

YSU HAS ENOUGH PARKING

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The M2 and M24 lots at Youngstown State University may fill up quickly, but that doesn't mean there isn't parking on campus.

Ideally, everyone would be able to park close to their classes, but with about 13,000 students on a mainly commuter campus, that just isn't possible.

Danny O'Connell, director of Parking Services, said there are about 7,400 parking spaces on campus and 11,000 parking passes registered to students and faculty this semester.

Although those numbers may appear intimidating at first glance, classes are at a variety of times all across campus, so not every student is on campus at the same time.

"We only really need one space for every two permits," O'Connell said. "There is parking, just not necessarily where you want it."

Between 10 and 11 a.m. is the busiest time for parking, but even then O'Connell said there is always parking available.

O'Connell compared campus parking to church parking where lots fill up

on Christmas and Easter — campus parking is designed for regular school days, not big event days like Crash Day.

Sean Meditz, vice president of university affairs for the Student Government Association, said M2 is the most ideal place to park, but it fills up quickly.

"I think there is enough parking on campus," Meditz said. "However, students don't like the idea that they're going to be inconvenienced by having to walk an extra 100 feet."

There have been several other complaints relating to parking.

Meditz receives student complaints often, trying to find solutions when possible.

One of the major complaints he receives is about the M2 deck, the deck between DeBartolo and Cushwa Halls, in the winter.

"Just the snow piling up and the ice ... it was a concern because some of the cars were sliding back," Meditz said. "So I went over to talk with Parking Services, specifically grounds."

After speaking with the grounds department, Meditz found the deck had been on their radar, but they were understaffed and trying to keep up with the sidewalks.



GRAPHIC BY RJ MIKOLAJ/THE JAMBAR.

"Since last year, I believe they told me they had half of their crew cut," Meditz said. "I believe because of the budget."

Meditz said the grounds department deals with a lot on campus, but they may not have enough people to keep up with the snow and ice.

"These guys put in a lot of time," Meditz said. "I think they only have 12 [people] on their full staff."

Another complaint often

received is about the transportation fee included in tuition costs.

"I don't think a lot of students understand what their parking fee is going to," Meditz said.

He said there are a lot of renovations and repairs that need to be made to the parking decks, and they aren't cheap.

He also said there is definitely a gap between the administration and students in regards to the require-

ment that students pay a transportation fee, whether they order a parking pass or not.

"I would advise students who want to know more about where their money is going to look at the YSU budget," Meditz said. "The budget is available online."

The transportation fee includes use of the shuttle, renovations for the parking decks and campus security services, among other things.

Lasting Impact On and Off the Court

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Collegiate athletes dedicate their entire lives to fulfilling a dream to play at the highest level and perfecting the sport that they grew up loving. They spend years at practice, camps and tournaments in an attempt to constantly try better themselves.

But in the back of every athlete's mind rests the thought of his or her career coming to an end. That sport that once set you apart from everyone else and the pastime that consumed your youth is now just free time. No more film study, no more practice and no more games.

This reality set in for Jessie Gerig, Youngstown State University setter and defensive specialist, on Nov. 10 after the YSU volleyball team lost their final home game to the Wright State University.

Although this wasn't the last game of her career, this was the final game at YSU. And something as simple as the question, "Since this is your last home game, what will you remember when you think about playing at YSU?" invoked tears.

After several days, the emotions of the Wright State game

and the season finale against the University of Illinois at Chicago subsided, and Gerig was finally able to answer the question.

"I will remember the team bond and all the individuals. And how I was able to bond with every teammate," Gerig said. "Honestly, there's not one girl I would switch out from previous teams. I loved every single person. Not just play on the court with them was great, but all the other things that come along with college athletics — being on the bus and going out to eat. There wasn't one moment where we didn't have fun. It's all the other moments besides playing volleyball."

Those "individuals" that Gerig talked about helped turn around the YSU volleyball program over the past three seasons. After the 2011 season, which saw the Penguins finish 5-29, YSU hired Mark Hardaway as the head coach and brought in his first recruiting class.

Hardaway brought in Aly Ryan, Nikki Thompson and Lauren Thompson as his first recruits before the 2012 season. Gerig later joined after she transferred to YSU in 2013.

The YSU volleyball team has a connection that is unlike any other sport on campus. The players frequently talk about a "family" atmosphere. Nikki Thompson, defensive specialist, said the players helped make the team an ac-



PHOTO COURTESY OF REGINA THOMPSON.

Defensive specialist Nikki Thompson broke the digs record twice during her career at YSU. She set a single-season record with 495 digs during the 2014 season and broke her own record after she totaled 510 this past season.

cepting environment.

"We're all alike, we're friends on and off the court," Thompson said. "We still see players that have graduated, they still come to our games and we still hang out with them. It's been like that since my freshman year as well. We've always been close to each other, and if there's one person who's singled out, then we try to get in contact with them. I feel like that's how we learned to succeed. We gel off

and on the court."

Gerig said even though the volleyball team finished 10-21 this season, it's that connection amongst the team that made the season worthwhile. Thompson and Gerig both expect the returning members of this year's team to learn from this season and play better next fall.

"The overall experience of the team does make up for it. If I was on a team that lost, and I didn't like the players,

that would have been a bad situation, but because we had a stronger connection, and we'll know that we'll always have that connection, it's okay that we didn't come out on top," Gerig said. "It's still disheartening for me that in the past two years we took two steps forward, and this year we took one step back. You'll have to fail in order to succeed even more."

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Finals Freak Out

Managing Stress During Finals Week

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Final exams are coming, and the stress and anxiety they bring can affect the way students perform.

Many students at Youngstown State University, like education major Alyssa Carosella, feel students need to have the right mindset to start studying. Students can't force themselves to study, as it ends in not being focused or not being able to retain information.

"A good way for students to motivate themselves to study is to have positive thinking," Carosella said. "Instead of thinking you can't pass the exam, or you waited too long to study, you should think about how studying is going to benefit you and how much more information you will learn if you do study."

Having the right mindset when studying is a building block in the process of preparing for finals. Good diet and exercise are ways to relieve stress and keep energy in your body, as well as improve cognitive function.

Brandon Barker, a dietetics student, says students need to refrain from eating junk food, such as candy and sodas. The high sugars in these foods will give students a temporary rush of energy, which will then result in fatigue and loss of concentration once your body burns off the sugar. Healthy alternatives to junk foods can be nuts, whole grains, fruits and vegetables.

"Students should eat breakfast when preparing for finals. Starting your morning with breakfast will allow your body to

have better cognitive function throughout the day so that you can retain more information when studying," Barker said. "Students should also make sure to eat a full breakfast on the day of their exams. This is going to help them focus on their tests and make them more alert."

Preparing for exams doesn't stop with eating healthy; being healthy is an important factor in being able to retain information.

"Students should do at least 30-minutes of exercise daily, preferably something cardio-based," Barker said. "This is going to relieve stress in your body and make you think clearly."

According to Barker, working out helps your brain by releasing chemicals that improve memory, problem solving and decision making.

Preparing for finals doesn't stop with healthy diet and exercise. Studying is the most important factor of all. Without studying, students hurt their chances of being prepared for their exam, says Lindsay Heldreth, a Center for Student Progress peer mentor.

Students should remember not to compare themselves with others students when preparing for exams. Each person learns differently and has different methods to studying.

"There are three types of learners: kinesthetic, auditory and visual. Each learns differently than the other," Heldreth said. "Students may classify themselves as an auditory learner, and so might their friend — this doesn't mean that both students use the same methods for studying. They retain information generally in the same way, but their study

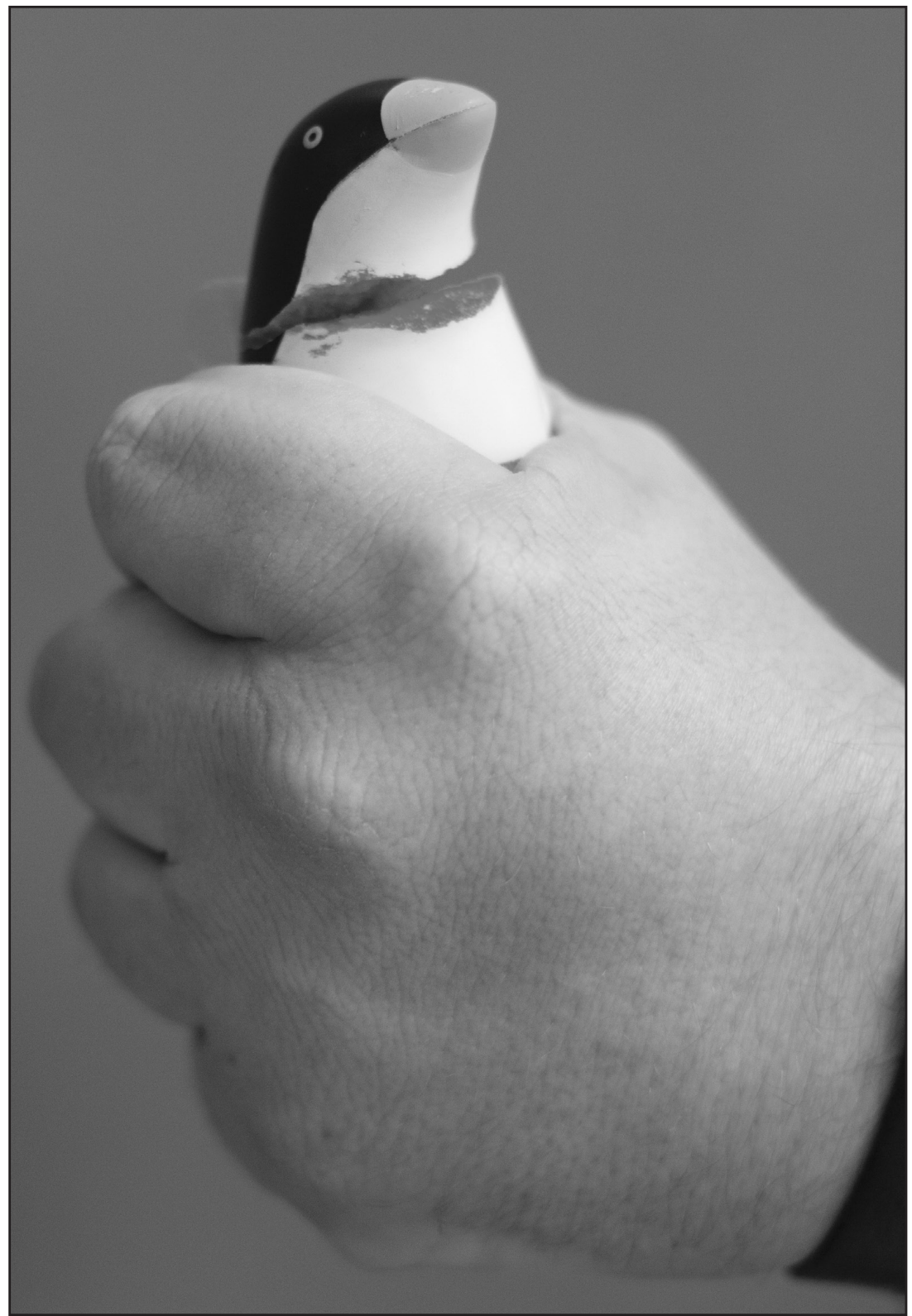


PHOTO BY GRAIG GRAZIOSI

methods may differ."

Kinesthetic learners are hands-on type of learners, auditory learners retain information by listening to lectures and visual learners learn best from reading or looking at pictures.

Students studying for exams should take steps that are going to help them

retain information. Getting colorful with notes and information from lectures may help trigger memories when taking an exam; picking a different color for each category of your notes will help with memorization.

"Students need to remember to not cram the night before an exam. It will

eliminate stress and anxiety. When a student crams, they tend to be forgetful and have a hard time retaining information," Heldreth said. "Students will benefit more from studying all week and getting a good night sleep the night before an exam."

STEM Dean Finalists Address Students, Faculty

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Candidates for dean of the College of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics at Youngstown State University participated in open forum discussions last week.

Montserrat Fuentes of North Carolina State University, Wim Steelant of St. Thomas University and Gregg Sturuss, the interim dean of YSU's college of STEM, presented plans for the future of the college and fielded questions from students and faculty.

Fuentes is the department head of the nation's largest statistics department, located at North

Carolina State University. Steelant is the vice president of Research and dean of Science at St. Thomas University in Miami, Florida.

While on campus, the candidates discussed diversity in STEM fields, academic governance and study abroad opportunities for students and retention, as well as their goals and strategies for management of the STEM college.

Fuentes emphasized her desire to grow the number of women and minorities represented in STEM leadership. Based on initiatives she led prior, Fuentes proposed establishing a post-doctorate fellowship program through the dean's office to promote diversity in STEM careers.

Retention was the

focus of Steelant's discussion of diversity. He blamed a lack of preparation at the high school level combined with administrative pressure on faculty to pass students as major contributors to retention issues. Steelant argued that hands on, personal intervention with students is a powerful tool in boosting retention.

"I don't have an answer to how to fix retention ... You've got to be hands on," Steelant said. "I pull students out from my classes early and try to encourage them to work with faculty, and also get them into internships with colleagues of mine in companies and other universities ... you've got to be willing to work with those kids."

Fuentes also proposed

face time with students as a viable answer to retention concerns.

"It's essential to be involved with students, faculty, staff, everyone. I'd like to have a breakfast with students each month," Fuentes said. "It will be different based on the culture but ... the students need to have a voice."

Sturuss expressed a desire to use already diverse groups operating within the STEM program to further recruit and involve minority populations in the STEM college.

"We have a couple of [minority work] groups active on campus [that can be used for] recruiting a more diverse base of students in engineering specifically ... we also at YSU have women in

science and engineering — WISE — and they're pretty active too," Sturuss said. "It's a good sized group, and we want to try to extend the same kind of activities to all of STEM."

Both Fuentes and Steelant emphasized the need for YSU to develop partnerships with nearby cities, universities and corporations for research and internship purposes.

"Whenever someone says, 'how much involvement should we have in other cities?' My answer is always, 'more,'" Steelant said.

The Board of Trustees discussed the forthcoming STEM dean during Tuesday's meeting. An answer may be ready for the public following their Dec. 16 meeting.

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Website Revamp Planned for YSU

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The Youngstown State University website consists of over 10,000 webpages and poor structure.

An initiative started by Ross Morrone, assistant director of Marketing Communications at YSU, revamps the website to make it more accessible for prospective students.

As it stands, Morrone said the website is too large and isn't doing enough to help prospective students easily find what they are looking for.

Morrone said most current student interaction with the website occurs through Portal, so daily interactions with the website will be uninterrupted.

"The structure of the system running the website also doesn't allow us to inject our brand messaging into the entire site," Morrone said. "The

new architecture will, allowing us to push our brand [the Y and Proud campaign] in our traditional mediums and on our website. That is something we have never done a good job of in the past."

In addition to the website redesign, the stress on marketing has been raised because the online course catalog is being redone so it complements the website.

Kevin Ball, associate provost for academic programs, is working with an outside vendor to redesign the catalog.

Ball spoke with several student groups about the current catalog and said he was worried no one had been using it, but it turned out they were.

Students weren't finding what they needed though, and often go to their departments for information that should be accessible via the catalog. "It wasn't really serv-

ing our needs," Ball said. "We're hoping that [the redesign] will make the catalog something that students can use much more productively."

Sean Meditz, vice president of university affairs in the Student Government Association, said he has also received complaints about the website being hard to navigate.

"You get emails from activities about what's going on during the week, but why not just have a calendar?" Meditz said.

When he talked to Student Activities about it, they told him they did have all that information online.

"They showed it to us and we had to click on five different links just to get to the calendar," Meditz said.

He said it should be on the front page, but it may not have been considered when the website was initially designed, but navi-

gation complaints may be being addressed now.

The new catalog will be updated to have general information about YSU policies and academic information, including curriculum for all the programs.

In the spring, the vendor will come to campus and train faculty who will be responsible for the website. They'll learn how to maintain it and update it on the university's end to save money by not hiring someone else to maintain it.

One new addition will be placing four-year plans in the catalog for majors in the same place. They will outline suggested courses for students to take each semester to graduate within four years.

The new catalog is expected to launch for the 2016-17 school year and may coincide with new students at events such as Ignite.

NEWS BRIEFS

Sen. Rob Portman receives honorary degree at YSU Fall Commencement

Sen. Rob Portman of Ohio will receive an honorary degree and give a speech at Youngstown State University's fall commencement at 2 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 13 in Beeghly Center on campus. Katina Darkadakis, a YSU graduate who received her bachelor's degree in Fashion Merchandising with a minor in Marketing, will be the guest speaker at the ceremony.

Phi Kappa Phi Deems YSU a Chapter

The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi acknowledged the Youngstown State University chapter as a Chapter of Excellence, the highest honor a chapter can receive from the organization. The award is given to chapters that excel in recognizing and promoting academic excellence in all fields of higher education and engaging the community of scholars in service of others. With the Chapter of Excellence title, the chapter is recognized as a thriving organization that meets regularly, holds annual initiations and applied frequently for PKP's select award and grant programs. A \$500 award is also given to those who achieve the Chapter of Excellence Award.

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BFA Graduating Show

Nov. 20 - Dec. 15 at the McDonough Museum of Art

Artist Statements

1. Vince Butka
"Second Skyn"

My preoccupation with the comic/graphic novel art form began in earnest when at the age of five and my father presented me with a hand-me-down book titled "How to Draw Comics the Marvel Way." Those first drawings and the artists that created them were my initial inspiration and led to years of drawing, adaptation and research. The epic battles of good and evil between costumed heroes and villains, and the relatable everyman turned super-powered juggernaut, as well as historical and mythological tales, influenced the direction of my narrative.



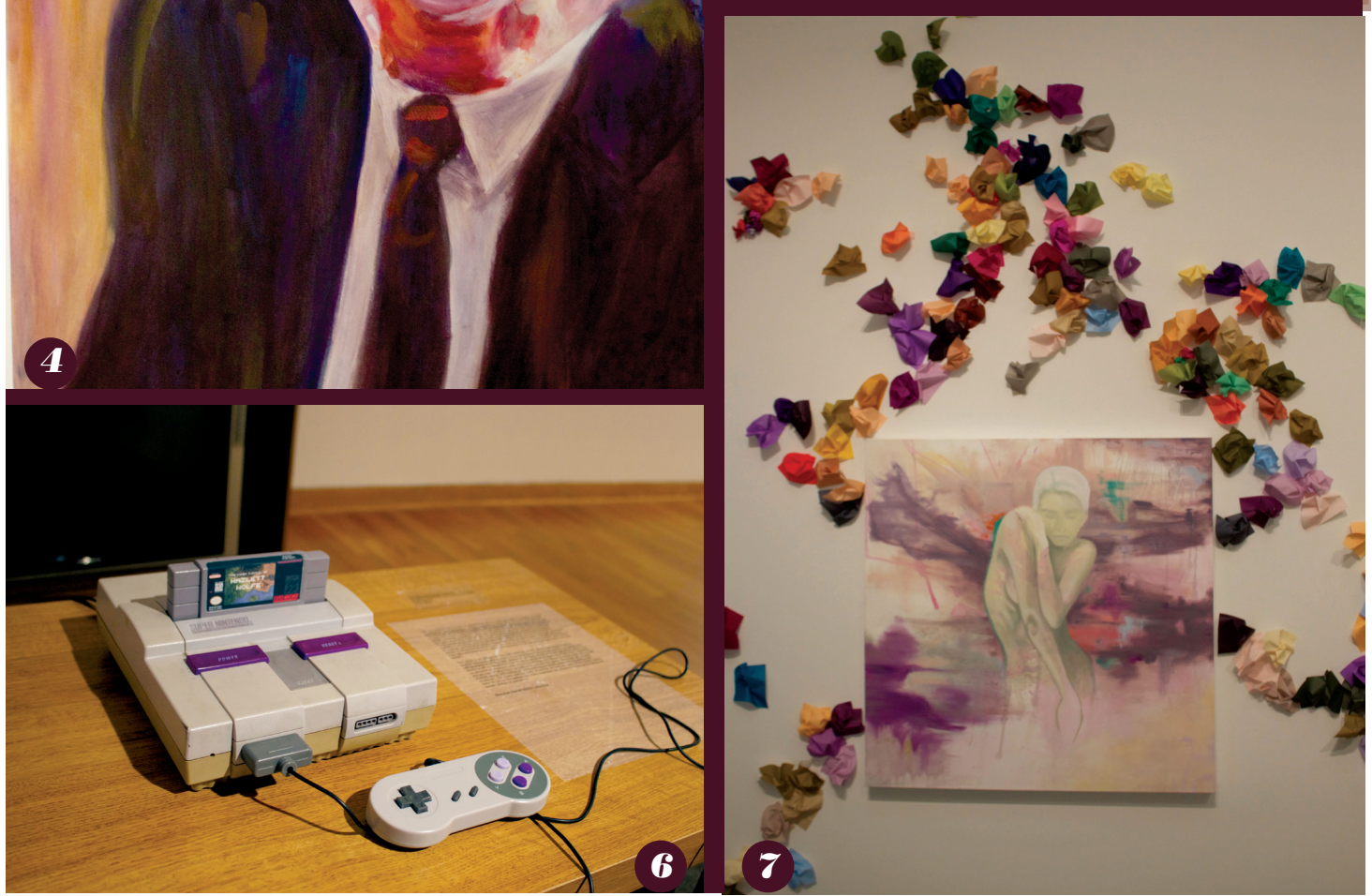
2. Dana Mooney
"Hold On Lightly"

I am a designer, photographer and filmmaker. I seek to carry out my ideas across a variety of platforms, and to do so in a meaningful, memorable way. I am intrigued by how an emerging concept ends up existing in the confines of a given space — how it is tailored to function in that specific space or how it transforms its surroundings. My work explores these notions through mood, movement and meticulous details.



3. Nick Carney
"Nostromo"

As a child, I had a very creative imagination. This was heavily influenced by Sci-fi and fantasy based movies, TV shows, comics and graphic novels. I would reimagine the world around me as my own creation. I would also day-dream about this world and what was going on in it. In the classroom, at recess or playing in the woods, I would bring this world to life. This was my escape from the real world to my imagined world where I would control what was going on and when it would happen. This imaginary world is still in my memories, and I can close my eyes and envision it as clear as day. Through my installation, I am able to show this world to you.



4. Annaliese Torella
"Jack"

My work challenges the traditional notion of portraiture and the idea of the pose as a mere historical record. My focus is on the ability of paint combined with cropping, scale and color to distill character and convey personal meaning. My hope is that the view will draw clues from the way I've handled the characteristics mentioned above to untangle my personal relationship to each of the subjects while forging their own emotional connection to the work.

7. Miranda Cala
"An Exploration of Vulnerability"

Vulnerability is the state of being exposed. The nude figures within ambiguous settings, combined with the use of paper as a fragile material, reflect the ways vulnerability manifests itself. In this body of work, I explore the effects of vulnerability on the physical, emotional and mental being. The postures of the nude figures suggest a sense of defenselessness: the forms are physically uncovered, unprotected and emotionally exposed. The color palette suggests various emotional states triggered by vulnerability. The incorporation of paper further personifies this emotional exposure since the paper itself is a fragile material that can be easily manipulated or destroyed. The folded paper echoes the lines of the folded figures, mimicking those poses of defenselessness, exhaustion or isolation.

6. Nicholas Hazlett Wolfe
Lukacena

"I dream in 16 Bit (The Inner Turmoil of Hazlett Wolfe demo)"

The game is an adventure through a fantasy world, where the player is left to explore the world and its trials, thus developing the main character by pass the self-exploration of the main character and facet the final challenge of the game. The player is left to determine how the story progresses, how much the main character progresses as a person and how they will face the outcome of the trials, all through the amount of effort they are willing to put into the game.

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EDITORIAL

Another Day, Another Shooting

It's difficult to be phased or emotionally moved when watching the news, especially since so much of it tends to showcase death, injustice and Donald Trump.

When it was reported that a mass shooting happened yesterday in San Bernardino, California, it didn't take long for Twitter to explode with people saying that gun laws are awful.

So awful that according to The Washington Post, as of yesterday, in America there have been 355 mass shootings in the 336 days of 2015. In this statistic, a mass shooting consisted of deaths of four or more people, including the shooter.

But where does the problem's root lie? Why does this keep happening? People are killed every day because someone with a gun decided those people didn't need to live anymore. Sometimes shooters have motives. A lot of the times they don't.

Smartgunlaws.org reported that Americans own an estimated 270 million firearms — approximately nine guns for every 10 people. That number has gone down since gun ownership's peak year in 1977.

In 1977, 53.7 percent of American households reported having guns. In 2014, that number dropped to an average of 32.4 percent. NBC News then reported that most gun owners are white males over the age of 55.

Getting rid of guns entirely might not work. If

people really want to hurt others, they're going to find a way. They'll make a bomb, they'll buy illegal firearms — it doesn't matter. Requiring stricter gun training might not work either because future criminals could still participate in training programs.

The problem lies in how guns are sold. Many guns are sold illegally, but even more are sold in areas that have particularly lenient gun laws. Americans can legally purchase firearms in over 40 states from "private sellers" without a background check. The law requires background checks only for guns sold by federally licensed firearm dealers. The background check includes a criminal, mental health and substance abuse history review. Dealers "not engaged in business" of selling firearms can sell them without conducting background checks or maintaining any records of sale.

Those in favor of looser gun control often argue that these mass shooters are simply unstable individuals and that the real problem is mental health. Dubious as that line of reasoning may be, even if it were the case, would it not stand to reason that more in-depth background checks and stricter sales regulations are precisely the answer?

To be blunt, if the standards to get a gun were raised, then people could be held more accountable for what they do with them.

25 Years, You Filthy Animal

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"Do you guys give up or are you thirsty for more?" Kevin McCallister taunts the Wet Bandits with these words in the movie "Home Alone." Marv and Harry do not give up.

Apparently, audiences haven't given up either, as "Home Alone" is turning 25 this year.

According to etonline.com, "Home Alone" became the highest grossing top live-action comedy ever, a record it held for over 20 years. It spent 12 weeks at No. 1 after it opened in November 1990.

Laura Beadling, assistant professor of film studies at Youngstown State University, said one of the reasons for its opening success was that the crew members were all masters at the top of their respective games.

Writer John Hughes ["Ferris Bueller," "Uncle Buck" and "Sixteen Candles"] and director Chris Columbus ["Gremlins," "Mrs. Doubtfire," "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone" and "Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets"] teamed up for this film which touted an all-star cast and introduced Macauley Culkin as the lead character, Kevin. The music score was

done by John Williams ["Harry Potter," "Indiana Jones," "Star Wars" and "Jurassic Park."]

"Now that it's 25 years old, people who saw it in the theater originally may now be watching it with their own kids, which is part of what makes it a classic," Beadling said. "The film has something for everyone — in addition to the physical comedy and sight gags for kids, the elaborate booby traps are fun for adults, as are the character actors who play the intruders and who give nuance to their very broad caricatures."

Keith Huff Jr., senior telecommunications major at YSU, said he remembers running around repeating lines to his mother after seeing the movie.

"I can relate to Kevin because as a kid. I would be that sort of troublemaker that Kevin was," Huff said. "It was never as deliberate, but I would definitely make it easy on my mother to put blame on my sister even though something would be my fault."

Kevin, who is eight years old in the movie, is accidentally left home alone when his rather large family wakes up late the day they are to fly to Paris for Christmas.

Burglars target the house where Kevin is

home alone, and Kevin is determined to protect his home via ingenious, albeit painful [for the Wet Bandits,] booby traps.

"A lot of those visual gags reminded me of what you would see in Tom and Jerry or the Road Runner and Wile E. Coyote and just like those cartoons there's a lot of violence," Beadling said. "I mean, the Coyote's always trying to do terrible things to the Road Runner: falling off the side the cliffs, running into anvils, but nothing ever comes of it. It's violence without a lot of consequence and that's the same thing you see in 'Home Alone.'"

The booby traps are elaborate and malicious, but Marv and Harry just keep coming back for more.

"And some of the things he does to these burglars are very painful; it could be very easy in lesser hands to lose the audience and make him [Kevin] like a little psychopath," Beadling said. "But you do root for him and that's I think the genius of the script; that's John Hughes and Chris Columbus working together to make us see this very little kid doing these terrible things."

To read more about "Home Alone," check out this article on www.thejambar.com.

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JAMBAR COLUMN

Smoking Decreases but Remains Public Health Concern

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Smoking circles pop up all over Youngstown State University's campus. There are stretches of people alongside the entryway to DeBartolo Hall, as well as various groups hanging around outside Maag Library and sporadically sprinkled throughout Kilcawley Center's quarters.

Dominic Ferreri, a YSU student, has been smoking for nearly half his life.

"I started smoking when I was 15," Ferreri said.

He attributes his smoking habit in the beginning to peer pressure.

"Peer pressure had a lot to do with it. No one made me smoke. For the most part, the kids I looked up to at that age smoked," Ferreri said. "I don't remember exactly when I smoked for the first time, but I am sure it was at a party or something."

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention reported that cigarette smoking harms nearly every organ of the body, causes many diseases and reduces the health of smokers in general. They also report that cigarette smoking causes more deaths than human immunodeficiency viruses, illegal drug use, alcohol use, motor vehicle injuries and firearm-related incidents.

According to thetruth.com, a non-profit smoking cessation website, cigarette smoke contains about 7,000 chemicals. Some of these chemicals include carbon monoxide, methanol — which is a chemical found in antifreeze — nicotine, arsenic and sodium hydroxide,

a caustic compound found in hair removal products.

Thetruth.com also estimated that in the United States, about 480,000 people die of tobacco-related deaths each year. All nicotine-based products can lead to death.

Hookah smoking has grown in popularity among American teenagers and young adults. Many believe that smoking hookahs doesn't have the same effect on their bodies as cigarettes, but thetruth.com stated that during an average one-hour hookah session, you inhale 100 to 200 times as much smoke as from a single cigarette.

According to the American Cancer Society, cigarette use has declined dramatically since the release of the first U.S. Surgeon General's report on smoking and health in 1964. Even so, about 20.5 percent of men and 15.8 percent of women still smoked cigarettes in 2012, with about 78 percent of these people smoking daily. Smoking is an expensive habit. According to thetruth.com, U.S. consumers spent an estimated \$90.7 million on tobacco products in 2006. Ferreri also said he actually doesn't like smoking, but it has become a routine for him.

"Honestly, I dislike the habit. I think most smokers would tell you that," Ferreri said. "It's not only bad for you, it's expensive..."

Smoking's addictive nature is due to the nicotine inside the cigarette. Regardless, Ferreri said that when you're a smoker, you rationalize your smoking.

"...They are addicting, and I think what those who don't smoke don't realize is that getting used to smoking at differ-

ent points throughout the day make it difficult to stop," Ferreri said. "For example, with coffee in the morning, on your walk to class, on your break at work or while you're driving your car. Most of the time, you don't even think about 'craving' a smoke, you smoke one because you are used to smoking one."

Ferrari said he plans on eventually quitting.

"I suppose I will have to either go cold turkey or seek help. I mean, there aren't many options out there," he said. "Hypnosis seems silly, in my opinion, then there are nicotine patches. Honestly, I don't really know. I will quit for the sake of my health. One would probably ask then why not quit now? My answer would be, because I don't want to."

Wendy Thomas has been a nurse at YSU since 1994 and has worked with Student Health Services since 2012.

"I'm not sure if it's peer pressure that causes students to smoke or not, but I screen students for tobacco use and direct them to St. Elizabeth's smoking cessation program if they are ready to quit," Thomas said. "It's a free program. I referred nine individuals last year. I had several that quit and came back to tell me."

According to the American Cancer Society, cigarette smoking among adults age 18 and older who smoked 30 cigarettes or more a day went down significantly from 2005 to 2012 — from 12.6 percent to 7.0 percent. Still, more than 42 million American adults smoke cigarettes, and tobacco use remains the single largest preventable cause of disease and premature death in the U.S.





PHOTO BY GABRIELLE FELLOWS/THE JAMBAR

SPORTS
FRONT

"Maybe now that we've felt, and the girls here now, have felt how it feels to lose, they're not going to want this to happen ever again. So for at least the next three years, anyone that's felt this, will know the feeling of how it feels to lose, and they're not going to want that to happen again so they'll just keep moving forward after this."

Thompson will leave YSU

as one of the top players in program history. She broke the digs record twice during her junior and senior seasons, but when she looks back on her career, she will remember how her fellow seniors were able to turn around YSU's program and molded it into a contender for the Horizon League championship.

"The first thing I think of is how far we've come since

our freshman year. Personally, with all the digs and the dig records and all the close friends that I've gotten since I've been here," Thompson said. "How we've started from the beginning — where they've never made the tournament, and all of a sudden they've made it three years in a row. We get two players back-to-back that were Freshman of the Year [in the Horizon League], we get Setter

of the Year [Val Jeffery] ... it's awesome that we were able to turn it around that quick."

Hardaway said the team kept working hard toward the end of the season. He said the team "didn't have a losing feeling in the gym," and he was glad the seniors won their final game at UIC.

"I think not only just the fact they won, but I think it was about how well we played.

And to me, you work hard because you want to see it all come together in a match and it all came together really well for them in that final match," Hardaway said. "I know the seniors didn't want to go out the way they went out and so I think, for at least that one night, they went out the way they wanted to go out."

Track & Field Preps for Season-Opening Icebreaker

Drew Zuhosky

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The Youngstown State University track and field team began the 2014-15 indoor season with a strong showing at the YSU Icebreaker last December. The Penguins had 11 participants win their individual competitions. The success at the Icebreaker gave the Penguins early momentum and allowed YSU to continue their dominance in the Horizon League.

On Friday, Dec. 4, the team will begin the 2015-16 campaign with the annual YSU Icebreaker inside the Watson and Tressel Training Site.

Last year in the event, sprinter/hurdler Caleb Lloyd, now a sophomore, set a school record in the

60-meter hurdles, clocking in at 8.13 seconds. Lloyd broke the previous mark of 8.22 seconds, which stood since 2009. Later in the season, Lloyd finished third in the 60-meter during the Horizon League Championships, clocking in at 8.26 seconds.

Additionally, sophomore sprinter Tavious Harvin had a strong showing in his freshman campaign, finishing sixth in the indoor 200-meter of 22.16 seconds.

Brian Gorby, head coach for YSU's track and field team, said Harvin gives the Penguins much-needed depth to their roster and would have to compete with a number of sprinters on the team for playing time on this year's roster.

After last season, Gorby said the men's team needed to improve if it was going to become a consistent competitor for the Horizon

League Championships. Heading into this season, Gorby said the team has made those improvements and is one of the best teams in the history of the program.

"This is the most talented team ever to set foot in YSU history," he said. "It's the best sprint team, the best throws team, the best distance team. Our focus is going after the indoor and outdoor championships."

There has been one important addition to the roster this season. Carl Zallow's younger brother Chad Zallow has already had a decorated career as a track star. Chad Zallow declined offers from The Ohio State University, The University of Michigan, Penn State University and Notre Dame in order to run alongside his brother. Chad Zallow was the top track prospect in the nation before committing to YSU.

"I'm really excited to see if I do well with the team," Chad Zallow said. "I think it's going to be a great season. I'm just looking forward to it."

As for the women, the trio of McKinsie, Michelle and Melissa Klim, all juniors, put in respectable times in distance runs. McKinsie Klim placed fourth in the 5,000-meter run in the indoor league championships, running the race in 17:43.56, following that up with an eighth place time of 18:22.31 in the outdoor 5,000-meter later that season.

Michelle Klim did not compete last season after sustaining a foot injury. Melissa Klim put in a career-best time in the 1,500-meter run of 5:22.48 during the outdoor championship after a ninth-place time of 18:30.53 in the 5,000-meter in the indoor championship.

Gorby took a moment to update Michelle Klim's status.

"She's not back up to full strength," Gorby said. "The foot's fine, but she just has some internal issues that she's working on. She red-shirted in cross-country, and she's working to finally get back. She missed outdoor and cross-country last season."

Sophomore women's sprinter Nina Grambling discussed her mindset heading into the new campaign, one that won't be too nerve-racking for her.

"There's a lot of excitement for me," Grambling said. "I'm really excited to see what my girls are going to do this year. A lot of them are still young, still trying to come up, but they've shown a lot of improvement already so I'm really excited about seeing what I can push them to do."

SPORTS BRIEFS

Women's Basketball Stays Undefeated

The Youngstown State University women's basketball team improved its record to 6-0 after a 55-47 win over Bucknell University on Wednesday afternoon. YSU guard Nikki Arbanas led the way with 15 points and nine rebounds. YSU will travel to Penn State University on Tuesday.

Three Penguins Named to MVFC All-Academic Team

Youngstown State University's Steve Zaborsky, Shane Kuhn and Hunter Wells were named to the Missouri Valley Football Conference honorable-mention team on Wednesday. The All-Academic Team is composed of MVFC schools that are similar to an All-Conference list.

Softball Adds Five New Recruits

The Youngstown State University softball team added five recruits during the early signing period for the 2016-17 academic year. YSU signed catcher and infielder Elizabeth Birkbeck, Tatum Christy, third baseman Ariel Lindberger, pitcher and infielder Maddi Lusk and catcher and first baseman Miyah Mitchum.