

THE JAMBAR



AFT INVITES THE LORDSTOWN COMMUNITY TO 'FEEL THE BERN'

Photo by *Tanner Mondok/The Jambar*

**RACHEL GOBEP
& ADDITIONAL REPORTING
BY MORGAN PETRONELLI**

Chants of “Bernie, Bernie, Bernie,” could be heard at Lordstown High School on Sunday afternoon as the hopeful 2020 presidential candidate, U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., entered the school’s auditorium.

The American Federation of Teachers hosted a panel that featured Sanders as a guest panelist to discuss the upcoming election and how Lordstown can come back after the closure of the General Motors Co. plant, joining AFT President Randi Weingarten.

The Ohio Federation of Teachers President Melissa Cropper and Charles Khan from the Hedge Clippers organization were also part on the panel.

During the town hall event, Sanders discussed both local and national issues such as education, school funding, corporate greed, local job loss and economic inequality.

He said it was an important meeting to discuss the “horrific impact” of what is happening to the community by the closure of GM and the company preparing to give “billions of dollars in stock buybacks to make the very rich even richer.” He said this discussion makes an impact on “virtually every state in this country and our

entire economy.”

“What we have to decide [is] whether, in our democracy, we are going to allow a handful of billionaires on Wall Street to close down profitable plants like the one here in Lordstown,” he said.

Sanders said the job now is to tell Wall Street that “whether they like it or not, they’re going to be good corporate citizens.”

“That means if entities like General Motors think that they can throw workers out on the street while they’re making billions in modeling, and move to Mexico and pay people there starvation wages and then line up to get federal government contracts, well they got another guess coming,” he said.

According to watchdog.org, the Communications Manager for GM Public Policy Jeannine Ginivan, said in an email that although the company would not address Sanders’s comments directly, the company has been “investing extensively” in the United States.

“GM has invested more than \$22 billion in its plants since 2009 in 11 states including Ohio, Michigan, Texas and New York,” Ginivan said. “This accounts for 26% of all U.S. manufacturing in that time frame. In fact, GM recently announced that it will invest \$1.8 billion in our U.S. manufacturing operations across six states, creating 700 new jobs and supporting a total of 28,000 jobs.”

After criticizing GM, Sanders called President Donald Trump a “tough guy” because he shutdown the federal government, denying people paychecks when Congressional Democrats did not want to meet his demands for U.S.-Mexico border wall funding.

He asked Trump to show GM how tough he is by telling the company “no more federal contracts.”

Republicans held a press conference before the town hall outside of the school that included Rep. Don Manning, state Chairwoman Jane Timken and Sen. Michael Rulli, who argued that a Sanders presidency would be a disaster for Ohio jobs and workers.

Alyssa Brookbank, an intervention specialist at Lordstown Elementary and president of the Lordstown Teachers Association, said she has seen Lordstown families torn apart and children struggle due to the closure of the GM plant and the opioid crisis.

She asked Sanders what he would do to support similar students not only in Lordstown, but across the country.

Sanders said America needs to give adequate funding to education including a salary that attracts the best teachers.

“Education is what being human is about,” he said.

Sanders praised AFT for showing that there is a connection between the children in the community and how the closure has impacted

them.

Eva Lamberson, a freshman philosophy and religious studies major, attended the town hall and also went to Sanders’ campaign rally in Pittsburgh the same day.

She said Sanders’ focus on blue collar workers and bringing well-paying jobs back to the U.S. is especially key to his electoral prospects in the Midwest.

“I think he did a great job highlighting the distinctions between himself and President Trump, whose policies have massively harmed Midwestern workers,” Lamberson said.

She said Sanders has her support because he has the strongest platform for economic justice of any candidate running for the 2020 presidential election.

“He is advocating for reform of the healthcare industry, the criminal justice system, immigration policy, environmental policy, foreign policy, and so many other major issues that could benefit, and save, the lives of millions of people,” Lamberson said. “His campaign and platform give me a lot of hope for major, beneficial changes to our political system and climate.”

The town hall event came after a report titled, “Hedge Papers No. 66, Hedge Funds Attack General Motors and American Jobs,” was developed in partnership with AFT.

FEATURES



3



6



8



15

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

NEWS

- 3 Taste of Youngstown / Avalon
- 4 Tego / Brien Smith Named Provost
- 5 "Surviving & Moving Forward" / Climate Advocate
- 6 Branch Street Coffee
- 7 Relay for Life / History Column

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT / OPINION

- 8 "Into the Woods"
- 9 Shusterman and Sheinkin
- 10 Mario's Movies / Butler Slow Art Day

OPINION

- 13 Editorial

SPORTS

- 14 Frost Penguins / New Swimming Coach
- 15 Softball / Baseball
- 16 Women's Golf

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YSUSCAPE'S TASTE OF YOUNGSTOWN EVENT RAISES MONEY FOR CITY PROJECTS

Photos by **Tyler Rothbauer/The Jambar**

AMANDA JOERNDT

YSUscape held their fifth annual Taste of Youngstown fundraiser — an event that has grown from five or six vendors to 27 — on April 13 at the B&O Station, where all the proceeds from the event help to fund public art projects around the city.

Compared to last year's 250 people in attendance, this year over 450 people from the community raised \$5,500, which will be used for the revitalization and beautification of Youngstown.

Daniel Bancroft, a junior geography major and the president of YSUscape, said the fundraiser was formed in 2014 to raise money in support for their first mural.

"Three of [YSUscape's] focuses are service, public art and activating public spaces," he said. "We do a lot of public art around the community. A lot of community work days around Youngstown, and we also are doing things such as putting a pocket park in downtown Youngstown."

Bancroft said a variety of food and drink businesses attend the event each year to advertise their business and support the downtown community.

Different cultural groups were represented with cuisine from Caribbean, Italian and Polish restaurants. There were also dessert

stores, coffee shops and breweries in attendance.

According to Bancroft, the event benefits the revitalization of the city and gave local businesses an advertising platform for their company.

"This is a great opportunity for the small food businesses to advertise and get more involved in events like these," he said. "We have a lot of people that — whether they're sponsors, the businesses, auction donors — they're doing this because they want to see us do more beautification for Youngstown."

Catherine Fetter, owner of Daddy Dick's BBQ and co-owner of the Boxcar Lounge in B&O Station in Youngstown, participated in the event.

Fetter said Daddy Dick's BBQ is a family inspired business, and she has been developing her recipes for years.

"My dad actually had some amazing barbecue sauce recipe that I grew up with and I have all kinds of recipes that I've been cooking with him since I was a tiny tot," she said. "Our barbecue sauce is more of a smoky barbecue. We do brunch on Sundays, and our chicken and waffles are unique."

Fetter said she helped the students coordinate the event at the B&O Station and is an advocate for the focus on revamping the city.

"The B&O Station is a gold-level sponsor for this event, and I

actually did a lot of the event coordinating and whatever I could to help the students out," she said. "We want YSU students to come down and enjoy the park area and this can be a little escape for the students."

In Fetter's opinion, raising awareness through YSUscape for the revitalization of the city is crucial for the future of the downtown area.

"I think most importantly the beautification of downtown as we can continue to beautify it, which is the whole mission of YSUscape," she said. "It's going to bring more people downtown to support the businesses downtown, and I also think it's going to decrease crime and vagrant issues."

Ellen Harvischak, owner of Sweet Grace Anna's, said the event gave her a chance to show off her specialty desert items.

"We do specialty wedding cakes, custom cakes, all gourmet cupcakes and macarons," she said. "Everything we make is 100% by scratch and butter-made."

Harvischak said the event helped her get the business name on the market and to raise money for the city.

"This is a little soft opening for us and a way to grow the business," she said. "People will get to try our product and they'll remember us, so it's just a great opportunity to do something to help our community and to help YSU."

HANGING AT THE "AV"

**DOM JOSEPH
JAMBAR CONTRIBUTOR**

When asked what form of food is most popular in Youngstown, the answer was unanimous — pizza. Restaurants like Belleria Pizza & Italian Restaurant, Wedgewood Pizza, Pizza Joe's and Cocca's Pizza have gone to battle for years to be the city's best-tasting pizza. One restaurant, however, has separated itself from the rest.

Avalon Downtown at 17 West Federal Street has served downtown Youngstown for over six years. Opening on New Years Day of 2013, it arrived as a subtle replacement to the closed Avalon Gardens tavern.

Avalon Gardens closed the year prior to Avalon Downtown's arrival. The tavern served

the North Side of Youngstown for 90 years.

Brigid Donofrio, a junior communication major at Youngstown State University, said she was devastated when Avalon Gardens closed.

"When they brought Avalon back, I was so happy, and I was going there at least once a month ... Whenever someone asks me where the best pizza is close to campus, I always tell them Avalon," she said.

In a city where pizza is the most popular food choice, Donofrio explained why Avalon is the undisputed champion.

"It's very distinct," Donofrio said. "You take one bite, and you know it's Avalon. Some other local places have similar tastes and styles, but Avalon has its own very unique flavor."

Avalon has a wide variety of pizza choices for its customers in the hopes of attracting more

than just traditionalists.

Jacob Sebest, a junior communication major, said Avalon is the best place to get a specialty pizza.

"I recommend their Mediterranean pizza. They use very fresh olives. Their cheese is good. Their spinach is good, and they use a perfect amount of olive oil. I also like their egg pizza. It's very creative, and not a lot of people make things like that."

When it comes to the classics such as pepperoni, cheese and the local Brier Hill pizza, Avalon is Sebest and Donofrio's first choice.

"Their cheese pizza is the best," Donofrio said. "I also like the Brier Hill. That was actually really good and of course their pepperoni is delicious, too."

"Although I'm not a huge fan of their tomato

sauce, I do love their Brier Hill," Sebest said. "The flavor and the crust they use makes up for that."

Avalon Downtown competes with V2 Wine Bar and Trattoria, Bistro 1907 by Mark Canzonetta, O'Donald's Irish Pub and Grill Downtown and The Federal during the after-work hours each night, and it attracts a large crowd.

"It's definitely fun during the downtown hours," Donofrio said. "It's fun going down there for dinner, but honestly, anytime is a good time for Avalon."

Since its grand opening, Avalon has put its name inside the competition for best pizza in the Mahoning Valley. It's a very opinionated debate, but Avalon is continuously brought up as a vote for the best.



Photo by J. Harvard Feldhouse/The Jambar

TEGO: SAFETY COMES FIRST

COURTNEY HIBLER

Angela Rucci has been scared to leave her house since she was assaulted at a grocery store in Columbus, Ohio, while attending The Ohio State University.

Rucci described her assault as a terrifying experience and said she would call her father daily when walking home from school or a night out with friends just to feel safe.

The incident inspired her to create a safety app, Tego, that would notify friends and family when an individual has arrived safely at their destination.

"I created [Tego] for the 2018 OSU Hackathon," she said. "I won first place out of 750 students, and this really gave me the confidence and validation that this app needed to become available for others."

The app became available for free use for iOS users in March, and it will be available for Android users in August.

The name Tego comes from the spell "Protego" in the "Harry Potter" book and film series. In the series, the spell provides an invisible shield of protection for wizards much like the app provides for users.

"The app provides safety with just two taps," Rucci said. "Users are able to choose their destination and assign up to 10 contacts as protectors during the course of their trip."

According to Rucci, once the user arrives at their designated destination, Tego automatically notifies their assigned protectors. If a user indicates they feel unsafe, he or she is able to send live video footage to protectors.

Hannah Colburn, a junior in the pre-pharmacy track at Youngstown State University, said she has felt unsafe on occasion when walking to her car in the evening on campus.

"I usually walk across campus to the Wick deck, and there are nights when I feel paranoid because you never know what could happen," she said. "I think Tego is a great idea, and I'll be downloading the app to my phone to use."

Mark Thorn, co-founder of Tego, said other features are available on the app, as well.

"You can use it as a meet up app for friends and family," he said. "It's just one of the many great uses we have created for Tego."

Thorn said another feature of Tego includes the estimated arrival time turning red if the user is taking longer than expected to arrive at their destination.

"Although we know some people have disabilities and walk at a slower pace, we will never end your trip for you until we know you've made it home safely," Rucci said.

In Rucci's opinion, everyone should be aware of their surroundings and always have a plan of action.

"We are trying to help as many people as we can to get home safely. You can be a victim of crime at any time during the day," Rucci said. "We truly care for others through our technology and hope to achieve a large usage."

SMITH NAMED SECOND IN COMMAND WITH PROVOST POSITION

JOHN STRAN

After searching through 60 candidates, Youngstown State University has selected Brien Smith as the new provost, effective June 6.

The provost position is the governing officer of the academic colleges, which includes the Graduate School, Honors College, the Office of International Programs and the Office of Assessment.

Smith will be leaving his current position as the dean of the Scott College of Business at Indiana State University — a position he has held since 2012.

"I will definitely miss Indiana State University, and I am grateful to them for affording me opportunities for growth and development," Smith said.

Prior to his dean position at Indiana State, Smith was executive director of the Networks

Financial Institute at ISU from December 2012 through May 2014, and spent 23 years in varying positions at Ball State University.

Smith believes his past experience will help him with his future provost position.

"I have a strong record of leading program innovation and development, and deep experience in strategic planning and implementation," he said. "I believe so many of these experiences will line up well with the skills necessary to move Youngstown State forward."

To move YSU forward, Smith intends to encourage excellence in faculty and staff while "pursuing strategies that enhance student success, fostering an inclusive campus and promoting engagement with the community in the region."

Mike Sherman, special assistant to the president of YSU, agreed that Smith's experience improving teaching for learning outcomes and

recognizing strategically focused research will enhance the educational experience at YSU.

"Professor Smith has a depth and breadth of experience as a faculty member and faculty member leader that will complement our focus on stimulating academic excellence that enables student success and connects with the community for mutual benefit," Sherman said.

Smith earned his bachelor's degree in psychology at Auburn University. He remained at Auburn to obtain his master's and doctorate degrees in industrial psychology.

After college, Smith said he planned to enter the "corporate world," but a teaching opportunity presented itself to him and he has not strayed away from academia since.

"I accepted a temporary teaching position at Ball State University to finish my research before entering the job market," he said. "It was quite fortuitous, but I discovered that I loved

teaching. Working with students is so rewarding. I get a sense I am influencing the future as I do my part in helping students succeed."

Smith said what attracted him to YSU, leading him to apply for the provost position, was the apparent opportunity for self-growth and development at this point in his career.

"Youngstown State is a great university with gifted faculty and staff and talented students with a can-do attitude," Smith said. "The institution has made rapid strides in the number and quality of students it attracts, the amount of funds brought to the university through grants and gifts and its growing generative relationship with the community."

Even though it will be difficult for Smith to leave ISU, Smith said he and his wife look forward to becoming active members of the Youngstown community.

Photo by **Tanner Mondok/The Jambar**

ALYSSA WESTON

The Youngstown community gathered in Stambaugh Auditorium to witness an awe-inspiring panel titled, “Surviving and Moving Forward” presented by Centofanti Symposium on April 11.

The panel featured individuals who survived or were widely affected by mass tragedies in America, and included:

- Sue Klebold, mother of Dylan Klebold, the Columbine High School shooter
- Fred Guttenberg, father of Jaime Guttenberg, who was killed in the Stoneman Douglas High School shooting
- Kaitlin Roig, former Sandy Hook teacher
- Brandon Wolf, survivor of the Pulse Nightclub shooting
- Susan Bro, mother of Heather Heyer, who was killed by a white supremacist in Charlottesville

The five panelists met briefly before the event, and met for the first time in Youngstown. The group agreed that although they were strangers, the bond they have from sharing similar tragedies made them feel like they knew each other prior.

Guttenberg said his life has been “anything but normal” since the day his daughter was killed.

“In a strange way, the only times I feel any sensitive or normalcy is what I’m around other people who can empathize with what my family is going through because they’ve gone through a similar trauma,” Guttenberg said.

Klebold expressed her concern for joining the panel, knowing that her son had caused similar grief upon people just like the ones alongside her on the panel.

“I was afraid my association with a family member who had been a perpetrator would be traumatic for [the other panelists]. But, when we all met and sat down and talked, it was just amazing how our shared experiences and loss and survival that we have many, many things in common,” Klebold said.

Caroline Smith, a junior political science major, said she attended the event because of the powerful messages of the panelists and the violence that has been characteristic of the United States.

“The message from Sue Klebold really stood out to me. She talked about how violence happens after we dehumanize others, a process that degrades a person to one single quality about them, like their race or gender. She talked about how detrimental this can be, and how important it is to view a person as a whole rather than one part,” Smith said.

The group expressed how they’ve used their unwanted limelight as a form of activism and speak out against gun violence as advocates for mental health and suicide prevention.

“It’s very strange how you take a death — instead of collapsing into your grief, instead you step up and you go ‘damn it, I’m not putting up with that.’ And that’s what we’ve all done,” Bro said.

Wolf talked to the crowd about survivor’s guilt, and said the hardest part of losing someone is being afraid he will forget. But Wolf finds strength in keeping his friend’s memories alive

through scholarships and gay-straight alliances.

The panelists were descriptive on the details on their loved ones deaths, aiming to be realistic about the tragedies.

“When I’m talking about how my daughter got murdered, I don’t want people to feel comfortable and I don’t want what happened to just be a temporary reaction,” Guttenberg said

According to Roig, after the Sandy Hook tragedy she made two choices — the shooting wouldn’t define her community and they would get control back.

“In making those two choices, the most incredible opportunities and experiences that have happened in my life over the course of the past six years,” she said. “When you find yourself in those lows, dark moments and hard times we each have choices. We don’t have to be defined by our hard times.”

Joseph Mosca, interim provost at Youngstown State University, thanked the speakers during the panels opening remarks.

“I’m deeply grateful for our panel speakers this evening for coming to Youngstown and being willing to generously share what most of us find unthinkable. Their resilience, strength and conviction are both amazing and humbling at the same time,” he said.

The panel was moderated by Timothy Francisco, English instructor and director of the Center for Working Class Studies at YSU.

“We are humbled by your courage and grateful for the opportunity,” Francisco told the panelists.

BECOME A CLIMATE ADVOCATE YOUNGSTOWN

COURTNEY CINA JAMBAR CONTRIBUTOR

The Citizens’ Climate Lobby opened a new chapter in the Youngstown/Warren area on March 30. The chapter had over 12 members in attendance at the first meeting, located at the Liberty library, volunteers proceeded in training courses to become knowledgeable of climate change.

John Sabin, Great Lakes regional co-coordinator, said the chapter is committed to “building the political will for the climate solutions we all need as empowered citizens.”

While in Washington D.C. in 2018, members of the U.S. House of Representatives introduced the bipartisan Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act, which explains the

fee-and-dividend approach CCL supports. CCL is now advocating for this specific bill.

Sabin gave a presentation about CCL and its history and educated new advocates that CCL took 1,200 members to Capitol Hill in 2018. With 100,000 plus supporters currently, Sabin said CCL continues to grow.

Three members from the area, Marne Cario, Rebecca Beharry and Alexis Smith, organized the meeting.

Leanna Laughlin, a junior communication major at Youngstown State University, expressed her interest in climate change and the importance of attending the meeting.

“The knowledge behind the act itself is something that we need to be educated about. We need to make climate change issues apparent and advocate for a cleaner environment,” Laughlin said.

“According to energyinnovation.org, the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act will reduce America’s emissions by at least 40% within 12 years. This is supported by economists and scientists as simple, comprehensive and effective,” CCL said

Cario, co-leader of the Youngstown’s CCL chapter, advocates for the act.

“This act will boost the economic growth and roughly give two million jobs locally across America,” Cario said.

According to CCL, this is a bipartisan climate solution meaning both republicans and democrats are on board.

Among other chapters of CCL, Ohio lawmakers Rob Portman and Tim Ryan have been introduced to the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act of CCL, according to Sabin.

Rebecca Beharry, co-leader of the Youngstown chapter, makes connections of climate change to carbon emissions.

“Our carbon footprint has left a mark on this earth and with that this chapter, hopefully we can campaign for a solution,” Beharry said.

Beharry said CCL chapters are making a difference. They established the House Climate Solutions Caucus, a bipartisan group in the U.S. House of Representatives that will explore policy options that address the impacts, causes, and challenges of our changing climate.

CCL recruited co-sponsors to the Republican Climate Resolution at the federal level, a Republican-led resolution that recognizes the impact of climate change and calls for action to reduce future risk.

To join the chapter or become involved visit www.citizensclimatelobby.org.

Photos by *Tanner Mondok/The Jambar*

AND THE BEST COFFEE SHOP IN OHIO GOES TO...

AMANDA JOERNDT

Where some areas of Youngstown are still climbing out of the “Rust Belt reputation” status, others are thriving from the large increase of local businesses that are bringing publicity and attraction to the city now more than ever.

Branch Street Coffee Roasters, located off of route 224 in Boardman, put its name on the map and gained national recognition for its accomplishments when Food and Wine Magazine rated it as the best coffee shop in Ohio.

Branch Street Coffee Roasters started its journey in 2015 and created its scientific method behind roasting coffee beans that enables them to serve the perfect cup of coffee.

Matthew Campbell, co-owner of Branch Street Coffee Roasters, said he and his wife started their passion for specialty coffees while they were living in New Jersey.

“I learned how to roast it, how to serve it and the proper way to find what we needed and we built a company out here,” he said.

According to Campbell, creating a scientific formula when roasting coffee beans requires an understanding of the factors involved in the roasting process.

“We have lots of thermal couples and feed outs that are giving a constant graph and feedback cycle during the roasting process,” he said. “We get a constant feedback, which gives us things like temperature change, and we’re constantly keeping an eye on that because it’s going to determine the final flavor in the cup.”

Branch Street Coffee Roasters uses all local dairy products in its coffee and has local baked goods stocked in their shop.

“There’s this great dairy farmer out of Southern Ohio that we get all of our dairy from,” he said. “It’s really thick and creamy awesome milk, and it really compliments the coffee really well.”

Campbell said the award from Food and Wine Magazine was unexpected and humbling for their whole team and he believes the award brought recognition to the area not just with Branch Street Coffee Roasters, but to Culture House Coffee Company in Youngstown.

“It’s really cool to have Youngstown put on the map for specialty coffee,” he said. “We’re excited for the community because they’re the ones that have come out day after day to allow us to do this.”

David Landsel, Food and Wine Magazine writer, described Campbell’s coffee shop in the article as a modest-looking operation.

“This isn’t about being charitable, not in the least — Campbell’s work speaks loudly for itself, as does his appreciation for the community that has kept him in business,” Landsel said.

Landsel said suspicions of a Youngstown shop are currently buzzing in the coffee culture.

“While recent plans to open a Youngstown proper shop have been scrubbed, there are rumors of good things coming in 2019. For now, at this modest shop out in the suburbs, there’s plenty to smile about,” he said.

Sam Giambroni, manager at Branch Street Coffee Roasters, has worked there for three years and was interested in the business

because of its specialty coffee products.

Giambroni said the customers are what make working at Branch Street special to him.

“It’s crazy how many people we’ve gotten to know and would have never been friends with if it wasn’t for this place,” he said. “It’s a very great community atmosphere here and we love everyone who walks in the door especially the nerds who we get to nerd out with about coffee and all that so it’s fun.”

According to Giambroni, the teamwork behind the coffee bar is what made the award possible.

“It’s our team members who are here with us and they really kill it every day. If it weren’t for them, I don’t think we would have ever gotten this award,” he said. “We were just beside ourselves and could not believe it was even possible.”

Christine Weber, a Youngstown State University alumna, said she takes a few days out of her week to stop in Branch Street and order her favorite coffee.

“What we love about this place is they have the best quality coffee in our area, and they also have the best customer service,” she said. “We’re always pleased with everyone that we talk to. They’re our friends now and they even came to our wedding.”

Weber said the atmosphere and generous employees at Branch Street are what make the experience memorable.

“We love to even just sit outside during this time of year,” she said. “All the employees are so helpful if you have any questions with their products.”

YSU RELAY FOR LIFE RAISES OVER \$45,000

**COURTNEY CINA
JAMBAR CONTRIBUTOR**

Youngstown State University students raised over \$45,000 to help fight cancer and tripled their initial goal and benchmark performance from the previous year during Relay for Life at Farmers National Bank Field on April 6.

The university partnered with the American Cancer Society to host the event.

Leah Tekac, event leader and a junior finance major, said it was a day full of fundraising events and raffles to raise money for cancer patients.

“This Relay for Life differs from others that have happened in the Youngstown area. This relay is hosted by YSU,” Tekac said.

Since YSU Relay for Life was hosted by YSU students, each tent was organized by the students, along with activities and events.

Cancer survivors of the Mahoning Valley and volunteers walked around the track to raise money for the American Cancer Society, and Tekac said this year’s goal was \$15,000. Weeks prior to the event, the initial goal was already reached at \$38,000.

By the end of the event, YSU Relay for Life raised \$46,000. Tekac said her team was overwhelmed by the donations and could not have asked for a better year.

“By next year, with the progress we’re making, our goal is to have the location of the

relay in the Watts Center, due to space and not having to rely on the weather,” Tekac said.

“The turnout for this event is beyond what I expected, and this is [the exact] reason volunteering has so many benefits,” Rachell Rottman, recruitment chair and a junior biology major, said.

Rottman said being a volunteer has many perks and once someone experiences an event that has given so much effort towards a cause like cancer, the reward is all that matters.

Event and entertainment wise, tents lined the track with multiple activities for volunteers to get involved.

Emma Potts, entertainment chair and a freshman nursing major, planned a successful day full of activities.

“We opened with the pre-event involving a DJ and getting volunteers acquainted, following the opening ceremony and first lap is for survivors and caregivers to be recognized, and after that the fun [began],” Potts said.

Entertainment included music, prizes, food and raffles.

Potts said with student organizations such as the Student Government Association and fraternities and sororities participating, the turnout was more than expected.

The American Cancer Society has fundraisers throughout out the year. To learn more, visit <https://secure.acevents.org/site/SPageServer/?pagename=relay>.



Photo by Courtney Cina/The Jambar

THE ROAD TO STATEHOOD

BRIAN BRENNAN

In 1967, the Youngstown University was admitted to Ohio’s system of tax-supported institutions. Henceforth, it would be called Youngstown State University and would receive funding from the public purse. This represented a sea change for the administration, as accepting money from the state’s coffers had been actively discouraged as a matter of internal policy.

Youngstown College emerged from the educational division of the local Young Men’s Christian Association.

It separated from the “Y” in 1944 and was fully accredited. Through private resources, the college grew to become a university in all but name, with several schools having evolved. The institution was renamed the Youngstown University in 1955.

The person behind this success was Howard W. Jones, who was appointed the university’s first president in 1935. Twenty years later, he was still in office.

A fiscal conservative, Jones claimed that he never spent one cent of public money on YU. He never had to; the university was

financed through tuition, endowments and contributions from area businessmen, most of whom were highly placed executives affiliated with the steel mills and allied industries.

Some had seats on the YU Board of Trustees. Jones maintained close relationships with these men, particularly with James L. Wick Jr., a local industrialist and chairman of the YU board. Jones and Wick were such close friends that they even exchanged friendly letters whenever one or the other went on vacation.

As the 1960s approached, however, YU’s financial model began to falter. Fees and private contributions could not keep up with the needs of the faculty and students.

Faculty salaries were dismally low. Laboratory facilities and equipment were inadequate and fast becoming outdated. Money was needed, regardless of its source. The public sector beckoned.

YU hoped to receive some funding through state issue one, Ohio Bonds for Public Improvements. This was a \$250 million bond issue placed on the 1963 election ballot. If passed, it would provide money to 10 colleges and universities in Ohio.

The bond would be serviced through a one cent additional tax on cigarettes. Fifteen YU students promoted the issue by taking

part in a torch relay to Columbus, with the flame symbolizing learning.

The issue passed and YU received \$6 million for expansion, plus another \$6 million in federal matching funds.

Next, public dollars were set aside for a new engineering sciences building (now Moser Hall); however, Ohio would own the building — YU would merely lease it.

In this manner, Jones was able to keep true to his fiscal philosophy. The new structure opened in 1966. After statehood, YSU took possession of it.

That same year, Governor James Rhodes invited YU to join the state system of higher education.

Soon thereafter, president Jones retired, as did several other administrators, and was succeeded by Albert Pugsley.

In retrospect, statehood saved the university. Ten years after becoming a public institution, the steel mills began to close. Local money dried up, and the Mahoning Valley entered into a long period of economic malaise.

YSU survived — and would continue to grow.



Photos courtesy of Matthew Mazuroski

VENTURING 'INTO THE WOODS' AT YSU

FRANCES CLAUSE

Cinderella, Little Red Riding Hood, Rapunzel and Jack and the Beanstalk were united on one stage for an enchanting opening night of "Into the Woods" at Youngstown State University.

Directed by Matthew Mazuroski, associate professor and chair of the Department of Theater and Dance, James Lapine and Stephen Sondheim's epic fairy tale came to life in the Ford Theater Friday. The cast of the sold out musical showed why it's a multiple Tony and Drama Desk Award winner.

"I think my favorite thing about the show is the fact that it takes all of these conventional fairy tale characters that we know and love and crushes any prior knowledge we thought we had about them," Jessica Hirsh, a senior musical theatre major, said.

Hirsh's role as the Witch in this musical has given her countless favorite moments that have helped her grow as a performer.

"I think the most difficult part about playing the Witch is the sheer amount of upkeep I have to do in terms of taking care of myself to be able to execute the physical and vocal demands of the role," she said.

Hirsh believes the role is spectacularly written and a complex

character to perfect, and it was exciting for her to get to analyze a role that so many actors she looks up to have played.

"Looking at a text that Bernadette Peters, Meryl Streep and Donna Murphy spent time with is something that not many college age students get to do," she said.

With courses and rehearsals throughout the semester, the cast, crew and pit orchestra of

"Into the Woods" were always preoccupied. In total, 8,500 hours were spent preparing for the musical.

Kivie Cahn-Lipman, professor of cello and conductor of "Into the Woods," said he grew up with the musical and was part of the pit orchestra when he was in high school and college, as well.

"I saw [the musical] on Broadway in the original cast production when I was nine years old and was obsessed with it. I came into the process with most of the show already memorized," he said, referring to his conducting position.

Although having prior experience with the musical gave Cahn-Lipman an advantage, the music throughout "Into the Woods" still came with its difficulties. He said most musicals have 15, 20 or 25 songs in one tempo and maybe some vamps — short musical passages often played during intros or solos — and cues, and they're pretty straightforward.

"This musical probably has 100 cues in the prologue of act one and is a cluster of vamps and tempo changes," he said.

Cahn-Lipman believes "Into the Woods" is the perfect collaboration for the Dana School of Music and the theatre department because of its operatic style, but the show would not be complete without the stage crew that is behind the scenes.

Elizabeth Sabo, a junior theatre studies major, became intrigued by stage management and decided this musical was the perfect opportunity to immerse herself in it.

"I'm in charge of letting everyone know what we need like props and scheduling when things happen," she said. "So, during the show, I call all of the cues like when a scene or lighting changes."

Sabo said getting through the tech week was a satisfying feeling because everything came together so well.

"When a scene goes right from the actors' side and the technical side, it feels like all our hard work pays off," she said.

"Into the Woods" will appear on the Ford Theater stage once again Thursday, Friday and Saturday at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are available through the University Theatre Box Office or www.ysu.tix.com.

Photo by *Marah J. Morrison/The Jambar*

LONG LINES FOR SHUSTERMAN AND SHEINKIN

MARAH J. MORRISON

The lines of high school students seemed endless as they waited to meet and get their books signed by Neal Shusterman and Steve Sheinkin on April 10 during the 41st annual English Festival at Youngstown State University.

Shusterman is a winner of the National Book Award and a New York Times bestselling author. He is known for his books “Scythe” and “Thunderhead,” which are young adult novels and a part of his “Arc of a Scythe” series.

Sheinkin is a young adult, nonfiction author from New York who used to write history textbooks. He is known for “The Port Chicago 50: Disaster, Mutiny, and the Fight for Civil Rights” and “Undefeated: Jim Thorpe and the Carlisle Indian School Football Team.”

Sheinkin said he enjoys coming to events like the English Festival and has heard many great things about it. He said the high school students, who are passionate readers, do their

homework before attending so they have their questions and ideas ready for the author.

“It makes me feel like I’m back with my kind of people from when I was their age,” he said. “It’s really cool.”

Sheinkin said he loves sharing his works with students and the world, and most of his life is sitting in a room because he does a lot of nonfiction writing and research.

“I want to share these stories [that] are often very little known [and] slices of American history with people,” he said. “I never know really how they are reacting to it until I go to schools or come to festivals like this and get to interact with the readers.”

Sheinkin said he feels like he is accomplishing something by reaching out to his readers, and said if anyone is interested in becoming a writer, practice is the best route to take.

“Nobody is good at it when they start. Nobody writes good first drafts, so it’s just doing it, showing it to people, getting feedback and just getting better and better,” he said.

Gary Salvner, co-chair of the English Festival committee and retired YSU faculty member, is one of the people who started the

festival 41 years ago. He said the festival is a lot of work and the responsibilities include finding authors and reading books for students to read.

“[It’s] a lot of planning and a lot of coordinating,” he said. “It’s intention is to celebrate kids and reading and writing.”

Salvner said the festival is an opportunity to excite high school students, and it allows them to get the experience of reading literature and talking to authors.

Melanie Loew, YSU’s English Festival coordinator, said having these authors at the festival is a dream come true for students. She said many of them are huge fans of Shusterman and Sheinkin.

“[Sheinkin] is an author that junior high students might relate to a little bit more with their reading levels,” she said. “We are honored to have both of them [and] the students prepare so well and they are so excited.”

Loew said the dates are set for the festival next year and the guest authors will be Rich Wallace and his wife, Sandra. She said plans are also being made for 2021. For more information, visit www.yseenglishfestival.org.

MARIO'S MOVIES: FLASHBACK FILMS- 'IT FOLLOWS' (2014)

MARIO RICCIARDI

In Quentin Tarantino's favorite films of 2015 list, the acclaimed director ranks a low-budget horror film called "It Follows." The sophomore directorial effort of former editor David Robert Mitchell, Tarantino mentions that he "really liked it," and "It was the best premise I've seen in a horror film in a long, long, long time." Positive words from a director of Tarantino's caliber should be enough to create intrigue, to seal the deal type this into your phone: www.youtube.com/watch?v=HkZYbOH0ujw.

"It Follows" is the story of Jay, an average mid-American teenager who learns that she is the latest recipient of a supernatural curse that is passed from victim to victim via sexual intercourse. The curse can manifest as either a friend or stranger and will follow the latest victim until it catches them. If it catches you, it will kill you and then proceed to hunt the previous person to

carry the curse then the previous and so on.

We've all heard of STDs, but have you ever heard of STGs? G? What could that stand for? Think about it for a second. If you guessed ghosts, email me immediately, you deserve a personalized message of congratulations. I guess you can probably deduct why I decided to open this review with praises from Quentin Tarantino instead.

It sounds like a wacky plot, and it's amazing that a second-time director was able to pitch this concept and receive two million dollars to produce it. Once you get past the plot in words, it's worth checking out the trailer. In fact, you should've checked that out first. That's why I followed up Tarantino's words with the trailer link. "It Follows" really is something special. In fact, it's the only film in recent memory that I can remember periodically Googling DVD release dates for because I was so excited to watch it again.

The film's key feature is its aesthetically murky, dream-like

Americana. Falling somewhere between John Carpenter's original "Halloween" and the works of David Lynch. The mood "It Follows" sets is so palpable that it causes the viewer to save any attempt to analyze the logic of the film for after the credits roll.

Not quite capturing the iconography of Michael Myers or David Lynch just yet, "It Follows" still currently resides closer to the cult film side of the cinema spectrum. Although not quite underground, if you show it to any of your friends for a movie night, odds are they'll get swept up in the synthy score and creepy tone of the film. Not to mention you'll be in store for a some good clean scares — scares that still get me after having seen "It Follows" at least five or six times.

"It Follows" is an indie masterpiece that serves the casual filmgoer as much as the jaded cinephile.

★★★★ 5/5 Penguins

BUTLER ART INSTITUTE TAKES IT SLOW

**ZACH MOSCA
JAMBAR CONTRIBUTOR**

For most, April 6 is just another day, but for art enthusiasts, it's a day for appreciating art and looking deeper into pieces to gain new perspectives on them.

Slow Art Day is a holiday celebrated by art museums around the world, and this year the Butler Institute of American Art in Youngstown was one of many to partake in the festivities.

According to Butler Director of Education Joyce Mistovich, this was the museum's third year of participating in it in hopes of increasing Butler attendees' appreciation for art.

"It is an opportunity to slow down, really engage and truly look at a work of art," Mistovich said.

She said people spend less than a minute looking at individual pieces of art in a museum, rather than taking time to stop and really look into them.

"Studies have shown that most people when they come into museums spend about 15 to 30 seconds looking at a work of art. They walk in, go into a gallery and walk by. With Slow Art Day, the thrust is really engaging and truly looking at a work of art," Mistovich said.

Upon entering, attendees were given a brochure listing seven

pieces of art in the museum, one for each room on the bottom floor.

When attendees got to a piece, a docent told them a bit about it and pointed out details that most people wouldn't notice at first glance.

In addition, the brochure contained two questions related to each piece for people to think about while they observe them.

For example, one of the pieces in the brochure was "The Rail Splitter" by Norman Rockwell. One question asked what the observer noticed about the perspective.

The painting features a young Abraham Lincoln standing in a field of leaves holding an axe. If one looks at the perspective, they will notice that Lincoln appears at a low angle, making him appear to be giant. This could symbolize power.

A lot of the people who participated in Slow Art Day left with a whole new outlook on works of art, and have taken interest in looking at pieces more closely.

Museum attendee Johanna Slivinske said while she already took time to look at art more slowly, she never tried to understand the stories behind the pieces and Slow Art Day got her interested in that.

"A lot of times, I'll view art in a slow manner already; however, I don't always get the artist's story behind it. So, I think that after

this, I'll probably be more interested in what the artist's intent was instead of just my own interpretation," Slivinske said.

The piece that stood out most to Slivinske was "After the Hunt" by William Michael Harnett. It is a photorealistic painting showcasing a variety of dead animals hanging on a door along with a plethora of hunting supplies.

She said she has a much broader interpretation of the painting now that she's been guided by a docent.

"What I see now is that there are multiple ways to interpret it and I'm curious as to what the painter's intent actually was," Slivinske said.

Janet Tarpley attended Slow Art Day with her friend, Eleanor Napier. The piece that stood out to them the most was "The Little Dancer" by Robert Henri.

At first glance, it just looks like a portrait of a woman, but after studying the context of the piece and the time period it was made, one will discover a new meaning.

"[The docent] pointed out a lot in the background like the colors and the angles of the picture that I wouldn't normally look at," Napier said.

"We left with the story of a girl rather than just a girl ... I think we left with more information about the painting itself and a connection to the artist as well," Tarpley said.



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THE JAMBAR

— EDITORIAL —

OUR AREA HAS BECOME A TOKEN

The once quiet streets of the Youngstown/Warren area are now filled with clatter and commotion from both the national media and politicians.

It all started with the idling of the General Motors Co. Lordstown plant that recently shot the area into the national spotlight.

Once GM CEO Mary Barra announced multiple U.S. plant closures, politicians and the media sprinted to Lordstown to showcase the tale of another city “broken” by the shipment of manufacturing jobs overseas.

Then, President Donald Trump threw fuel on the fire by firing off his usual tweetstorm; although, this time it hit home.

On March 17, Trump tweeted, “Democrat UAW Local 1112 President David Green ought to get his act together and produce. G.M. let our Country down, but other much better car companies are coming into the U.S. in droves. I want action on Lordstown fast. Stop complaining and get the job done! 3.8%

Unemployment!”

Trump’s criticisms of Green led to 2020 presidential candidate Beto O’Rourke to rush to the area to have a surprise discussion with Green, while he made an official stop in nearby Cleveland, Ohio.

On March 18, O’Rourke tweeted a picture of him speaking with Green with the caption, “Impressed w/ David Green, UAW 1112 president. His leadership, the way he’s fought for employees at GM’s Lordstown plant & how he’s conducted himself while being attacked by the President. He’s fighting not just for his members but for their families, this community & all workers.”

Sure, it looks nice to have candidates have the backs of blue collar workers, but do they really support our families or does it just look good on camera?

And now, the recent last-minute visit of Bernie Sanders only exemplifies the notion that this area is becoming the media and politicians’ next pawn — a broken city yearning for a savior to help it rise from the ashes.

It’s no secret the Mahoning Valley has been through significantly difficult times from Black Monday to constant

political corruption; however, this area is not the media’s next token city awaiting a national messiah, like presidential candidates. It’s looking for real answers and real solutions, not lies made on camera. The media needs to stop chattering and politicians need to start doing.

Unfortunately, due to current circumstances, this area will see a plethora of visits over the next two years from politicians spouting empty promises and feeding area residents lies about how they plan on saving the area, only to run off to the next struggling blue collar city and make the same statements.

But, never fear! The politicians and national media will once again rescind their tidal wave of attention, return to their high castles in big cities and forget that Youngstown and Warren exist.

The streets will be quiet again, and life will return to normal — our normal, not some abnormal, twisted wasteland that the national media wants to so desperately depict us as.

We are proud to be hardworking, blue collar, Northeast Ohioans and no politician or national media outlet will take that away from us.

**YOUR AD
HERE**

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FROST PENGUINS: BRINGING ESPORTS TO YSU

Photo by *Tanner Mondok/The Jambar*

TANNER MONDOK

With esports becoming increasingly popular in the sports world, it's no surprise that the Frost Penguins esports club has found some early success at Youngstown State University.

The club hosts "Super Smash Bros. Ultimate" tournaments in Kilcawley's Andrews Student Recreation and Wellness Center on Wednesdays, which is drawing attention to the fast-growing team.

During the most recent Smash Bros. tournament on April 10, several participants from outside of Youngstown, such as Pennsylvania and Geneva and Kent, Ohio, took part in the tournament.

Adam Learn, tournament organizer for the Super Smash Bros. Ultimate division of Frost Penguins, explained Smash is the only game the team plays primarily in person as opposed to online.

"We decided to do a Smash event on Wednesdays because it doesn't conflict with any of the other events in the college area," Learn said.

Alexander Stroud, Frost Penguins Smash coordinator and coach, said the team runs a double elimination bracket for Smash because they've found it gives them the most interesting matchups.

Stroud said participants pay an entrance fee, which is eventually paid out to the top three

players.

Depending on how many people participate, as many as the top eight participants can receive a payout.

"To make it better for viewership, we have a device that we use so we can send the game to the projector. So, what the players are seeing on screen we can see on the projector," Stroud said. "It also goes to our stream through twitch.tv that we use to broadcast it online to other colleges."

With 105 current members, Joe Conroy, Andrews Student Recreation and Wellness Center intramurals and special events coordinator, said Frost Penguins is the second largest team at YSU.

"The only other team currently on campus that has more than 105 is YSU football, and I think esports will surpass that soon as far as an organized sport," Conroy said.

According to Conroy, Frost Penguins could be competing against universities with similar esports teams in the near future such as Ashland University, the University of Akron and Kent State University.

"I think it is the new wave of young men and women that are participating and moving into this, because the fascination and the excitement of esports just seems to be growing. Everybody's talking about it," Conroy said.

To learn more about Frost Penguins, visit twitch.tv/frostpenguins

NEW COACH DIVES INTO NEW PROGRAM

BRIAN YAUGER

The brand new men's swimming and diving team at Youngstown State University now has its coach.

Brad Smith joined the program after spending five seasons with Binghamton University where he saw plenty of success. Smith's teams set 39 freshmen, pool, school and conference records in his tenure and coached six conference champions.

"I'm thankful and excited to join Youngstown State University as the next head swimming and diving coach," Smith said in a

press release Tuesday. "It was clear to me during the interview process that Youngstown State is committed to excellence in athletics, academics and providing their student-athletes with an exceptional experience. That is something I value and greatly respect. I'm looking forward to working with the current Penguin swimmers and divers and to helping build the program to new heights."

Executive Director of Intercollegiate Athletics Ron Strollo said Smith is the perfect person to lead the women's team and get a great start for the emerging men's team.

"In meeting with coach Smith, he demonstrated a clear vision of what he wants

our program to become, and we are thrilled to have him coach our swimming and diving programs at Youngstown State," Strollo said. "His programs at Binghamton had success in the pool and were outstanding in the classroom. He will be a great addition for our current women's swimmers and divers, and we are excited about him developing our men's program."

In the last two seasons, Smith's Bearcat squads were the America East runners-up both seasons. At the most recent conference meet, Binghamton had 12 all-league selections, with seven on the men's side and five on the women's side.

This isn't the first time Smith has jump-

started a program. In 2012, Western Colorado University brought Smith on to start the emerging Mountaineers program. WCU had not had a swimming and diving program since 1984. In his two years with the program, Smith oversaw a squad that produced an NCAA qualifier, set 84 team and pool records and was named a Scholar All-American team in 2014.

The men's swimming and diving program will be in their third iteration. YSU previously fielded teams in men's swimming and diving from 1949 through 51 and 1964 through 1984.

The Penguins men's swimming team begins their season this fall, they'll compete in the newly renovated Beeghly Natatorium.



Photo by Robert Hayes/The Jambar

SOFTBALL SPLITS DOUBLEHEADER

ROBERT HAYES

The Youngstown State University softball team hosted the Wright State University Raiders on Tuesday evening, and split a doubleheader.

The Penguins took the first game by a score of 2-0, then fell in the second game by a score of 14-6.

YSU coach Brian Campbell said he thought the team played well in the first game.

"I'm not going to take anything away from our performance in the first game, but in the second game we just ran into the one inning there," he said. "It's a learning process, and we'll take what we learned today moving into tomorrow."

The inning that Campbell was referring to was an eight spot the Raiders (17-26, 4-10) put

up in the top of the fifth inning to get them an 11-6 lead over YSU.

This occurred after the Penguins (21-21, 9-3) had a 6-3 lead.

Dani Dadig brought in Maddi Lusk on an RBI single in the bottom of the second inning for the first of YSU's six runs. Alex DeLeon scored due to a throwing error on the same play, and the Penguins led 2-0 going into the top of the third.

WSU scored three in the top of the third, but YSU charged right back thanks to a solo home run by Lexi Zappitelli to tie up the ballgame. In the bottom of the fourth inning, Grace Cea knocked an RBI double to score Yazmine Romero and Dadig. Cea eventually scored on a fielding error later in the inning, but that represented YSU's last run in the second game.

Dadig had three hits for the first time in her

career in the second game. Although she wasn't happy with the end result, she was proud of her performance.

"I was just staying focused," Dadig said. "We've been putting in extra work, so just really staying focused and seeing the ball, and hitting it to the big part of the field and working those gaps."

Dadig said it has been exciting, especially since she has been struggling.

"I had an injury last semester, so just really working through that injury was the toughest part this season because it still bothers me sometimes. But it was a great day at the plate, but obviously we want that win at the end of the day," she said.

Dadig was just looking for contact.

"I was trying to put the ball in play," Dadig said. "I knew that I wanted to get my teammates

into scoring position and move them over."

YSU played a great game earlier in the afternoon, as Addy Jarvis pitched another dime for the Penguins. The 2-0 victory represented Jarvis's sixth shutout of the season. She also recorded 10 strikeouts for her 11th victory of the season.

For Campbell, it was just another excellent performance out of Jarvis.

"She got in a good groove, and was able to keep the off balance through those innings," Campbell said.

Cea absolutely crushed a solo home run to left field in the bottom of the fourth inning for her fifth home run of the season. Maddi Lusk followed that up with a double, and she was later moved to third base on a ground ball. This set up a well executed squeeze play by DeLeon, which gave YSU a 2-0 lead.

THE HAND THAT THIEVES

BRIAN YAUGER

The art of stealing a base is not something every baseball player has the skill for.

Two notorious masters of the craft are Jackie Robinson and Rickey Henderson.

Robinson once famously stole home in the 1955 World Series, which is one of the most prominent photos in the sport and Henderson, the all-time leader in stolen bases, stole 1,406 bases during his illustrious 25-year career.

Youngstown State University's baseball team has its own artist in the making with sophomore Jeff Wehler.

Wehler has 14 stolen bases on the season and 39 throughout his two-year career. He's already tied for seventh place all-time with Mike Szenborn, a member of the YSU Athletics Hall of Fame.

What goes into stealing a base? Not much, according to Wehler.

"There's not really much to go into it," Wehler said. "You just find the pitchers tendencies and [assistant] coach [Eric] Smith. Coach Smith is really good at preparing us to pick up pitcher tendencies. Every guy is different. You got some

guys that are 'shoulder guys.' Some guys are when they breathe. It's just — there's a whole plan on it, but I just pick it up, and I really pay attention to in film, and I just get good reads and that's the end of it."

The Penguins have had a resurgence since their rough start. A start like they had could kill morale, but Wehler says the team is feeling a lot better as of late.

"I think we've done a great job," Wehler said. "At the beginning of the year, we started off a little slow. We played a couple tough teams, and then I think we got a little bit of frustrated. I think we got a little bit down on ourselves because we weren't — we weren't winning as much as we wanted to. But as of now, I think we're handling it awesome. I think the guys are we're starting to play some baseball, and the guys are really excited to just come to the yard every day and play."

According to Wehler, playing at home a lot more has something to do with that.

"I think playing here at Eastwood [Field] in front of our home crowd is actually really exciting for the guys," Wehler said. "I know we got a few young guys who haven't really experienced it, and I think they're really excited

to just kind of play in front of the home crowd and come here every day."

Wehler had a good freshman year, averaging around a hit-per-game and 25 stolen bases, but knew there were things about his game he needed to change. Mainly increasing his mental toughness and his awareness.

"Individually, there's a lot of things I needed to change since last year," Wehler said. "I mean, I had endless conversations with the coaches on just things I need to improve on the off season and I came back more of a better player. I came back more mentally strong and more aware of what was going on around me."

Like many in the sport, Wehler's love of the game comes from family ties. His dad and brothers all played baseball all the way through college.

"My dad and two brothers, they played in college," Wehler said. "They all went to the same college, they went to school in Erie. So, just growing up I was just always around the game of baseball and just just learning new things, and I've just always found interest in it. So, just being around the game. My whole life just really drew my interest as I was growing up, and I've just been playing it ever since."

They all attended Penn State Erie, The Behrend College, a Division III school. With those ties getting him into the sport, it would make sense for Wehler to follow in their footsteps, but instead Wehler chose YSU becoming the first in his family to play Division I baseball.

"It's just a great opportunity," Wehler said. "The coaches were really young. [They're] more my type of coaches and just coaches you want to be around. You just want to be here ... When I got on campus, it just just felt like home. It felt like I could be here. It's something I could be at for the next four years."

If Wehler maintains the pace established in his freshman season, he should be able to pass everyone and become the all-time stolen base leader. Nick Gesacion, another YSU Athletics Hall of Famer is the current all-time leader with 97 stolen bases that he set in his time with the Penguins from 1968 to 1971.

By watching and learning from the pitchers, Wehler has shown his skills as a base thief. Wehler may not pull a Robinson, but there is a very good chance for the sophomore to become the Penguins' Henderson. But like they say, you can't rush art.



LADY PENGUINS LOOK TO CAP “PHENOMENAL” SEASON WITH CONFERENCE CHAMPIONSHIP

Photo courtesy of **YSU Sports Information**

JOSHUA FITCH

After completing a season that began all the way back in September 2018, the Youngstown State University women's golf team has its sights set on a conference championship as the Horizon League tournament begins Saturday in Orlando, Florida.

The team will fly to the Sunshine State Friday before the tournament tees off Saturday. Taking the challenge will be junior Katlyn Shutt, and a group of freshmen, Victoria Grans, Puthita Khuanrudee, Rattika Sittigool and Jenna Vivo.

This lineup has competed in the better part of the spring tournaments including its most recent first-place finish during the YSU Spring Invitational played at the Youngstown Country Club.

This is the fifth time in program history the Penguins have won at least four tournaments in a season. The most recent prior to this season was during the 2015-2016 season.

Nate Miklos, coach of the Penguins women's golf team says any win is a good win.

“It always feels good to win, especially on our home course. Right now everyone's game is in pretty good shape,” Miklos said. “We just have to get in a little bit of practice and work on some maintenance aspects of the game.”

Practice will continue at the Youngstown Country Club, where Shutt tied for medalist honors after an even-par 72 which included five birdies, eight pars and was the fifth finish in the top five this season. For her performance at the Spring Invitational, Shutt has been named the Nike Horizon League Athlete of the Week for the second time this season.

Three other Penguins finished in the top 10, Khuanrudee finished fourth with 73, Vivo tied for sixth with 76 and Sittigool tied for eighth with 77. Grans finished tied for 11th place after carding a 78.

For Vivo, her sixth-place finish matched her best of the season and has now earned her second top-10 finish, while finishing in the top-15 in four straight events. This season has been quite the adjustment for the freshman from Boardman, Ohio, but one Vivo has tackled head-on thanks to her teammates.

“It's been a lot to handle, but it's been a lot of fun traveling with the team,” Vivo said. “We've had a really successful season. It's nice to have good leaders like Megan [Creager] and [Shutt], and we have a really good time with each other. They make it easier to adjust. It's very beneficial to have them since they've both played at conference several times. Give us some tips to stay focused and have fun.”

The fun will hopefully continue as the focus now shifts to Orlando where the Penguins will look to become Horizon League champs for the first time since 2015, when the team was led by Emily Dixon, Allison Mitzel and Aislynn Merling who all finished in the top five.

Last season, the Penguins finished in seventh place during conference play, however this year it's a different feel. This time, the team is taking their best swings at the perfect time.

“It's nice to know we're playing our best at the right time and we're all on the same page,” Vivo said. “It's very exciting going into conference knowing what we can accomplish there as a team. It's a lot because most of us have never been in this atmosphere, but I'm ready to go play for a championship.”

Coach Nate Miklos adds that the only factor the Penguins can't control is what the other teams do and how they perform.

No matter what happens in Orlando, this season has been one to remember.

“It's been a phenomenal year, just very, very proud of the team,” Miklos said. “I knew we had a strong team coming into the year, but everything we've done has exceeded my expectations. Our focus all year has been becoming the best team we can be, and the team's done an incredible job with that.”

Being the best team one can be involves so much more than what fans see out on the course. It involves unsung heroes and leaders like Creager, the only senior on the Penguins roster. Creager will not participate in conference play, but is traveling with the team to be the leader they need.

“I'm honored coach is taking me so I can help any way I can and make an impact off the course,” Creager said. “Winning wouldn't surprise me at all. I've seen what this team can do and there's no doubt in my mind we can win.”

Miklos praised Creager's leadership and team-first mentality.

“She's handled it with incredible maturity,” Miklos said. “She knew that the five we have in the lineup gave the team the best chance to win, and she handled it extremely well. She's more than happy to do anything she can to continue to be a leader and support the team anyway she can.”

As the season comes to a close, the freshman in the lineup will be looking not only to Creager, but Miklos as well, who still has one goal in mind.

“We're going down there with the goal to be champions at the end,” Miklos said. “I feel very confident that if we go down there and continue to do the things we've been doing all year, we're going to have a great opportunity.”