

**YO DIARY:**

Aligning your Chakras

**THROUGH THE DOORS  
OF THE CRAWLSPACE**

**MASON CARRATT:**

Not Just the Gardener  
Down the Street

**IT'S ALL IN THE  
PERSPECTIVE**

**MIRANDA FAIRCHILD:**

An Effervescent  
Woman with Drive



# GROW

TABLE OF CONTENTS



*Chakras*



4-5

*Crawlspace*



6-7

*Healthy*



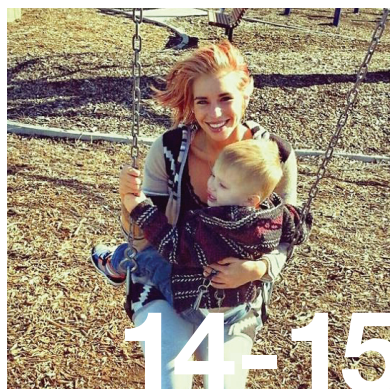
8-9

*Perspective*



10-13

*Fairchild*



14-15

*YBI*



16

*England*



17

*Carratt*



18-19



# EDITORS' LETTER

Dear Readers:

While some of you may look at Youngstown and think that the city is dwindling, perhaps even collapsing in on itself, we see a city with a bright future, where the journey of growth has only begun.

Youngstown gets a bad reputation, it's even been named as one of the bleakest places in the world according to BuzzFeed, and Youngstown even has a charming entry on Urban Dictionary, claiming that the city is a "desolate, barren wasteland was at one time an important manufacturer of steel, ranking third in the country in gross production."

But they're wrong.

Our city is growing.

Not just growing — *thriving*.

We invite you on this journey of growth through Youngstown, whether it is one's personal journey to better the self (Chakras), taking a nondescript space and turning it into a haven for artists (Crawlspace), or even physically growing organic produce to better the community (Healthy).

We invite you to look at Youngstown from a positive light (Perspective), look at how a Youngstown native turned obstacles into life lessons (Fairchild), look at how Youngstown is similar to one of the biggest, most admired cities in the world (England), look at how a local business is making its mark on the world (YBI) and last, look at how through all of our hard work and growth has transformed the city we live in (Carratt).

In this issue of The Yo, we want to share with you life's uncertainties and all of the challenges we are faced with on a day-to-day basis — as individuals, as a culture, as a city — and the drive, the blue-collar sense of gusto that is ingrained within our history and our blood, that enables us to persevere and succeed.

*Cassandra Twoey Rachael Kerr Jordan McNeil*

## YO STAFF

### EDITORS

Rachael Kerr  
Cassandra Twoey

### DESIGNERS

Keeley Black  
Corin Miller  
Stacy Rubinic

### COPY EDITOR

Jordan McNeil

### CONTRIBUTORS

Gabrielle Fellows  
Claudia Gage  
Graig Graziosi  
Josh Medore  
Alyssa Pawluk  
Stacy Rubinic  
Beth Shiller  
Amanda Tonoli

## ABOUT US

The Yo Magazine is published twice each academic year (once in the fall, once in the spring) by The Jambar, Youngstown State University's student-run newspaper.

The Yo Magazine was first distributed as part of The Jambar in spring 2007, and it won the Associated College Press' Best in Show award in 2008.

We're always looking for writers, editors, designers and photographers, so contact us if you're interested. The Yo must go on!

### CONTACT US

EMAIL: [yomagazine2@gmail.com](mailto:yomagazine2@gmail.com)  
PHONE: [330] 941-1991

# YO DIARY:

## ALIGNING YOUR CHAKRAS



### JOSH MEDORE

I'm 6 foot 3 inches, right around 240 pounds, and I haven't done anything particularly physical for two years.

The summer between my sophomore and junior year, I ran a mile and a half each morning, usually hovering around the 9 minute 30 seconds mark. In the time between that summer and February, the peak of my physical activity had been half-hearted pickup basketball games and an hour or two of catch outside The Jambar office, weather permitting.

So, why exactly I was being pulled and twisted and contorted like a circus performer was still something I hadn't really figured out. But I knew I wanted to be healthier.

I've been putting on weight steadily over my time in college. It turns out that sitting in an office at a computer for most of the day, and taking a five-minute break four times a day to walk to and from class, doesn't keep the pounds away.

Going to the gym has never appealed to me and I don't really enjoy running.

I started doing yoga because it seemed simple enough, and I wasn't happy with my weight. I knew some of the benefits going in — the basics like core strength and flexibility — and I was willing to give it a shot, mainly because I could do it in the privacy of my own home.

The first time I had any experience doing yoga was in the conference room of

The Jambar.

My instructor was Jenna Medina, one of our assistant multimedia editors, who has done yoga for three years.

My goal — do yoga for 30 minutes a day for a month.

Session one wasn't bad. I learned the absolute basic poses — Baby Cobra, Cat/Cow, Plank and Downward Dog.

I didn't feel anything after the first session. Not immediately, at least. The next morning, though, it all hurt.

My surgically repaired knee (ACL tear in high school), my wrists (I couldn't support myself very well), my arms (no upper body strength), my sides (Who uses those muscles regularly?), my core (It should be clear by now that I hadn't used those muscles in a very long time.) — it all hurt on day two.

But I soldiered on.

My second day was a little better, but not much. The tightness across my body from the day was still there, despite stretching beforehand. It turns out that muscles used for yoga aren't reached by stretches that I learned playing basketball and soccer in high school; those were the usual arm and leg routines that everyone does starting in first grade gym class.

Over the course of the next week, I kept going trying to last longer, bend further and to reach this new plateau of fitness and coming to a complete sense of oneness and aligning my chakras, but I ended up hoping to simply not feel like a very sore Auntie Anne's pretzel every night.

It was going *well*. I was *finally* feeling *happier about my body*; happier than I was with it in a long time, *possibly ever*.



I took two days off that week, and it set me back almost to square one. My first day back after the hiatus, I noticed that breathing was difficult.

The first thing that Jenna taught me was how to breathe while I was doing my poses.

In through the nose.  
Hold.  
Out through the nose.

It was oddly challenging. It was like nothing I had ever done before.

Through the small amount of exercise I had done before, all breathing had been the same: a couple quick breaths in through the nose, a couple quick breaths out through the mouth.

Changing how I breathe was the first challenge. Over time, I got better to the point where it was almost second nature. I didn't skip a day again for almost two weeks.

In that time, I added the Warrior poses and started hitting my mark of 30 minutes a day. Breathing became a non-issue, my muscles didn't hurt, the stretching started to feel good, comforting even, and I noticed that I was getting thinner.

Even outside of yoga, doing everything was easier. The hill coming up from Lincoln Avenue no longer left me out of breath. I could get up to my 9 a.m. class on the top floor of DeBartolo with ease. At the end of a 14-hour day putting The Jambar together, I wasn't as tired as I was in the fall semester.

It was going well. I was finally feeling happier about my body; happier than I was with it in a long time, possibly ever.

It penetrated my mental well being, too. When I did yoga, I felt calmer and focused. During my sessions, the world faded out.

My neighbors blasting Top 40 pop songs?

Silent.

My decade-old refrigerator that rattled in place?

Quiet.

The cars driving by every night?

They didn't exist when I was doing my routine.

Outside of my homemade yoga studio — my living room with a yoga mat wedged wherever it will fit — I felt self-confident, I felt happier overall and I felt accomplished. I had never felt particularly good about my body. I've always meant to lose weight and be in better shape, but I just never got around to it. I spent more time wanting to be fit than actually trying. That changed with yoga.

By the third week, I had started working on balancing poses like Warrior 3, Mountain and Tree. The 30-minute sessions I had planned on doing dropped to 20-minute sets of going through all my poses, but it became a workout. I was left tired, aching and, most importantly, wanting more. I wanted to get back the next night, to push myself further and make myself better.

But it didn't last. I still want to keep doing it and improve myself physically and mentally, but over time, my interest waned.

There was a cluster of huge news stories — is the name Randy Dunn familiar at all to anyone? — that happened and required several long days at the office. I was left physically exhausted almost every day and when I got home, I just wanted to sleep. I didn't have the energy or the will to do half an hour of yoga every night anymore.

Once all of that blew over, I ran into the problem that I had always had with physical activity: motivation to continue.

My days returned to normal — class at 9, work inter-

mittently from 10 to whenever the day's work was done, go home — but I just didn't feel like doing yoga. I knew I could do it, but I didn't. I don't know why. And I feel bad about it.

I haven't touched my yoga mat since my goal of one month ended. The final numbers: 17 days, with most sessions coming in at 20 minutes. One went to 35 and a couple were at 25.

It's not the result I wanted or the one that I was hoping for. It's almost saddening that I couldn't keep with it. Reading through the records I kept after each session, where I wrote about what I did and for how long and how I felt about all of it, I found a line that makes it worse.

"I can't believe that I'm actually excited to get some new stuff in my routine, even if it's just to

break up the routine a bit. This really looks like something I might keep up beyond [the end]."

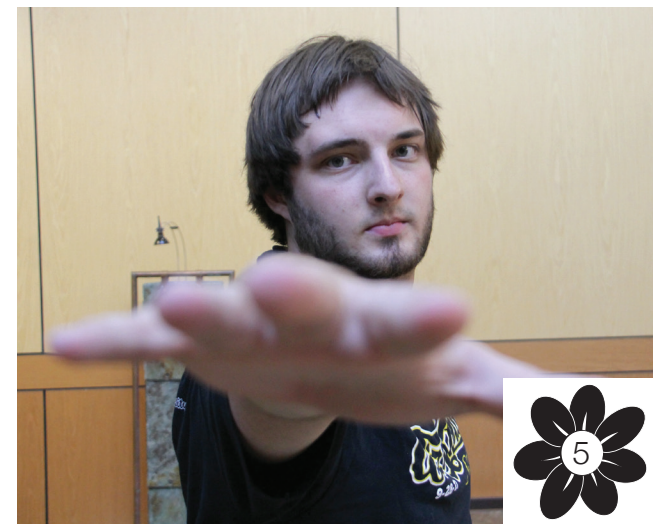
I don't know how I let it slip away from me. I enjoyed it and it did wonders for me. Most of all, it was fun. I've never had fun exercising, but with yoga, when I had to think about what I was doing and how I was going to move and stretch and contort myself, it was enjoyable.

I graduate in May. I don't have a job lined up yet. I'm going to have some downtime, some time to myself. If I do anything to keep myself from gaining weight again, it'll be yoga.

I guess I'll see what happens.

Namaste, Youngstown.

“It was *oddly challenging*.  
It was like *nothing I had ever done before*.”





# THROUGH THE DOORS OF THE CRAWLSPACE

## GABRIELLE FELLOWS

“Youngstown has a music scene. There is pop punk, metal, classic rock sounding bands here, no doubt. But the issue is there is nowhere for these talented bands to go.”

Brian Markle, one of the owners and primary show booker of the Crawlspace Concert Club in Girard, knows that local music is dying a slow, painful death in Youngstown and the surrounding areas.

Small-town talent is becoming squashed by bigger acts that come in through Cleveland and Pittsburgh, squeezing the breath out of the area musicians that desperately cling to any music scene the area has left.

Venues are closing their doors and area bands are forced to play at houses or stop performing all together. This forces local talent out of the area and into other places, something that isn't good for the economy or any music lover's mental well being.

Markle is an experienced booking agent and has been bringing in bands for Beardcore

and other area showcases for the past few years. He also is the guitarist of Houston! We're Going Down, and when he and his bandmates noticed his favorite places closing their doors, Markle took action.

“I always used to play at a place called Zeke's. One day, I heard that Zeke's was closing and the owners just wanted out. The price and scenario was just too good. ... We were looking for the catch and we couldn't find one,” Markle said. “I ended up securing the building for a really good price and we re-opened it as the Crawlspace Concert Club.”

The old Zeke's became the Crawlspace in early January when Brian and Codie Priester, Jeff Gargas and Frank Toncar received the keys to the building. After cleaning, dusting and moving furniture for a month straight, the club was finally ready to be open to the public.

The walls of the upstairs

concert room are covered in murals depicting various dark scenes. There is a graveyard, a witch and a painting of what seems to be a mushroom cloud from a nuclear explosion among many others. Turquoise carpeting is laid on the floor and meets up with auditorium style seating on the edges of the spacious room.

The focal point, of course, is the main stage. Speakers are lined up facing the audience to create a semi circle of sound and the concrete wall behind the stage is painted with the Crawlspace logo. The overhead lights, light filters and a disco ball that are set up above the stage create an atmosphere when the shows perform.

“You know, this used to be a place of worship. That's why there are seats and this place is set up

“Music and people who love it are always welcome through these doors.”

—BRIAN MARKLE



“

NEVER IN A MILLION YEARS WOULD I HAVE THOUGHT THAT I COULD RUN A PLACE LIKE THIS AND ACTUALLY MAKE PROFIT. THIS IS A DREAM. MUSIC IS A PART OF ME...

”

—BRIAN MARKLE

so solid. It's all concrete. You could play up here full blast and you wouldn't be able to hear it next door or even downstairs. Bands can really let loose with their sound and their performance," Markle said, "I mean, I live here. I clean up all week if they make a mess. The point of this place is to give bands a space to fully put on a show. They respect me as a host, and I respect their need to rock out."

The Crawlspace has been a host to more than 30 bands since their opening day in late January. Bands such as Daydreamer, Tuesday's Too Late, Cherry PoPPins and They Promised Escape have graced the spacious Concert Club with their presence.

Justin Hunkus, the drummer for Cherry PoPPins, said the Crawlspace's presence in the area is definitely a good one.

"It's the only venue in the area without driving 30 minutes or more to get to a show," Hunkus said. "Fun times and good vibes inside the Crawlspace."

Andy DeRosa from Tuesday's Too Late has seen plenty of venues in the United States. His band travels from areas around upstate New York to places as far south as Florida. He is pleasantly surprised with the atmosphere in the Crawlspace compared to other venues that the band has performed in.

"As a touring band, we see venues from all over. The Crawlspace definitely keeps up with some of the larger venues that have been taking business from the independently owned ones," DeRosa said. "They know what they're doing there. We, as a band, enjoy playing there because it's a little taste of home with that Youngstown flair that the city used to have. For awhile we thought the live music era here was long gone, but places like the Crawlspace restore our faith in performance."

Markle said one of the main reasons he opened the Crawlspace was to restore the music scene back to its former glory.

"I remember going to shows in the Youngstown area

whenever I could when places were open. For those of us who hold music so dearly to our hearts, it's not like we have a choice. It's in you — you know? You feel it and you need it. If you don't go to a show — local or not — you feel out of place. When smaller local venues started shutting down it took live music down with it," Markle said.

"When you see something so dear to your heart failing to survive because of one simple thing like places to play ... it sucks. So when I saw the chance to open the Crawlspace and give music somewhere to exist, I took it."

In addition to giving local music a home, the venue is giving home to national artists as well. On May 25, Hawthorne Heights will be coming in to perform an intimate 200 person show in the concert club's main performance room.

"This is big news for us," Markle said, "JT Woodruff, the

lead singer, contacted me and said he wanted to play an acoustic show here. We planned one, and it was a success. Next thing I know, he's saying he wants to bring the whole band. I'm like, 'Dude... Yes.' It's awesome to be bringing a nationally touring band here to perform."

Local act Daydreamer was chosen to open for Hawthorne Heights and guitarist Kevin Breegle said the band couldn't be more excited.

"When Brian contacted us and asked us to open for Hawthorne Heights, we automatically said yes. It's going to be so cool to open for a band we all used to listen to," Breegle said.

The Crawlspace is going to be more than just a concert venue. According to Markle, stand-up comedy, raves, craft shows and game jams are going to be held in the building.

Lane Kerr, the graphic designer for the concert club, said that he believes the Crawlspace is the venue people in Youngstown and surrounding areas have been waiting for.

"Not only is it a space for great concerts, but it is always willing to open it's doors for anyone's idea, whether it be comedy, a competition, an arts and crafts show, etc," Kerr said. "The idea that the Crawlspace was built upon is nothing short of amazing, and the fact that that idea is so successfully carried out on a weekend basis is a miracle."

Markle mentioned he wanted to open up the bottom half of the building for events like the ones mentioned above. The basement of the Crawlspace Concert Club will be used as a hangout for musicians and fans alike.

The basement is an acoustic showroom with a small stage and table seating. There is minimal lighting and graffiti all over the walls as well as retro video games, a pool table and a space for food to be served directly from the kitchen that sits in the rear. The acoustic room is a wide-open space designed for people to kick back and relax with softer music, comedy and good company.

Markle said the future of the Crawlspace is unknown, but for what he can see, it looks to be bright — and full of music.

"Never in a million years would I have thought that I could run a place like this and actually make profit. This is a dream. Music is a part of me, and now I have the opportunity to give it a place to live," he said.

"I don't know what the future of this place is, but if I can do anything about it, it's going to keep going and keep growing. Music and people who love it are always welcome through these doors."



PHOTO BY GABRIELLE FELLOWS



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE CRAWLSPACE





# Mahoning Valley is Looking Healthy

ALYSSA PAWLUK

We spend our lives trying to maintain our health over the hustle and bustle of everyday life, and — let's face reality — our eating habits usually suffer.

You grab a quick snack on your way out the door as you're running 15 minutes late for school or work, right? As a Mahoning Valley resident, it's easy to lose sight of what we eat. So how can we stay healthy while still maintaining our convenient life?

No, there is no miracle diet that will save the day, but the Valley does offer a few programs that will help residents to get that balance of fruits and vegetables.



Grow Youngstown, a non-profit organization that promotes the growth of organic food and interdependence throughout the community of Youngstown, is just one of the many groups out

there trying to create a healthy environment for the residents around the city.

Elsa Higby, director of Grow Youngstown, started the program because she wanted healthy food options that were local and self-sufficient.

"We started to create a socially just and economically viable local food system, and a strong local food system is a combination of gardeners, farmers, eaters, cooks and any number of people that participate in growing and eating produced goods. If you're trying to eat locally, there are not as many processed food options available, and you find yourself eating more healthfully," Higby said.

They offer convenient and fresh produce like carrots, strawberries, broccoli, apples, peppers, lettuce, celery and much more that would not require too much preparation.

Even if it seems like a lot to be involved with, members of the organization will show you how to grow your own garden. If you want to start eating healthy and do not have time, I'm not saying growing a garden is the only option. A trip down to the

grocery store or the local farmer's market is all it takes.

Grow Youngstown is in its seventh year in Mahoning County. Higby said the reason she started the organization was due to the public's lack of access to local food.

"There wasn't any access to local food. There wasn't really any local food infrastructure — there wasn't any language," Higby said. "Local farmers markets had a lot of re-sellers, and I wanted to purchase local vegetables. I just happened to drive up to Cleveland to do it."

Higby said benefits of eating healthy are garden-fresh options that last longer than purchasing from a grocery store and that buyers know where the produce originated.

"The produce that you are getting is fresher. You can get produce from us and it will last in your refrigerator for a week or more opposed to what you might buy at the grocery store," she said. "You're keeping your tax dollars local; you're actually purchasing from a local business. So you're helping to stimulate the local economy. You also have a closed feedback loop with your farmer. If you want to know how something is grown or





you want to learn from your farmer, you can contact them and find out. It's really supportive of local business."

Higby explained that anyone living in the community could pick up the produce that Grow Youngstown offers in drop-off locations in Boardman, Poland, Austintown, Warren, Fellows Riverside Garden and the Fairgreen Neighborhood Garden.

"If folks actually want to purchase produce from us, they can go to our website. We accept payments up front for the entire summer, and we take subsidized shares for people who qualify, and you also have the option to pay weekly. There are also 18-week memberships, 24-week memberships, or you can purchase a year round membership."

Higby said that taking part in a community garden stabilizes and beautifies neighborhoods.

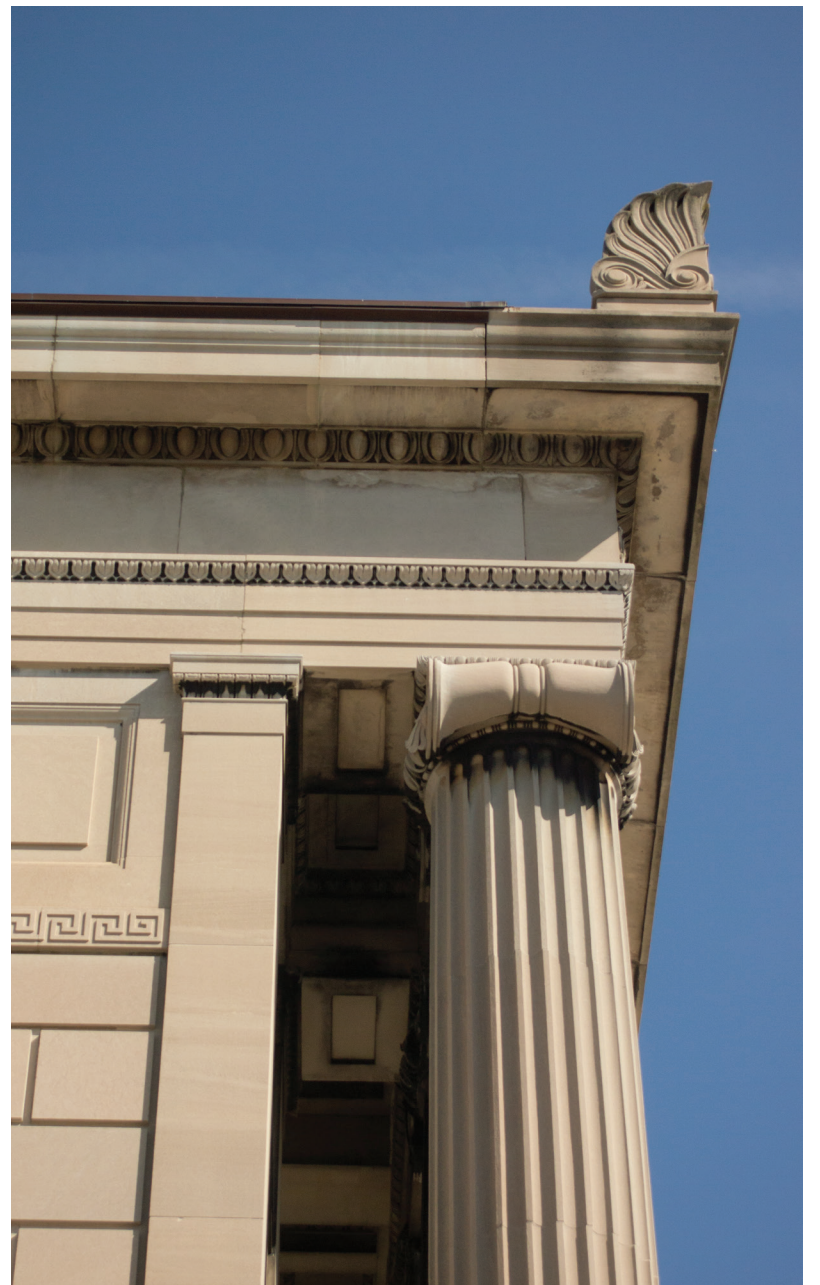
"You're someone that a neighbor's child can come up and talk to, and you're engaged in an activity that is beautifying a neighborhood," she said. "So there is all kind of ends in which some community gardens really are an anchor for in neighborhoods that teach stability."

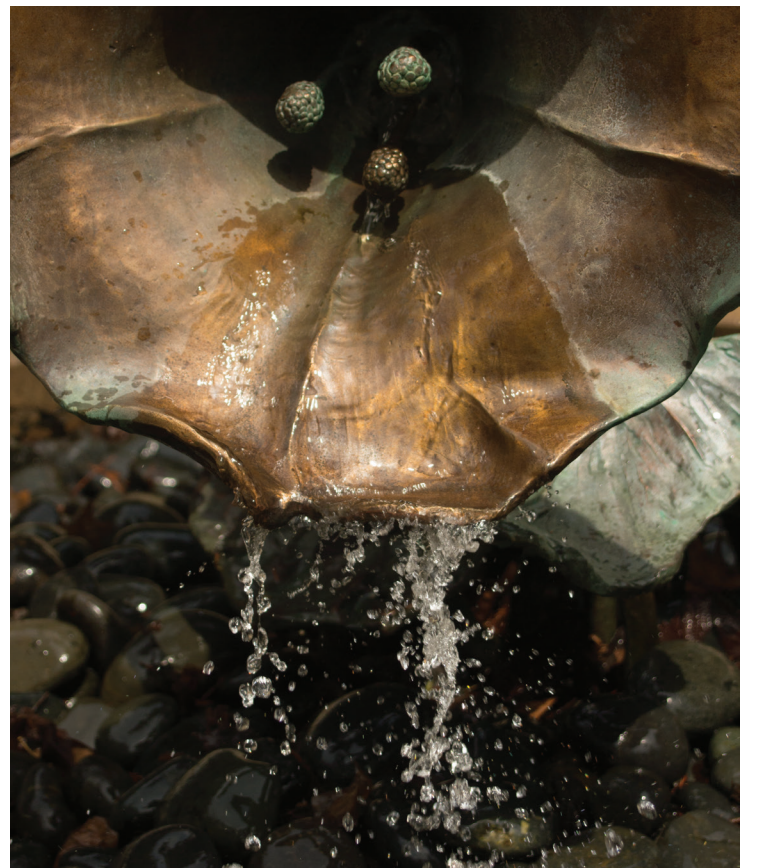


# it's all in the **PERSPECTIVE**

STACY RUBINIC

*I wanted to capture an intimate view of Youngstown, while conveying an optimistic outlook.*









**PER  
SPEC  
TIVE**

# Miranda Fairchild: An Effervescent Woman with *DRIVE*

AMANDA TONOLI

As she sits on one of the worn couches at Dunkin Donuts on campus, Miranda Fairchild's naturally platinum blonde hair and warm summer glow make her an eye-catcher. The array of seven tattoos peak out of her clothes — by her shorts, up by her collar bone, around her upper arm and wrist and leading off of her chest covered up by a gray V-neck and a white zip-up hoodie.

She waves me over enthusiastically as we meet, nearly bounding up out of her seat to greet me with a warm hug.

Fairchild is truly an amazing person.

Starting her college career at Youngstown State University soon after she turned 18, Miranda knew exactly what she wanted to do with her life. She also knew it would only get harder. Excited to start her journey, she completed her first semester with 20 credit hours and outstanding grades. Miranda even met with the dean to request an override to take 24 credit hours the following semester. With ten college classes on her schedule at one point, she still managed to excel.

Currently, she is a YSU senior anticipating graduating in the spring of 2015 with three majors in Food and Nutrition, Exercise Science and Psychology. On the verge of turning 23, graduating on time — especially at YSU — is a feat in and of itself.

“The ride is easy, exciting even, when you know where you’re going. I knew where I wanted to be and what I had to do to get there,” Fairchild said. “What I didn’t know is there’s more to college than classes. Thinking back on those sleepless nights, the overwhelming amounts of stress, and the tears shed because of it, the truth hit me. I was spending all my time, energy and even my health preparing for a future I am not promised. I thought what if I died now? Next week? What am I really accomplishing?”

Fairchild not only has a whirlwind of circumstances that should have knocked her down (or at least slowed her down), in the middle of her junior, year she received news that would be considered an obstacle to most. She was having a baby.

“He is my whole world. Sometimes, I forget I’m the mother. He takes as much care of me as I do of him,” she said.

Getting pregnant at 20 was nothing that Fairchild could have anticipated, but during a conversation with her she said, “I’ve learned that most things in life cannot be planned. If we waited until we’re ready, that’s all we would do — wait. Life is too short to wait and timing is never right. There will always be reasons why you shouldn’t. Part of growing up is accepting what is and doing the best you can to prepare for it. When you’re given a surprise, or in my case a miracle, embrace it.”

Miranda took a moment to reflect on her pregnancy.

“It definitely wasn’t planned, but what can you do? I loved being pregnant. I loved being able to get my little gift from God a little earlier in my life. I know it was in his plan, so obviously it is a part of my plan, too,” she said. “Yes, having a baby is big

news. Huge, but what surprised me was how other people handled it. Despite knowing how important my education is to me, still people would ask ‘What about school?’ ‘What about it?’ I would respond.”

“What about it?” indeed. To keep herself on track, the mother-to-be wasted no time in mapping out her priorities.

“In the midst of deciding how I wanted to spend the rest of my life, I took a piece of paper and wrote down the most important things to me. Number one is family. Even before I found out Ashton was on his way, everything I was doing was for him. Time and money completed my list. Time being so limited and so valuable is the most important thing I can give to my family. Those usually go hand in hand,” she said. “Some people have money but no time. Others have time but little money. That won’t work for me. I need both to provide for my family and be there.”

However, it wasn’t until after the pregnancy that some of her problems started to begin.

After she had her son in 2011, Miranda got very sick, losing almost all of her baby weight in a very short amount of time. Despite being told how good she looked, she said she felt horrible.

“Skinny is not beautiful, healthy is.”

Miranda was in the worst shape that she had ever been. The weight she lost was not fat — it was her muscle mass.

Having the major that she does, Miranda Fairchild has always been very health oriented. She played any and all sports throughout her high school days and continued to stay active upon entering college. Fairchild competes in races and has placed top five in three half-marathons. She currently works as a swim instructor for the YMCA and uses her free membership religiously.

She went as far as consulting a doctor about being so scrawny post-birth. She wanted to be what she was before, if not more muscular. And that she did.

In March of 2012, four months after Fairchild had Ashton, she decided to go see Dr. Armon Shayesteh to help her with her problem. The doctor was everything that Fairchild was studying to be, so she had thought he would be of great use to her in her fragile state.

Although she sought out his help, Fairchild devised her own plan to get fit. She went back to running like she did pre-pregnancy, working her way up to 60 miles per week. On top of the activity, she also took pride in eating a well-balanced diet.

She took the route of having her body fat measured as compared to her lean muscle. She started at 154 pounds at 28 percent body fat. Currently, Fairchild weighs 142 pounds at 20 percent body fat. She said that her ultimate goal is 15 percent body fat, and she doesn’t quite care what the scale says because without considering body composition, weight is just a number.

What gives her this kind of drive and motivation? Not many college students would work so diligently on being healthy, let alone having a son, a job, a house and three majors to worry about.

Growing up, Miranda Fairchild was bounced around from home to home, never really having one that she felt entirely permanent in. With five younger siblings in similar situations, Fairchild began to resent herself for not being able to provide them with a sense of stability.

“I remember my sister crying on the other end of the phone as I stared at the overstuffed box filled with everything I owned in a room that was not mine. Trying to find a solution to stop her pain, feelings of helplessness and shame brought me to my knees. I was 16, still in high school. How could I help her?” she said. “The first rule in saving a life is protecting your own. A person cannot be a lifeguard if they’re a victim. I had two options: sink or swim. So I swam hard — straight to Youngstown State University. I knew then as well as I know now that education is my solid ground. It’s my security. It’s what will put me in a position to be a lifeguard.”

Beyond providing a sense of security, YSU also introduced Miranda to someone that helps add to her as a person: her boyfriend, Dustin Guyer. He challenges her in the gym, and helps her in her journey through parenthood.

“I was hesitant, and he was patient,” Miranda said. “When I’m stressed, he’s calm. He’s everything I’m not. He’s my rock, and together we make the perfect team. I didn’t know something so wonderful could come so naturally.”

Dustin feels the same way about Fairchild.

“Miranda’s great. I could never do half of the things that she does. I couldn’t bring myself to talk to her for weeks. She’s gorgeous, but that wasn’t it. It was the way she carried herself — so ambitious,” he said. “The first time we met she was sitting in class with books piled up, vigorously note taking. When the teacher stepped out, she opened another book and got to work. She has more drive than anyone I’ve ever met. There is so much more to her than her exterior. Being fit is her lifestyle. Sometimes I joke with her and laugh that she’s more jacked than me, but I think it’s awesome. Taking care of herself is another way she takes care of her family.”

Fairchild’s own self-worth shows through her personal self-confidence and her fighter persona.

Last year, in early September her house was robbed when no one was home. Everyone kept saying how thankful she should be that no one was home — that her and Ashton had been spared by God.

“I know I should have been grateful that I wasn’t home, but I was angry. It’s a terrible feeling, being robbed. Aside from my flat screen TV and four-year-old laptop along with thousands of irreplaceable pictures, videos and research, I lost something more valuable than that. I was stripped of my comfort [and] the security I’ve worked so hard to provide for my son,” she said. “It takes a lot to make a house a home, years even. For me, my home is my sanctuary, my outlet, my safety zone. The fact that there are such people that feel so entitled to the things I’ve spent years building, that invite themselves into my home and help themselves to anything they can get a few bucks for sickens me. But what scared me most was my confidence in my capability to defend what’s mine if that were to happen again. I would do *whatever* it takes.”

Her motivation to be the fighter that she is, in all senses of the word, cannot really be pinned down to one point. She didn’t understand what I meant when I had asked her what her turning point was, or what her reasoning was behind being the way she is with her son, her college or her life super-positive life perspective.

“Well, I think that education is the most important thing a human being can have. So that’s my reason for school,” she said. “My son is my everything and I want the best for him. There’s no reason, I mean, doesn’t every parent? And I guess the rest is up to God. I trust him, he’s the only.”



“The first rule in saving a life is *protecting your own.*”





BETH SHILLER

Youngstown was once Steel Valley, known for its thriving mass production in the steel industry.

Now, with production at a standstill and the once great factories abandoned and weathered, it has earned a new title — the Rust Belt.

After the city's fall in the 1970s, the Youngstown area turned into a dreary, run down ghost of what it used to be. But that is all changing thanks to the Youngstown Business Incubator.

The YBI is a non-profit organization that opened in 1995; it houses several start up companies. The incubator is currently a four building campus that offers office space and administrative services to new businesses. Each building is connected so each employee has access to anything in the incubator without setting foot outside.

"The four-, soon to be five-, building campus is now becoming the 'Tech Block' of downtown," said Brittany Housel, client development coordinator.

The YBI was established in Youngstown as the city's last hope in the ever-changing job market.

"We had no choice, if we didn't make the tech conversion, it'd [Youngstown] be gone," Jim Cossler, chief evangelist and entrepreneurial expert of the YBI, said.

The YBI's ultimate goal is to bring more businesses to the Mahoning Valley, creating a better economy, and to change the Youngstown reputation.

The YBI is different from other incubators because in 2000, it chose to focus on one type of technology: software. The Incubator chose to focus solely on software because location is irrelevant, it doesn't cost anything to start and there is a less than a year wait to see if the company goes to market or fails.

"We can't be good at everything or have the budget for resources. Plus the cloud is everywhere; no one is concerned with where software comes from," Cossler said.

This Incubator also encourages a hyper-cooperative atmosphere. Instead of tearing each other down, each company that is housed in the incubator helps each other out.

As Cossler said, this way, each company "has

access to every software language."

"There is no other place like this," Cossler said.

This method has proven to be successful — there are currently 32 companies housed in the YBI and it has been named the 11th best university-affiliated incubator in the world as well as the fifth best university-affiliated incubator in the United States.

Aside from the incubator achievements, Turning Technologies — which started out in the incubator — has moved next door and was named the fastest growing privately owned software company in the U.S. It develops hardware and software designed to allow remote audience response and gather audience feedback data during presentations. Clients include companies in the professional and educational markets.

"I have witnessed our largest success story to date, Turning Technologies acquired their largest competitor (eInstruction) as well as our second largest, and most recent success story becoming acquired and produce double the jobs they previously had, still in Youngstown, Ohio," Housel said.

Turning Technologies, along with the incubator, are helping to reshape Youngstown's dreary new reputation.

"I see the future of the Youngstown Business Incubator as being bright. We are constantly taking steps and measures to make sure we are on the 'up and up' as far as resources, technology, methods, etc," Housel said.

Playing an important role in the reinventing of downtown Youngstown and being committed to its companies, the YBI got rid of the "graduating a company" mentality and adopted an "accelerating a company" one.

This attitude allowed Turning Technologies to move into the Taft Technology Center and it will be developing more properties to house the move successful companies.

This attitude is also helping change the reputation Youngstown has acquired over the years and people's attitude about the area. As it grows and evolves, so do the people and the pride for their home.

"I absolutely see this city shaking off the Rust Belt mentality and moving towards a 'Tech Belt' mindset. We have great restaurants, tremendous arts and awesome software companies. We will continue to grow, prosper and improve during this economic renaissance into a bigger and better Youngstown," Housel said.



# The Rust Belt Across The Pond

## My Journey in England



CLAUDIA GAGE

I spent this past spring semester studying abroad at the University of Winchester in the historic capital of England. Through the initial culture shock, I began to discover some ways that it maybe wasn't so unlike home.

First, let's start with the similarities.

The biggest one is the weather.

Ahh yes ... it's another day of clouds and rain! How delightful!

When I arrived in England, I didn't find anything unusual at all about the weather. If anything, I was grateful to be missing the great Polar Vortex or whatever it was that buried most of Ohio in snow for the greater part of this winter.

The friends that I made from other parts of America were upset by the lack of sunshine and startled at the weather's tendency to be bright and sunny one minute and a torrential downpour the next. But to someone from Northeast Ohio, this is just another normal day.

Like Youngstown, England also boasts some great food. No matter where you travel, you owe it to yourself to try out some of the local cuisine.

In England, I have grown very fond of dishes such as fish n' chips, potato and leek soup, traditional English breakfast of eggs, toast, baked beans, bacon and sausage and, of course, tea. In every English city I've been to, I find a local pub to try out, rather than just grabbing lunch at a fast food chain. I advise visitors and Youngstown natives alike to try our own local restaurants, such as the Elmtown, the MVR and Avalon Pizzeria.

After eating at a local pub, nothing finishes the night better than great theater. In addition

to a great theater department at the university I was attending, Winchester boasts great community theater at venues such as the Chesil and the Theatre Royal, not unlike the Youngstown Playhouse or the Oakland Center for the Arts.

One thing Winchester has over Youngstown? It's a lot easier to get to the renowned artistic nightlife of London's West End from Winchester than it is to get to New York's Broadway from the Mahoning Valley.

Another thing that's within close proximity? Beaches.

The beaches of England are remarkably similar to the beaches of Lake Erie. There are more rocks than sand, and it's often too cold to want to get into

the water, but that doesn't detract from the natural beauty of these beaches.

And nothing beats the people.

Whether it's an ambitious young entrepreneur with a new business plan, an older city native showing a newcomer the history or a musician performing on the street, both Winchester and Youngstown can boast some fantastic people. No matter where you go, you're guaranteed to find a friendly face.

Despite some of the similarities, there are very obvious reminders that I was no longer in the Valley — or even in America for that matter.

First off, the language. Seriously. For two places that both speak "English," there is definitely a language barrier.

*Pub.*

*Rubbish.*

*Fit.*

*Knackered.*

A lot of new words and even new meanings for words I thought I already knew. For example, it is very important that you refer to pants as "trousers," as pants means "underwear" in British English. Sweaters are called "jumpers," cell phones are called "mobiles" and the trunk of your car is known as the "boot."

Speaking of cars...

In the U.S., it seems like practically everyone has a car. Let's be honest, using your car to get from one place to another is probably second nature. Need to go to the store? Have to go to work? Just don't feel like walking to your mailbox? Hop in!

This is not the case in Winchester.

Cars in England are overall less common than they are in America, partially because they are more expensive to drive and insure, but also because everything is either within walking distance or decently accessible by train or bus.

Which means most shopping trips were either taken by foot or public transportation.

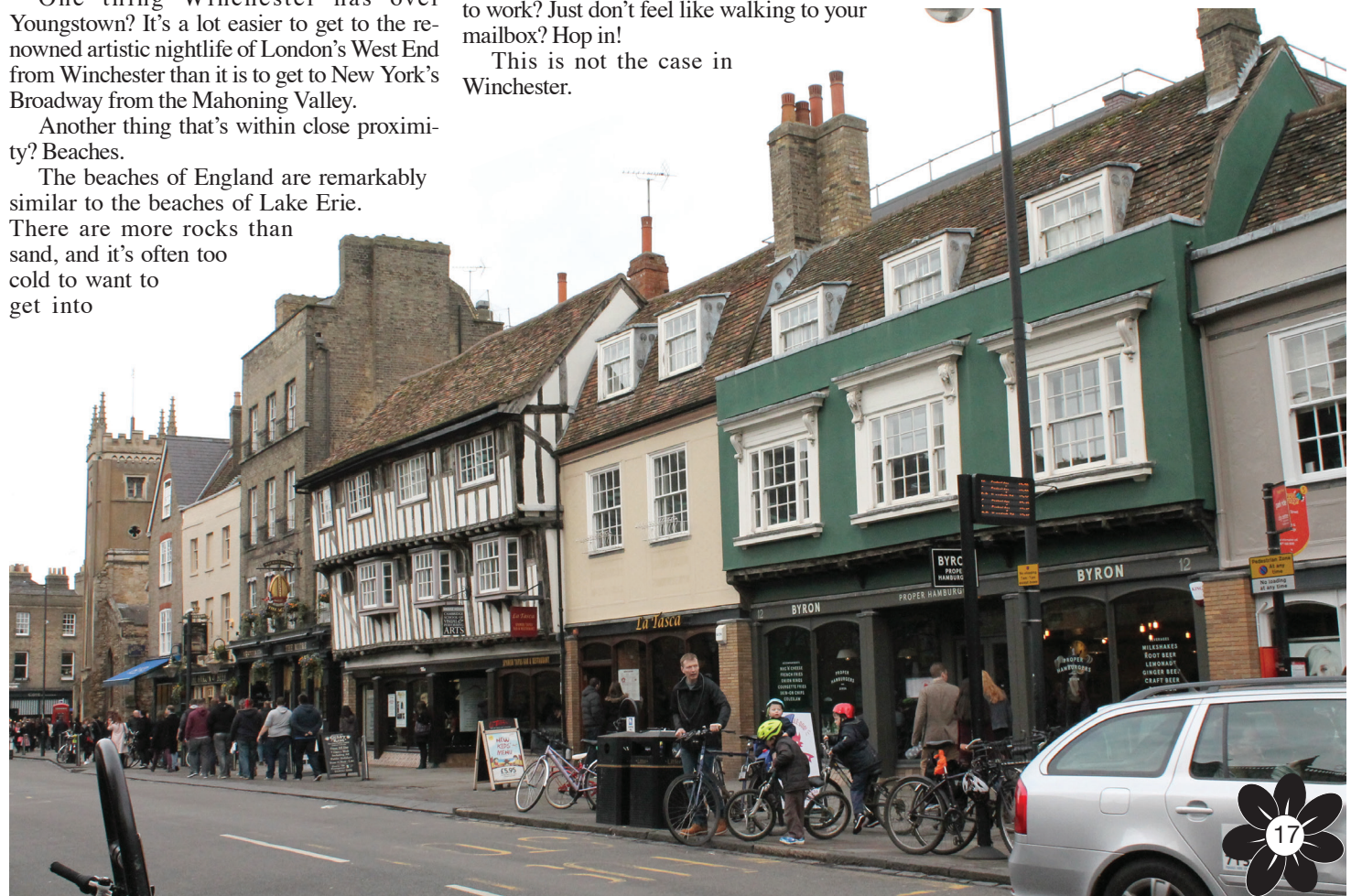
If you do go shopping — which, it's England, you will — not only do you see different brands here, the type of stores you find are also much different.

England — Winchester in particular — still has a lot of independent boutique-type shops that line High Street. There are not really an abundance of "mega-stores" like Wal-Mart, Target and Sam's Club, and small shopping centers seem to outnumber malls and chain stores.

To experience another culture is something I would encourage everyone to do. Explore life outside of the Valley for a change — swap out winter's potholes for historical cobblestone or your favorite local coffeehouse for a quaint little pub or even just a change in your everyday routine.

The important thing isn't where you go or how long you stay, but that you go, and give yourself a chance to experience all the wonderful things the world has to offer.

Who knows? Wherever you go may just be more like home than you thought.





# Mason Carratt: *NOT JUST THE* GARDENER DOWN THE STREET

GRAIG GRAZIOSI

## Activism is growing in Youngstown.

Whether it be the hydroponic lettuce farming with The Lettuce People, the awareness campaigns of the Friends of the Mahoning River, or the community supported agriculture farm-to-table delivery services of Grow Youngstown, groups advocating more sustainable, alternative living practices have been popping up recently in the Valley.

Among the various organizations and their own ranks of volunteer do-gooders, one man seems to pop up over and over again across the majority of these endeavors. He's helped clean up the Mahoning River, helped Youngstown State University student organizations earn their volunteer hours and was integral in organizing Youngstown's first SOUP micro-financing event.

He is Mason Carratt, the unassuming force behind the Youngstown Inner City Garden and Food Forest.

Carratt doesn't fit the template for the activist in 2014. No hip beard, no bracelets. You won't likely find him in coffee shops or wearing hats one might find in an Irish pub in the 1930s. He's not even in his 20s.



Plodding through freshly dug dirt in Wal-Mart boots, earth-tone shorts, and a wide brimmed trail hat with a stars and stripes ban-

danna around its crown, Carratt, 44, looks more like the gardener down the street who always leaves your mom a basket of vegetables that inevitably will go bad before you can finish them all.

While Carratt certainly possesses the giving spirit, the scope of his ambition goes much further than fleshing out your salads.

"About two years ago, we had a ton of gang activity right here [the garden site]; drugs, prostitution, violence," Carrat explained while walking through the future site of the Youngstown Inner City Garden. "So, I put a garden here, and the gangs left, and the drug activity left. It shut it all down."

Carratt's initial inspiration for the garden came from his wife's work at Grovewood Manor, a disabled care home on Hillman Street. While she worked with the disabled at the manor, he grew vegetables around his home, giving his yields as a donation to Grovewood.

Grovewood Manor eventually approached Carratt about starting a garden that their residents could tend themselves. It was this request that gave birth to the Youngstown Inner City Garden and Food Forest.

"I said 'Well, I can't build something like this for you

[Grovewood Manor] with just a wheelbarrow and shovel ... that's all I've got.' So then I went out and sought help," said Carratt.

Knowing that a cold call for volunteers would likely result in little response, Carratt spent the past year participating in 26 Youngstown city improvement projects with various organizations, hoping to build an army of volunteers from those already working towards change in the city.

"That's how I met Salam, at a Mahoning River cleanup with the Sierra Club and the Friends of the Mahoning River," said Carratt.

Salam Farhad, a junior at YSU and the Secretary of the Youngstown State Geological Society, has been digging in at the garden, along with a few of her YSGS colleagues.

"I met Mason last year, and thought he was just a nice, jolly guy ... then I learned about his garden project and thought, 'That's so cool!' and it wasn't a hard choice for me to get involved —here," Farhad said. "It worked out great, because he needed helpers and we [YSGS] needed volunteer hours."

Farhad and fellow YSGS members Richard Yovichin and Ryan Rach were hard at work building the self-anointed "World's Greatest Green Bean Wall," the poles of which were

painted YSU red and white.

Carratt's intentions for the Inner City Garden aspect of the project is to attract groups to adopt plots in the garden, work them, then donate the yield to an organization of their choosing. Donations will work on a rotational basis, so one entire harvest will go to one organization, then the next harvest will go to another participating group's organization of choice, and so on.

The garden itself is being designed as efficiently as possible, using the crops' own growing patterns and requirements to shape the placement of the produce. In one spot, a wooden trellis leans at a 45-degree angle, and will eventually be covered with tomato and cucumbers, which hang from vines before they're picked. Underneath the trellis, lettuce will be planted, which is a ground plant that requires shade for healthy growth. The tomato and cucumber vines above will provide the shade for the lettuce below.

Across the street from the garden, Carratt's Food Forest saplings were showing off brand new buds, the new life metaphor of the once vacant plot of land too obvious not to notice.

The Food Forest will feature rows of trees with branches trained to hang low, allowing the disabled who are bound to wheelchairs the opportunity to pick their own fruit. This method of growing trees, where branches grow out instead of up, is called the Espalier Growing Method and will be tended to by arborist Kurtis Mangello from the "Treez Please" arborist organization.

At the far end of the forest, Carratt has built three Hugelkulturs — German gardens that are built by piling mounds of dirt and horse fertilizer over felled logs, then planting the desired crop into the mound's side. As the log decomposes, the nutrients and moisture from the log are released into the surrounding soil, providing nourishment for the plants, and placing the crops at a height that both the abled and the wheelchair bound can reach for harvest.

"Those things will last for a hundred years," Carratt explained. "Definitely longer than I will anyway. ... Probably."

Lining the paths through the forest will be various berry bushes and vegetable patches, and each of the paths will converge in the center at a spot Carratt calls "Freedom Park" because "the forest gives people in wheelchairs freedom."

Carratt is no stranger to disability. Suffering a work accident that left his left foot and leg scarred and swollen, Carratt was unable to continue working in a career capacity, but still possessed enough mobility and strength to tend his gardens. Not content with just farming for himself, he began serving the

community, especially those with severe disabilities.

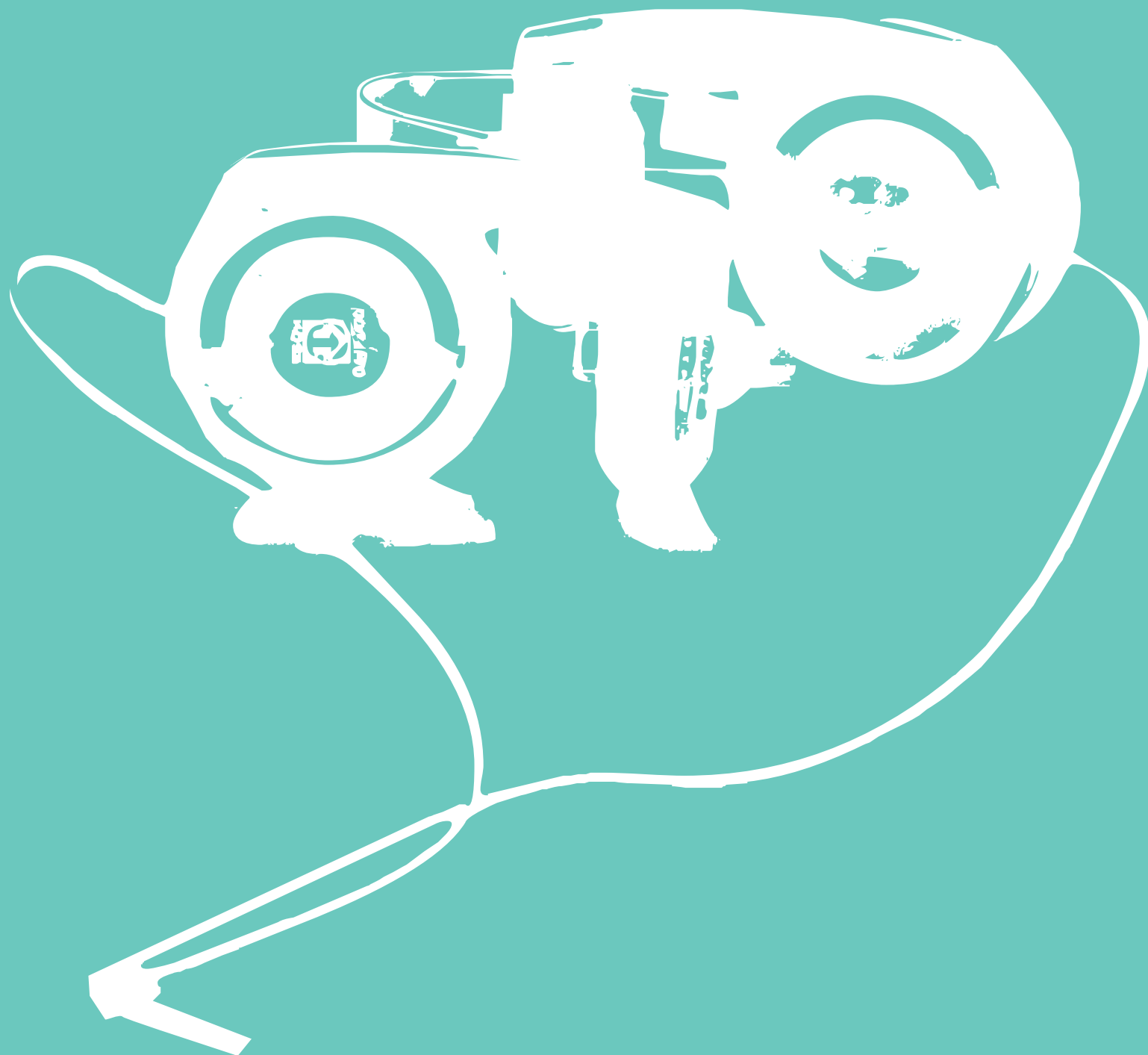
As the Youngstown Inner City Garden and Food Forest project continues to take shape between Hillman and Inglewood on Youngstown's South Side, Carratt hopes that more volunteers will join him in the project.

"I ain't ever seen a brand new truck buried 6 feet under. You

can't take that stuff with you. You can't live just for money. What you do, and who you can help, is what sticks long after you're gone."

For those interested in joining Carratt's project, you can find him on Facebook by searching "R Mason Carratt" or searching for the "Youngstown Inner City Garden and Food Forest."





# GET PLUGGED IN

CALLING ALL WRITERS, EDITORS,  
DESIGNERS & PHOTOGRAPHERS

[yomagazine2@gmail.com](mailto:yomagazine2@gmail.com)

330-941-1991