

[the yot magazine]

[the yot magazine]

Reflections

Reflections

The Yo\* Magazine  
Spring 2011

---

## Editors

Lamar Salter  
Josh Stipanovich

---

## Designers

Sam Marhulik  
Chelsea Miller  
Keeley Black  
Lamar Salter

---

## Contributors

Kayla Boye  
Jumal Brown  
Miranda Tusinac  
Andrea DeMart  
Joe Catullo Jr.  
Jenna Jordon  
Chelsea Telega  
Doug Livingston  
Joe Giesy

---

## Copy Editor

Emmalee C. Torisk

---

## Adviser

Mary Beth Earnheadt



It's another semester, and that means another edition of The Yo\* Magazine.

Usually in these letters, we address the specific theme of the issue, explain reasoning behind our stories and end with witty, yet inspirational, banter.

This time, however, we wanted to talk briefly about this magazine and the progress we have seen. The Yo\* Magazine was the product of a group of student journalists at The Jambar who wanted to emphasize the culture, life and entertainment in the city — beyond the limitations of the campus publication.

They flew in blind.

The Yo\* was something completely different from what they were used to. Everything from design to content was a deviation of their standard norm. There were a lot of sleepless nights, last-minute adjustments and lessons learned.

But through and through, their dedication and passion pushed them forward.

Four years later, that dedication, passion and, unfortunately, sleepless nights still make up the behind-the-scenes work of our publication.

Even though you see different faces, we still have the very same drive that turned this one-time project into a recurring publication.

And perhaps, somewhat indirectly, our publication perfectly echoes our theme.

As a mirror to the city we write about, we have beginnings similar to our continuing subject.

Youngstown's origins stem from the innovative minds of its first residents.

Today, that innovation continues in the form of the many unique individuals that make up our city.

Our future, much like Youngstown's, is uncertain, but like its residents, we are excited for the things to come.

To understand that future, you must first comprehend its past and present. This edition of The Yo\* gives our readers the opportunity to do so.

# Yo\* Magazine

## Spring 2011

---

**4**

Kelly Pavlik: The rise and fall and (potential) rise again

**8**

House raid

**10**

Through the windows: An economic crisis, 20 years in the making

**13**

Yo\* poetry

**16**

The \$25 Secret

**20**

Dancing: The lowdown on the dances that spark passion, praise and prestige

**23**

Summer events

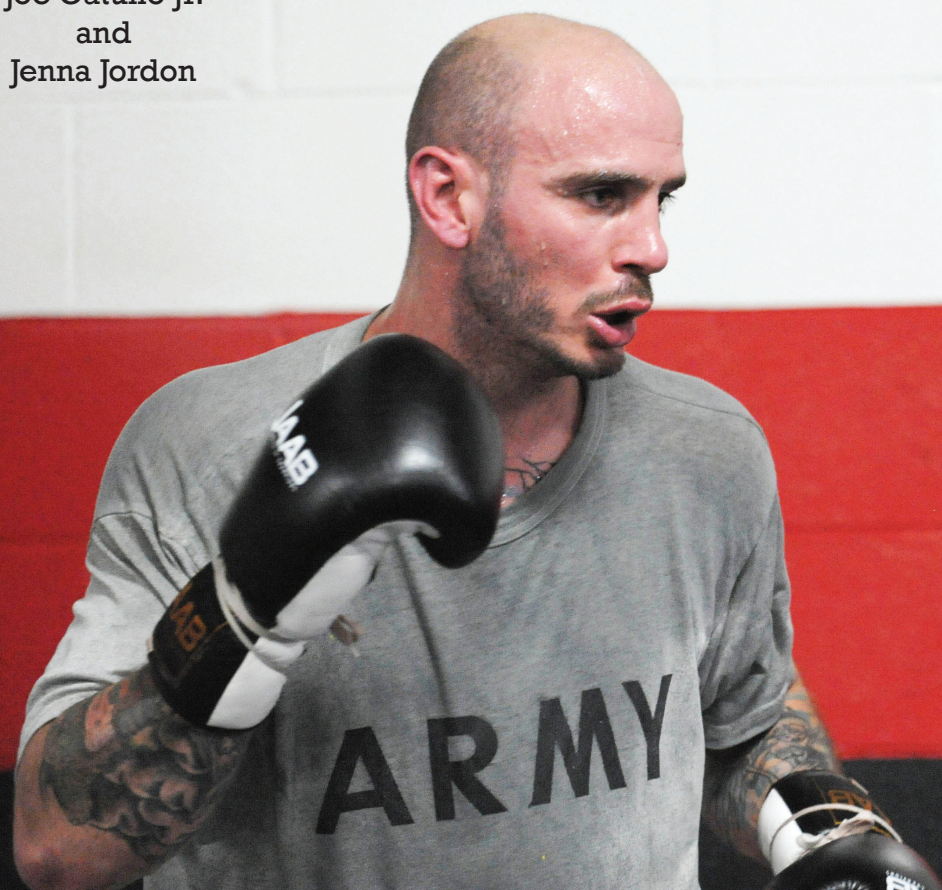


# Kelly Pavlik

Photos courtesy of Frank Ocasio

The rise and fall and (potential) rise again

Joe Catullo Jr.  
and  
Jenna Jordon



The city of Youngstown once looked upon a local hero. Residents found a sense of pride through his championships, but since Kelly Pavlik's temporary demise after checking into rehab for alcoholism, the crime and struggling economy of the city have wriggled their way back into the forefront.

Several months later, a clean Pavlik is hoping to rebuild the city he once held

on his shoulders.

Pavlik grew up in the small South Side neighborhood of Lansingville, which was dominated by Slovak-Americans for much of the 20th century.

His boxing career began young and on a high note. He has been successfully trained and coached by Jack Loew since the age of 9.

In the early stages, Pavlik won three amateur awards:

the 1998 National Jr. PAL Amateur Champion award, the 1998 National Jr. Golden Gloves Amateur Champion award and the 1999 U.S. National Under-19 Amateur Champion award before turning pro in 2000.

With success comes a unique nickname, and every boxer is bestowed with one. Boxing fans and media know Pavlik as "The Ghost."

"I was one of the only white fighters [in my

neighborhood]," Pavlik said. "Everybody liked calling me the ghost. It was something different and it stuck, and I was also really good at my defense. My brother saw me make a guy miss badly, and he said, 'Wow, you move like a ghost,' so it was kind of a coincidence."

As a pro boxer, Pavlik won his first 26 fights, including an eight-round victory by way of knockout over Rico Cason on July 1, 2003. The fight was



in Niles and aired on ESPN's "Tuesday Night Fights."

Pavlik received his first professional title opportunity on Oct. 7, 2005, against Fulgencio Zuniga. Pavlik won by technical knockout in the ninth round and earned the vacant North American Boxing Federation middleweight title. Pavlik defended the title on two occasions, eliminating the likes of Bronco McKart and Luis Zertuche.

Loew said he believes Pavlik's biggest win came on May 19, 2007, when he defeated Edison Miranda in seven rounds by TKO. The fight was a World Boxing Council middleweight title eliminator.

"It was [the] turning point where everybody stood up and said, 'Wow, this kid is for real,'" Loew said. "Even though I thought some earlier fights [the fans and media alike] should have stood up and marched and notice this kid, but they didn't."

Loew added that the Miranda fight should not have been the rice in the pudding.

"[Zertuche] was supposed to be our mandatory, which I thought was a tremendous knockout, [but] then they threw this beast Miranda at us," Loew said.

Pavlik, however, said his biggest accomplishment was winning the WBC and World Boxing Organization middleweight titles. For him, it was when his dream became reality.

"It went down as the ninth best fight of the decade, and some regard it as even better. They have it in the top five," Pavlik said. "It was one of the more meaningful fights. It's all over ESPN and HBO."

Pavlik faced Jermain Taylor for the titles. The bout took place in Atlantic City on Sept. 9, 2007. Pavlik defeated Taylor in the seventh round, and he won the titles.

The fight won the Boxing Writers Association of America Fight of the Year award, and it aired on HBO. Pavlik was also named Ring Magazine's middleweight world champion.

However, Taylor was rewarded with a rematch. Pavlik had to adjust to Taylor's new game plan.

"It was harder [to face Taylor the second time]," Pavlik said. "He's a smart fighter. I couldn't do the same things I did in the first fight because he changed his whole game plan. He made it more of a tactical fight. I had to think a lot, using different game plans and strategic plans."

Loew also saw the adjustments Taylor made to his attempt to become champion once again.

"[The] second fight, I think it showed that Kelly was able to adjust. We were able to adjust in the corner. [We went] to a brawler and outboxed him that night," Loew said.

The second bout was held in Las Vegas on Feb. 16,



2008. The match lasted all 12 rounds, but in the end Pavlik was still champion.

Without a doubt, Taylor was one of the toughest opponents that came his way, Pavlik said.

“That’s a kid that has all the boxing ability in the world,” Pavlik said. “Jermain had everything. He was the whole package that we had to worry about, and I showed him the fights.”

Loew said Pavlik’s rivalry with Taylor was compelling.

“He’s the only one we fought twice. If you fight someone a third time, that’s a rarity. Rivalries are just built on the weeks leading into a fight,” Loew said.

Pavlik returned to Atlantic City on June 6, 2008, in his first title defense against Gary Lockett. Pavlik successfully ended the fight in just the third round by TKO. At this point, his record stood at 34-0. However, his undefeated streak would not last.

Once again, Pavlik fought in Atlantic City, but this time he squared off with Bernard Hopkins in a non-title fight on Oct. 18, 2008. The fight went all 12 rounds, but Hopkins came out victorious, ending Pavlik’s 34 straight wins.

Hopkins unanimously won 119-106. Judge Alan Rubenstein ruled it a shutout.

Although Pavlik lost that night, he said Atlantic City is one of his favorite places to compete. So is his home city.

“I’d definitely say home just because of the energy and the atmosphere and the chance for local fans to

come support,” Pavlik said. “Other than that, I would say Atlantic City. That’s where all the magic happened back in 2007, and we just get a lot of the fans out there. After winning the world title, there has [been] more meaning behind the place.”

Pavlik touched base with a former boxer that many critics compare him to. That man is Arturo Gatti.

“He was a huge draw in Atlantic City,” Pavlik said.

“Anytime he fought there, he



“Bernard Hopkins was my fault. We should have never fought that fight, [but] I let a few people get into my ear.” - Jack Loew



drew 15,000 fans. That’s what they’re kind of comparing me now to just because of the fans and support that I have out in Atlantic City.”

Gatti, a former well liked boxing phenomenon, finished his boxing career with a 40-9 record with 31 knockouts. However, Gatti’s life fell short after he was murdered on July 11, 2009, at the age of 37.

His body was found that Saturday morning in a room at Porto de Galinhas, a hotel on the well-known beach in Brazil. Originally, Gatti’s wife, Amanda Rodrigues, was accused of killing the former fighter, but his death was ruled a suicide.

One month after Gatti’s death, it was announced

that Pavlik would have a chance to defend his titles in Youngstown at the Covelli Centre against Marco Antonio Rubio.

Pavlik defeated Rubio on Feb. 2, 2009, in nine rounds. He also defeated Miguel Espino on Dec. 19, 2009, in five rounds. The Pavlik-Espino bout was held at Beeghly Center on the campus of Youngstown State University.

Pavlik simply said those fights were “awesome,” especially because he fought

in front of a home crowd.

“Not so much the fight, but leading up to the fight,” Pavlik said with a genuine smile on his face. “[I saw fans] line up from Boardman to Youngstown on Midlothian [Boulevard] to downtown Youngstown,” Pavlik said. “When I was going down, the electricity in the air was just amazing. I think the last time they had something like that in the area was when [Ray] Mancini was fighting.”

Back in the “magical” Atlantic City, Pavlik defended his titles for a fourth time, squaring off with Sergio Martinez on HBO on April 17, 2010. Pavlik, 36-1, lasted all 12 rounds with Martinez, but he lost the decision and all three titles.

While Pavlik has enjoyed much success, he has also faced adversity.

Loew and Pavlik agreed that his biggest disappointments were his losses.

“I can give you a hundred excuses for both of [the losses],” Loew said with utter disgrace. “Bernard Hopkins was my fault. We should have never fought that fight, [but] I let a few people get into my ear. I thought that was a very stupid loss we took against Bernard Hopkins,” Loew said.

Loew also described the events leading up to the showdown with Martinez.

“[It was] just stupid to even fight a kid like Martinez. That was just disappointing to our part, not Kelly’s. He went in there and fought his ass off against the odds both times. It’s no fault of his. Team Pavlik took the blame for both of those losses,” Loew said.

Pavlik is a no-excuse guy and he doesn’t accept any.

“There [were] a lot of things behind the losses that I’m a little frustrated about, but sometimes it’s better to fight the bullet than to come out and try to make excuses. Things like that just don’t look good. The losses were the worst thing that happened to me,” Pavlik said.

Throughout his professional boxing career, Pavlik resorted to alcohol. That demon eventually caught up to him.

“Right when he fought Martinez was right when he came out of rehab the first time,” Loew said, his voice trailing off with anger and



trailing off with anger and disappointment.

Pavlik was in and out of rehab twice.

Locals, including some YSU students, realize the challenges that alcohol presented to Pavlik.

One student, junior Ralph Lewis, saw firsthand, as a former employee of Youngstown's Rosetta Stone, what alcohol did to Pavlik. One night in the summer of 2009, Lewis was surprised at what he saw.

"He came in with a group of people, assuming people that are a part of his crew," Lewis said. "He was pretty visibly drunk. After the night went on, they stopped serving drinks. It was definitely Pavlik. It didn't seem like a pro boxer."

Although Pavlik visited rehab twice, he said he found minimal differences each time.

"It was kind of identical," Pavlik said. "Everything I do is magnified. A lot of it was just to get me away from the

rumors. It wasn't different than your average, ordinary person."

Pavlik spoke with Sports Illustrated in February about his alcohol problems and how they affected his career. In the interview, Pavlik said drinking was a relief.

"I still feel the same way I as did in that article," Pavlik said to local media on Feb. 23 at a press conference. "A lot of people are alcoholics, and they don't know it. To this day, I believe I am and I'm not. You have no power over it. If I follow it and the program's right, then I am too. I could care less if I was an alcoholic or if somebody thinks I am."

At first, Pavlik said he was against going to rehab, but "manned up" and got it out of the way. Pavlik is trying to get away from alcohol and the rumors because he has many other things to handle.

"Everything's completed. I did my 60 days there and that's what the counselor wanted. I did everything I

had to do. I had time to relax and get my head straight," Pavlik said.

Although rehab may have helped Pavlik look beyond the likes of alcohol, rehab did not change his demeanor.

"It's not going to change my personality by any means. I was having too much fun. Boxing is not going to be there for the rest of my life. I got to pay attention to what's going on," Pavlik said.

Pavlik described how he compared with others who were recovering in rehab.

"[There were] a lot of different lifestyles. Kind of hard to relate, but a lot of the guys in there were just partying too much. There were some things you can relate to, and there were some you couldn't," Pavlik said.

Now, Pavlik is back and training for his upcoming bout against Alfonso Lopez at the MGM Grand as an undercard. While he trains

once again, Pavlik described the preparations that he has undertaken six months after checking out of the Betty Ford Clinic.

Pavlik said he trains solo with no outside reference, not even from the likes of Ray "Boom Boom" Mancini, a former Youngstown boxing legend. With a sincere and determined look on Pavlik's face, he said nobody helps him.

"I talked to Ray a little bit here and there, but as far as anything else I've been doing it myself," Pavlik said. "Through the years of being there, I was lucky to fight for the world title. I never sat down with Ray and discussed [my boxing]. I learned the hard way, and that's kind of a good thing."

Pavlik does not separate himself from anybody else.

"I don't put myself in a different category. It doesn't bother me, but I think it bothers people around me. I'm content knowing what I want to do," Pavlik said. ✱

"A lot of people are alcoholics, and they don't know it. To this day, I believe I am and I'm not."

- Kelly Pavlik





# HOUSE raid

Andrea DeMart



A man walks the hallway in a green jumpsuit and black boots. He said he doesn't smile often, and today this is truer than ever. Down the stairs and outside, he meets up with a group of men who call him "Sergeant."

Outside, he proceeds to his large SUV. Although not technically his vehicle, it is his for the nights he is on duty. He takes out his gear, which weighs more than 25 pounds and puts it on over his head

and attaches the Velcro straps across his chest. The gear includes a Kevlar vest, knives and guns. The other men in the parking lot do the same.

The man is Sgt. John Elberty, and he is commander of the Mahoning Valley Crisis Response Team, commonly known as a SWAT team. They are a division of the Mahoning Valley Law Enforcement Task Force.

Their job is to raid the houses they believe are hosting

drug activity. The raids are conducted one night a week, with the actual day varying to break consistency.

The plan for this evening is to visit two houses, both in Youngstown. Once the team is geared up, members load into their vehicles. A group of officers assigned to enter the homes pack into a cargo van, with barely enough room for all of them to fit.

The convoy of vehicles parades through the streets of

Youngstown.

Elberty explains that they are not worried about being conspicuous, although the element of surprise is still important.

The outside of the house is run-down and looks as if it will collapse in on itself at any minute. Paint is chipped, the wood porch is splintered and a dead rat is nearly petrified.

The carcass has been a staple on the front porch, along with another in the yard.





Once upon the house, the officers packed into the van jump out, guns drawn, yelling, "Police! Get down! Search warrant!" It's a warning to any who may be inside.

The officers scan the house inside and out, making sure the premises are clear of danger. They rush the house and make their way inside, with little protest from the house's occupants.

The people inside the house are handcuffed, and an officer fills out the procedural paperwork with them: name, age, address and so on. The truth of what the officers are told is solely up to suspects, and the officers said they believe they're often lied to.

The inside of the house echoes the same neglected feel as the outside. Even before entering, the smell is overwhelming. It is not a distinct odor, but a combination of mustiness, dirt and smoke. The floor is sticky and filthy.

Water bottles filled with urine line the kitchen counter. There is no running water in the house, so the bottles serve as a makeshift restroom. One has spilled on the floor, a result of the officers' rush of the house.

It is hard to maneuver through the house without stepping on something. There are clothes in the kitchen along with a grime-covered George

Foreman grill. Large wood planks are scattered across the floor.

The commotion strikes curiosity from the neighbors. They gather at a doorstep to observe the disturbance. Mainly elderly, their faces show disgust and wishes for years gone by.

The reality of what's inside, and the life drug users and dealers live, is routine to the officers outside. They stir up conversations with one another on everything from hunting to football. This passes the time while evidence is collected.

The officers seem unaffected by the environment they exist in regularly.

Some of them said they feel the people are merely a product of their environment. This is the way they were raised: to do drugs, steal and lie. They cannot be faulted for not knowing better.

With the cold November air setting into their bodies, it is time to move on to the next house. Everyone piles into the vehicles and gets ready to do it all over again. Darkness has come, which makes the job even more difficult. There is more room for the unexpected to happen in the dark.

En route to the nexthouse, a sign reads a clear contradiction:

"This is a drug-free safe

school zone."

Just a few streets away, the SWAT team has just completed a drug raid, and there no longer exists a functional school in the area.

The SWAT team approaches the next house. The driveway is long, and the house seems to be empty. Again, the officers yell: "Police! Search warrant!"

This time it takes a little longer to get inside the house as no one answers immediately.

They yell again.

The door opens and the officers flood inside.

The house is cleared, except for a portion blocked off from the inside and an iron gate door sealed shut from the outside. The officers need to check the entire house and need to gain access into the blocked portion.

Many attempts to simply pull the door open fail. The last option is to use a door ram to jar the door open.

With several officers helping, the door is removed from the house and they gain access. The portion is cleared.

The inside of this house resembles the first. The smell and filth are familiar. Many blankets line the floors of the living room and into the kitchen. A large bay window overlooking the driveway has been removed and replaced

with wood particleboard. A small square is cut out near the bottom, creating a makeshift drive-thru window for drugs.

Elberty said this house was once someone's home.

"Now look at it," he said.

Lt. Robin Lees, task force commander, no longer performs the drug raids.

Lees' run with the task force began in 1988, when the force was created. His main duty now is to ensure operations run smoothly and to apply for and receive as much federal grant aid as possible because the task force relies on grants to operate.

Without grant dollars, there would be no vehicles, no communicator radios and no overtime pay.

The task force made national news in November by assisting the FBI in the seizure of 13 pounds of methamphetamine from a drug trafficking organization with ties to California and possibly Mexico. The case began in Youngstown based on information concerning local drug dealers.

The task force is looking toward the future. Lees retired on Jan. 21.

Elberty said he hopes to obtain a new armored vehicle for the force, which would provide more security for the officers.

# Through The Windows

MIRANDA TUSINAC

## An economic crisis, 20 years in the making

“We are going to fight for our jobs. What happens today could determine the future of Youngstown for the next 20 years.”

As I walked inside the Youngstown Historical Center of Industry and Labor, I read that quote by Ed Mann, a long-time labor activist, and it stopped me in my tracks.

My whole life, I have lived in the Youngstown area, but I never realized what it once was. Mann was dead on.

The closing of the steel mills would determine the future of our city. I just don't think anyone could have fathomed how drastic the toll would be.

Before Sept. 19, 1977, the day known to many as “Black Monday,” Youngstown and the areas surrounding the city flourished. The area was a major contributor to the steel industry. Generations of families made a living by working at the steel mills.

Carmen Pitzulo, now a maintenance worker at Struthers High School, was part of one of those generations. His grandfather and father worked at a Sharon steel mill, and Pitzulo took a position as a welder at the Youngstown Sheet and Tube Company, where he made a living for 22 years.

I listened to Pitzulo talk

about how the way things used to be around this area. He expressed how Youngstown and the surrounding cities flourished when the steel mills were open.

“Many businesses derived directly from the steel mills . . . the Wagon Wheel Bar and Restaurant was a family establishment. They catered to mill workers and weren't too far from one of the main gates of the Youngstown Sheet and Tube. They would get a lot of their revenue from the steel mill workers,” Pitzulo said. Many shops and restaurants prospered because of expanding populations.

In Youngstown, Struthers,

Campbell and Lowellville, a job was an easy find at the steel mills. Along with a good-paying job, any worker could get an apprenticeship and learn a trade at schools on job sites.

Not only were the jobs great, but the unions were excellent. Pitzulo said the unions helped him through hard times in his life.

“Unions were great. I went to war while I was working in the mills. Two years after, my job was still waiting for me,” Pitzulo said.

The mills were a sole source of income for many families. While they were around, the city was the place to be.

Albert Sanchez, a lifetime



Mahoning Valley resident who worked as a mechanic for the Youngstown Sheet and Tube Company in 1976 and 1977, talked about how great the pay was.

“I came from working a \$2 an hour job and started making \$8 an hour at the mills. Things were going really good for me and for many others living in the area,” Sanchez said.

James Hanlon, a Youngstown native for 55 years and former Youngstown Sheet and Tube worker of eight years, reminisced about the easy life he once had.

“The economy was doing really good. There was a lot of money back then, and also a lot of good-paying jobs. Cars were cheaper, food was cheaper [and] clothes were cheaper. It was an easygoing time. Life was great,” Hanlon said.

Life was great, but that mindset didn't last forever. Even as early as the 1960s, mill production fell to less than 70 percent of capacity, and imported steel consistently exceeded exports. Not only was the economy hit by the loss in production sales, but also many area residents' lives were filled with turmoil.

John Phillips has lived in Youngstown since 1957 until about eight years ago, when he moved to Hanoverton, Ohio. He remembers when Youngstown was not the best place to live, even when the mills were open.

“During the mid- to late-

**“The economy was doing really good. There was a lot of money back then.”**

**-James Hanlon**



Photo by Miranda Tushnac/The Yo Magazine

‘60s, there were a lot of riots because of segregation. It was a frightening time, and for about six months there was a lot of violence,” Phillips said. “I was a minority in my neighborhood, being in one of the only white families, and I saw a lot of hard times happen even when the steel mills were around. There was always a lower class and people were not always able to find jobs, even when the businesses were booming.”

Even as the mills brought success to Youngstown, and its surrounding areas, they weren't the safest places to work, Sanchez said.

“I remember seeing big

sheets of steel flying through the air. The mills were also dirty. I would park my car next to the mill, and when I would go back to it after my day at work, it would be covered in soot from all the smoke,” Sanchez said. “The Mahoning River used to be really clean, but the mills ruined it. There was rats the size of big cats.”

Sanchez added that the mills were usually really hot in the summer, but in the winter, the mills were “usually 20 degrees colder inside” than they were outside.

On Black Monday, the parent company of the Youngstown Sheet and Tube began closing Campbell Works, which was

followed by the closing of the Brier Hill Works in 1978, U.S. Steel Corporation's Ohio Works and McDonald Mills in 1980, and the Republic Steel's Youngstown Works in 1981.

During that time, the Youngstown Sheet and Tube and also many other mills around the area began to perish. Many citizens dispute the reasons why the steel mills closed.

Some past steel mill workers, such as Hanlon, said it was a political conspiracy and was simply to help the rich get richer. At the Youngstown Historical Center of Industry and Labor, a more formal approach is taken. It attributes

the closings to the depletion of high-grade ore deposits and the expanding markets of steel substitutes. No matter what views were taken toward this issue, what happened after the mills closed was never a debated topic by citizens who lived in the area after the damage was done.

In the years that followed, the steel industry became less of an economic power in the area, and many large plants, which employed thousands, were superseded by mini-mills that employed a mere few hundred. As the job market dwindled, so did the population. Many families moved out of their homes and went to different parts of the country to find work. To the people that stayed around after the mills closed, it became obvious that life was never going to be the same.

Pitzulo said he bought a “starter home” for his family when he was working in the mills. He still lives in it, but he isn’t bitter.

“I still live in my starter home, never got to make my dream house, but I’m glad I’ve been able to get through the years all right ... It was a drastic change in the beginning, many lost their jobs. It was hard to provide for my wife and kids after the mills closed,” Pitzulo said.

Hanlon also had a hard time after he lost his mill job.

“Everyone went from rich to poor. The economy just spiraled downhill after the mills closed up. It was hard to make ends meet, and it’s still hard,” Hanlon said.

Sanchez said he feels his life would have been different if the mills would have stayed open.

“If the mills hadn’t gone down, I would have retired by now,” Sanchez said. “I would have had a lot more money. The closing of the mills caused me to have harder times in my life.”

In all of the interviews I had with the former workers and families that lived through those hard times, one thing remained constant: Youngstown doesn’t compare to how it used to be at all. Once a central area, Youngstown and the cities surrounding it became a shell of what they used to be. Once a thriving economic area, the city became a place that destroyed dreams of an economically stable life.

Many families were forced to move out of the area and try to find jobs elsewhere, which hurt all businesses around the area. Families that had restaurants for generations had to close because of dwindling populations, and many other venues did

the same. With the failing economy came a higher rise in violence in the years to come. Youngstown for a while was one of the most dangerous cities to some, and many others felt it would never be the way it was when the steel mills were around.

“There’s no comparison at all,” Hanlon said. “No jobs. Everything is built overseas now. There’s no middle-class people anymore. You’re either rich or poor. In the present, life’s not so good because many can’t afford to even buy a house. The economy’s terrible. Now you have to work so much just to make ends meet.”

Sanchez said, “The economy is not the way it used to be. I think some people are afraid of change, people are afraid to try new ways to save the economy, and it’s affecting everyone.”

Many who lived in Youngstown when it was at its best told me it is sad how younger generations cannot see the way it once was. Pitzulo said even if we see pictures, and he tells his story of living during that time, it is something people can’t picture unless they’ve seen it with their own eyes.

“Things may not get better, but hopefully it doesn’t get any worse than it already has,” Pitzulo said.

Sanchez said he feels that with all of the area’s past struggles, it is finally becoming noticed that Youngstown is changing for the better, with small, but promising, economic growth.

“We are a city that has went through good times and also a lot of hard times, but one thing that is certain is that we have learned to always fight through it. In all of the struggles that has been put on this area, many have stuck around and fought through them, not leaving their homes because this city and the areas surrounding it are engraved in the hearts of many,” Pitzulo said.

These workers grew up here, generations of their families grew up here, and they wouldn’t leave just because it was a hard time for the area.

Phillips has hope for the area, but he doesn’t know how many hardships Youngstown can overcome.

“It seems like Youngstown is starting to make a comeback,” he said. “I’ve always been a skeptic, and I didn’t even think that the Covelli Centre would stay around, but it seems like the area’s making a little bit of progress in the right direction. It will never be the way it used to be though. There were some good times in Youngstown’s history.” \*  
\*





oetry

Y

O



***Jumal Brown***



***Miranda Tusinac***

Following the tradition of The Yo\* Magazine, this new section highlights the creative minds of Youngstown, albeit in a different perspective. Contributors Jumal Brown and Miranda Tusinac share with readers a collection of poetic works geared toward forming a new flow of creative thought by accenting the true stories of our past, present and future.





**THE  
FALL  
OF  
A  
HERO**

We root to heroes  
Singing a praising hooray  
Touchdown  
That is all  
When heroes fall  
Fumble

A chant of unfocused boos from the first  
whistle to the last

A sign of the time come to pass

Times once glorious red and gray Buckeyes

Tailgaters Nittany lions broncos and  
tacklers bouncing off thighs

Were those the days were those the days  
were those the days

These are the days these are the days of  
the falling heroes

As now to us heroes root for forgiveness

Doe eyed inverted through the glass tube

No touchdowns no pension no more  
fumbles

Just instant replays of faint dreams and  
hardy nightmares

Taking turns conducting ensembles of in nite

boos and dancing cheers that rise and fall

Warren G Harding Raiders is yelled over a  
speaker

A crescendoing echo of marching drums  
that suddenly stops

That is all

**MAURICE  
CLARETT**

By Jumal Brown



# A Hollow Cost

I watched them, as they began to fill the room.

All unclothed, awaiting their horrible doom.

Some were children, as bald as the rest;  
so young, yet already had their faith put to the test.

As I listened, I heard them pray.

Hoping their fear in God would help them keep their life,  
their pulse not to stray.

But then, alas!

It began to rain down.

No more prayer.

Not even the slightest sound.

MR  
rouzzo

Would you tell your deepest, darkest secrets to a complete stranger?

# The \$25 Secret

Joe Giesy

Whispers in the Boko Photo studio can tell stories of a “simple” man, a “radiant” woman or a “goofy” child.

Portraits capture a pensive young man labeled “fiction” looking off the screen and the spirit of an older gentleman with “driven” written down his arm. In another portrait, a woman holds a single finger with the word “private” to her mouth.

But once the subjects of these photos made it to Sarah Bokone’s studio, the conversation was far from private.

Sarah, a professional photographer living in downtown Warren, spent the past two years taking pictures of people for a project she named the “\$25

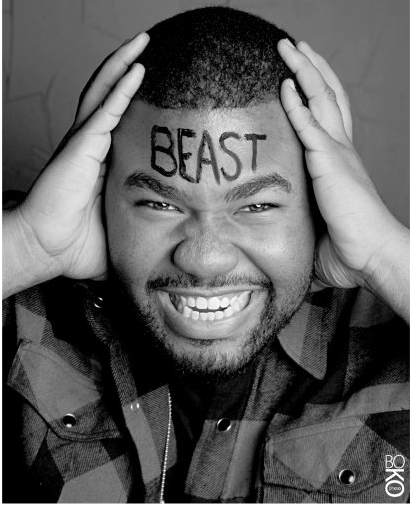
Secret.” Now, she is ending the project at 200 portraits to focus on putting them into a book.

“Originally, I wanted to do the \$25 Secret forever, but at some point, projects should come to an end,” Sarah said.

She said the project started, as most of her projects do, with a self-portrait. She put a piece of tape across her mouth with the word “strength” written on it. The project took off, but in baby steps, as Sarah started recreating her self-portrait by writing words on her friends that she thought best described them.

After doing a few photographs for the project, Sarah asked former classmate Aaron Kaufman

Photos courtesy of Sarah Bokone





if the project should be pursued. He said yes, and she made him a part of it.

With the project still in its infancy, he forewent the interview and picked his own word — “critical” — and Sarah said it fit him perfectly.

Eventually, strangers wanted a similar picture taken, so Sarah began interviewing the people she was photographing.

For nearly every photograph, Sarah interviewed the subject about his or her most personal secrets in order to come up with a word that best fit each person. She then wrote the word on the person and took pictures until she captured the right frame.

“When I look through the photos, I remember everyone’s story. I remember my session with each of them,” Sarah said.

John Bokone, Sarah’s father, said the \$25 Secret is unique in the sense that the subject is telling his or her life story to the photographer who is a complete stranger.

Sarah said it would be great if more people thought about the background of people, along with what and who they are today.

The Trumbull Art Gallery displayed Sarah’s project last fall. Displayed on the gallery walls were Sarah’s

photographs and quotes from her interviews with subjects.

John said he found the little quotes at the TAG show really moving.

“I could see Sarah in that,” he said. “It was more than just photography.”

Sarah’s mother, Kathy Bokone, said she understood what subjects were telling Sarah after seeing her work at TAG.

“I don’t think she knew it would turn out like that,” Kathy said of the project and the way people opened up to her daughter.

She said Sarah always had the ability to talk to people.

“She’s picked out a word for me, and I didn’t like it,” Kathy said.

Sarah chose the word “fragile” for her mother, but she has not interviewed her yet.

“She really listens to what you’re saying,” said Cyndi DiClaudio, the mother of Sarah’s friend and project participant.

DiClaudio said her word for the project was “protective,” and her daughter’s was “attached.” She said they are both fitting.

John said he appreciates that Sarah is listening to people’s feelings and “being someone to talk to for all the hurting people.”



## Bokone

“I wonder what’s going on in their life,” he said. “It’s a different form of art in my opinion.”

Sarah’s sister, Lisa Ihnat, sat in on the interview when her friend participated in the \$25 Secret. She said the experience led her to see how understanding Sarah is.

“It’s amazing how she comes up with the word,” she said.

Ihnat said the interview is very one-on-one and in-depth.

“It’s amazing [that the subjects] were able to open up to her,” Ihnat said.

Sarah said she could not go into detail about some of her most memorable interviews because it “would be giving away a secret,” but one of the most impactful

was with a woman who showed so much strength in the face of nonstop adversity.

Sarah will never forget the woman’s strength.

“I try really hard to hold back my emotions during some of the interviews, but there are people you relate with, and there are people who have pain so deep and so strong that it makes you feel it,” Sarah said. “I’ve felt a lot through this.”

DiClaudio said Sarah has a special knack for listening and pulling information out, which makes for a unique portrait.

“She tries to draw something out of the picture,” DiClaudio said.

Sarah was not always this way, though. Her mother said she used to be really shy. Her father agreed.

“Sarah was very loving ... and sensitive to people’s feelings,” John said.

He said she is prone to taking things more personally than her sisters and could see that she was always the quickest to have her feelings hurt.

“My personal feeling was she was just like me,” John said.

She went to Kent State University for a while, but her mother said she had trouble adjusting because she was always more “hands-on than book smart”

and liked being creative.

“That was just kind of a fluke,” Kathy said about her year at KSU.

Sarah said she did poorly at KSU because she did not want to be there. She wanted to go to the Art Institute of Pittsburgh, which she did in her sophomore year.

Sarah became interested in photography after she took a few pictures for a high school art show and found her passion for expressing herself through photos.

After college, Kathy said Sarah became a little more outgoing.

“The biggest part of it was being downtown ... dealing with people,” she said.

Ihnat said Sarah’s photography has helped her to express herself and be more comfortable in the process. She noticed a shift in their relationship — and in Sarah — when she began going to Sarah for advice.

“She’s become that role for me,” Ihnat said. “Giving back what I have given her.”

Kaufman, who met Sarah at KSU and continued to follow her on Facebook after she left, said she was initially lacking confidence.

Kaufman, who went to KSU for graphic design, later designed the logo for the corner of Sarah’s pictures: a “BO” sitting on top of a sideways “KO.”

He said she was a fun person and wanted her logo to reflect that.

“I was really captivated by her work,” Kaufman said. “There was something different about it.”

He said she has developed a style and technique that she did not have coming right out of college.

“I know she goes into [shoots] not really knowing what she’s going to do, but it turns out so amazing and that’s what I love,” Ihnat

“I was really captivated by her work. There was something different about it,”

-Aaron Kaufman

said.

Sarah said she wants to do an editorial type of photography, and Kaufman said that is what she is good at.

He added that some of his favorite photos by her are a series in which a little girl portrays Little Red Riding Hood and another in which a model is covered in an octopus.

John said he is impressed by the variety in his daughter’s photography. Whenever he can go to one of Sarah’s shows, he does. He particularly liked her Market on the Square show in Warren.

Kathy liked the show at Warren’s Hippodrome, which she described as “more [Sarah].”

Ihnat said people don’t always understand Sarah’s photography. She said they see things differently, but that she understands where she’s coming from.

John said he likes the uniqueness of the \$25 Secret and that she made it work in Warren.

He added that he believes people should do what they want to do and do it the best they can, but still a father still questions when his children make risky moves.

“Your thought is, ‘There is a ton of photographers. What are you going to do with this?’” he said. “I don’t think Sarah ever had that in mind.”

Sarah said she could not see herself doing anything other than photography.

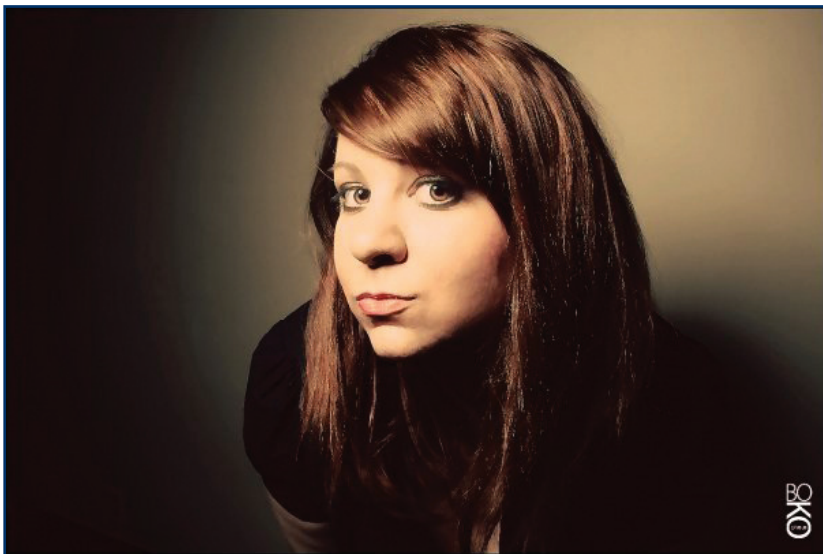
“She has a gift with photography and feeling other people,” John said.

Ihnat does not like some of Sarah’s self-portraits because they are too “dark.”

“It’s depressing to me, but I understand that’s how she expresses herself,” she said.

“I’ve never done any criticism,” John said. “She sees things that maybe I don’t.”

Sarah photographed her father’s second wedding. He said his favorite picture from the wedding was the one of him and his current wife holding hands — with an





OSU bag between them.

"It was simple and Sarah captured it," he said.

Sarah's mother and father divorced early on in her adolescence.

Her mother said Sarah knew something was going on in the marriage because she was asking questions before it happened.

"There were rough spots she got scared about," she said.

Kathy said Sarah and her father were not close and grew more distant when they didn't live together.

John said he was hurt when she went to live with her mother, and there has always been a silent hurt from not living with her.

Her sisters were older and decided to stay with their father, and Ihnat said the divorce affected Sarah the most.

There was always tension between Sarah and her sister Lori because each felt their father gave the other more attention, Kathy said.

"I think Sarah would be so happy if they could spend time with no negativity," she said.

Ihnat said she believes that John connected with Lori more through sports — softball specifically — and he sometimes did not listen to or give enough attention to Sarah.

"It affected Sarah more with relationships," she said.

Kathy said things have gotten better between Sarah



*The idea for the \$25 Secret started when Sarah woke up in the middle of the night, wrote "strength" across her mouth and took this picture.*

and her father, but she still does not always feel accepted.

Around the same time her parents were separating, one of Sarah's best friends suffered an untimely death.

Josh Landis was killed in a car accident on Labor Day when he and Sarah were 12 years old.

DiClaudio, Josh's mother, said Sarah used to call the house for Josh all the time when they went to school together in the fourth grade.

"They were so cute," Kathy said.

Josh was Sarah's first boyfriend, and Kathy said they always hit it off.

"Josh would come to play and vice versa," John said. He described their relationship as puppy love and said it had quite an effect on Sarah.

"She'll never completely be over it," Kathy said.

Sarah wrote letters to Josh in a journal every day and gave it to his mother a year after his death.

"I don't think she fully expressed how she felt then," Ihnat said, adding that she talks about him more now.

Kathy said Sarah was a "girl's girl," but she got along better with boys.

She remained close to Josh's mother and still visits her frequently today.

"She kept me in touch with things Josh would have been involved in," DiClaudio said.

Kathy said Sarah held a lot inside while growing up. As she got older, a sense of depression in Sarah became more evident.

"There is a real sadness,"

Kathy said.

Her father said she is a lot stronger now than she was then.

"We all have to go through adversity in life to make us stronger," he said.

John said he hopes his daughter will find happiness and be successful, but not just in the monetary sense.

Her mother and sister see her moving out of Warren and to a bigger city soon.

"I go back and forth on moving out of Warren. I still can't figure out where I'd like to be," Sarah said.

Ihnat said she could see her sister working for a magazine.

"I've never doubted her work," she said.

Sarah said she is preparing herself for something bigger and more challenging.

"She can do it when she's ready," Kathy said. "When she sees the opportunity, she'll go for it."

As for the \$25 Secret, Sarah said she is thinking about starting it again in a new location but would like to wait until she releases the book.

"I still have people emailing me every week wanting to be a part of it," Sarah said.

She said it would not be any time this year, but she could not promise anything.

"I still love the project, but I was ready to work on something else," Sarah said. ✨





# Dancing!

Kayla Boye

The lowdown on the dances that spark passion, praise and prestige

Photos by Kayla Boye

## SWING DANCING: In the swing of things

---

Skipping to the frenetic pace of Benny Goodman's "Sing, Sing, Sing," the swing dancers at Cedars Lounge demonstrate their prowess and passion on the dance

floor. The blast of brass horns and the pulsing beat of percussion accentuate the dancers' enthusiasm and pure energy as they take to the boards, their shadowy silhouettes swirling in fluid artistry. They are dancing a swing jam, the climax of the evening when the crowd clears a circle and allows each couple to showcase their best moves. All skill levels are on display, and anyone feeling

the least bit nervous quickly forgoes fear to jump in on the excitement.

Swing dancing is a highly social style of dance and has a major following in Youngstown. Walking into Cedars on any Thursday night, you are immediately welcomed into the swing of things. You have no chance of spending the evening as a wallflower; chances are, you will either be invited onto the

dance floor or feel yourself hypnotically drawn into the action by the swinging tunes of DJ Doctor D.

The usual style of swing at Cedars is West Coast Swing, a stylistic variation of the Lindy Hop. It can be danced to an extensive range of music including blues, country, rock 'n' roll, big band, and smooth and cool jazz. Many experienced dancers are willing to assist



newcomers with free lessons on the dance floor. As they continue coming to Swing Night and attending swing sessions at other locations, beginners soon find themselves at an advanced level.

This was the case with Dean Velasco Jr., who after dabbling in swing for six years, decided to raise his game over the past year and a half. Onlookers now observe him dancing skillfully around the room, teaching beginners basic techniques and encouraging everyone to join in the swing jam.

"I travel down from Cleveland almost every week," he said. "Cedars is really a hot spot for swing, and people come from all over to dance here." Dancers journey to Swing Night from locales in Ohio, Pennsylvania and even Michigan.

Steve Meshenberg comes regularly from Kent with his friends.

"I've been coming for about a year and a half," he said. "It's a great way to have fun with your friends and meet great people."

Steve is accompanied by his friends Jeremiah Landi, Cindy Ahonen and Megan Mingus, also from Kent. Ahonen and Mingus are making their first foray into the swing world tonight.

"They kind of dragged me out," Mingus said. "But I'm having fun, and I think I will come back again."

Jamie Turney also fell in love

with swing dancing after her first time at Cedars in November.

"Initially, you step on everyone's feet, but you learn on the go. It's a tight-knit group, but they embrace you if you show an interest in learning," Turney said.

Now, Turney is a regular dancer and comes every Thursday.

This is a common phenomenon at Cedars, where it is easy to become hooked on dancing and turn it into a personal tradition. Gary Wiggins has been going for three years. "I started coming when one of my friends suggested it," Wiggins said. "Having nothing better to do, I said, 'Why not?' And there was always the possibility of meeting some hot chicks."

Wiggins shows his swinging skills by participating in competitions with his dance partner, Amy Warner, who he met two years ago at Swing Night.

Warner has danced for 10 years, beginning with the Dance Club at Youngstown State University. Of her competitive experience, Warner said, "We compete often. My favorite style of dance is the tango; it is full of power and aggression. I love swing dancing, though, because it gives me a chance to relax and have fun when I am not competing."

When they attend Swing Night, Wiggins and Warner enjoy demonstrating their swing technique and teaching

beginners the fundamentals.

Watching these rug-cutters can motivate even the shyest soul to join in the fun; swing dancing is a great way to let go of insecurities and enjoy oneself. Regardless of the fluctuating spring weather outside, you can still enjoy yourself indoors surrounded by the company of enthusiastic dancers.

## BALLROOM: Taking hold

Accompanied by the electric mixes of Ke\$ha, ballroom dance instructor Mineh Ishida deftly executes a graceful turning pattern with his dance partner.

"See, you can do West Coast Swing to any type of music. It's so versatile," he said to his students, who eagerly attempt to emulate his example. Ishida reminded them, "Remember, you must maintain the proper hold and connect with your partner."

Mishaps and entanglements occur, but the students quickly find their rhythm and begin enjoying the wondrous freedom of ballroom movement.

The Dance Club at YSU prides itself on offering a special insight into the world of dance for students new to the art form. No experience is needed, and instructors enjoy working with all skill levels. Although today's focus is West Coast Swing, all styles of ballroom are explored,



Joshua Bartlett and Kavya Sreevalsan practice ballroom dancing. The Dance Club at YSU offers classes for dancers of all experience levels.

including cha-cha, rumba, foxtrot and waltz. Club President Randi Yazvac and Vice President Bree Szmara hope to build club membership so they can establish a competition team. "We had one last year," Szmara said. "But the funding and interest hasn't been there for a team this year." In past years, the team has competed at meets in cities such as Columbus and Akron. Yazvac dreams of establishing and hosting a ballroom competition in Youngstown. "We have so many talented and active dancers in the area. I think a local competition would generate huge interest," she said.

Yazvac and Szmara became involved with the Dance Club after attending Swing Night at Cedars.

"During spring of my freshman year, I saw a flier for Dance Club on campus. I wanted to get more involved, so I decided to join," Yazvac said.

Before joining Dance Club, Szmara had extensive experience with studio competition dancing, so ballroom seemed like the logical next step.

"I've been in Dance Club for two years. I enjoy it because it is more social, and you have fun meeting everyone," she said.

Many first-time participants decide to continue coming and learning new styles. YSU student Aljeeta Sangtani started dancing last semester. "I was inspired by 'Dancing with the Stars,'" Sangtani said. "I especially like the tango; it's really passionate."

YSU student Kavya Sreevalsan has also fallen in love with ballroom dancing.

"I really love dancing. I've danced all my life; it's a really nice break from school and life in general. It's about letting go," Sreevalsan said. Yazvac invites interested students to attend any session of Dance Club, which meets

Mondays at 5:30 p.m. in Beeghly Center.

"It is a great stress relief and a way to escape the pressures of school. Everyone needs to try it; everyone can dance," she said.

## SALSA: The spice of life

Amanda Adams has a taste for spicy salsa. Dancing, that is. She fell in love with the art form while studying abroad in France, where she attended salsa raves nearly every night at salsa nightclubs and subterranean bars.

"I made my best friends dancing. We would go to underground salsa spots in the South of France. It was sometimes scary to get there; sometimes, we'd have to walk behind alleys surrounded by trashcans and climb several flights of stairs," Adams said. "But once we reached the rave, it was pure fun."

Her adventures abroad were not Adams' first encounters with dancing.

"I studied ballroom at Fred Astaire for several years; my favorite types of dancing are the waltz, foxtrot and salsa. Definitely salsa, because you have the power to do more with it and explore variety in

your movement," she said. "And an added bonus: You don't necessarily need a partner." Although there are several sub-genres

of salsa dancing, the easiest way to enter the field can be dancing solo. At salsa raves, improvisation allows dancers to create unique combinations. The style is characterized by fast-paced energy and fierce footwork. Much of the movement occurs in the hips, propelled by pulsing energy from the upper body.

Because salsa dancing is a multi-genre style, the music is an eclectic blend appealing to a variety of personalities. Salsa can be performed to traditional Latin beats, techno rave, hip-hop, swing and even polka.

Though it has Cuban origins, the salsa movement is surging across Europe and is experiencing a slow rise in popularity in the United States.

When Adams returned to Youngstown after her study abroad experience, she noticed a lack of salsa events in the area. She plans to fill this void by organizing a series of salsa raves with friend Cherise Benton. Benton also has a long love of dancing.

"I took dance lessons when I was a little girl, but now I'm really into salsa, swing and belly dancing," she said. Recalling the first salsa rave in March, Benton said, "It went really, really well as far as I'm concerned. We ended up with a lovely turnout considering it was a Wednesday night; people neither of us knew showed up and danced and wore our glow

sticks, which was really all we asked out of the world."

The pair plans a sequel to their first salsa rave.

"We're thinking about having another one in May," Benton said. "We'll probably divide it into half salsa night, half rave night instead of playing the music randomly. One of the attendees from the first rave offered to give salsa lessons." Adams also anticipates a potential salsa instructor at the next rave.

"I think bringing in an instructor to give free salsa lessons will certainly help to improve the event," she said. Considering more possibilities, Benton mused, "And we'd get a bigger turnout if it was on a weekend, but there's something charming about two girls having a bar to themselves, wearing glow sticks and dancing to their own music on a weeknight." Adams said she believes people will discover a pleasurable experience in local dancing.

"Youngstown may seem like a pretty boring place, but there really are great venues to have a lot of fun at, especially if you like to dance. It doesn't matter what style of dance. We really do have a place for everyone," she said.

Benton encourages everyone to hit the dance floor, with or without glow sticks.

"Dancing is easier than it looks. Make the first move," she said. ✨

**"I was inspired by 'Dancing with the Stars.'" -Aljeeta Sangtani**





# Plan Yo\*

## Summer 2011

### May 21

Love Turns Hate & Red  
Sun Rising  
Cedars Lounge  
10 p.m.  
\$5  
18+

### May 22

Lynyrd Skynyrd and ZZ  
Top  
Covelli Centre  
7 p.m.  
\$36.75-\$76.75

### May 28

JonesFest IV  
Nelson Ledges Quarry  
Park  
Noon to midnight  
\$20  
All ages

### May 28

Frontiers  
(A Journey Tribute)  
Warren  
Community Amphitheatre  
\$5

### June 10

"The Dixie Swim Club"  
Youngstown  
Playhouse  
7:30 p.m.  
All ages

### June 18

The Kellys and ZOSO  
(The Ultimate Led  
Zeppelin Experience)  
Warren Community  
Amphitheatre  
\$5

### June 25

"Painting on Paper: 25  
Works by Alex Kuthy"  
McDonough Museum of  
Art  
6 p.m.  
All ages

### July 9-10

Summer Festival of the  
Arts  
Youngstown State  
University campus

### July 13

Jeff Dunham Identity  
Crisis Tour 2011  
Covelli Centre  
7:30 p.m.

### July 16

Sarah Turner, Chris  
Higbee and  
7 Bridges (Tribute to The  
Eagles)  
Warren Community  
Amphitheatre  
\$5

### July 22

Male/Female Auction for  
Breast Cancer  
Club Gossip  
9 p.m.  
21+

### July 29

Motley Crue with Poison  
Covelli Centre  
7 p.m.

### August 6

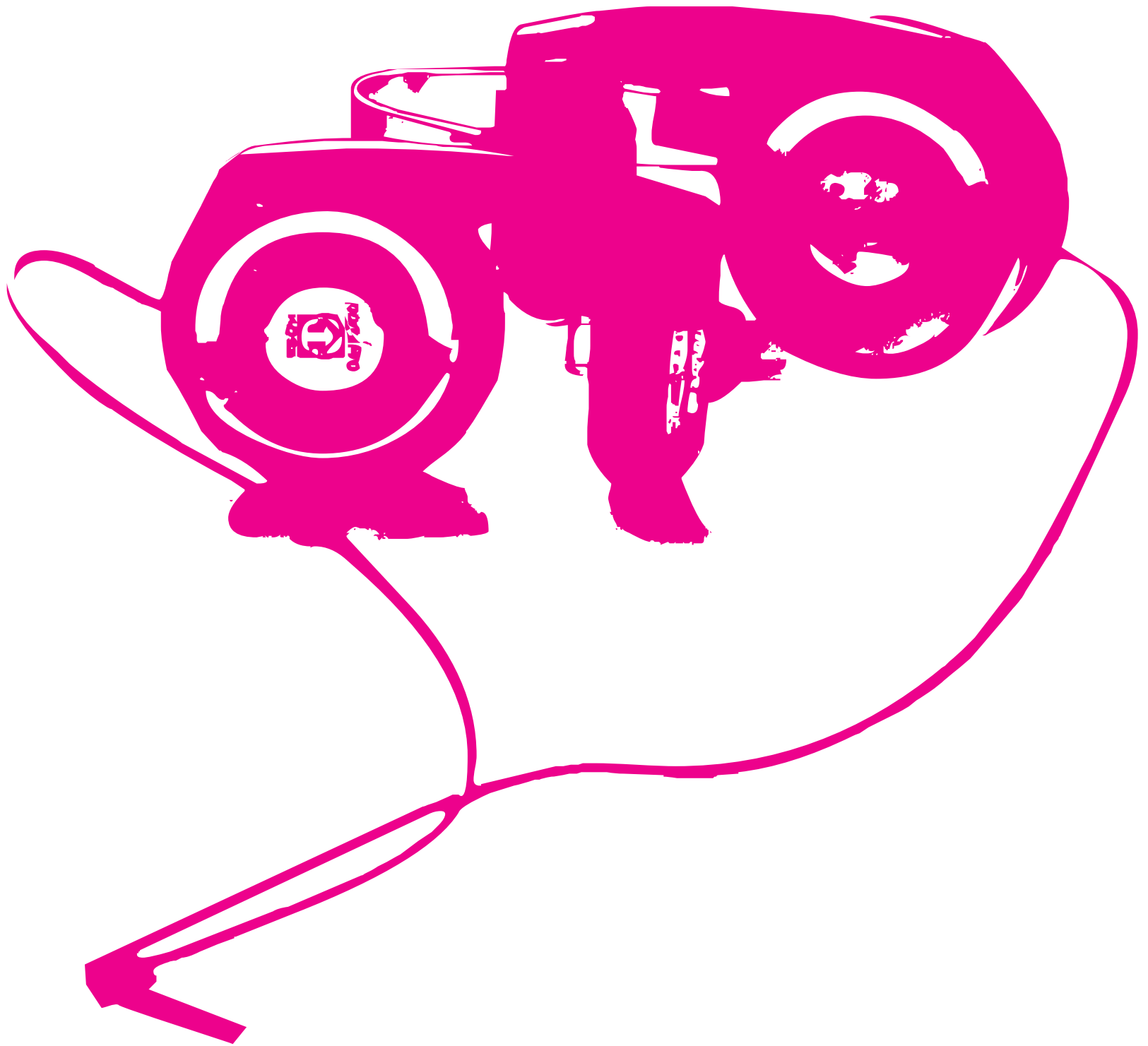
Strutter (Tribute to KISS)  
Warren Community  
Amphitheatre  
\$5

### August 14

Vexfest 8  
Downtown Youngstown  
(West Federal Street)

### August 20

Bad Medicine (Tribute to  
Bon Jovi)  
Warren Community  
Amphitheatre  
\$5



*Calling all writers, editors,  
designers and photographers*

**330-941-1991**

**theyomagazine@gmail.com**