

THE JAMBAR

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BULKING UP YOUR BRACKET

THE SIDEBAR



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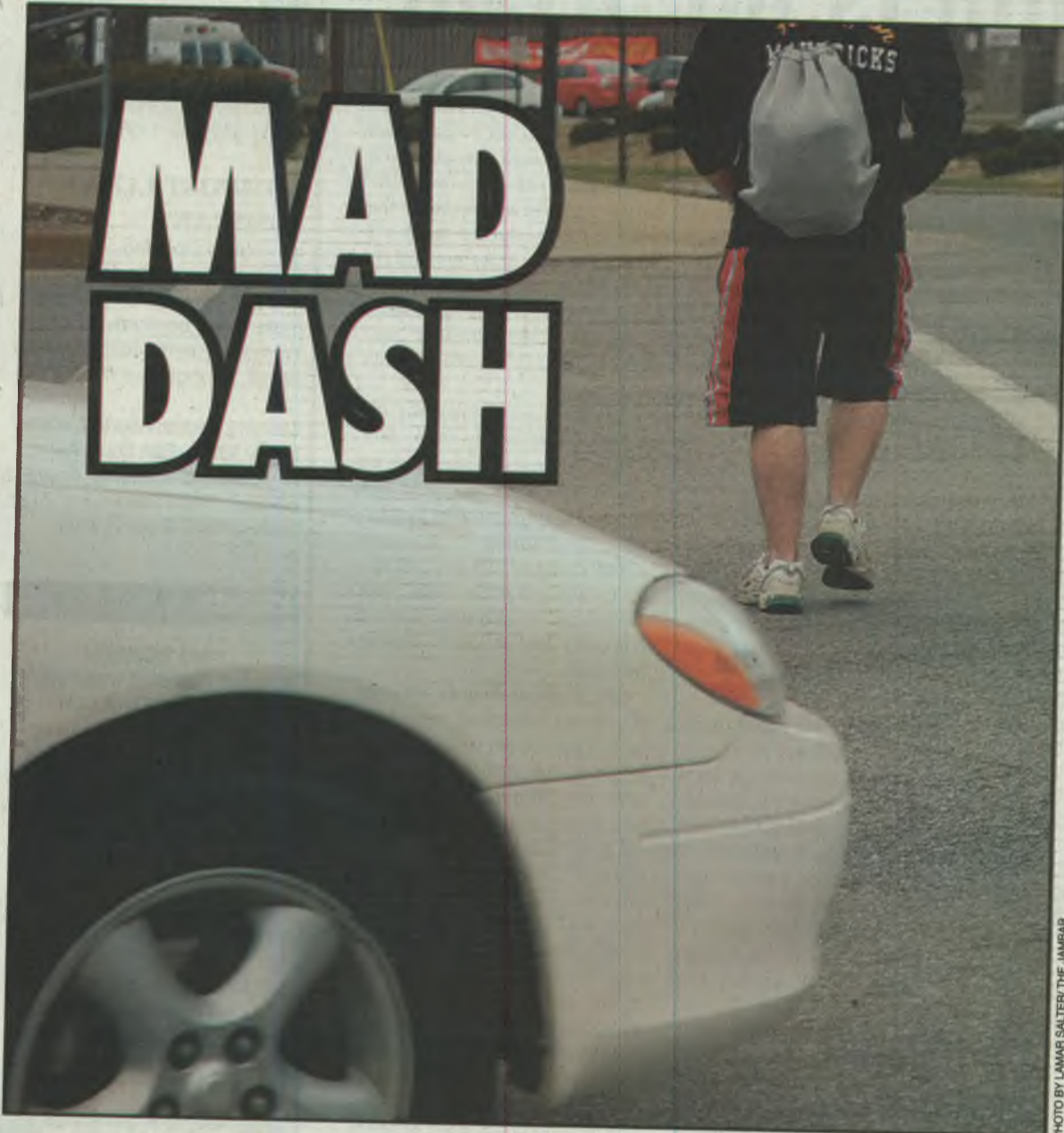


PHOTO BY JAMBAR SALES/STAFF FOR THE JAMBAR

Crosswalk signals leave little time to cross streets

Juliana Hall
REPORTER

While crossing the street at Fifth and Lincoln Avenues on April 27, 2005, a Youngstown State University staff member was hit by a vehicle driven by a student. Youngstown State University student Teaya Traylor hit Pat Lapresta while turning left onto Fifth Avenue. Traylor told police she "did not see the pedestrian in the intersection" when she struck her. Officer Lopez of the Youngstown Police Department said the woman was knocked to the pavement upon impact and was later taken to St. Elizabeth's Hospital. Lapresta said Traylor was on her cell phone while making the

turn and called the accident "avoidable." "People just don't give pedestrians the right of way," she said. "Officials really don't do anything about the crosswalks, anyway." According to the National Highway Traffic and Safety Administration, 4,654 people were killed in crosswalks in 2007. To reduce these injuries, the administration's mission is "to save lives, prevent injuries and reduce economic costs through education, research, safety standards and enforcement activity," according to their Web site. They also aim for the highest standards in enforcing safety regulations. Youngstown State University engineering professor David Kurtan-

"People just don't give pedestrians the right of way. Officials really don't do anything about the crosswalks, anyway."
- Pat Lapresta, YSU staff member

CROSSING page 2

Ohio top choice for many businesses

Emmalee C. Torisk
NEWS EDITOR

For the third consecutive year, Site Selection Magazine, a nationwide location assistance guidebook, has named Ohio the country's top choice for business development, attraction and investment. This designation, which is marked by the Governor's Cup Award, is based upon the number of new business starts and expansions in the past year. Ohio also received this award in 1993, 1994, 1995, 2003, 2006 and 2007. An investment of at least \$1 million, the creation of 50 new jobs or the addition of a minimum of 20,000 square feet of new floor

area must occur in order to qualify for the award, said Tony Paglia, the Youngstown/Warren Regional Chamber vice president of government affairs. According to Site Selection's rankings, Ohio won the award with 503 projects. Paglia attributed Ohio's win to the "aggressive way that state and local communities have tried to bring new business to the area," while also helping existing businesses expand. He also said the continuous collaboration between the state, various departments of development and local communities have made Ohio a more attractive place for businesses to locate. For instance, in recent years, the state has lowered income taxes by a substantial amount, and is also in

the process of eliminating property tax for business inventory, Paglia said. The state's quality of life, competitive cost of living, infrastructure, schools, central location, resources, plethora of existing sites on which to locate new facilities and productive workers have also contributed to the state's business growth. Additionally, the city of Youngstown tied for 7th in the mid-sized metropolitan area category [with a population between 200,000 and one million] for new and expanded corporate facilities. In this division, Dayton, Akron and Toledo took the top three places. Also, in Site Selection's top 10 for metropolitan and micropolitan categories,

OHIO page 2

YSU performed alarm test over break for upgraded emergency system

Doug Livingston
REPORTER

During spring break, Youngstown State University performed a test for the alarm and mass communication system. The test, which concluded on Friday, highlighted the newly upgraded YSU emergency sys-

tem that now consists of both interior and exterior audible alarms. In a personal announcement e-mail sent out March 6, the university indicated, "tests will include fire alarm, tornado warning and mass communication messages." Ron Cole, manager of news and information at YSU, af-

firmed that "the tests went well" and "that the system should be fully operational soon." The purpose for upgrades may be a result of a growing concern about civil unrest on campuses across the nation over the past few years, such as the Virginia Tech shootings last April. "Ever since the attacks we've been assessing our emer-

gency responses," Cole said. Cole said this new emergency programming was initiated by the Office of Student Affairs and is just one of several implementations that students will see in the near future. Other programs include a cell phone messaging system and a threat assessment team, which will concentrate on raising awareness during emer-

gency situations and help to bridge any gaps in communication. Though the system is not fully operational at this point, Cole emphasized its importance. "You never know when there is going to be an emergency situation," Cole said. "We all believe that with this system in place, we are a little bit safer."

ACE pres, admin promised pay increase in letter

J. Breen Mitchell & Sarah Sole
THE JAMBAR

A letter of agreement obtained by The Jambar shows that Youngstown State University Association of Classified Employees Union president Ivan Maldonado and former Chief Human Resources officer Craig Bickley agreed to increase former ACE president Christine Domhoff's salary, even if she were to be denied a position vacated by job reclassification. Maldonado was placed on paid administrative leave last week after allegations surfaced that he had threatened an ACE employee who might have helped to circulate the document. Included in the agreement, which was signed by Bickley and Maldonado on Nov. 28, 2007, was a stipulation that the document be shredded upon completion of the process. Domhoff did not receive the raise and filed a grievance against the university on Feb. 16. In the grievance, Domhoff requested that the university adhere to the agreement. Domhoff could not be reached for comment when contacted early Monday afternoon. Scott Schulick, chair of the YSU Board of Trustees, said the board received the information regarding the allegations against Maldonado about two weeks ago and discussed it at length. While he was unable to comment on the discussion, Schulick said the Board will do everything necessary to protect faculty, staff and students from threats. "The Board finds that information very disturbing," he said of the allegations.

Two candidates remain for Health and Human Services dean

Emmalee C. Torisk
NEWS EDITOR

The Youngstown State University Bitonte College of Health and Human Services' search for a new dean will culminate this month when the two remaining candidates visit campus as a component of the interview process. Out of a pool of nine, Joseph Mosca, associate dean of the YSU Bitonte College of Health and Human Services, and O. Matthew Adeyanju, professor and director at Ohio University's School of Public Health Sciences and Professions, were chosen as the final candidates for the position. On March 18 and 19, Mosca will be present on campus, while Adeyanju will visit March 24 and 25. Dean of the YSU College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences [CLASS] Shearle Furnish said the search for a new dean was necessitated by the retirement of former dean John Yemma last year. Since then, Janice Elias has served as the interim dean of the college. The new dean will take office July 1, at the beginning of the new fiscal year. Several requirements for the position exist, including a doctorate in any of the college's disciplines, tenure eligibility, a distinguished record of achievement in teaching and department administration, dynamic leadership and a collaborative management style, Furnish said. Communication skills, fundraising and management were also considered as some of the qualities and characteristics sought in a potential dean. Furnish said the candidates' campus visits will be similar to recent dean interviews, including last

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- SPORTS**
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- WEATHER**
- Today 65° 46°
- Wednesday 65° 36°
- Thursday 42° 25°
- Friday 44° 28°
- Saturday 53° 34°
- Sunday 54° 36°
- Monday 53° 38°

Remember to recycle your copy of The Jambar.

News Briefs

Jambar ad sparks discussion

The recent Bradley R. Smith advertisements in The Jambar will be the focus of a roundtable discussion hosted by YSU's history club. The discussion will take place Thursday, March 19 in the Presidential Suites at Kilcawley Center.

YSU to host UN diplomat

YSU will host UN diplomat David Smith at a reception in the lobby of DeBartolo Hall Thursday, March 19 from 2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. This event is free and open to the public. Smith can also be seen at a Wine reception at the Rosetta Stone restaurant from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. The public will be charged \$20 for this event and students can partake in the event for \$10. Smith is a UN spokesperson and is a diplomat fulfilling his duties with the executive branch of Congress.

Piano concert at DeYor

Caroline Oltmanns and Dror Brian will perform a piano concert at the Ford Family Recital Hall, Eleanor Beecher Flad Pavilion at the DeYor Performing Arts Center in downtown Youngstown. The concert will be Tuesday, March 17 at 8 p.m. and is presented by the Dana School of Music. Tickets for the concert are \$6.50, \$4, and free for anyone with a valid YSU ID.

Ohio campus compact meeting

The Ohio Campus Compact and how it can benefit YSU will be the topic of discussion at a meeting in the Board of Trustees room on the third floor of Tod Hall. The meeting will be held Thursday, March 19 at 10 a.m. Jen Gilbride-Brown, director of faculty and campus development, will speak about the non-profit organization and how it can encourage the civic purposes of higher education. The meeting is free and open to the public.

Police Briefs

Woman Injured

On March 12, a female parking employee was injured when a machine pinned her up against the wall and caused her to scream out before help arrived. As a result of the incident, the victim sustained a large, deep bruise to the right thigh.

Woman gets sick at Kilcawley

On March 11, an older female subject left a trail of vomit and diarrhea by the Candy Counter to the Chestnut Room. She was found sitting in a chair when paramedics checked her. The subject was later transported to St. Elizabeth's Hospital.

Man with warrant caught

A male subject was reported to be asking for money to get to Akron on March 11. An officer stopped the subject at Spring Street, north of the Kilcawley Student Center, where the subject was identified to have had an active arrest warrant for domestic violence. The subject was placed under arrest and issued a trespass warning before being transported to the Mahoning Country Jail.

Key stolen from key ring

On March 10, an officer was dispatched in reference to one key stolen from Cushwa Hall, which opened the WYSU radio station. The key is still missing, and it was last seen on March 5.

Homework over vacation is no break

Darlene Wagner
REPORTER

Algebra, chemistry, foreign language, labs, managing studies, family and a job; these are just a few things that collegians deal with on a regular basis. Many students anxiously awaited spring break only to have their plans for fun in the sun extinguished by the need to study and complete projects due this week.

A January survey conducted by mtvU, MTV's 24-hour college network, and the Associated Press found that of the 2,253 students from 40 random four-year campuses surveyed, 80 percent said they feel day-to-day stress and 63 percent said that they have been stressed to the point where they could not get school work done. According to a 2008 survey done by the Center for Student Health and Life, 27 percent of college students say they are doing poorly or very poorly at managing stress. Greater academic demands headed the list of common stressors for college students.

For students like freshman Ashley Reynolds, getting good grades is nice, but time off from her hectic work and study schedule is what she says she needs. Reynolds, who works and attends college full time, said spring break was anything but a break. "Maintaining good

grades [is] important to me so I have to study. There are life necessities I need, so I have to work," she said. The pre-nursing student said she feels the most stress when an assignment and a test are due around the same time. "It's important for me to complete my education so that I can get a job in the field. I don't plan on working at KFC for the rest of my life," she said. For her, spring break included a trip to the Maag Library.

Anna Bobby, Maag Library operations manager, said there is usually always a decrease in the amount of people that come to the library during breaks. "We had a flow of request for material because people had papers due this week, but attendance in the library is always lower," she said.

Some students have questioned the purpose of spring break. Is it an opportunity for a vacation from school schedules or is it a time to review and catch up on the college workload?

Senior Rocco Sabino had a paper due the Monday after spring break. Sabino said he tried to get it out of the way as soon as possible so that he could enjoy his break. "Time off from college should be more of a break rather than doing school work," he said. Sabino also said instructors should try to have all test papers assigned before or after break so that assignments weren't mandated during it.

Freshman Raveon Neely said she tries not to get stressed out about homework because it's just another part of college life. Neely said she understands the need to study during break. "I take it one day at a time and do the work as soon as possible to get it out of the way," she said.

Faculty also consider students when making assignments over break.

Teresa Volsko, program director of respiratory care, said her students used the break time to play catch up. She said her paramedic students also participated in learning experiences in the campus lab and an experimental lab at the Ohio State University. Volsko also worked alongside her students during the break.

Dr. Maria E. Delost, director of clinical laboratory programs in the department of health professions, advised her students to review Web exams and practice during the break, but did not give them any new assignments. "Students graduating this spring have a lot to review," she said. Delost said she understands that many of her students use the time to catch up on life events at home and she used a democratic approach for assigning work prior to and during break. "The students choose to take their exams before break and use the break time to study for their clinical and registry exams," she said.

CROSSING page 1

ich said YSU's crosswalk times are dependent on the location's traffic patterns. According to the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, which sets the standard for U.S. signs, signals and various pavement markings, walk intervals should be four to seven seconds in length. This is to ensure pedestrians have enough time to leave the curb before "pedestrian clearance time" begins.

Additionally, according to the MUTCD, it is not necessary that the walk interval be equivalent to the calculated pedestrian clearance time, since many will conclude their crossing within the allocated pedestrian clearance time.

Kurtanich said the standard pedestrian walking speed used for engineering design is 4 feet per second, but also that "pedestrian control signalization is

affected by the available gap in traffic patterns." To determine these patterns, engineers factor in crossing distance, number of lanes, walking speed and group start-up time.

In the middle of the week around noon, the crosswalks were timed using a Timex Chronograph stopwatch. At the crosswalk on Fifth Avenue and Spring Street by the McDonald's, pedestrians are shown the "walk" sign, also known as the allocated walk interval time, for 5.56 seconds. It actually takes 15.1 seconds to cross the street at a brisk walk and 22.1 seconds until the cars get their green light.

On Fifth and Lincoln Avenue where Lapresta was hit, the "walk" sign is shown for 24.1 seconds, and it takes approximately 13.1 seconds to cross the street. This section of the cross-

walk between the M7 lot and the M26 lot by Smith Hall is approximately half the size of the crosswalk by the McDonald's, yet it provides more crossing time. None of the crosswalks on campus are set the same because of "traffic patterns," Kurtanich said.

Zack Sablak, a sophomore who frequents the crosswalk by the McDonald's said he is concerned about some campus crosswalks.

"It's a bad idea that the 'walk' light doesn't stay on long enough for you to cross the street," Sablak said.

However, junior Edelmira Delgado said she has never had any problems with the crosswalks, but also said in her three years at YSU, she had never used the crosswalk by the McDonald's or Smith Hall.

OHIO page 1

Ohio had more cities on the list than any other state. Paglia said this designation was "huge" and a "major, major accomplishment for the area."

"Historically, the Youngstown metro area has been in the last place or in the bottom five. For years, we've not been able to attract companies to the area," Paglia said. "Now, the community is working together. This wasn't the case 10 or 15 years ago. For years, we were thought of as the epitome of a rust belt community on the decline."

Paglia said that teamwork and collaboration have been instrumental in changing the city and its negative image. Several other things have contributed to Youngstown's change in image, including the city's 2010 plan, the Youngstown Business

Incubator, Youngstown State University and the election of new, young and innovative officials, Paglia said.

"These officials are changing the way the outside views Mahoning Valley public officials," Paglia said. "Before, there was a negative connotation, but now they are helping bring people to this area that may have not wanted to come before."

Paglia also noted that although the country is currently experiencing a period of economic downturn, once it wanes, both Ohio and the Mahoning Valley will be in a prime position.

"We will be poised to make big strides because of the groundwork that has been laid," Paglia said.

DEAN page 1

month's fine and performing arts dean search.

"The interview process is fairly grueling. It's a day and a half of exhausting, back-to-back interviews with various entities on campus, including the president and the provost," Furnish said.

An open meeting with faculty, staff and students will also take place, and candidate evaluations will be available, Furnish said. The times for these discussions — which vary with the candidates — are available at <http://www.ysu.edu/hhsdean/candidates.shtml>, and are noted

in the candidates' itineraries.

Youngstown State University's Bitone College of Health and Human Services offers numerous accredited programs for a variety of careers in the health and human service field. The college's eight departments consist of criminal justice, health professions, human ecology, human performance and exercise science, military science, nursing, physical therapy and social work, according to the college's Web site. Various majors through other YSU colleges are also available, as are several graduate courses.

Classifieds

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Then look at the *Jambar* or *Penguin Review Literary Magazine*. Applications are now being accepted for the upcoming 2009 summer and 2009-10 academic year [August-May] student positions. All positions receive a paid stipend. Applicants will be interviewed by the Student Publication Committee in mid-April.

Who should apply?

To apply for a paid position you must:

- (1) be enrolled in YSU's spring 2009 semester,
- (2) be in good standing,
- (3) be enrolled for 12 or more hours,
- (4) and you must have completed course **ENG #2622 News Reporting** or be currently enrolled in ENG #2622 for spring 2009. [Also listed as JOURN #2622]. If you do not meet all four of these requirements you will not be considered for a PAID *Jambar* position; however please do email the *Jambar* for VOLUNTEER staffing opportunities at thejambar@gmail.com.

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■ Advertising and sales positions also require the completion of initial business classes.

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Penguin Review Literary Magazine

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Where to pick up an application:

Applications are available from Lynn Haug in the Kilcawley Staff Office located on the upper level of Kilcawley Center. One application applies for both publications—simply check the position(s) you are most interested in.

Application Deadline: 1pm, Tuesday, March 31, 2009

APPLICATION DEADLINE:

1 p.m. Tuesday, March 31, 2009.

Interviews will be scheduled for mid-April.

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YOUNGSTOWN'S BLARNEY STONE

County Mayo Irish folk band to perform two shows for St. Patrick's Day

Gary S. Angelo
REPORTER

Since 1984, Youngstown Irish folk band County Mayo has been bringing the spirit of luck to the area's Irish and non-Irish alike.

On March 17, County Mayo will play at the Youngstown Sports Grille at 11 a.m. and at O'Donald's Irish Pub in Niles at 4 p.m. In addition to performing traditional Celtic folk music, County

Mayo's main mission at a show is to magnetically pull the audience into their set. Additionally, although they make a set list for each show, it is rarely used.

County Mayo doesn't draw solely from Irish influences, but from a vast array of Anglo cultures in Australia, Canada and of the British Isles. The band plays Irish-American "Danny Boy"-esque favorites in addition to Irish classics.

County Mayo includes Ted Miller on lead vocals, Bill Lewis on mando-

lin, banjo, concertina, guitar, tin whistle and organ, Bill Davis on guitar, lead vocals, harmonies and harmonica, and Marcie Meiers on flute, tin whistle, bodhran and piccolo. Frontman Ted Miller named the band County Mayo in honor of his ancestors who came from Ireland's County Mayo. Miller makes frequent visits to County Mayo. The band is an avenue for Miller to connect with his Irish roots and to bring such appreciation to the masses.

Over the years, the band has released a chain of recordings including 2000's "County Mayo The Early Years" [a compilation of the band's first two cassette recordings], 1992's "Sick and Tired of Working," 1996's "This Pub's On Fire" [recorded live at The Pub in Youngstown State University's Kilcawley Center], and 2004's "St. Patrick's Day Favorites." The band plans on recording a second "Saint Patrick's Day Favorites" CD in the future.

Banjo master Bill Lewis' introduction to Irish folk music came by way of a friend's invitation to a Sessiun, or a festive Irish jam session.

There, Lewis met Ted Miller, Bill Davis and Marcie Meiers. At the time, Bill Lewis was playing '60s-tinged bluegrass folk that bore resemblance to the music of Peter, Paul and Mary and Pete Seeger.

"Marcie Meiers played flute while at YSU, and Bill Davis and Ted Miller were interested in forming an Irish folk band," Lewis said of his band mates.

County Mayo sheds some light on 1960s folk legends, but draws heavily from the 1950s Irish folk sound of the Chancey Brothers. The Chancey Brothers were a vocal group who incorporated guitars, tin whistles and mandolins, and basically set the tone for County Mayo's style. During the band's early years, Bill Lewis was an occasional member, and by 1994, he became a regular to the County Mayo family.

In addition to the four members of the band, Bill Lewis invited his sons; Jack Lewis plays electric guitar and Jim Lewis plays bass. Lewis' two sons add a punkish, youthful energy to the mix, and introduced the band to Irish folk punk acts such as The Dropkick Murphys, Black 47 and Flogging Molly.

So far, County Mayo has played thousands of gigs and festivals, including the YSU Festival of The Arts and numerous Irish Celtic Festivals in Western Pennsylvania and West Virginia. Lewis said the band once played a wedding for a couple who saw County Mayo with their parents as children.

No matter where the band plays, County Mayo has left an indelible impression on the audience every time.

"We have a major impact on our audience. People who had parents that took them to most of our shows while growing up in the '80s still support us," Lewis said.



Bill Lewis of County Mayo plays the Bodhran. PHOTO BY GARY S. ANGELO.

St. Patrick's Day festivities

St. Patrick's Day is annually celebrated on March 17 to honor Ireland's patron saint. The Irish and non-Irish alike celebrate this holiday all across the world. This year, some local restaurants are providing various unique activities for those who choose to celebrate.

IRON SHAMROCK, BOARDMAN

- Opens at 6 a.m. with kegs and eggs breakfast buffet
- St. Patrick's Day parade
- Irish step dancers
- Bands
- \$5 car bombs
- \$3 premium drafts
- Small cover charge

BUFFALO WILD WINGS, YOUNGSTOWN

- 40-cent wing day
- \$3 Long Island iced tea
- Green beer

YOUNGSTOWN SPORTS GRILL, BOARDMAN

- Opens at 7 a.m. with kegs and eggs
- 10 a.m. Clear Channel Radio will arrive with an all-day DJ
- Irish music all day
- Green Beer
- Reuben Sandwiches
- Bagpipers
- Dancers

Compiled by Samantha Cavalier, reporter

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MAJORS FAIR

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Monday, March 23, 2009
10:00 am- 3:00 pm

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Representatives from the following colleges will be in attendance to answer your questions:

- Beeghly College of Education
- Bitonte College of Health & Human Services
- College of Fine & Performing Arts
- College of Liberal Arts & Social Sciences
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OUR SIDE EDITORIAL

Jambreak our hearts

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Why didn't you show us your Jambars?

Perhaps you were too busy drinking. Maybe you had nothing better to do on the 22-hour drive to Panama City. We never said you had to read it, since we know you think that's uncool. We couldn't even entice you with an auto-graphed football.

If even one of you had sent in a picture taken in Youngstown, you would have won. Just think: amidst all the spring break Facebook photos taken that will make you unemployable, you could have had just one of you reading a newspaper. The following is a list of ways The Jambar could have come in handy on your spring break:

- Emergency contraceptive
- Wet Jambar contest
- Puke mop
- Blanket
- Beach umbrella
- Swimming trunks
- Towel
- Drink holder
- Kite
- Magic carpet
- Dinner
- Pimp cane
- Cooler
- Hammock
- Pillow case
- Superhero cape
- Toilet paper
- Rolling paper
- Changing screen
- Scarf
- Shark bait
- Cheap hotel
- Raft
- Sunscreen
- Sombrero
- Miniskirt
- Frisbee
- Weapon
- Flip-flops
- Pirate eye patch
- Speedo
- Dreadlocks
- Fan
- Volleyball net
- Beer bong

Maybe you could keep all these in mind for next year. The prizes offered will still be in our office...

OUR SIDE POLICY

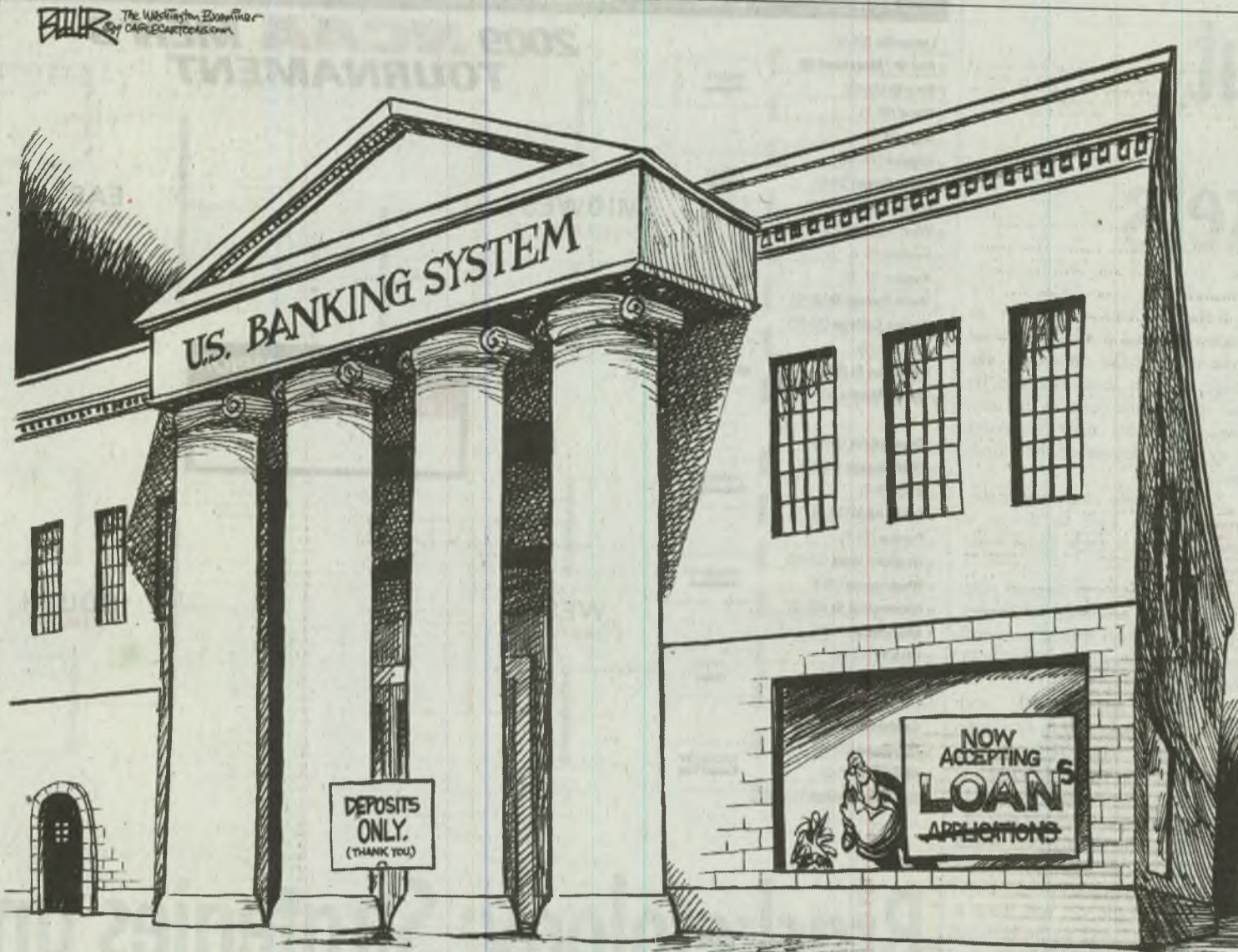
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YOUR SIDE POLICY

The Jambar encourages letters to the editor. E-mail submissions are welcome at editor@thejambar.com. Letters should concern campus issues, must be typed and must not exceed 400 words. Submissions must include the writer's name and telephone number for verification and the writer's city of residence for printing. Letters are subject to editing for spelling, grammar and clarity. The editorial board reserves the right to reject commentaries that are libelous or that don't defend opinion with facts from reliable sources. The editorial board will request a rewrite from the submitting writer based on these requirements.

Letters will not be rejected based on the view expressed in them. Letters may be rejected if they are not relevant to Jambar readers, seek free publicity or if the editorial staff decides the subject has been sufficiently aired. The Jambar will not print letters that libelous, threatening, obscene or indecent. The Jambar does not withhold the names of writers of letters or guest commentaries.

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The views of this syndicated artist do not necessarily agree with those of The Jambar.

COMMENTARY

Mexico's war hits home

McClatchy-Tribune MCT

Mexico. As drug-related violence escalates south of the border, its effects are being felt as far away as Maryland and Minnesota, where federal agents last month made hundreds of arrests and seized tons of cocaine traced to Mexico's ruthless Sinaloa cartel. Skirmishes among rival gangs have spilled across the border into El Paso, Texas, and San Diego. Phoenix is suddenly the kidnapping capital of the United States.

A recent National Drug Intelligence Center report says Mexican cartels have a foothold in 230 U.S. cities, where they have forged alliances with local gangs to distribute drugs. Attorney General Eric Holder says the cartels are a national security threat.

A State Department travel advisory warns that tourists visiting Mexico have been injured and killed in public places, and "dozens of U.S. citizens have been kidnapped across Mexico." Its most recent dispatch specifically warns against spring break excursions to Tijuana and Rosarito Beach. Can Puerto Vallarta be far behind?

For generations, Mexico's drug cartels co-existed more or less at arm's length, each with established territories and distribution routes, unmolested and sometimes abetted by police. The illicit trade, fueled largely by American drug habits, is a \$10 billion-a-year industry. But tightened security at the border led to conflicts over turf, especially near key crossings such as Tijuana and Juarez. Warring gangs also found themselves scrapping over a domestic market that used to be an afterthought.

The cartels operate shadow governments in hundreds of communities, extorting "taxes" from businesses and residents. In many towns, it's hard to tell whose side the cops are on: Either they're on the cartel payroll or turning a blind eye. Those who do their jobs risk being killed, often by their own; their gruesomely disfigured bodies occasionally just their heads are dumped in the streets overnight as a warning to others. Last month, the police chief of Ciudad Juarez yielded to drug lords' demands that he resign after they made good on a promise six times to kill a police officer every 48 hours until the chief was gone.

Elected in 2006, President Felipe Calderon quickly made good on his promise to confront the lawlessness, dispatching 40,000 soldiers to take over the work police couldn't or wouldn't do. It's a bloody undertaking. More than 6,000 people, including 500 police officers and soldiers, were killed last year. An additional 1,000 died in the first two months of this year. The government has also instituted reforms designed to professionalize the police force and judicial system, but those changes could take a decade or more.

Mexico's drug war must be fought on both sides of the border. The Bush administration's Merida Initiative promised \$400 million a year to Mexico for equipment and police training; Congress is talking about doubling that amount. In cooperation with Mexican authorities, federal agents recently staged raids in California, Maryland and Minnesota, arresting 755 people and seizing 13 tons of cocaine, 8 tons of marijuana, scores of vehicles and weapons and \$59 million in cash.

The feds are also cracking down on U.S. gun dealers who are arming the cartels. Mexico says it seized more than 20,000 weapons last year; U.S. officials estimate up to 90 percent were smuggled over the border. A single Phoenix gun merchant has been charged with selling more than 700 guns, including assault rifles, that he knew would end up in the hands of drug barons.

Though some U.S. officials worry aloud that Mexico is devolving into a narco-state, others say the body count is a hopeful sign. Forced to fight the government and one another, the fractured cartels will be easier to defeat or at least contain. At this point, though, it's far from clear who's winning.

Best defense against unemployment is having options

Jack Z. Smith MCT

There's nothing like a brutal recession to reinforce the value of a good education.

The U.S. unemployment rate was 8.1 percent in February, the highest in about 25 years. A closer look reveals that the jobless rate is an alarming 12.6 percent for people who lack a high school diploma. It's considerably lower, 8.3 percent, for high school graduates, and only 4.1 percent for college graduates.

A nationwide Census Bureau survey showed these estimated annual median incomes for 2007 for workers 25 and older at varying levels of education:

- \$19,405, less than high school graduate;
- \$26,894, high school graduate (includes equivalency certification);
- \$32,874, some college or an associate (community college) degree;
- \$46,805, bachelor's degree;
- \$61,287, graduate or professional degree.

Those numbers make a point that's often hard to drive home to young kids struggling in school: The more education you get, the greater your job security and the higher your income likely will be.

A college graduate with a stimulating, purposeful career is also likely to lead a happier, more-fulfilling life than a high school dropout hamstrung by limited education and a dead-end job barely paying monthly bills.

There are, of course, many exceptions to the general rule that better-educated persons make more money and have greater job security.

Some multimillionaires were high school dropouts whose innate smarts and exceptional drive led them to success in the business world.

The need for a strong formal education is greater than ever in today's global knowledge- and information-based, high-tech economy.

No one is emphasizing that more forcefully than President Barack Obama, who rose from humble circumstances to graduate from Harvard Law School

and attain the nation's highest elected office.

I have mixed emotions about some of Obama's recent exhortations on education.

Longer school days or extended school years?

How much extra cost might that entail for taxpayers? Do students have the attention span for more class hours?

What effect would such a change have on already hard-working school administrators and teachers?

Teacher merit pay? What criteria should determine which teachers receive merit pay and how much? How politicized could this issue become? Could it hurt teacher morale?

These ideas are worth consideration but could have more downside than upside if poorly implemented.

That said, it's very pleasing to see Obama placing education on a high pedestal, while mincing no words in telling young people how vital it is.

Obama praises the GI Bill that sent a generation to college and created the largest middle class in history.

Durban II an opportunity turned into parody

Frida Ghitis MCT

If you enjoy the theater of the absurd, get a good chair and prepare yourself for some hearty entertainment.

On the other hand, if you care about the struggle against racism and discrimination, prepare to see your heart break and your blood boil.

On April 20, delegates from dozens of countries the ones that decide not to boycott will come together in the city of Geneva for a U.N. event officially aimed at fighting racism.

Like many of the U.N.'s ideas, it sounds good on paper. In reality, however, the meeting has all the makings of a farce.

Like its predecessor the portentously named World Conference Against Racism, Racial Intolerance, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance held in Durban, South Africa, in 2001, this train derailed even before it had a chance to leave the station.

The gathering, according to Hiller Neuer, executive director of the advocacy group U.N. Watch, "is and was designed as a political exercise for the world's most intolerant regimes to indict

the world's most tolerant democracies."

Instead of fighting discrimination, Durban II, as it is ominously known, will become a hate-fest aimed at attacking Israel and the West. But even Israel's critics should worry about the aim of this event, already hijacked by the undemocratic countries that have subverted the U.N.'s human rights agenda. This conference will launch a new assault on freedom of speech by pushing for measures to outlaw a ban on any expression that someone might deem unkind to Islam.

Efforts to outlaw criticism of Islam have become increasingly frequent, particularly within the United Nations, in a cynical maneuver that cloaks itself in the language of human rights to attack the freedom of expression of the individual by demanding special protections for one religion. The move could make it a crime to draw cartoons, stage historical operas or quote the statements of historians. All of these instances of free expression have caused offense to Muslims in Europe in recent years.

The planning meeting that drafted the racism conference's final document, under the guidance of Libya and Iran, horrified representatives of democratic

societies. The foreign minister of the Netherlands said he was "deeply disturbed by the turn this event is taking." The text, he said, was being "used by some to try to force their concept of defamation of religion and their focus on one regional conflict on all of us." Italian Foreign Minister Franco Frattini said his country will not participate because of "aggressive and anti-Semitic statements" in the draft document.

Already Canada said it will have nothing to do with what is sure to become a travesty. The entire European Union is seriously contemplating a boycott. An EU spokesman said the 27-country bloc would not subscribe to a document that "would limit or undermine human rights and fundamental freedoms."

The Obama administration considered participating, but after sending a delegation to observe the planning, the United States, too, decided to boycott, unless major changes are made to the draft text. Israel is also staying away, even though it is sure to be one of two principal topics of discussion in Geneva. If history proves prologue, Israel will be the one country singled out for criticism, possibly by delegates of the same countries that perpetrate and excuse ethnically motivated

killings of hundreds of thousands of people in places like Darfur.

Preparation for Durban II is in the hands of countries that should have no business speaking about intolerance, unless, of course, they want to teach us how to maximize it. Libya chaired the planning meetings of a panel that included Iran, Pakistan and Cuba, hardly paragons of freedom.

The original Durban meeting turned into an orgy of anti-Semitism. The entire conference became a forum for demonizing Israel, while the delegates somehow managed to forget ethnic massacres in Darfur, tribal slaughter in the Congo or on-going discrimination anywhere else on Earth. If you cared about anything besides attacking Israel, Durban had nothing for you. The conference was a waste of U.N. resources. The American and Israeli delegations walked out and European delegates refused to sign on to the hate-filled ideas.

While racism and xenophobia continue to kill, this second installment of the Durban anti-racism charade will again fail those who need help. Rather than making history, it will write a new chapter in the U.N.'s anthology of opportunities turned into harmful parodies.

Mad about the brackets

Keith Langford Jr.
SPORTS EDITOR

March Madness has arrived. The best three weeks for a sports fan are here.

Picking the right No. 12 seed to upset a No. 5 seed is essential to maintaining a decent bracket. Riding a team you have never heard of before in your life becomes the Cinderella story for this year's tournament.

The many hours of prognostication and bracketology that Dick Vitale and other experts carried out to construct the field of 65 teams are over and the tournament starts this Thursday.

The madness even strikes here at Youngstown State University.

YSU Intramurals coordinator Joe Conroy filled out his bracket using the knowledge he had from following the teams. "I actually watched these teams play this season," Conroy said of his picks. Conroy said he likes his picks and he feels the tournament this year is a wide-open one. "I think there is a sixth seed out there who might sneak in to the Final Four," he said.

Everyone has a different method when it comes to filling out their bracket.

English professor Dr. Steven Reese, who admitted he doesn't follow college basketball closely, picked his Final Four teams according to the sentimental value

they held.

Reese picked one team to reach the Final Four because he grew up near the university. He chose another team because he had spent some time in the city. Reese chose his other two picks at random because of their high ranks.

Some people even use mathematics as a tool to devise a scheme to pick their Final Four teams.

Mathematics professor Dr. Gary Stanek has been following men's basketball this season and had some interesting points about the tournament.

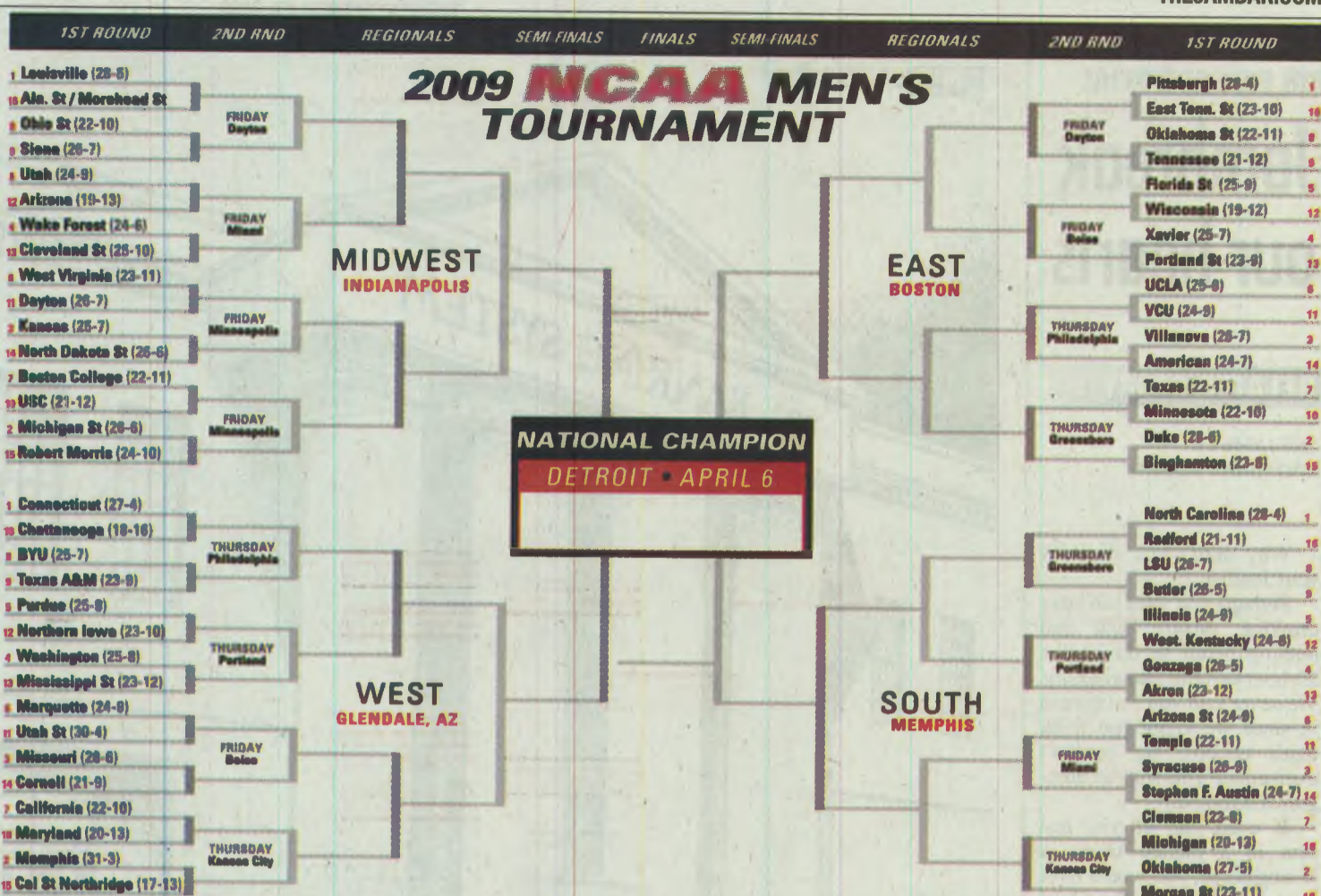
"It's so unpredictable and that's what makes it so fascinating," Stanek said. "I think it's wide open this year," he added.

Stanek fills out an office bracket and fills brackets out online. "I usually do my best when I just go right through [the bracket]," he said.

Some people do not have a strategy at all and go on instinct and feel to fill out their brackets.

David Lee Morgan Jr., a sports writer for the Akron Beacon Journal, has no strategy on filling out a bracket. His wife helps him pick teams by watching SportsCenter and staying on top of the good teams in the country.

Morgan said back in the late 80s he watched college basketball more closely than he does today. Morgan rooted for the Big East conference and said his favorite team was the Georgetown University Hoyas.



Bracketology; Strategies unleashed

Josh Stipanovich
SPORTS REPORTER

Records, statistics, rankings, RPI, seeds, strength of schedule, conferences and at-large selections.

These are all words that many people take into consideration this time of the year as 65 schools across the nation prepare for another chapter in the book of March Madness.

The field of 65 is set for both the men and women, with first round action beginning March 21 for the men and March 24 for the women.

This year's men's and women's tournament welcomes seven different schools from the state of Ohio, including two from the Horizon League — Cleveland State University and Butler University.

CSU, who defeated Butler in the Horizon League championship game this past weekend, will partake in the tournament for the second time in school history.

The last time CSU played in the NCAA men's basketball tournament was 1986. They made it in as a No. 14 seed as they shocked the college basketball nation.

They outlasted Bobby Knight and the Indiana University Hoosiers in the first round, and ended up making it all the way to the Sweet Sixteen but lost to the Naval Academy.

While going through your brackets this year, you must not forget that the Horizon League

has played tough in tournament play in the past and they will look to do it again, especially with the two teams earning bids.

Teams making the tournament from the Horizon League have advanced to at least the second round in eight of the last 11 years and on three occasions, the Sweet Sixteen.

No matter how much time is taken into consideration for each and every pick on your brackets, there are always those one or two smaller schools that will steal your thunder, thus ruining your entire bracket.

So what goes into the process of choosing that perfect bracket?

Sophomore Mike Tokarsky, devoted University of Michigan fan, fills out a number of brackets each year, and this year is no different.

Here are some of Tokarsky's do's and don'ts while filling out your bracket this year.

Do's: Always pick a No. 1 seed over a No. 16 seed. Always pick a No. 2 seed over a No. 15 seed.

Don'ts: Never pick favorites.

Although Tokarsky does not oblige to picking favorites, he must make an exception this year.

The Wolverines, who have not made the tournament since 1998, will be going up against the No. 7 seeded Clemson Tigers in the opening round.

"I'm going to pick them to beat Clemson because it's an emotional thing," Tokarsky said. "I'm not going to pick them to

beat Oklahoma," he added.

Tokarsky uses many different Web sites such as Facebook and ESPN to participate in this year's madness.

The tournament will be his only focus. "I'm going to request off school, just not show up ... to watch all [the games]," he said. "It's an amazing thing."

He projects Wake Forest University, Marquette University, University of Pittsburgh and University of Oklahoma to be in the final four, and he has Oklahoma over Wake Forest for the title.

Sophomore Andrew Patrick is a close follower of college basketball, and uses his great knowledge to decipher which teams to pick.

"I definitely look at records, conference and strength of schedule," Patrick said.

This gives him a clear advantage over his opponents, but explains that he has been beaten many times.

Patrick likes the Ohio State University team to win its first two games mainly in part because of the region where they are playing.

Ohio State, who is playing in the Midwest region, will be playing in Dayton. This is basically a home game for the Buckeyes, and Patrick understands this very well.

"I like Ohio State because they're playing in Dayton. I think they could pull an upset on Louisville," Patrick said.

Freshman Kenny Webber takes advantage of the infinite brackets

that one can fill out and turn in for the tournament. He said he fills out two different brackets.

"The first one has all of my gut instinct picks, and the second one I fill out the day before the tournament starts," Webber said.

Before he makes his final decisions, he goes back to look at team statistics, records and how the team did in their final 12 games of the regular season including conference tournaments.

It is natural to be indecisive of a certain matchup, and Webber knows just the remedy.

"If it's a close decision, I either flip a coin or make my pick with my eyes closed," Webber said.

But who said that March Madness for just guys?

Loni McNany is a graduate student here at Youngstown State University, and she has her eyes on this year's tournament as well.

"I watch the season closely, and that's how I know who to pick," she said. She also acknowledges that you cannot ignore the numbers. She said you have to have knowledge of a team so you can predict the upsets.

"You can't win that way. You got to pick the upset," McNany said.

McNany predicts that Siena College will upset Ohio State in the first round, the University of Akron will not make it past the first round, and she said her "money's on Pitt."

Final Four picks

Dr. Steven Reese's Final Four

1. Midwest winner: Cleveland St.
2. West winner: Cornell
3. East winner: Florida St.
4. South winner: North Carolina

Joe Conroy's Final Four

1. Midwest winner: Wake Forest
2. West winner: UConn
3. East winner: Pitt
4. South winner: Syracuse

Dr. Gary Stanek's Final Four

1. Midwest winner: Louisville
2. West winner: UConn
3. East winner: Pitt
4. South winner: North Carolina

David Lee Morgan Jr.'s Final Four

1. Midwest winner: Michigan St.
2. West winner: UConn
3. East winner: Pitt
4. South winner: North Carolina



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