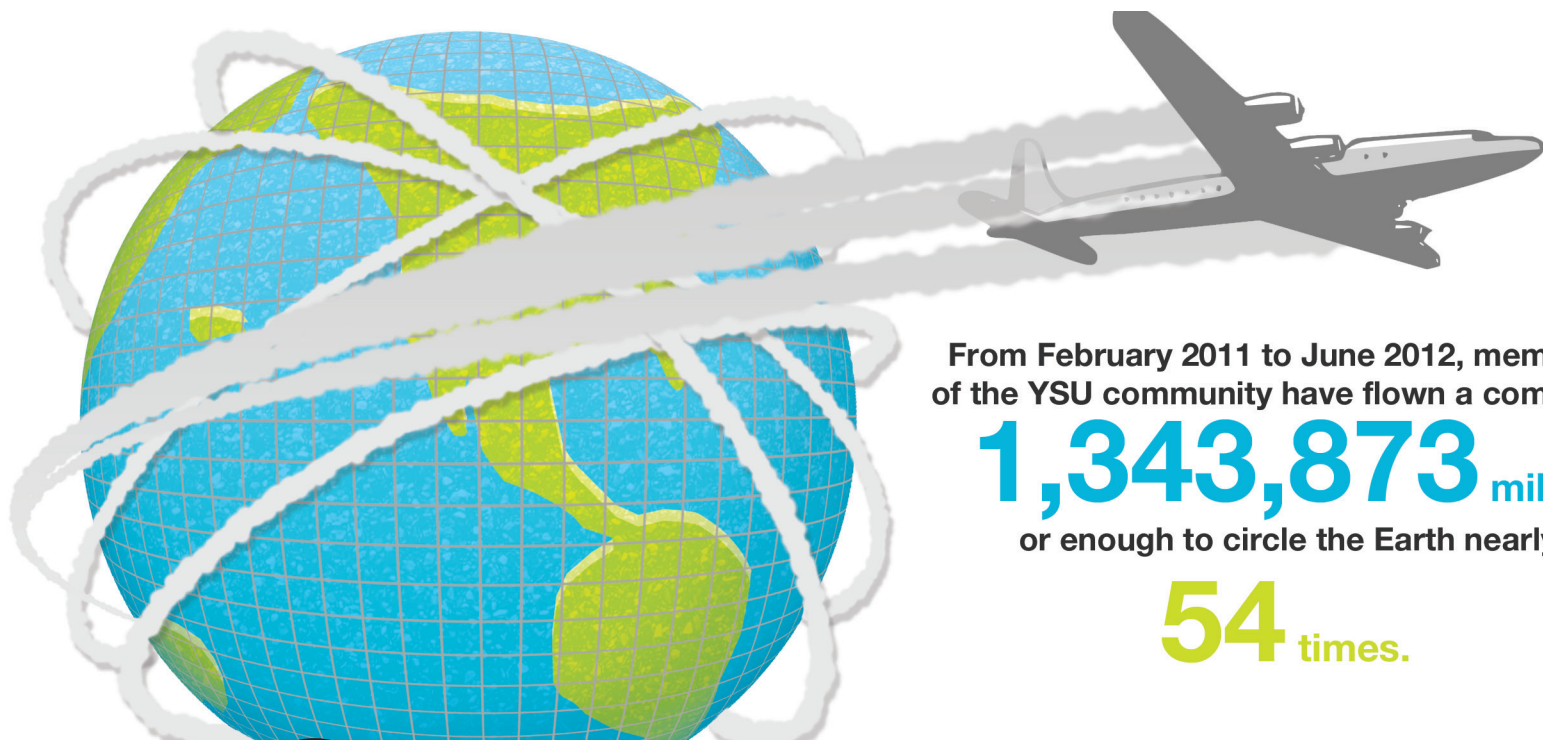


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From February 2011 to June 2012, members of the YSU community have flown a combined **1,343,873 miles**, or enough to circle the Earth nearly **54 times**.

PENGUIN FLIER MILES

Kacy Standohar
NEWS EDITOR

The students, faculty and staff of Youngstown State University have traveled a total of 1,343,873 miles by airplane from February 2011 to June 2012. That's enough airtime for 54 trips around the Earth.

Penguins travel across the U.S. and beyond for education, competition, recruiting and more.

Ron Cole, director of university communications, said this type of exposure is valuable to the university and to the travelers involved.

"Whenever anyone is able to carry the YSU name anywhere in the country or around the world in a positive kind of way, it obviously reflects well — not just on the university, but on the Youngstown community in general," Cole said.

Cole said that since the university has

experienced budget deficits the past few years, each appropriate department vice president closely monitors the requests to ensure that they are necessary.

A global market

Gang Peng, an assistant professor of management, flew 13,621 miles last December — the farthest distance traveled in one single trip — on a trip from Chicago to Shanghai and Beijing.

Peng was not willing to comment on his traveling.

Management Chair Rammohan Kasuganti said Peng presented papers at a conference in order to get articles published.

Kasuganti said faculty members often travel to keep up with the field.

"If you're not doing it, you're not up to date with your field," Kasuganti said.

He said people in university settings typically travel to present research or to maintain accreditation. Also, in the management field, it is important to see how

business is done in various cultures and climates.

Remaining competitive

Michael Wernicki, the assistant men's basketball coach, traveled 60 times last year, covering 30,395 miles.

Most trips were for away games. However, Wernicki said he also travels between academic years for recruiting.

"We recruit a lot in July. Sometimes we're gone for the whole month. Nowhere in the U.S. is too far for us. We're everywhere," Wernicki said.

Wernicki said he has traveled to various destinations such as Las Vegas, Georgia, Florida and California.

"We're flying from one place to the next," he said. "Being where we are located at, our best players are from different parts of the country. It's a huge factor that contributes to the success of the teams."

"We would be seriously behind if we couldn't fly because we have been able

to bring in great players, and our team's GPA is over 3.0," he said.

Wernicki said assistant coaches recruit at Amateur Athletic Union tournaments throughout the month of July. Coaches like Wernicki also travel to high schools across the country to scout.

Eighty percent of recruiting is done over the phone, email or Facebook.

International education

Some students studying Italian traveled to Italy during a study-abroad program last year. Italian professor Carla Simonini said seven YSU students traveled with two students from Cleveland State University to partner with an Italian school called Culturforum.

The group stayed for almost five weeks to learn more about the customs and practice the language.

"We were in class with people from all over Europe and were able to

FLIER MILES PAGE 3

Model UN breaks school record

Marissa McIntyre
ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR

From Nov. 8 through 11, the Youngstown State University Model United Nations team attended the 19th Lake Erie International Model United Nations conference in Cleveland.

At Model UN conferences, students role-play as representatives from different countries and debate various issues.

YSU returned from LEI-MUN with several awards, breaking a school record by placing in the most consecutive conferences.

This was the 44th consecutive conference in which the YSU Model UN team has won awards.

YSU senior Cory Okular was part of the Absent Nations Team, or the A-Team, which means that he represented several nations throughout the conference.

There are usually three students on the A-Team, but this year Okular acted alone.

"Being the only one, the challenge was how rapid-fire the day was," Okular said.

He said he would often represent one nation, go to the A-Team room and have to leave almost immediately to represent another.

"I was basically doing the job of three people," Okular said.

Fortunately, he said, he was well prepared.

"I had a good background knowledge, and you have 10 minutes to do research before you have to go and represent," Okular said.

Okular brought home three

superior awards from the conference. This was his third year participating.

Drew Webster, president of the YSU Model UN team, said he was proud of Okular's performance.

"I've never seen anyone do what he's done," Webster said.

This is Webster's fifth year participating.

"The YSU chapter, we pride ourselves in doing well every year," Webster said.

The team is now preparing for the Harvard National Model United Nations conference. Webster and Todd Pasquale have organized YSU's first scrimmage.

"A scrimmage for us is just like it sounds," Webster said. "It's a way for us to practice."

Pasquale said that, by attending the conference, they have made connections with students at other schools and decided to put the scrimmage together.

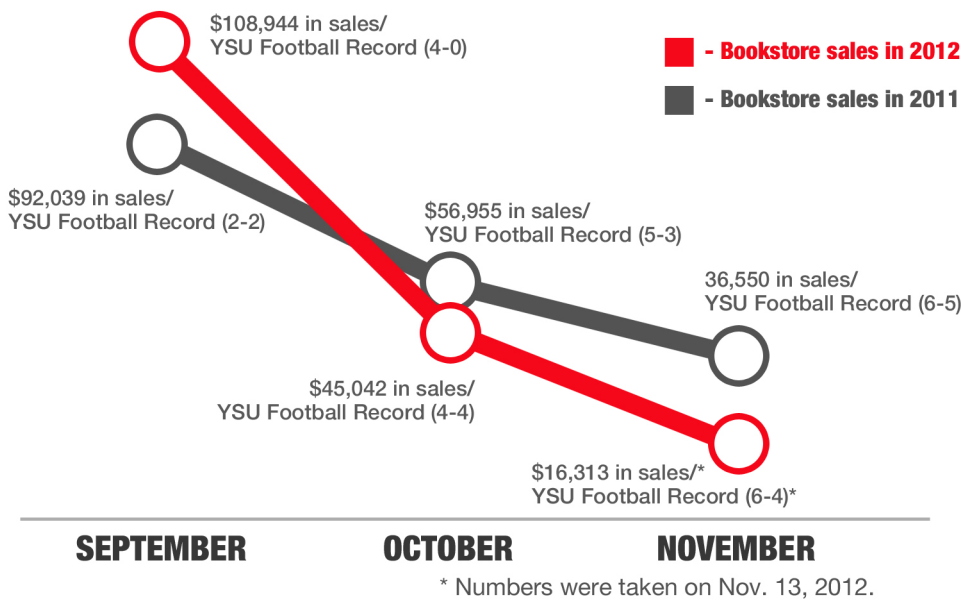
"Drew and I actually got the idea when we were working on a project for class together," Pasquale said.

They plan on inviting other schools like Mercyhurst University, Cleveland State University and Lakeside Community College to attend.

Pasquale said attending the Harvard conference is a great career-builder because it gives attendees the opportunity to make connections with others worldwide.

"Last year, we represented Ireland, and the kids from Ireland actually came up to us to pay their respects for representing their country the way we did," Pasquale said.

The YSU scrimmage is planned for Jan. 26, while the team will attend the HNMUN conference from Feb. 14 to 17.



Bookstore merchandise sales spike in September

Kevin Alquist
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

After the Youngstown State University football team won four consecutive games in September, the YSU Bookstore saw a dramatic spike in clothing and merchandise sales that was nearly \$17,000 higher than sales in September 2011, when the Penguins broke even with a 2-2 record.

Clothing and merchandise sales from September totaled \$108,944.08, compared to \$92,039.80 in September 2011.

Eva Guwca, coordinator of merchandising for the YSU Bookstore, said the Penguins' victories are only part of the reason for the sales increase.

"The major factor for the increase is the number of home games in September this year against last year," Guwca said.

In September, YSU played three games at Stambaugh Stadium; in September 2011, the Penguins played there just twice.

"When the football team does well, attendance goes up, and sales of logo merchandise increases," said Matt Novotny, executive director of student services at Kilcawley Center. "It's safe to say that's a pretty solid trend."

Novotny credits the win at Heinz Field against the University of Pittsburgh on Sept. 1 for kicking

off merchandise sales.

"With that victory, you not only had people getting excited about the team, but people who traveled and wanted to have their red logo apparel to represent [YSU]," Novotny said.

Trevor Parks, sports information director, said the football team should not be the only team getting credit for the sports craze on campus early in the fall semester.

"In September, all of our teams were having success — not just the football team," Parks said. "People saw all of them doing so well, and people got excited and figured they'd get their YSU gear while they were doing so well."

Though sales often decrease dramatically in the middle of the semester until the Christmas season gives them a boost, this year, sales plummeted particularly sharply in October and November.

October's sales were approximately \$10,000 less than those in October 2011.

Despite challenges created by decreased enrollment, Guwca said she's hopeful that this year's holiday sales will be similar to last year's — and perhaps experience "slight growth."

In an effort to increase sales, the Bookstore is distributing a coupon for discounts on logo apparel; it will be valid through the end of the fall semester.

McDonough features graduate work

Lee Murray
REPORTER

The McDonough Museum of Art is hosting Youngstown State University's Fall Graduating BFA Show. The show opened on Friday and will run through Dec. 14.

Every fall and spring semester, students graduating with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from YSU exhibit their work at the museum. The 10 graduating artists from this fall were on hand to present their featured pieces, which include photography, sculptures, drawings, graphic design and installation art.

"There are 10 different students and all the areas of study," said Kirsten Pesa, a graduating photography student whose work is featured in the exhibition. "It's going to be a nice show."

Pesa's work includes a series of portraits of the children she works with, along with an audio commentary that includes sounds of those kids playing.

"A lot of my work is on disorders and anxiety — my own and others — and on dealing with those issues," Pesa said. "I think it came together really nice."

Pesa will begin working as a professional photographer for a studio in Meadville, Pa., next year. She will be photographing weddings.

"A friend got a job with them after she graduated, and [the company is] expanding. So, she recommended me," she said.

Katelyn Gould, another graduate being fea-

tured in the show, said that her work, a series of vivid drawings and sculptures, was influenced by her reading and research on the male gaze, an aspect of feminist theory that deals with the objectification of women in film and advertising.

"[It's about] the pressures women face," Gould said. "There are different faces from different generations. It's about how you feel and how it makes you want to escape to a different place ... away from others' opinions."

Gould plans to research graduate schools and build her portfolio, but said she wants to take a little time after graduating to "breathe a little."

Kevin Hird's installation piece features two circles of stones, each engraved with text messages. The messages range from personal communications — such as "What are you cooking for dinner?" — to account balance inquiries.

Hird said a local landscaping company donated many of the stones. He had originally planned to make 10-foot wall-hanging tablets, but said he decided on the stones because, although they are smaller, they imply permanence.

"It's like gravestones or statues," Hird said. "They last a long time."

Hird plans to continue his education at graduate school and said he hopes to eventually find a job teaching sculpture at a university.

Admission to the exhibit is free, and the museum is open to the public Tuesday through Saturday from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information, stop in at the museum's Wick Avenue location, call 330-941-1400 or check online at <http://mcdonoughmuseum.ysu.edu/>.

Student partners with United Way to help Sandy victims

Liam Bouquet
REPORTER

Mark Stanford, a music education major at Youngstown State University, has teamed up with the United Way to bring relief to Hurricane Sandy victims in his hometown of Bucks County, Pa.

Bucks County was one of the hardest-hit areas in Pennsylvania, experiencing power outages and damage to property, roads and public buildings.

Shortly after the storm hit, Stanford contacted the United Way to see how he could help the area.

"We are in the position of advancing the common good," said Danielle Bush, community impact assistant for the United Way. "We connect; we make connections for the agencies. We are not a direct service provider."

United Way of Bucks County serves the community as a nonprofit organization, funding 52 programs and 31 agencies.

After the storm, the United Way found that food banks across the area were unable to deal with the increase in food necessities.

Relief services could offer only limited support, as they were preoccupied with highly damaged areas. In addition, the requests for relief from food banks grew, and resources ran thin across the coast.

"It was just very vulnerable, you know, if something were to happen again," Stanford said.

The United Way is now working to help restock supplies, and in an effort to assist, Stanford has launched a campuswide fundraiser. He's placed collection boxes in each residence hall, and a box was included in the Tunnel of Oppression, which was located in Kilcawley Center last week.

Stanford is now running the fundraiser through the Catholic Student Association at YSU, and he has reached out to other organizations such as Housing and Residence Life and the Scholars and Honors Program.

Stanford has also worked with other students and faculty members across campus to help the program expand.

"As of right now, I think I have raised \$100, which is a decent amount, but I think we have higher goals," Stanford said.

He has worked with Cory Okular, president of the Student Government Association, and Ronald Shaklee, director of the Scholars and Honors Program, to create an incentive program to encourage university scholars and honors students to donate.

"I have agreed to allow a prize to be letting somebody pie me in the face if they raise \$300 in donations," Okular said.

If students in the program can raise \$600 by the end of the week, the chance to pie both Okular and Shaklee by the semester's end will be raffled off.

Those interested in donating can contact Stanford at mjstanford@student.ysu.edu.

YSU hosts workshop for mental health professionals

Kevin Alquist
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

On Friday, Audrey Ellenwood, director of the school psychology program at Youngstown State University, and Lars Brok, a psychiatrist and internationally renowned family therapist, presented a workshop for mental health professionals in the Ohio Room of Kilcawley Center.

The workshop was based on Ellenwood and Brok's book, "Shake-UP: Moving Beyond Therapeutic Impasses by Deconstructing Rigidified Professional Roles." Kenneth Miller, a professor of counseling at YSU, served as the book's editor.

"[The workshop is] designed to enhance [counselors'] therapeutic roles when working with clients," Ellenwood

said. "The workshop is unique because we've brought an external consultant on campus as an expert."

After presenting the workshop internationally, Ellenwood said she hopes to make it an annual event at YSU.

"We hope to do it again next year, based on the success and feedback from today's session," Ellenwood said on Friday.

Christina Guzzo, a graduate student in counseling, said the session was enlightening.

"It's taking a lot of the classroom stuff I've learned to this point and enhancing it," Guzzo said.

Guzzo said the workshop is applicable to anyone in the field — from undergraduate students to longtime professionals.

Dennis Gioiella, a clinical counseling professional since 1987, attended the session to

renew his practicing license. He said that although he sees the session from a different viewpoint than the students who attended, he still found it informative.

"I first encountered psychodrama in the '70s, so it's not brand new to me, as opposed to some of the others here," Gioiella said.

Gioiella said role-playing, or examining what role each person takes in a conversation or social setting, still fascinates him.

Elizabeth Pugh, a graduate student studying school psychology, said though the material covered in the presentation isn't much different than what she has learned in the classroom, it was interesting.

"It ties in the collaborative part with the teacher and student interaction," Pugh said.



The Office of Alumni & Events Management congratulates our fall 2012 graduates! We are proud of your success!

Be sure to attend **GRAD CENTRAL** on Monday, Dec. 10, from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. in Kilcawley Center's Schwebel Reception Center.

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- Explore the School of Graduate Studies and Research

Caps and gowns will also be available on Tuesday, Dec. 11, and Wednesday, Dec. 12, from 8:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. Further information about commencement can be found at web.ysu.edu/commencement.

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NEWS BRIEF

Conversational language classes planned for Metro College

YSU will begin offering conversational language courses next semester at the Metro College in Boardman. The courses cost \$149 before each registration date and \$169 after. Classes offered are as follows:

- Introductory Italian with Lisa Dolasinski. Classes will begin March 5 and will meet every Thursday from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. through April 23. The registration date is Feb. 19.

- Conversational French for Beginners with Ron Saffell. Classes begin Feb. 21 and will meet every Thursday from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. through April 11. The registration date is Feb. 7.

- Beginning Arabic with Madeline Clendenin. Dates and times to be announced.

- Conversational Spanish with Barbara Kurz. Classes begin Feb. 25 and will meet every Monday from 10 a.m. to noon through April 15. The registration date is Feb. 11.

For more information, call the YSU Metro College at 330-941-2465.

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POLICE BRIEF

Cops drive children home

On Thursday, a YSU police officer was performing a routine patrol on Elm Street when he noticed a vehicle blocking the intersection. The driver, who had four small children in the backseat, said she did not have a driver's license. After running the woman's name through the police identification system, the officer found that her license was suspended and that she had a related warrant issued by the Austintown Police Department. The woman was taken into custody, and an officer waited with the vehicle and its passengers until the vehicle was towed and then drove the children home to Hubbard.

FLIER MILES PAGE 1

represent our university against people Germany and the Netherlands," Simonini said. "It immerses the students in the Italian culture and language."

Students were able to travel and study for the same price as a spring semester at YSU. There were other travel and lodging expenses, but the students made it worthwhile when they hiked, visited archeological locations and tasted authentic Italian cuisine.

Alyssa Yacovone, a junior and international business major, traveled to Sicily and said the experience helped her get to know herself better.

"Studying abroad and traveling abroad opens up your mind," she said. "Do some soul searching, order food that you've never heard of, do things you couldn't ever imagine yourself doing, listening to new music, dancing in the streets, ride on a Vespa or play in a soccer game."

She said she still keeps in contact with the friends she made there.

"We keep up with each others' lives, Skype and, best of all, practice my Italian," Yacovone said. "I've met lifelong friends that I have across the world. By making friends with the people who lived there, it was, in my opinion, the best way to embrace and get accustomed to a new culture."

But Yacovone appreciated the opportunity.

"By being spontaneous, you'll see the world in a new perspective," Yacovone said. "When you come back, you're a different person, and when people tell you, 'You've changed,' they're right."

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THE END?

Sarah Thomas
REPORTER

If you're busily preparing for the end of the world on Dec. 21, you're wasting your time, according to two associate professors at Youngstown State University.

Matt O'Mansky, an associate professor of sociology and anthropology, and Pat Durrell, an associate professor of physics and astronomy, will explain why on Friday and Saturday in the Ward Beecher Planetarium. Both presentations — which are free and open to the public — will begin at 8 p.m.

O'Mansky and Durrell will use evidence from their respective fields to negate the Maya prophecy and other end-of-the-world predictions.

"We want to put the Maya side and

the astronomy side together to debunk the pseudoscience," Durrell said. "As an astronomer, I look at these claims that are obviously incorrect. They are easily refuted by fact-checking."

Durrell said he hopes the presentation will teach people not to believe everything they hear.

"I want to get people to start thinking for themselves," Durrell said. "It's a cool universe with lots of neat things. There are dangers, but to suggest they will all happen in one day because it coincides with the end of the Mayan calendar is crazy."

O'Mansky said the presentation will also explore some truths surrounding the apocalyptic predictions. For instance, Dec. 21 does mark the end of one cycle of the long-count Mayan calendar; each cycle spans approximately 5,125 years.

"The Mayans were obsessed with

time," O'Mansky said. He said this led them to create the long-count calendar, which is a linear count of days.

One Mayan baktun is equivalent to about 394 years. On Dec. 21, 13 baktuns will have passed, marking the end of one cycle of days. After this cycle, however, a new one will begin.

"The Maya today would have a celebration or build a monument or a new, huge temple," O'Mansky said. "They would prepare for the new cycle. It would be a time of renewal."

The keys to this mystery are two ancient stone monuments.

Monument 6 — which is located in Tortuguero, a Mayan city in southern Mexico — features an inscription that refers to the end of the current baktun era.

"The monument reads that something will occur, but the verb has eroded," O'Mansky said.

O'Mansky said the hieroglyphs speak of descent, which is the word that Mayans used in relation to building temples. This monument supports the belief that the Mayans would have celebrated on this day, rather than prepared for impending doom.

However, the Aztec calendar stone, found in Mexico City, suggests that the fifth and current version of the world will be destroyed by an earthquake. O'Mansky said the relic helped spread the rumor of the 2012 apocalypse.

"This is actually about a doomsday prediction, but has nothing to do with the Mayan calendar," he said.

O'Mansky and Durrell said they expect Dec. 21 to be similar to the end of the millennium: The world will go on.

"I'm just hoping I'll have my holiday shopping done by this day," Durrell said.

Pleasing the ears, treating the lungs

Marissa McIntyre
ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT
EDITOR

At the age of 19, George Miklas took a yearlong break from his education at Youngstown State University's Dana School of Music to tour with Jerry Murad's Harmonicats, a professional harmonica group.

"Playing the harmonica makes me feel as if I'm removed from what's going on around me," Miklas said.

Miklas started playing the harmonica when he was 4 years old. Being a musician ran in his family, and his father taught him how to play the instrument.

"I just concentrate on the music. It's practically all I think about in my waking moments," Miklas said. "It's an obsession because I've done it all my life."

Miklas graduated from the Dana School of Music in 1991. Shortly after graduation, he was asked to perform again with the Harmonicats. He embarked on a coast-to-coast tour.

In 1996, the founder of the Harmonicats, Jerry Murad, died of a heart attack.

"After Jerry died, I stepped back from harmonica performance," Miklas said.

Miklas said he still played often during this time, but wanted to get married and support a family. So, he got a special education degree at Slippery Rock University and worked in juvenile reha-

bilitation.

Residing in Mercer, Pa., Miklas continued performing and passing along the harmonica legacy to his daughter.

Then, about a year ago, Miklas met Dr. John Schaman, a respiratory doctor from Ontario, Canada.

Schaman first picked up a harmonica in 2007 after hearing that playing the harmonica could benefit respiratory development for cardiac and asthma patients.

He attended a meeting in 2007 where he learned that between the ages of 30 and 70, it is normal to lose half of your lung function.

"Hearing at this lecture that by the time I was able to lead a normal life, I would lose half of my lung function probably scared me more than it did anyone else in that room," Schaman said.

He began doing research and gravitated toward the harmonica. Miklas said the harmonica is a good instrument for the task.

"The harmonica is the only instrument that produces sound when the player inhales and exhales. So, logically, it's the only instrument for the purpose," Miklas said.

Stephen Gage, director of bands at YSU, said he has seen students with asthma improve their breathing over time.

"I've seen marvelous results where students with severe asthma would bring inhalers to practice when they begin in middle school,"



YSU alumnus George Miklas passes on the family tradition of music to his daughter, Janalyn Miklas. George Miklas said music has been in his family's blood for generations. Photo courtesy of George Miklas.

Gage said. "By the time I had these students in high school, I didn't see as many inhalers. ... if you think about what you have to do to play a wind instrument, how much compression you have to have your lungs do, it makes sense to me."

One of Schaman's goals was to get his patients comfortable with inhaling as much as possible, and then exhaling as much as they can until they can't push any more air out.

Both techniques are essential to harmonica playing.

Schaman had his patients practice the basics of the har-

monica for six minutes a day.

But most of his patients could play only chords on the harmonica rather than single notes, because they had trouble making their mouths small enough to blow into the holes.

With the help of the Seydel harmonica plant in Germany, Schaman developed a medical harmonica that plays four chords, rather than two on the standard harmonica.

And it's dishwasher-safe. "From a medical standpoint, it was important for it to be hygienic," Schaman said.

Schaman is doing studies

in the hopes of providing scientific evidence that playing the instrument helps breathing and lung development.

He said, if nothing else, his patients are having fun and smiling while in therapy.

Miklas is helping Schaman promote his medical harmonica, as well as research harmonica history.

"My goal is to raise awareness of harmonicas in unusual arenas," Miklas said.

Miklas said he hopes to see harmonicas being played more often and to get the word out about Schaman's medical harmonica.

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Hazardous conditions ahead!

Whether it's rushing around finding last-minute gifts, dodging fellow shoppers and black ice patches, or averting the dreaded fiscal cliff, the holiday season is typically very hectic for everyone.

And then there's the Mayan apocalypse.

Doomsayers — political, cultural or nutcase — will salivate at a month peppered with catastrophes.

If that's not enough, RaptureReady.com has been tabulating its "Rapture Index," and it's a bad year for rapture conditions. Just saying.

So while Democrats and Republicans bicker over whose sparsely detailed plan is somewhat effective at chipping away the national deficit, and crazed parents fight over the last Furby, remember what's really important.

Family. Friends. Relationships.

Shockwaves ripped through the Kansas City Chiefs' team facilities when Jovan Belcher, a linebacker, took his own life shortly after murdering his girlfriend.

"When you ask someone how they're doing, do you really mean it? When you answer someone back how you're doing, are you really telling the truth?" said quarterback Brady Quinn, after the Chiefs' game on Sunday.

The NFL and most of the nation were stunned by the news, but it exemplifies, to us, what's so wrong about the holiday season.

Halfheartedly buying a gift card for a family member, friend or coworker means nothing. No true good comes from a gift bag filled with scented candles and chocolates.

This is all temporary.

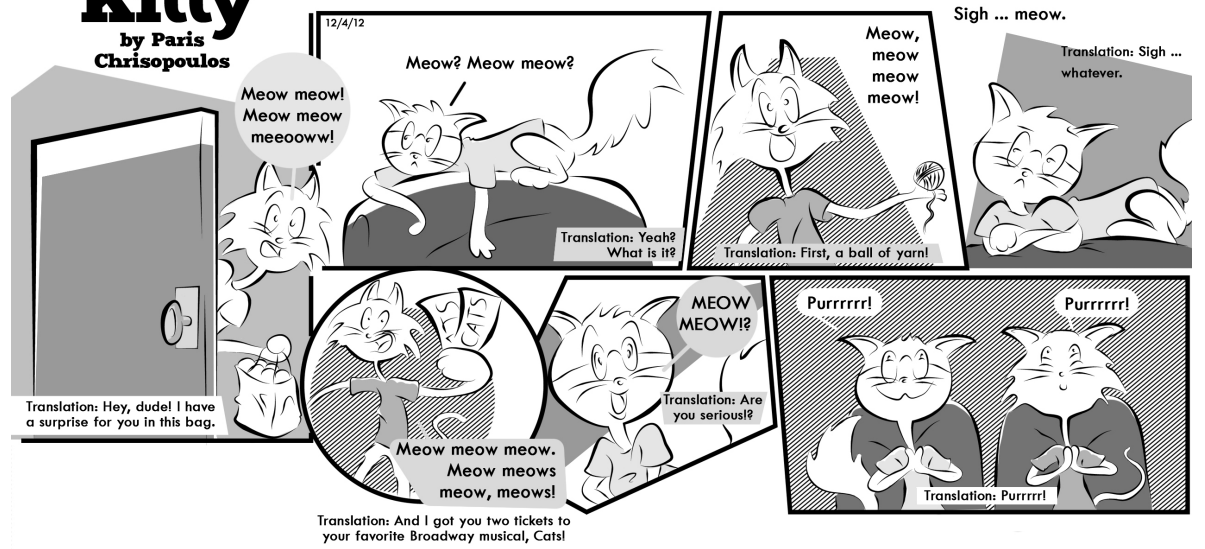
Perhaps Congress will reach an amicable solution and extend the Bush-era tax cuts, and maybe the world won't come to an end on Dec. 21.

But will the overwhelming pain and sorrow secretly eating away at one of your relatives or friends really be mitigated by a measly piece of jewelry?

This holiday season, give gifts but also contribute sincere compassion to those who need it most.

Young Kitty

by Paris Chrisopoulos



Merry Christmas to all



David Roberts
COLUMNIST

It is officially the Christmas season — and what a wonderful season it is. Not only does it signal the end of the semester for college kids across the country, but it also starts a monthlong marathon of family, friends, food and fun. I mean, it's not called "The Most Wonderful Time of the Year" for nothing!

Along with those previously mentioned perks, there are, of course, Christmas decorations, Christmas music, Christmas movie specials and Christmas shopping. All these things are integral parts of the Christmas season, and they all use the word "Christmas."

So, what is wrong with saying "Merry Christmas"? I realize people are worried about being politically correct to people of different religions or to those who do not observe the holiday, but let's face it: The word is everywhere, so it seems a bit silly to show disdain when it's used in a simple greeting.

Many stores push for their employees to wish customers "Happy Holidays" as a holiday salutation. The greeting serves dual purposes: It is a politically correct blanket term for holiday greetings, and with New Year's only a week after Christmas, it covers the entire holiday season. While I can see the merits in the second purpose, neither makes a valid argument to completely supplant the traditional

"Merry Christmas."

First off, I'd like to point out that Christmas is a civil holiday, which means that all government organizations observe it. Although the holiday has religious meaning to Christians, it is observed as just another national holiday, like the Fourth of July, for the rest of the country, and I do not see people protesting and saying, "Happy Independence Day."

I'm not trying to be ignorant of people with different beliefs; I'm just trying to make the point that it's kind of crazy to make this war on Christmas over political correctness. For the record, a great deal of the traditions that are a part of Christmas, like the Christmas tree, mistletoe and even good old Santa Claus, are all secular creations.

Christmas, regardless of your beliefs, is a special time of the year where we can spend time having fun and making lasting memories. Wishing someone "Merry Christmas" is not a way to push your beliefs on somebody else; it's just a simple wish of glad tidings for the upcoming holiday season, so why put a restriction on that?

Of course, it doesn't mean you can't say "Happy Holidays" instead. I'll be honest; it does mean the same thing, but just don't tell someone what he can and can't say, especially when it's just his way of wishing you well.

The challenge against the use of "Merry Christmas" is not just against the salutation but also against another iconic part of the holiday, the Christmas tree. Ac-

ording to Harvard University's newspaper, "The Harvard Crimson," the giant spruce tree that resided in Boston Common had its name changed from "Christmas tree" to "holiday tree" in 2005. Officials said it was done so that all people could enjoy the decorated tree during the holiday season, but what I don't get is this: How can a simple name take away from one's ability to enjoy a decorated tree?

Sure, you can say that if the name of the tree does not matter, then what is wrong with calling it the "holiday tree"? It's a tradition, and I realize that tradition doesn't seem to have much of a place in today's progressive society. I may be archaic in my way of thinking, but tradition does mean something.

Tradition is what links past, present and future generations. Even though it may not have all that much significance, the intrinsic value of a community gathering around to watch the first lighting of that season's Christmas tree is in valuable.

Why can't we just enjoy something for once and not nitpick over the name assigned to it? In the end, what is the holiday season about anyway? It is about bringing people together, and the last thing that Christmas tree wants as it shines brightly in the night is to have people fighting over what it should be called.

In short, what I am really asking for here is to keep at least one tradition alive. On that note, Merry Christmas to all, and to all a good night!

Obama needs to make reducing greenhouse emissions a top priority in second term

The Miami Herald
(MCT)

Superstorm Sandy capped a year of bad weather in the United States. Droughts in the Midwest that dried up fields from Iowa to Texas. Heat waves along the Atlantic Seaboard and points inland last summer. An oddball winter that left typically snowy states in the Upper Midwest practically snowless while other areas were repeatedly blanketed with the white stuff.

These unseasonal and dramatic events have wrought all kinds of havoc, but they have also had one positive effect: growing awareness that we are all beginning to feel the effects of a warming climate. Nothing made that more clear than Sandy, which slammed into New York and New Jersey on Oct. 29. Power is still out in some places, the Eastern Seaboard in the two worst-hit states is littered with mile after mile of wrecked homes and businesses, whole coastal neighborhoods have become uninhabitable. With an estimated damage price tag of \$90 billion, Sandy is shaping up to be the second-most costly hurricane after Katrina.

All the conflicting weather phenomena will surely be discussed during the United Nations' latest round of international climate talks, which convened Monday in Doha, Qatar. While global warming appeared to be a tacitly verboten subject during the just-concluded U.S. presidential campaign, President

Obama raised the issue, finally, during his victory speech, calling for a "national conversation" on climate change.

Really, the time to talk is long gone. Just ask the people in New York and New Jersey. They are still picking among their ruined homes. Or the farmers in Nebraska who saw their crops wither last summer under an unforgiving sun. Or Floridians, many of whom are struggling to pay ever-rising windstorm insurance rates to cover even the most modest of homes.

Most observers believe that the officials meeting in Qatar will not reach the consensus necessary to take admittedly tough steps to slow rising global temperatures that are melting Arctic Sea ice and permafrost, shifting rainfall patterns that cause droughts and rising sea levels that contribute to stronger hurricanes. For example, no insider expects the United States to improve upon its voluntary pledge to reduce green-house emissions by 17 percent by 2020.

What can be expected from the talks, say climate experts, is an attempt to extend the Kyoto protocols, an international emissions-reduction agreement that will otherwise expire this year, and to increase climate financing for poor countries. That's pretty lame in the face of increasing real-time proof that man-made greenhouse gases and other heat-trapping emissions are wreaking havoc.

The United States, with the highest rate of automobile emissions, a major greenhouse gas, has

to take the lead. With a second term assured, President Obama needs to make tackling climate change among his top priorities, right up there with growing jobs and reducing the deficit. If he does, future generations of Americans will hail his second term as the moment when this nation finally pulled its head out of the sand on global warming.

In 2010, the Obama administration ended the 30-year fight between the auto industry and government to raise fuel efficiency standards for automobiles and light trucks, which should cut greenhouse emissions by 30 percent. The president's other big push, a bill that would have capped U.S. greenhouse emissions, got stalled in the Senate. Mr. Obama must get that bill back on the table. Send photos of Sandy's devastation and withered corn stalks in Iowa to every lawmaker.

The other hope for the U.N. talks is the genesis of a new global emissions-reduction agreement that would take effect in 2015. U.S. leadership is the key to making that happen.

The truth is we all need to be more engaged in the stark realities of climate change, which will affect the national economy over time just as much as will the huge federal budget debt.

No individual, no region, is immune from its effects, be it searing heat or severe flooding. Wise are those Floridians who look at the aftermaths of Sandy and know that next year it could be our turn again.

JAMBAR POLICY

Since being founded by Burke Lyden in 1931, The Jambar has won nine Associated Collegiate Press honors. The Jambar is published twice weekly during the fall and spring semesters and weekly during the first summer session. Mail subscriptions are \$25 per academic year. The first copy of The Jambar is free. Additional copies of The Jambar are \$1 each.

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TheJambar.com



Softball, soccer teams to receive new turfs



Construction continues on the new athletic facilities. To the left is the area being prepped for the softball field, and to the right is the soccer field and track. Photo by Cory Bartek/The Jambar.

Cory Bartek
SPORTS REPORTER

Come April, Youngstown State University students can expect to see new softball and soccer fields, as well as a new outdoor track.

Rich White, the associate director of planning and construction at YSU, said he's pleased with the progress that is being made in constructing the new facilities. The project will likely be finished by summer.

"The contractor we hired is a very good contractor," White said. "Everything seems to be moving pretty good except for the weather now; the weather has to hold up."

Approximately \$2.19 million is allocated for the project, White said.

"Then, what you do is back off the fees for the design consultant and a couple

of miscellaneous things and then, yeah, it's about 1.8 [to] 1.9 million for construction," White said.

White admitted that the site's utilities have set back progress.

"The one thing we would have liked to move along a lot quicker was the utilities," White said. "If you looked at the site recently, you'll still see telephone poles around the middle where the track is."

The construction crew is now working to prep the site, and will continue working as long as the weather cooperates, White said.

"Should the weather get bad or start snowing, a lot of the stuff would be deferred until the spring because we're kind of stuck," White said.

Jamie Hall, assistant sports information director, said the softball team will

play its 2013 season at McCune Park, which is located in Canfield. This diamond has been the home of the YSU softball team since the 2003 season.

However, Hall said he has high hopes that softball will transition to campus in time for the 2014 season.

Brian Campbell, head softball coach, said he is ecstatic since his team will soon have a home on campus.

"It's going to be very exciting for the university and for the kids," Campbell said. "It gives students the opportunity to stop and watch kids in between classes."

Campbell said he believes that having a field on campus will be beneficial in several ways, including recruitment.

In addition, the idea of hosting a weekend tournament could become a possibility now that the university has a place to host one,

he said.

"It would depend on the Horizon League schedule," Campbell said. "Our season usually starts the week following spring break."

In addition, members of the softball team are excited about the project — even though this year's seniors won't get a chance to use the facilities, he said.

"The girls are looking forward to having more of their friends come to watch games," Campbell said. "Kids can come out on a nice day, lay a blanket down on the hill and enjoy a great game."

YSU is also looking to add other amenities to the site, such as restrooms, concessions and storage.

"We're kind of working on those things to see if we could find some funding and get those things in," White said.

SPORTS BRIEFS

Track and field opens indoor season

The YSU track and field teams began this year's indoor season on Saturday at the YSU Icebreaker, held at the Watson and Tressel Training Site. Katey Heney won the 5,000 meters, finishing in just under 19 minutes. Jen Neider won the shot put with a distance of more than 14 meters, and Megan Wesner won the weight throw with a distance of more than 15 meters. Placing for the men were Nick Bell, who finished second in the 60-meter hurdles; John Seaver, who was second in the shot put; and freshman Jay Jakovina, who finished third in the high jump.

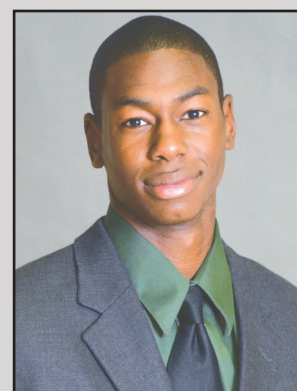
Davis named HL Newcomer of the Week

The Horizon League named Shar'Rae Davis, the Penguins' starting point guard, as Newcomer of the Week on Monday. Davis also earned the honor three weeks ago when the HL began assigning the title. Davis averaged 8.5 points, 7.5 assists and five rebounds last week. She had 11 points and five assists against Northern Kentucky University on Nov. 27. On Friday, she had a career-high 10 assists, seven rebounds and six points against Stony Brook University. Davis' assists were the most made by a YSU freshman since 2001. The 33-point victory was the university's largest since 2006. Davis leads the HL with 5.3 assists per game.

STANDINGS

	W	L
1. YSU	5	1
2. Green Bay	5	1
3. Detroit	4	3
4. Loyola	3	3
5. Cleveland State	3	4
6. Milwaukee	3	4
7. Wright State	2	3
8. Valparaiso	2	5
9. UIC	1	4

PENGUIN SPOTLIGHT



DJ Cole

Year: Sophomore
Height: 5'11"
Hometown: Olathe, Kan.
Position: Guard

In YSU's 58-49 victory against Bowling Green State University on Saturday, DJ Cole recorded six points and five assists in 28 minutes off the bench. Cole is averaging 4.1 points and 2.4 assists per game. His most productive outing came in YSU's season-opening victory at George Washington University, during which he scored 12 points on 4 of 6 from the field. Cole is a business major.

Leadership proves essential to basketball success

Joe Catullo Jr.
MULTIMEDIA EDITOR

When Bob Boldon joined the Youngstown State University women's basketball program in 2010, the Penguins compiled six wins after a winless season.

Last year, the team won 10 games. This year, the Penguins have accumulated five wins after the first month — for the second time in school history.

The main reason for success is the leadership of senior forward Brandi Brown. Twice she was named Second Team All-Horizon League and was the Horizon League's Pre-season Player of the Year last season. She earned HL Co-Player of the Week honors earlier this year.

Brown is averaging 19.7 points and 12.7 rebounds per game this season. On Saturday, she scored 13 points and collected four rebounds, but the Penguins still won. Boldon has another secret leader who sparked against Stony Brook University.

Junior Liz Hornberger scored 15 points (all 3-pointers) and kept her team motivated even as a benchwarmer during the 76-43 rout. Boldon said during Saturday's post-game conference that his offense is better when she plays, even if she scores no points.

"She's got a wonderful understanding of our offense," Boldon said. "I don't think I've coached a kid that understands our offense as well as

she does and what we're trying to do defensively."

Hornberger said during the conference that the team no longer focuses squarely on Brown.

"Brandi scores a lot of points, but she's not a selfish player," Hornberger said. "Brandi's about winning and about the team, and that's what I love about her. They tried to double her last year and was ready this year to make those extra passes."

The Penguins responded to Brown's extra passes, losing one game on Nov. 27 against Northern Kentucky University. YSU led by four points with two seconds remaining before blowing the game.

"I think the loss also helped because it shows some mistakes, and it shows that we're not perfect," Hornberger said. "It shows that we have to play as a team, and we have to play smart."

While the Penguins are also getting help from freshman Shar'Rae Davis (HL Newcomer of the Week this week) and others, YSU's journey to a conference championship falls around Brown and Hornberger.

Boldon said they are the best leaders he's ever had at YSU.

"When you have kids that are contributing with that effort, I don't think anybody's taken more charges than Liz and Brandi," he said. "When your top two players are doing that, it makes it so much easier for the others to fall in line, be a part of it and buy into it."



Monica Touvelle (24) shoots a jump shot during a game last season against Butler University. The Penguins won five games in the month of November. Photo by Dustin Livesay/The Jambar.