

a few albums. The second half of the band, Chauncey Hay, said since their first album, "Grape," the two have switched up their music to a heavier sound.

"We're drawing more from garage rock and heavy blues," Hay said. "We bought an \$80 Craigslist drum set, and that spawned the current sound, which is much heavier."

In an effort to try and come up with a name for their sound, Hay described it as art, rock, blues and jazz. A genre name covering an array of musical backgrounds for just two guys can be a challenge at times.

"Sometimes it's hard to fill up a song with only two people playing, but we've always used loops and delay pedals to fill out the sound live," Tamulonis said. "Now with drums, we rely on dynamics a little more."

If their unique blends of sound doesn't encourage people to go to tonight's show, other elements of the show might. Tamulonis said if there should be a single reason to come to the show tonight, it should be to see the opening act and Kentucky natives, Morning Teleportation.

Morning Teleportation is self-described as psychedelic rock. Megan Jones, the concert series lead for Penguin Productions, said the two bands are a good mix because they show different spectrums of the same genre.

"Picnic Day and Morning Teleportation mesh well together because going into it you will be getting a rock concert, but experiencing different branches of rock," Jones said.

This is the first event Penguin Productions has held at the Lemon Grove. After Jones attended a show there last semes-

ter, she knew she wanted to host a show and believes students will enjoy the space as much as she did.

Jones holds events like these in high regard, stressing the importance of culture along with the opportunity to take a step back from classes and unwind the mind.

"I am a firm believer in two things: arts and music are essential to life, and when you come to college, you should be involved in more than just classes," Jones said. "This event fulfills both of those, so we encourage students to come out and enjoy a unique night downtown."

Morning Teleportation will head back to Kentucky for their next two shows while Picnic Day's next performance will be tomorrow at 9 p.m. at Cedars West End with local artist Tony Armeni.

DNA STUDIO REVIEWS



◀ When I first walked into DNA Studios in Youngstown, I was in complete awe of the artwork and the wonderful people who work there. Josh and Mark Fellows, along with Emily Exists and Roy Schmidt, are an absolute pleasure to be around and they definitely know what they are doing. Not only do they care about the quality of the tattoo or piercing someone is getting, they genuinely care about the work you decide to get done and make suggestions and or recommendations for you. I highly recommend DNA Studios. It's totally worth the visit.

Marah J. Morrison
Arts and Entertainment Editor

▶ I'm deathly afraid of needles, but the employees at DNA Studios were so welcoming and calmed my nerves. I went out of my comfort zone and got a conch piercing. Josh Fellows was extremely gentle and told me everything he was doing. The piercing didn't hurt as much as I thought it would and it is healing nicely. Josh made helpful recommendations and Roy Schmidt is always there to make you laugh. I will definitely be back soon for another piercing.

Morgan Petronelli
Web Manager



◀ I have wanted to get my nose pierced for a while now — but did not have the guts to do it. When I stepped foot into DNA Studios, I knew it was the shop I wanted to get it done at. Not only is the studio aesthetically pleasing because of the artwork displayed on the walls, but it has a welcoming atmosphere. Roy Schmidt pierced my nose and made the experience fun. I know that if I plan to get another piercing or possibly a tattoo, I will look no further than DNA.

Rachel Gobep
News Editor

▶ I wanted to get my helix pierced, but when I went down to DNA Studios they suggested a conch piercing because the helix might have been harder to heal. I took them up on the suggested change and I love it. They were kind, funny and made the process a breeze. Unlike the place where I got my last ear piercings, they genuinely care about their customers, and it's not just about the money. They really seem to love what they do, and I would definitely get another piercing there.

Laura McDonough
Editor-in-Chief



◀ I have wanted a nose piercing for a few years but have always had other financial responsibilities to take care of. After my coworkers recommended DNA Studios — pointing out how close it was to campus and how cool the shop looked — I decided to finally treat myself and get it done. I was not disappointed. After my fun (and painless) experience, I will be going back for my next piercing and maybe even a tattoo. Even if you just want to take a look at the artwork and meet some fun people, it's worth the trip. I would definitely recommend DNA Studios to those looking for a piercing or tattoo.

Samantha Welch
Head Copyeditor



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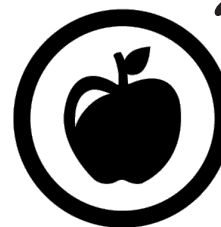
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A JAMBAR

EDITORIAL: TAKING A BREATHER

College students can begin a semester bright-eyed, bushy-tailed and hope-filled. Throughout the semester, they can become mentally exhausted and the best solution is to just take a break.

Students can suffer from stress and an overabundance of work, particularly during the long stretch from the end of August to Thanksgiving. As the Student Government Association at Youngstown State University drives for a fall break starting in 2019, some of these issues can be resolved.

The benefits from breaks are not limited to students either. The same issues can be faced by faculty at the university or anyone in any workplace.

Breaks from work should not be mistaken as excuses to be lazy or counterproductive. According to a column posted on Forbes by psychotherapist Amy Morin, sometimes people need to take days off work to maintain their

mental health, even if it's something as common as battling stress or managing emotions.

It is not unheard of for people to feel overworked from long hours at their jobs or find it difficult to concentrate because of so many things on their plate. In fact, it happens frequently.

According to ABC News, a national study indicated more than half of American employees feel overworked or overwhelmed by their jobs.

"A day or two away from the office might give them an opportunity to administer the self-care they need to get back on track," Morrin said in the column.

College campuses are no exception. Students and faculty do not shy away from having an overabundance of work on their shoulders, and sometimes even a few days of relaxation can relieve some of that stress.

At the same time, students and faculty have families.

Many of them have children whom they may not get to spend much time with during long hours of the semester. A fall break gives students who live on campus an extended weekend to go home, or it gives an overworked parent an extra day or two to spend with their kids.

Now, breaks from work do not need to be extensive. Sure, sometimes longer leaves are necessary for an out-of-town vacations or medical situations. However, a few days off keeps hard workers in the mindset of work while also giving them the chance to recharge if they are burned out.

A fall break directly following midterms would do exactly that. It would give professors time to catch up on grading or research and it would give students a moment, even if it's just a moment, to catch their breath and prepare for a strong second half of the semester.

MAYBE CHOOSE SOMETHING A BIT HAPPIER

SAMANTHA ALLAN

Music is often characterized in a lot of interesting ways. It can not only be identified by genre, but also by the mood or feeling it presents to the audience. Due to the great variety we are exposed to, we often see examples of certain music connected to many different emotions. Whether you are feeling sad, happy, angry or disappointed, there is a song to fit every possible experience.

More often than not, emotion-based songs are often directly correlated with the people who would be listening to it. The best examples I can think of is someone sad listening to a ballad or someone happy listening to something upbeat. In

both of these examples, the person is usually presented as having this emotion before the song, and then later listening to increase their feelings.

Thinking a lot about this, I could not help but wonder if negative music had any benefits. For example, does listening to a sad song make you feel worse? Could a song filled with anger cause someone to act out aggressively?

Unsurprisingly, many people wondered the same thing. A few different studies were released in 2016, specifically on the effects of listening to sad music.

Sandra Garrido, a research development fellow, revealed there are actually positive and negative benefits to sad music. Garrido explained listening to sad music will make you feel sadder, but it can be beneficial to a healthy person.

In her article "Sad music and depression: does it help?" Garrido says, "For a healthy person this feeling is probably no more than a minor blip in their day and may even help them obtain some important psychological benefits along with way."

In this respect, it sounds great to listen to your favorite ballad on a bad day. Although you might feel sad at first, it could have the potential to make you feel better in the future. However, Garrido's remark about how music affects a healthy person was a really important distinction.

In her article, Garrido later mentions that someone with diagnosed depression or other mental illness can suffer negative effects. Due to their health, the sad music can not only make them feel worse but also trigger long-term effects.

Factoring mental health into the equation makes for an interesting perspective. Listening to sad music can be beneficial, but only if the individual is able to cope on their own. Individuals who have heightened levels of emotion, especially negative, would not benefit at all. The negativity in the music, meant to be comforting and relatable, would be doing exactly the opposite.

Many of us have seen the cliché image of a sad guy or girl listening to music as they cry. While a person in perfect health might benefit from it, clearly not everyone will.

Save the sad ballad for another day and crank up your favorite dance song. Despite how relatable that ballad may be, it might be for the best to seek out something more upbeat.

MARIO'S MOVIES: BLACK PANTHER MAKES MARVEL BOLD AGAIN

MARIO RICCIARDI

On May 2, 2008 Marvel Studios changed the world with the release of “Iron Man.” No other franchise in history has managed to capture critical and commercial attention like the heroes of the Marvel Cinematic Universe. The tales of Marvel’s super-powered saviors have fluctuated in content, theme and viewing platforms with the years, but nonetheless the phenomenon carries forward.

To keep the success going since “Iron Man,” Marvel has trodden deeper into the world of low-stakes fantasy, until now. The studio’s latest, “Black Panther,” ups the stakes, brings superheroes back to the real world and reminds us of how refreshing the Marvel Cinematic Universe can be.

After the murder of his father, T’Challa, king of the African Utopia, Wakanda, returns home to take his place at the throne. Both ruler and protector as the persona Black Panther, T’Challa must decide how to meet the needs of his people. This challenge escalates when he is threatened by a terrorist with radicalized notions of how the world should be saved.

“Black Panther”’s themes of kings, rebellions and fam-

ily loyalty prove it to be the Shakespearean entry to Marvel’s ever-growing genre-hopping formula. I initially expected “Black Panther” to be a political thriller, but after the opening act I was quick to realize the ties in this film are rooted much deeper than just politics. “Black Panther” roots itself in culture — a culture that shows the beauty of a world outside of Marvel’s two other settings of awe-inspiring heroics (America and outer space).

“Black Panther” might be the most visually stunning Marvel film to date. Its cinematography is ripe with color and style. The film masterfully balances mixing ancient beauty with the beauty of the modern world through shots of the city of Wakanda, as well as a sequence in South Korea. “Black Panther” is ultimately about honoring the past to improve the future, and the art and design of the film hold true to that as much as the plot.

On a side note, this year’s Oscars ceremony hasn’t even taken place, but I wouldn’t be surprised if costume designer Ruth Carter gets a nomination for next year’s awards.

Starring in the film as T’Challa is “42” star Chadwick Boseman. He turns in an honest portrayal of the young Wakandan king but serves more as the glue holding

together the true stars of the film: the women. Lupita Nyong’o, Danai Gurira and Letitia Wright star as a spy, a bodyguard and a tech genius who all have strong personal ties to King T’Challa. These characters and their part in the bigger story is what the film plays best toward.

Opposing our heroes as the villains are Andy Serkis (yes, the actor who was the motion capture model for Gollum) and Michael B. Jordan. Serkis as the maniacal Ulysses Klaue may be Marvel’s most interesting onscreen villain ever. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said for Jordan’s Killmonger. His character has a good build-up in terms of backstory, but Jordan’s follow through comes across as weak.

Killmonger aside, just about everything in this film succeeds. The scenery and the costumes are nothing short of beautiful, the action sequences are exhilarating and the characterization is great. Modernizing a tale told countless times before is no easy task, but director Ryan Coogler makes it look easy with “Black Panther.”

The film fits perfectly into the Marvel Universe, but makes a name for itself alone. “Black Panther” is bold, refreshing and worth your time.

7/10 (4/5 Penguins)



Cam Morse will play his final game as a Penguin on Saturday. He is one of the best scorers in men's basketball history.

Photo Courtesy of YSU SPORTS INFORMATION

PENGUINS HOPING FOR STRONG SENIOR NIGHT SHOWING

CHRIS MCBRIDE

A regular season filled with ups and downs for the Youngstown State University Men's Basketball team will come to an end this Saturday against Cleveland State University. It'll be a pitch perfect note to end on for former CSU assistant coach and now current YSU Head Coach Jerrod Calhoun.

In their last three games, the Penguins (8-22, 6-11) split a two-game home stand. They beat Oakland, 75-73, after a put back by Garrett Covington at the buzzer helped YSU steal a victory. Their second home game was a 94-84 loss to the University of Detroit Mercy.

Playing in their final road game, it came in the form of a loss to one of the league's top teams, Northern Kentucky University. YSU lost 70-51.

With the season winding down, finishing strong will be the name of the game coming into the Cleveland State (8-22,

5-12 HL) game.

Early in the season, the Penguins beat the Vikings after Cameron Morse knocked down the game-winning 3-pointer to make the game 80-77. The Penguins shot the ball to the tune of 56.4 percent on the game against 45.8 percent shooting of CSU.

Coming into the second half YSU had led by 11 and would never trail despite letting the Vikings creep back into the game late. Blowing that lead would prove to be an omen for how the season would go for YSU as they've struggled maintaining late leads throughout the year.

"We've been in every game really until the final seven or eight minutes of all these games — that's the thing that hurts," Calhoun said.

Maintaining a lead will be essential as the Penguins have struggled with inconsistent defense and offense year round. Despite being top five in team points per game with 74.9, YSU is giving up 81.1 points. Opposing teams are shooting

nearly 50 percent from the field.

With both teams bearing similar Horizon League records, the game will have an added layer of importance.

"It kind of sums up the Horizon league this year," Calhoun said. "It's been very erratic, games where anybody can beat anybody on any given night. It's only fitting to see the league crowned in the last two games."

Calhoun will be looking to enter tourney play in Detroit as either a fifth or sixth seed depending on how things play out.

No matter where YSU fits into the standings at the season's end, Calhoun made it clear that "all bets are off" heading into tourney play.

Aside from the game, the night will hold more significance as it will be Senior Night.

The Penguins have four seniors on their roster: Cameron Morse, Jaylen Benton, Ryan Strollo and Francisco Santiago. Santiago will be the only senior that will not play against CSU due to injury.

All season long the storyline has been how Morse has assumed the role Santiago once carried as the facilitator on offense, running the point and kick starting the offense. It'll be the final chance for Morse to chase all-time YSU records as he plays his final game in Beeghly Center.

Calhoun spoke about both YSU Men's and Women's basketball teams and the importance the night has in honoring these athletes.

"It's important for both the men and women regardless of the records for either teams," Calhoun said. "All those seniors on both teams have put a lot into this university not only in the sport they're playing but the academic side of things. All these of kids are going to graduate."

For their final showing, Calhoun is hoping for 5,000 to 6,000 fans to come out to show support.

Youngstown State will conclude regular season play against Cleveland State here at home Feb. 25, with tipoff at 7 p.m.



YSU SOFTBALL AND BASEBALL TEAMS GET GOING

Kelly Thompson-Cappadocio (#7) swings a pitch in an exhibition game during the fall.

Photo Courtesy of YSU SPORTS INFORMATION

MARC WEEMS

With the winter pretending to break this week, the Youngstown State University softball and baseball team both began its regular seasons last weekend.

For the YSU softball team, the expectations haven't been this high in years. It started the year at 2-0 before losing two games. It played four games between Feb. 9-10.

It started with a 7-1 over Hampton University in the Gardner Webb Tournament. The Penguins hit 11 of 35 and struck out just two times. Nikki Saibene finished 2 for 5 with three runs scored. Pitcher Maddi Lusk went 2 for 5 with two RBIs.

In the second game of the weekend, YSU defeated the host team, 7-4. Paige Geanangel pitched 4.0 innings with one hit and gave up one run. The Penguins scored three runs in the first inning to get the win. Lusk was 2 for 4 with three RBIs and a run scored.

YSU then lost two games. The Penguins got destroyed

by Western Kentucky University by a score of 17-6 in five innings.

WKU scored seven runs in the third inning to get the big win in the tournament. YSU gave up six unearned runs in the loss on six errors. They lost despite hitting 9 for 23.

The last game of the weekend came against the host again but Gardner-Webb got revenge with a walk-off in the bottom of the seventh.

GW's Rachel Cumiskey knocked in Callie Thornton on a double to right center field in an 8-7 victory.

Center fielder Hannah Lucas went 3 for 4 with three RBIs and Yazmine Romero went 2 for 4 with an RBI.

On the baseball diamond, the YSU baseball team lost two out of three at Belmont University between Feb. 17-19.

The Penguins began the year with an 8-4 win over Belmont. Right fielder Blaze Glenn hit a two-run home run in the top of ninth to give YSU a four-run advantage. He went 2 for 5.

Catcher Nick Caruso went 3 for 4 with two RBIs. Start-

ing pitcher Greg Dunham pitched 6.0 innings with four hits and one earned run.

In game two, YSU lost 5-1 to Belmont. Left fielder Zach Lopatka went 2 for 4 with the only run scored. Belmont's starting pitcher, Connor Etheridge went 6.0 innings while giving up four hits and one earned run. YSU grounded into six double plays in the loss.

In the finale of the series, Belmont defeated YSU in a 5-2 game. YSU got up 2-0 on a Nick Caruso two-run double in the top of the second inning. Belmont then scored five unanswered runs to the win.

Belmont's Casey Queener pitched 6.0 innings of three-hit ball with seven strikeouts.

YSU baseball now faces the University of Louisville on Feb. 23-25. The YSU softball team plays two double-headers and a single game between Feb. 23-25. They play Lafayette College on Friday and Saturday and the University of Buffalo on those same days as part of the doubleheaders. YSU then plays the host of the tournament, Hampton University, on Feb. 25.

PRESS BOX PERSPECTIVE: SUNDAY BLUES WITHOUT FOOTBALL

SETH RIVELLO

Being an NFL fan, I never really hated Sundays. Sitting down for 10 hours and watching sports all day was never a problem from September through February. Now, fans have hit a large speed bump.

NASCAR fans were probably excited this past Sunday watching Austin Dillon win the Super Bowl of racing, the Daytona 500. Dillon raced in the no. 3 Chevrolet, a number that hasn't been placed on a car since Dale Earnhardt Sr. passed away on that same track exactly 20 years ago.

The race lasted close to three and a half hours due to a crash which forced the remaining drivers to move into extra laps. The normal 200 laps raced turned into 207 and the normal 500 miles increased to 517.5. No matter if you hate the sport,

love the sport or don't think racing is a sport at all, you have to respect the no. 3 on the side of Dillon's car.

Some sports fans might have enjoyed the NBA All-Star festivities that took place in Los Angeles last weekend. The festivities included Team World vs. Team USA, Taco Bell Skills Challenge, Three-Point Contest and the Slam Dunk Contest.

Team World destroyed Team USA by 31 points. Spencer Dinwiddie, a guard for the Brooklyn Nets, won the very pointless and unimpressive Taco Bell Skills Challenge. All you do is dribble, throw a chest pass through a net, make a layup, then finally make a three-pointer.

The Three-Point Contest was entertaining as Devin Booker and Klay Thompson kept things interesting but a couple misses by Thompson lead Booker to a slim three-point (28-25) victory.

Then the Slam Dunk Contest was nothing different as Larry Nance Jr. of the Cleveland Cavaliers and rookie Donovan Mitchell of the Utah Jazz advanced to the final round. Long story short, Mitchell wore a Vince Carter jersey, added a spin to a dunk and edged out Nance for a victory.

The final event on Sunday was Team LeBron vs. Team Steph. A new format allowed captains (LeBron James and Steph Curry) to draft their own teams. A horrible rendition of the National Anthem by Fergie and a twenty minute non-entertaining players' introduction by Kevin Hart really set the mood. At the end of the day, injury-rattled Team LeBron took home a 148-145 victory.

As in years past, the game had no defense which would seem like a positive but it's not. It's understandable that no one wants to get hurt but seeing a hard fought

battle is much better than watching players loafing down court and then chucking up a 40-foot 3-pointer. In the end, LeBron took home the MVP and is buddy-buddy with former enemy for about seven months, Kyrie Irving.

Even with all this fun, without the NFL, Sundays are still trash.

Some things to look forward to are the final day of the Winter Olympics this Sunday. March 11 is Selection Sunday for NCAA basketball fans plus a couple games will land on Sundays in March.

The Masters Tournament is slowly approaching and you can catch the final round on April 8; maybe Tiger Woods will be in one of the final groups but probably not. Then all you MLB fans, if you can't make it to your favorite ballpark you can watch on TV and, if you can withstand that, much respect to you.



YSU WOMEN'S BASKETBALL CLINCHED TOP-6 IN TOURNNEY

Sarah Cash (#23) gets to the basket against Shadae Bosley (#34) on Jan. 20.

Photo Courtesy of YSU SPORTS INFORMATION

MARC WEEMS

The Youngstown State University women's basketball team is having a February to remember. With just one loss against the 19th-ranked University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, the Penguins (14-14, 10-7 Horizon League) have won six of their last seven games and six straight on the road.

YSU has fully clinched at least the sixth seed in the Horizon League tournament and could get up as high as the third seed with a win over Cleveland State University (19-9, 11-6 HL) on Saturday.

"The team has really been playing hard and focused. They've really been giving everything they have and it's showing on the court," YSU head coach John Barnes said. "We were able to put some wins together and put us in a good position. We've been fighting to get that first-round bye, which we were able to obtain. Now, we are just looking to finish strong for the seniors."

YSU has three seniors on the team with all-time assists leader Indiya Benjamin, Morgan Olson and Kelley Wright.

Now YSU has to focus on CSU and trying to secure a

much better seed in tournament. Of course, getting a better seed is also based on both Wright State University and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee losing on Saturday as well.

"That was a tough stretch there. That was arguably the toughest stretch besides the Green Bay-Milwaukee-Wright State trip. For the team to get two of three of those, I thought the players had to dig deep," Barnes said.

Barnes said that the team didn't even celebrate after beating Northern Kentucky University because of how exhausted the team was after the road trip it had been on.

When YSU traveled to Cleveland to face the Vikings back on Jan. 20, the Penguins got the win, 66-52. CSU did play that game without its best scorer, Ashanti Abshaw. She's the second-best scorer in the league at 19.3 points per game on 42 percent.

In that game, freshman Chelsea Olson dropped 26 points on 8 of 14 shooting including three made 3-pointers. She also grabbed eight rebounds in the winning effort.

YSU forward Sarah Cash put up 16 points, six rebounds and two blocks in that game.

"We knew we needed that win against NKU to clinch

a quarterfinal spot. We are just being more physical and rebounding much better," Cash said. "We're working harder than I think we were at the beginning of the year. We have more confidence going into games now."

Compared to where this team was before the month started, not many would have predicted that the team could be in such a good position.

"It takes a lot of mental toughness. We talk about [it] every day before practice and before games," Cash said. "We have to be mentally tough to be able to play well and hold off teams as well."

The Penguins got the win over NKU with a continued rebounding effort that has helped them get much better all around. YSU grabbed 37 rebounds to NKU's 28. YSU also hit nine 3-pointers to the Norse's four.

"From when we came in to now, everyone has grown as a person and as a basketball player. I know we are going to miss Indiya a lot because she has been our point guard every game she has been here," Cash said about the seniors playing their last game at the Beeghley Center. "Kelley and Morgan have worked really hard and made our team a lot better."

YSU tips off with CSU on Saturday at 4:15 p.m. at the Beeghley Center.