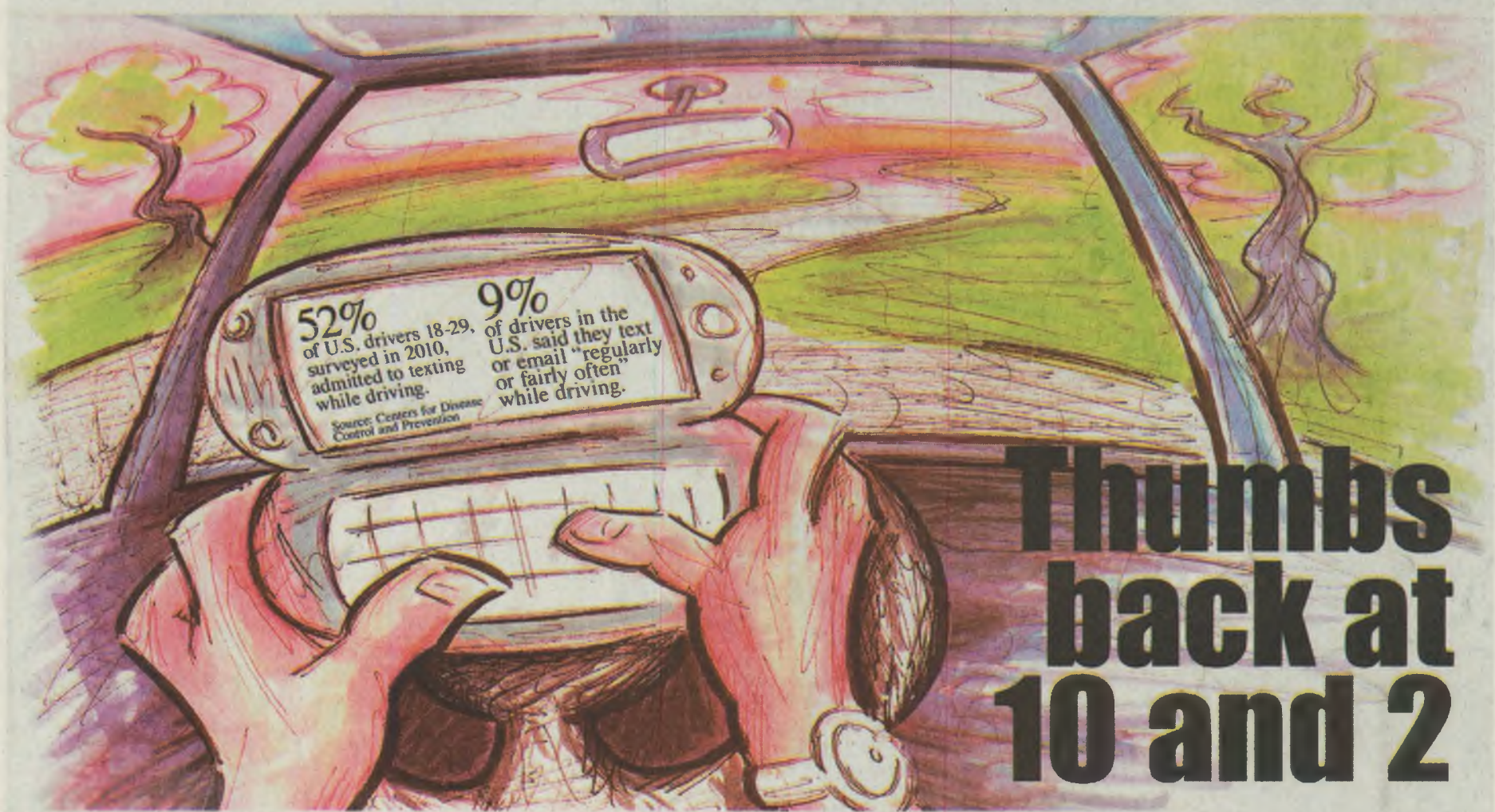


the jambar.com

The student voice of Youngstown State University since 1931



GRAPHIC BY PARIS CHRISOPOULOS/THE JAMBAR

Rachel Lundberg
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

Tina Yanssens became an advocate for a statewide texting while driving ban after her father's death on June 17, 2010. He had been struck and killed by a texting driver.

Now, Ohio drivers have six months to kick bad habits as the state joins 38 others, along with the District of Columbia, in banning texting while driving.

Ohio police will begin fin-

ing drivers who are caught sending, reading or composing a text in the driver's seat.

Gov. John Kasich signed Ohio House Bill 99, which outlines the texting ban, into law on June 1, and it went into effect on Aug. 31. The law bans texting while driving for adults and any use of an electronic handheld device for drivers under 18.

For Yanssens, this law came at just the right time, as her resolve for advocating an anti-texting while driving law was tested.

"I'm glad that we were able to get it done. Because, I'll tell you what, I'm not a very patient person, and politics is not very fast," Yanssens said.

After her father's death, Yanssens began to pay attention to other drivers on her drive home from work — and she was shocked by the number of eyes focused on their laps instead of the road.

"We need to take a look at the riskiest behaviors we do and legislate those behaviors," Yanssens said.

Police can administer a fine of up to \$150 after the six-month warning period expires.

The offense has been given misdemeanor status, but it is a secondary offense. To issue a citation, drivers must commit another offense, and police can then pull them over.

Yanssens said this law is only a starting point. She continues to fight to make texting behind the wheel a primary offense, as it is in Canfield.

Even with the stricter law in Canfield, which was approved in September 2010, not many citations are written.

Paul Laskey, a Canfield police officer, said only a few warnings and maybe one citation have been issued since the law's inception.

Laskey said no texting-related crashes have been reported because police blame crashes on distracted driving or other issues. But Laskey

TEXTING PAGE 3

Blackboard app now available for iOS, Droid

Kevin Alquist
ASSISTANT NEWS EDITOR

Students can get their education on the go this semester, as Blackboard Mobile Learn became available for individual purchase on all mobile networks this week. The app was previously available only to customers of select mobile carriers.

If a student's school licenses Blackboard Mobile, he or she can use the app for free. But purchasing the app for the 1,700 Youngstown State University students registered as of August to use it on their mobile phones would've cost YSU \$27,000 annually.

"We looked at the total number of students using Blackboard Mobile, and

the cost of the app wasn't justifiable," said Lloyd Painter, manager of technology customer support and training at YSU.

Subsequently, Media and Academic Computing — along with Kenneth Schindler, associate vice president and chief technology officer of information technology services at YSU — decided not to purchase the app for universitywide use.

YSU would have been paying ap-



proximately \$15 per student, with not even 10 percent of the student body using the app.

"If nearly every student used the app, then the university might break even on the purchase," Painter said.

Emily Wilson, senior marketing manager for Blackboard Mobile, said the app is now available through a personal license for \$1.99 a year or \$5.99 for life.

"When we looked at the price [for individual purchase], it seemed very rea-

sonable," Painter said.

Schindler said he would reconsider purchasing the app for universitywide use if enough students register for the app in time.

"Cost and benefit would still be a major factor," Schindler said.

Nicole Pavlichich, a junior exercise science major, said she's an avid user of Blackboard Mobile.

"I use the Blackboard app every day of my life," she said.

Freshman Jackie Mortimer said she has not yet had to use Blackboard for her classes. Instead, her instructors prefer to use MyYSU groups, which are accessible through the portal.

"It provides us with all the material needed for our coursework, just like Blackboard would," Mortimer said.

Female joins the force

Karen Bell
REPORTER

Youngstown State University student Emma Brenoel, 22, made local history on Sept. 6 when she became the first woman to be sworn in as a full-time Struthers police officer.

Brenoel is taking classes at YSU toward a bachelor's degree in criminal justice with an emphasis on psychology.

She attends part time in order to give her job in Struthers enough attention, and is slowly but surely finishing up her degree.

In turn, she doesn't need to take out student loans.

Struthers Police Department has had female reserves

since being established in 1902, but Brenoel was the first to graduate from officer training school.

In order to be hired, Brenoel had to pass civil service and physical agility tests, and she also had to be experienced with the city.

"As soon as I started the academy, I knew I wanted to work in Struthers," she said. "I know the city like the back of my hand."

Brenoel was born and raised in Struthers, but she moved with her parents to Poland when she was in fourth grade.

"I was sad that I even moved from Struthers," Brenoel said.

Now that she's back, she

FORCE PAGE 3

Ryan tours the heart land



U.S. Rep. Tim Ryan spoke with a group of roughly 20 Youngstown State University students about the importance of youth organization and community outreach during this election season. The appearance, part of the "Heartland Tour 2012: Moving the Middle Class Forward" RV tour, took place in the Hynes Room of Kilcawley Center on Tuesday. Pell Grants, the nation's current economic status, Obamacare and how to canvass neighborhoods were all talking points during the roughly 40-minute discussion. One of Ryan's main topics for discussion was the difference between the Democratic approach to rebuilding the economy — from the middle out — and the Republican approach — from the top down. Photo by Jordan D. Uhl/The Jambor.

Let's talk about sex



A passion party is a gathering that explores human sexuality in a judgment-free environment. On Tuesday, a passion party was held in Cafaro House for the YSU community. Photo by Kara Pappas/The Jambar.

Kara Pappas
REPORTER

A passion party held in Cafaro House on Tuesday night spiced up Safer Sex Week with condom races, sex toy presentations and taste tests.

"I expect it to be interesting," said Gregory Satmare, a junior majoring in psychology.

Satmare said it was his first passion party, and that he was going into the party with an

open mind.

Sexpert Vanessa Stamper led the event, using many different toys and demonstrations to promote the message of safe sex.

"Always use a condom," she said. "If you don't have one, search the dorms because somebody has one."

Stamper presented different products with the hopes of showing participants that there are ways to spice up a relationship while still being smart.

"I would rather see every kid with a toy than have them go out to a party and have unprotected sex with a stranger. That's dangerous," she said.

Roughly 50 people attended the event in the multipurpose room of Cafaro House. Breanne Romeo, a residential education graduate assistant and one of the party's planners, was surprised by the turnout for the passion party.

"I'm happy with the turnout because a lot of students

are busy during this week with classes or exams," Romeo said.

Jennifer Schuster, a junior majoring in forensics, was a little apprehensive about attending, saying she went only because her friends did.

"It was a little uncomfortable, because you don't know everyone there, and even talking about dildos and edible lotions with your friends is weird," Schuster said. "I mean, sure, I learned a few

things while I was here, but it was a little awkward."

Kara Malberti, a Kilcawley House resident assistant, said she had a good time at the event. She's hopeful that the passion party becomes a tradition for future incarnations of Safer Sex Week.

Safer Sex Week continues with free HIV testing, a sexy scavenger hunt starting in the residence halls and a late-night quickie at Christman Dining Commons.

Youngstown Foundation grant adds funds to Opera Western Reserve

Justin Carissimo
REPORTER

Youngstown State University performing arts students will notice new additions to Stambaugh Auditorium this fall.

The Youngstown Foundation has awarded Opera Western Reserve a \$1,600 grant for new equipment.

"Supporting the arts and culture keeps our community vibrant. Helping the opera is crucial because they operate on a shoestring budget," said Jan Strasfeld, executive director of the Youngstown Foundation.

Opera Western Reserve has used the grant to purchase power tools, ladders and new stand lights to brighten performances in Stambaugh Auditorium this fall.

The new additions will increase Opera Western Reserve's ability to build and loan scenery for YSU productions.

"New scenery and lights will bring performances to a higher caliber," said Lauren Corcoran, a senior vocal education major. "We already have very talented singers, and a beautiful stage will really complete the art."

The professionally produced scenery is offered to schools at no charge.

"It's something we do for schools because

they probably won't have the time or ability to develop scenery on their own," said David Vosburgh, general manager and production director of the Opera Western Reserve.

Opera Western Reserve has collaborated with the YSU Dana School of Music for the past five years.

Michael Crist, director of the Dana School of Music, said the school has had a great relationship with Opera Western Reserve and Stambaugh Auditorium. The collaboration is necessary for their projects.

"Performing and building shows becomes very expensive and takes quite a bit of energy," Crist said.

Stambaugh Auditorium will host "The Barber of Seville" on Nov. 30. The student production begins at noon, and the main performance starts at 7:30 p.m.

Corcoran will perform as Rosina during the smaller student production of the opera. She will also sing in the ensemble during the main performance.

"I'm really excited to be working with world renowned artist Lawrence Brownlee," Corcoran said. "This opera really will be the cream of the crop."

For questions or ticket information, contact the box office at 330-480-0693, or visit <http://www.operawesternreserve.org>.

Political spending skyrockets

James Toliver
REPORTER

Spending on political ads is racking up for the November elections.

At its peak in August, campaign spending reached \$300,000 for one week in the city of Youngstown.

President Barack Obama has raised \$587 million, while Republican presidential nominee Mitt Romney has brought in \$524 million, according to Federal Election Commission figures.

Paul Sracic, chair of the political science department at Youngstown State University, said two issues affect campaign finance and influence elections: the content of ads and where the funding for said ads is coming from.

"[Citizens United v. FEC] determined that money equates free speech and the independent expenditures are not corrupt," Sracic said, explaining how the landmark First Amendment Supreme Court case freed up certain restrictions placed on monetary donations to candidates.

Under previous federal law, individuals and groups such as unions and corporations could only give a limited amount of money in support of a candidate. The previous law required these groups to donate through political action committees, or PACs, and these committees could donate only

\$2,000 per election cycle.

The Citizens United v. FEC case ruled to allow for "super" PACs to raise and spend an unlimited amount of money each election.

Direct people-to-candidate donations are still limited to \$2,500 per election.

By law, these super PACs cannot coordinate with candidates during the election, but, Sracic said, "Candidates know who spent money, and that's what gets access."

At \$305 million, most money in the 2012 election has been spent on messages about jobs. This compares to the \$62 million spent on messages about education, according to Kantar Media, a campaign media analysis group. Kantar Media also reported that 79 percent of the money spent in Youngstown was used to produce ads negatively directed toward another candidate.

For example, advertising expenditures from WFMY show that \$2.5 million was spent on campaign advertising in Mahoning County. Most of this spending was for negative ads toward a candidate. The largest spender was Crossroads GPS, an anti-Obama group with \$675,775 in ads purchased.

So far, cumulative spending in Youngstown is \$3.2 million. In comparison, \$27.7 million was spent in Cleveland, \$14.5 million in Columbus and \$11.1 million in Cincinnati.

CORRECTION

In "Trustee decision late," which appeared in Tuesday's edition of The Jambar, we incorrectly reported that newly appointed student trustee Melissa Wasser

had attended her first board of trustees meeting on Tuesday. Wasser did not attend that meeting. We deeply regret the error.

POLICE BRIEFS

Man urinates on Phelps Building

Around 2:30 a.m. Sunday, a YSU police officer noticed a man peeking out from the north side of the Lincoln Building. When the officer pulled around, he noticed another man who was urinating on the Phelps Building. The officer pulled up to him, and the man turned, pulled up his zipper and started walking away. The man began to run as he turned right on Phelps Street, and the officer repeatedly ordered him to stop. While running, the man's shoes fell off, but he continued on. The officer caught up with the man in the F-3 parking lot. Although the man tried to escape, the officer handcuffed him. He was issued a court date for charges of public indecency, resisting arrest and underage possession of alcohol.

Bacon sets off fire alarm

On Monday, a YSU police officer was sent to the Flats at Wick to assess a fire alarm that went off on the fourth floor. The student in the room said the alarm activated while he was cooking bacon. Other officers arrived at the scene, but the situation was under control; all officers cleared the residence.

NEWS BRIEFS

Professor opens photo exhibit

Joy Christiansen Erb, an associate professor of photography at YSU, recently opened a new exhibit at the Fawick Art Gallery in Berea. Erb's exhibit features contemporary photography that delves into the themes of memories, storytelling and identity. The exhibit will run through Sept. 28. Call 440-826-2152 for more information.

Prof seeks to create hermaphrodite papayas

Xiangjia Min, an assistant professor of biology at YSU, participated in a study led by Ray Ming, a professor of plant biology at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, in order to produce hermaphroditic papayas that can bear better fruit more consistently. According to their study, papayas reproduce sexually. This causes inconsistency in the bearing of the fruit. Hermaphroditic papayas produce by self-pollination; however, these papayas still produce female fruit, making it difficult to produce the hermaphroditic plant consistently. They have moved closer to solving the problem and will continue with their research.

TEXTING PAGE 1

said he feels the law is worthwhile nonetheless.

"I think, for the most part, most officers would agree that's a good law. Because [texting] is a distraction," Laskey said.

Freshman nursing major Rachel George doesn't have as positive of an outlook on the law.

"I personally feel like old people cause more accidents than texting while driving," George said. "That's what makes me mad."

George said she agrees that people should not text while driving, but feels the law focuses too much on punishing young drivers, when all ages commit the offense.

She admitted to texting and driving, adding that her parents, siblings and even grandmother have done it as well.

"They kind of blame our generation too much, and it's annoying," George said.

FORCE PAGE 1

said that this is the best place for her to be.

Not only does she expect to get a lot out of the city, but city officials have high hopes for her in return.

Struthers Mayor Terry Stocker and Struthers Police Chief Tim Roddy agree that Brenoel was a perfect choice.

"She scored well [and] passed all her tests. She had ex-

perience," Stocker said. "It was perfect timing. She is a valuable asset to the city."

Roddy agreed, adding, "We are lucky to have her."

For now, Brenoel is settling into her role as a Struthers police officer. Her eyes are on the future of her education, but she's in no hurry to chase a degree.

"As long as I get one in the long run," Brenoel said.



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Ahead of the network

Marissa McIntyre
ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT
EDITOR

Thumbs are becoming important educational tools this semester, as instructors at Youngstown State University are using social media to communicate with their students.

R.J. Thompson, an assistant professor of art at YSU, uses social networking to not only convey messages, but as a way to show students how to use such tools to excel in their future careers.

Thompson has his students set up accounts on the Students of Design website. Prior to teaching at YSU, Thompson taught at Edinboro University in Pennsylvania, where he had a two-hour commute to and from school. Using the Students of Design website and other forms of social media allowed him to still communicate with students.

Students of Design also allows his students to post their projects, and he includes links to his courses' Twitter accounts, where he posts resources for class.

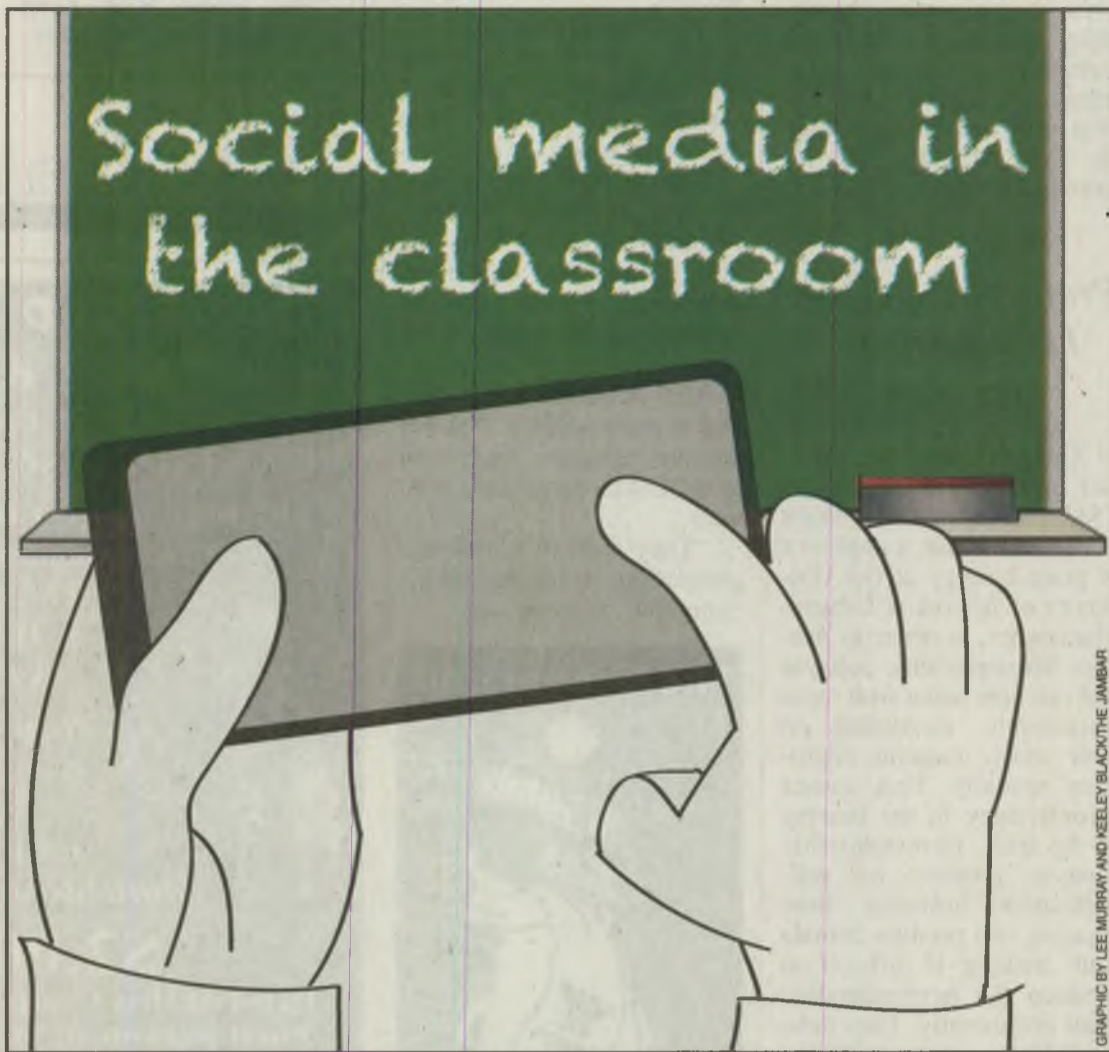
He also created the site as a response to students posting unfinished work online.

"Being that I know a lot of professional people, a lot of my students would post their unfinished work on Facebook and tag me in it. These guys would then see the work and think it's terrible because it's unfinished," Thompson said.

Now, the students have a place to post their work for feedback before turning in a final product.

"I want to create the center for graphic and interactive design groups to go and interact with each other and share resources," Thompson said.

The site allows him to get feedback on what lectures



GRAPHIC BY LEE MURPHY AND KEELY BLACKWELL FOR THE JAMBAR

students need clarification on, based on the hits the lecture gets on the website.

"I know the information was either understood or not interesting at all depending on how many students revisited the notes. Either way, it helps me improve," Thompson said.

Some YSU professors have been using social networking as a teaching tool for a while.

Mark C. Vopat, an assistant professor of philosophy and religious studies at YSU, began using Twitter in 2006 when he caught wind of the website during a technology convention.

"I was an early adaptor in Twitter when there was nothing to tweet and no one to

follow. Then, the next year, it took off," Vopat said.

He now uses the social network to convey messages to his students. In the beginning, he was essentially introducing them to the website, and now, more students are familiar with it.

"I have separate Twitter accounts for each class," Vopat said. "I obviously use email, and I could have set up a Facebook account, but I like Twitter for two reasons. One, I can easily set up a bunch of different accounts, as opposed to setting up six Facebook pages. I also don't have to go through the tedious email of, 'What did I miss in class today?'" The students can just check the Twitter."

He also posts links to slides, and posts if there is a class cancellation.

Dani Burkhart, a senior

business major at YSU, said it's helpful that Vopat uses Twitter in the classroom.

"What I like about Twitter is it gives you a glimpse and so it's more private," Burkhart said.

She said more teachers should incorporate a Twitter account into classrooms.

"It's a good move because if you miss class, instead of finding someone else who has the class or emailing the teacher, you can check Twitter instead," Burkhart said.

She also uses her Twitter account to follow celebrities and friends.

Rebecca McAndrew, a freshman business major, does not have a Twitter account. She prefers to get the homework from the teacher rather than checking Twitter.

"I just don't want to know every little thing that is going on in someone's life," McAndrew said.

However, she said that if more teachers were to use Twitter, she would consider getting an account for academic purposes.

He also uses Slideshare, which is a PowerPoint- and presentation-sharing website, in the classroom.

"I use Blackboard, but I don't always like it as a means of posting information for students to download. Sometimes, I just want something quicker and easier. For instance I'll post something on Slideshare, and then tweet out the link," Vopat said.

He also uses Vimeo for video lectures.

Thompson said he believes social networking is important to use because more jobs are becoming available that require knowledge on social media.

"The social media market is just that: It's marketing. It's purposeful, strategic and it's important," Thompson said.

Student creates 'Transformers' car

Sarah Thomas
REPORTER

Driving around in a transformer tends to evoke a plethora of reactions from on-lookers: looks of confusion, perplexed stares and gawking. For Brandon Heard, a sophomore electrical engineering major, these all are part of his daily commute to school.

In 2010, Heard bought a new Ford Mustang and began transforming it into Barricade, the Mustang from the movie "Transformers."

The transformation is still underway, but so far the car says "police" backward on both doors and has police decals on both sides of the car and the roof. Heard said he eventually plans to add police lights to the roof and a bull bar to the front. He also wants to trade in the decals for a vinyl paint job.

Heard has been pulled over 15 times in the one and a half years since the transformations began.

"Do you know how many state troopers have not seen 'Transformers'?" Heard asked.

Heard's run-ins with the law tend to be more related to speeding — and not to his vehicle's appearance. But when he does get pulled over, multiple police officers always arrive on the scene.

"There's never just one officer," Heard said.

He said as many as five cars have arrived on scene at once to gawk at his means of transportation.



Brandon Heard, sophomore, poses on top of the M-2 parking deck with his Ford Mustang he transformed into Barricade, a character in the movie "Transformers." He drives the car to school every day. Photo by Sarah Thomas/The Jambar.

Even strangers find the car controversial.

Heard once found a note on his vehicle that read, "Those who know how to be obedient don't need to be enslaved," in response to one of his decals that reads, "To punish and enslave."

Barricade often turns heads on campus, too.

"I just saw it like three days ago," Audrey Dodgson said, referring to Heard's vehicle. "I was creeping up on it and went to pass it because I wanted to see who was in the driver seat. Then, I saw that it said police and didn't know if it was legit."

But Heard said he's gotten used to the stares.

The Mustang was not Heard's first choice of car. Initially, he wanted to get a Chevrolet Camaro.

The Camaro is still on his list, though, along with approximately 20 other cars he would like to purchase.

In November, Heard bought a motorcycle, which also plays a key role in the

"Transformers" movie, and he plans to get a Pontiac Solstice in the near future.

Once Heard acquires the Solstice and finishes transforming the Mustang into Barricade, he plans to retire it as a show car. He said it would be too risky to drive around with police symbols, police lights and a bull bar.

Rewrite

Freedom of expression is necessary to maintain a free society. Without the ability to speak against powerful or oppressive forces, liberty would wither like a rose deprived of sunlight.

But sometimes innocent civilians get grazed by crossfire.

In Tuesday's editorial, we chose to express our support for freedom of expression — no matter how offensive — in a manner brash enough to rival its gravity.

In our rush to lower royalty and religion below sacred human rights, we forgot that we're unable to serve our readership if we don't express ourselves clearly.

We did indeed mean to cause a reaction. For, without a response, words often miss their mark.

But in the process, we aimed, we believe, too narrowly. When we called Allah a "false god," we left out the other thousands of deities that have been invented and discarded in human history.

Yet, even still, that draws the conversation away from the issue of the necessary supremacy of free speech and instead focuses on the debate over a god's existence.

Let us make ourselves clear.

We neither know nor care whether any god or gods exist. We care that people express themselves without fearing government reprisals or violent attacks.

And if we have to scrape some knees and bruise some elbows along the way, then so be it.

The rights of definite people outweigh those of potential gods.

JAMBAR POLICY

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

OUR SIDE POLICY

The editorial board that writes Our Side editorials consists of the editor-in-chief, the managing editor and the senior copy editor. These opinion pieces are written separately from news articles and do not reflect the opinions of any individual staff member. The Jambar's business manager and non-writing staff do not contribute to editorials, and the adviser does not have final approval.

YOUR SIDE POLICY

The Jambar encourages letters to the editor. Submissions are welcome at thejambar@gmail.com or by following the "Submit a Letter" link on 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, along with the writer's city of residence for printing. The Jambar does not withhold the names of guest commentators. Letters are subject to editing for spelling, grammar and clarity. Letters will not be rejected based on the views expressed in them. The editorial board reserves the right to reject commentaries and letters if they are not relevant to our readers, seek free publicity, fail to defend opinion with facts from reliable sources or if the editorial staff decides that the subject has been sufficiently aired. The editorial board will request a rewrite from the submitting writer based on these requirements. The Jambar will not print letters that are libelous, threatening, obscene or indecent. The views and opinions expressed in letters and commentaries on the opinion page do not necessarily reflect those of The Jambar staff. Editorials do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the faculty, staff or administration of YSU.



The opinions of this artist do not necessarily reflect those of The Jambar.

Campus Connection

How do you think Twitter will benefit teachers in the classroom?



"I think it opens up a whole possibility that people would be afraid of, you know, face to face. Social networking is good for connecting with people who you normally don't connect with."
-Justin Mondock



"I don't think it will. I'm old school; I'd rather take notes and stuff. I don't mind when teachers send PowerPoints and stuff, but I'd rather make my own notes."
-Melissa DelSignore

Protests about more than film

The Philadelphia Inquirer (MCT)

Demonstrations to protest a film made in America that portrays the prophet Muhammad as a womanizing child abuser had spread to at least 20 countries by Monday.

But in the United States, both major-party presidential candidates retreated from the subject rather than risk saying anything that might cost them votes. It's good they did. The issue is too important to be distorted by sound bites in a political campaign.

The number of protests has grown daily in the week since John Christopher Stevens, the U.S. ambassador to Libya, and three other embassy workers, were killed in an attack on the U.S. diplomatic mission in Benghazi. The attack was apparently sparked by an anti-Muslim video posted on YouTube.

Experts debated whether jihadists used the video to whip up the anti-American frenzy in Libya that left Stevens dead. Ensuing protests in Afghanistan, Indonesia, Sudan, Tunisia, Leb-

anon, and other countries were more clearly about the video. "I thought it was my duty as a Muslim to condemn those who made this film," a protester in Kabul said.

The protests are a reminder to Americans that people in other countries have a hard time grasping that freedom of speech here allows individuals to make statements that do not reflect the government's position. To the protesters, a video from the United States must have been approved by the U.S. government.

Getting them to see the situation differently requires a lengthy educational process that began years ago and will likely take years to bear fruit, if ever, given the anti-U.S. diet they are fed daily by Islamists who thrive when the masses they preach to are ignorant of the truth.

The video protests in Muslim nations suggest that much of the goodwill President Obama tried to sow with his 2009 Cairo speech has been uprooted. "Just as Muslims do not fit a crude stereotype, America is not the crude stereotype of a self-interested empire," Obama said three years ago.

That's the same speech that

is derisively referred to by Obama's conservative foes now as having been made on his "apology tour." Their politically calculated rhetoric makes it even harder to convince Muslims that a video that vilifies their religion's most important deity doesn't represent this country's official view.

Republican presidential nominee Mitt Romney made a political calculation, too, when he prematurely criticized Obama's Mideast policies as having led to the murder of Stevens. Romney's statement came at a time when the country craved unity, not division — at least for a moment.

As Republican challenger Ronald Reagan said when President Carter was trying to handle the Iran hostage crisis during their 1980 election campaign, "This is a difficult day for all Americans ... when words should be few and confined essentially to our prayers."

A political campaign is unlikely to provide a solution to the anti-American sentiment in Muslim countries. There's no magic formula to make people who distrust this nation suddenly change their minds. Winning mutual respect takes work.



Our kids ain't writing so good

Columbus Ledger-Enquirer (MCT)

Spell check doesn't help.

Even with the aid of word processing technology, only about a fourth of American eighth- and 12th-graders can be considered reasonably conversant with Mother English.

So goes a bleak assessment of U.S. students' writing skills by the National Assessment Governing Board, which issues the annual "Nation's Report Card." According to the report, a whopping 24 percent of students in those grades in 2011 could write coherent essays with proper grammar and usage.

Twenty-four percent: That's an "F" on any curve.

What makes the report especially troubling is that students who took last year's National Assessment of Educational Progress writing test were allowed to use computers with spell check and thesaurus.

But as Cornelia Orr, executive director of the National Assessment Board, pointed out to the Associated Press, most students in American schools today have such technology at their disposal already — at school, if not at home. Yet without the basic skills of organized thinking and proficiency in language, the tools don't really help: "It's as if years ago we had given them a pencil to write the essay and

took away the eraser."

Said another way, even the best calculator won't enable somebody with no math skills to comprehend laws of physics or geometry.

More than a half-century ago, the Soviet Union's successful launch of the Sputnik satellite spurred the U.S. into a focus on science and technology that resulted in some of our most dazzling achievements — one of which the recent death of astronaut Neil Armstrong evoked.

Maybe it's time for another national intellectual challenge. This one should focus on mastery of the most indispensable tool we have — the ability to communicate coherently with one another.

'This weekend, I want to win'

YSU-UNI face off in top 10 showdown



YSU quarterback Kurt Hess attempts a pass during Saturday's win against the University at Albany. The Penguins host the University of Northern Iowa on Saturday at 7:05 p.m. Photo by Dustin Livesay/The Jambar.

Steve Wilaj
SPORTS EDITOR

Kurt Hess, both a quarterback and a Youngstown State University Homecoming King candidate, hasn't voted for himself and doesn't plan to.

Hess said he doesn't care if he wins or loses the crown. He only has one thing on his mind.

"This weekend, I want to win," he said.

On Saturday at 7:05 p.m., the No. 3-ranked Penguins (3-0) host the No. 8-ranked University of Northern Iowa (1-2) at Stambaugh Stadium in a highly anticipated matchup that will be televised on ESPN3.

"It's a big game on our schedule," Hess said of the matchup, which will open Missouri Valley Football Conference play for YSU. "We know coming in, especially this being our first con-

ference game, that we're going to have to be on our stuff this week."

And rightly so, said head football coach Eric Wolford. Although UNI holds a losing record, its losses came against Big Ten Conference teams: the University of Iowa (27-16) and the University of Wisconsin-Madison (26-21).

The Panthers defeated Central State University, 59-0, for their lone victory.

"It's not hard to see that they're a good football team," Wolford said. "They've had two difficult games with Wisconsin and Iowa, but they played very well in both games. Physically, they're impressive, and we look forward to having them at our place."

YSU also looks forward to the opportunity to snap its 11-game losing streak against UNI. Last year at the UNI-Dome, the Panthers defeated the Penguins, 21-17, and in 2010 at Stambaugh Stadium,

UNI won, 34-30.

"The last few years we've had some close games," running back Jamaine Cook said. "We just want to show that we can put the icing on the cake, finish and finally beat Northern Iowa."

The Penguins expect to get some help from what they are anticipating to be a sold-out crowd.

"The crowd is like the fuel for an engine," Wolford said. "When they're revved up and going, that gets us going. ... Hopefully, we'll be the loudest we've ever been."

While the Ice Castle wasn't exactly sold out this past Saturday against the University at Albany, the Penguins needed all the crowd support they could get. Withstanding a tough test against the Great Danes, the Penguins held on for a 31-24 victory.

"It showed us that we can't look over our opponents or underestimate guys," Cook said. "We have to come

out every game and play four quarters and be hungry."

From the sounds of UNI's head football coach Mark Farley, the Panthers will come to town as a hungry football team. Farley dubbed the game as a "must win" for his team.

Meanwhile, Hess said it is also a "must win" for YSU.

"I think it really is," he said. "I think it's going to be huge for us to see what kind of competition we're going to face, especially the young guys and the other people who haven't been here."

And although Wolford wouldn't make any predictions for what is being called "the biggest game of the year," he was willing to give his outlook on the Homecoming King election.

"You know how those quarterback guys are," Wolford said. "Those guys get a lot of attention. So, [Hess] will probably just get it by being a quarterback."

SPORTS BRIEFS

Men's tennis wins 13 singles, eight doubles in Illinois

The YSU men's tennis team kicked off its fall season at the River Forest Tournament over the weekend. YSU won 13 single matches and eight doubles matches over the course of the two-day tournament, leaving each YSU player winning at least two matches.

Women's golf takes second at YSU Invitational

The YSU women's golf team placed second on Tuesday at the YSU Invitational, held at the Mill Creek Golf Club's South Course. The Penguins carded a team total of 614, falling just short of first place. The University of Detroit Mercy Titans beat out the Penguins, carding a team total of 609. Sarah Heimlich, the top finisher for the Penguins, had a combined score of 150, earning third place overall.

Freshman is top YSU finisher at John Piper

The YSU men's golf team finished in ninth place at the Bowling Green John Piper Intercollegiate, which concluded on Tuesday. The team's total at the conclusion of the three-round tournament was 929. Brandon Pluchinsky, who competed as an individual, was the top finisher for YSU; he placed 15th, and finished with a three-round total of 226.

PENGUIN SPOTLIGHT

Missy Hundelt



Year: Junior
Height: 6'1"
Hometown: St. Charles, Mo.
Position: Outside Hitter

In helping lead the YSU volleyball team to a 10-4 start, Missy Hundelt has 53 sets, 171 kills, 19 assists and 26 blocks through the first 14 games. She earned Horizon League Player of the Week honors for the week of Sept. 10-16, posting 43 kills and digs. Hundelt is a criminal justice major and received the 2012-2013 McKenna Family Scholarship.



Yo Show good to go

Cory Bartek
SPORTS REPORTER

Justen Vrabel, the Student Government Association's chief of staff, wanted to create a group for students passionate about YSU sports. Yo Show was the result.

Vrabel said that Yo Show has lived up to its expectations, and that turnout for the YSU football game at the University of Pittsburgh surpassed expectations.

"We had over 200 kids ride on the buses to the Pitt game," Vrabel said. "We ended up having to order a second bus, and even then, we still had to turn some people away."

Vrabel said he hopes to keep Yo Show growing as an organization and slowly expand it into other sports.

"There's no reason why YSU can't have big student sections," he said.

Along with having tailgates before all of the home football games, Vrabel also hopes to get groups together for a volleyball match and a soccer game.

"It's more difficult to get people to come to these events, so we need to publicize them first," he said.

Joe Mikolay, an SGA representative for the Williamson College of Business Administration, assists Vrabel with promoting Yo Show. He said



Justen Vrabel, SGA's chief of staff, recently started a student fan club called the Yo Show. Photo courtesy of the Yo Show.

they expect to have large student sections at the men's and women's basketball games.

"Having everything organized is the key," Mikolay said. "We're going to have coordination and cheering leaders to have the student voice be heard."

Yo Show has been working closely with athletics, and the increased support has been noticed.

"Faculty and advisers thought something like this was long overdue," Vrabel said.

Those wary of coming to the tailgate are encouraged to keep an open mind and give it a try.

"It's a great way to get out

of your comfort zone and meet different people on campus," Vrabel said. "It's a great party; there's free food and different games."

Kingsley Ansah, a senior at YSU, attended his first tailgate for this past week's football game.

"I'm definitely coming back to more," Ansah said. "Free stuff is the best, and you get to meet different people."

Senior Patrick Shelton is a regular at the tailgates.

"The tailgating experience depends on who you're with," Shelton said. "If you're with the right people, it's definitely worth it."

While the results have been good so far, Vrabel said there is

room for improvement.

"There's growth to be had at the home tailgates," he said.

As for Saturday's football game against the University of Northern Iowa, Vrabel and Mikolay are excited for the prospects.

"We need to help the team out and show them we're there for them," Vrabel said.

The tailgate lot will open at 1 p.m., and kickoff is set for 7 p.m. Yo Show is located under a red and white tent at the far end of the M-7 parking lot. Students are encouraged to spread the word.

"Come on down, and see what we're all about," Vrabel said. "We'll have burgers, dogs, cornhole and music."