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IMPROVING CAMPUS LIFE

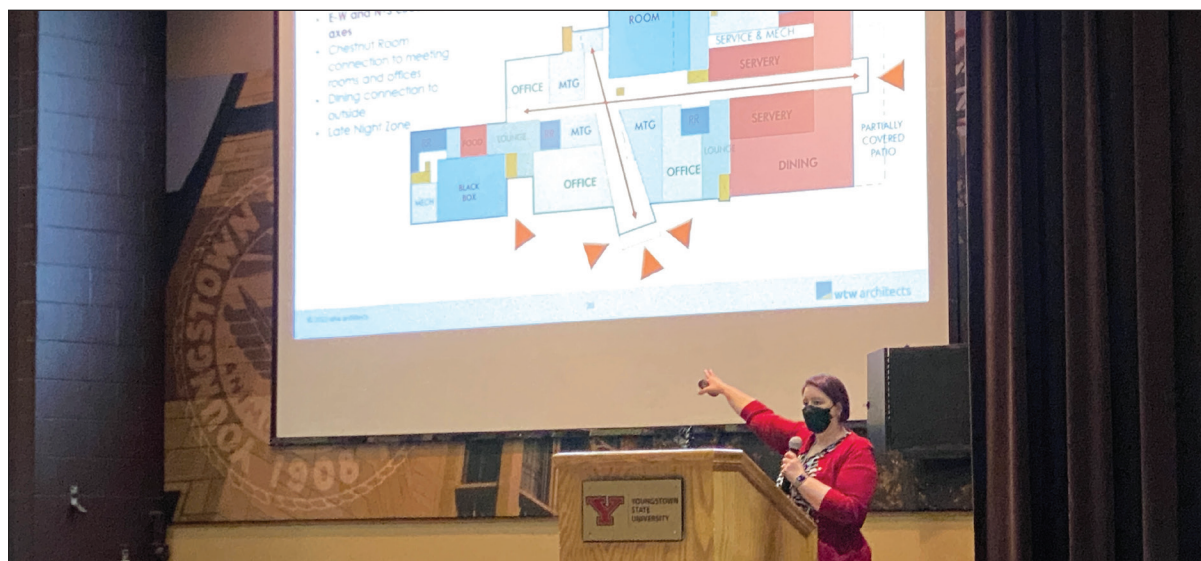


Photo by Jessica Stamp / The Jambar

Amy Macyko discusses possible renovation plans for the Kilcawley Student Union.

Plans to expand Kilcawley Center under deliberation

By Jessica Stamp
The Jambar

A meeting was held by WTW Architects, a planning and interior design firm, on Jan. 24 to get input and feedback from students, faculty and staff involving the possible renovation or move of Kilcawley Student Union.

Amy Macyko, associate principal at WTW Archi-

itects in Pittsburgh, and Joy Polkabila Byers, associate vice president of Student Experience, started collaborating on this project in August 2021. They met with focus groups like student-leader organizations, faculty and staff who work in Kilcawley to gain insight on what decision would be best for YSU.

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Struggles with snow

By Sydney Stalnecker
The Jambar

Despite the slightly warmer temperatures, the mounds of snow packed along the edges of the parking lots on Youngstown State University's campus refuse to budge.

As a result, the Grounds department has closed six parking lots to remove the snow and will close four more lots at midnight tonight.

Lot closures will take place Wednesday, Thursday and Friday starting at midnight each day.

Danny O'Connell, director of Support Services, said the lots will reopen when all the snow is removed.

Other on-campus lots will be available for alternate parking. All alternative lots provided will be open for overnight parking, even if they are not usually designated as such, while these lots are cleared of snow.

The parking decks and some parking lots, such as the M-81 lot by the stadium, are some of the spaces listed as alternate parking options.

"We've got plenty of parking in both parking garages," O'Connell said. "We're not looking for anyone to go off-campus."

In previous winters, YSU has not closed parking lots to clear snow.

"The overnight parking lots, normally we just let them go, but we haven't had a snow like this ... since the early

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Snow

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'90s," O'Connell said. "Because it hasn't warmed up, there's still so much snow between the cars and plowed down that we just can't get to."

Despite the anticipated winter storm, O'Connell said Grounds is going to continue with the closure of parking lots.

"On the days the storm hits, we'll keep them closed until we can get to them," O'Connell said. "I would say those lots are going to be closed no longer than 24 hours, if everything works well for us."

Once the cars are removed from the lots, Grounds will place the snow in grassy areas near the parking lots.

"Most of the parking lots have places to the edge that — if we could get to — we could push it there," O'Connell said. "The lot on Rayen [Avenue] has a lot of grass to the west and a cou-



Photo by Sydney Stalnecker / The Jambar

"Lot closed" signs mark parking lots so the YSU Grounds Department can remove the snow.

ple spots to the south, and we'll pile it up — try to keep all the lanes open — we'll push to the edges and we'll actually scoop it and pile it up on the grass."

O'Connell said the snow removal was spurred by

calls received from students who said they were having trouble getting in and out of the parking lots.

Lot Closures:

Wednesday, Feb. 2:

Lot 63 on Lincoln Avenue
Lot 90 on Elm Street
Lot 23 in upper Courtyard and all spaces on Wick Oval in front of the Courtyards

Alternate parking:

M-60 parking deck, located on the corner of Lincoln and Fifth avenues
Lot 81 by Stambaugh Stadium
M-30 parking deck on Wick Avenue
Lot 24 by the Courtyards
Thursday, Feb. 3:
Lot 61 on Rayen Avenue
Lot 92 by Lyden House
Lot 24

Alternate parking:

Lot 63
Wick and Lincoln parking decks
Lot 81
Lot 32 by Bliss Hall and the Courtyards

Friday, Feb. 4:

Lot 91 on Madison Avenue
Lots 3 and 4 on Bryson Street
Lot 32
Alternate parking:
Lot 81
Lot 2 on the East Bound Service Road
Lot 24

Renovation

Page 1

“What we learned through that process is that the union needs to be designed for the campus — it needs to be representative of the specific needs and the culture and the ideas from campus,” Macyko said.

Renovation of Kilcawley would take about two years, and construction of a new building would take approximately 4-5.

Kilcawley Center already has deferred maintenance and would need new, updated HVAC and plumbing systems, and there are some issues with the service access to the loading deck and pedestrians walking.

Byers said one of the important things about the renovation is creating a building that gives students a home-away-from-home type of feeling.

“It’s the place where you can relax, be yourself and hang out,” Byers said. “Bringing us to the point where our students are meeting their needs is really important as well as the rest of campus and so part of this study is looking at what is needed and how do we become more efficient.”

The parking deck on Fifth Avenue will be demolished in approximately two years. There are no current plans on what will go there in its place, but if Kilcawley does get another building, that spot is going to be its location.

Macyko said the new building is a better opportunity for easier access to the community, design space and a roof terrace, as well as bringing it closer to the Barnes & Noble bookstore. Some downsides of the new building is that it’s closer to an intersection, not connected to the Andrews Student Recreation and Wellness Center and further from northern residence halls and buildings.

Macyko said WTW Architects is still determining and working through the cost of the project.

“What we’ll do is we’ll look at what new construction will probably cost per square foot and what renovation

If a renovation were to happen, there are two options for the layout of the building.

The first option would be:

- Connect Kilcawley Center more with the fountain
- Switch the food and dining area to the Chestnut Room and have the Chestnut Room be moved to where the Den is currently located
- Clearer circulation in the building so it’s easier to navigate
- Chick-fil-A becomes a covered outdoor patio/lounge area
- New black box theater with retractable seating and a food area connecting to the Cove
- Late night zone that provides service to students in the late hours without needing a full staff

The second option would be:

- Chestnut Room expands and receives upgraded audio, visual and lighting technology
- Chick-fil-A gets a larger lounge that wraps around the building, giving students a better view of the fountain
- Becomes more open and transparent for students walking in the building

will probably cost per square foot and then calculate the square footage of the selected option,” Macyko said. “But we’re not quite at the point of putting numbers together yet.”

Many students at the Kilcawley Student Union meeting voiced their opinion about parking. Some pointed out that with a new building replacing the Fifth Avenue parking deck, it will limit parking space for commuter students.

Macyko said the renovation of the parking deck is separate from the Kilcawley project.

Ashley Cook is a staff member at Kilcawley Center and said she doesn’t want to see a new building location. She said its location at the center of campus is convenient and thinks renovation is the better option.

“I definitely am for staying in this location and making something work here. I don’t really like moving it, but we’ll just see what everyone else thinks,” Cook said.

The project is not yet finalized, and Macyko and Byers are working on a report for the board of trustees approval in April.

COVID-19 update

By Sydney Stalneckner
The Jambar

The number of reported COVID-19 cases at Youngstown State University dropped below 50 last week.

According to YSU’s COVID-19 dashboard, only 48 cases were reported between Jan. 23-29. Of those, 36 were students living off-campus, six were students living on-campus and six were employees.

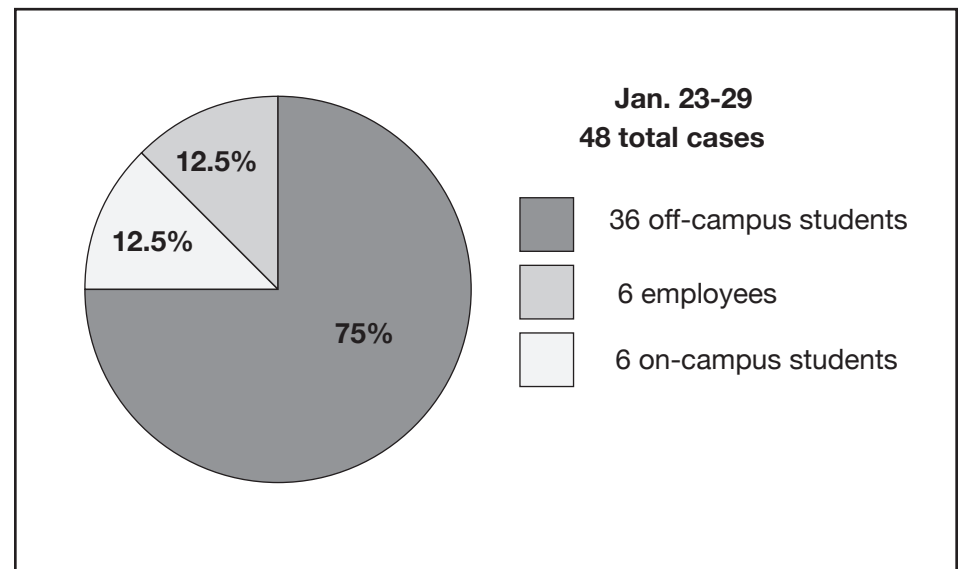
Through YSU’s asymptomatic volun-

tary testing program, 26 people were tested. Only two tests came back positive, resulting in a 7.69% positivity rate.

According to an email sent by University Relations, the vaccination and booster clinic originally scheduled for Feb. 3 was canceled. There will be three more clinics offered throughout the semester on March 3, March 28 and April 28.

The Youngstown City Health District has other clinics scheduled in the Youngstown area as well.

Stay safe, Penguins!



GOING DOWN IN NUMBERS

Enrollment suffers lowest point historically

By Elizabeth Coss and Sydney Stalnecker
The Jambar

Enrollment from fall 2021 reached the lowest point in Youngstown State University's history, marking the third year in a row the university has suffered from a loss of students.

YSU has been dealing with a decline in enrollment since 2018, and it hasn't seen enrollment numbers as high as 13,000 since 2013.

Last year, the university saw only 11,298 students

fully enrolled, down from 11,788 in 2020 according to Youngstown State University's 14th day enrollment summary.

Undergraduate students were the main portion of the university's loss, with just over 1,000 fewer undergraduates coming into YSU following their high school career.

However, contrary to undergraduate numbers being down, 1,851 graduate students enrolled, an increase from 1,318 in fall 2020.

The percent of students who are enrolled full-time at

the university saw a slight decrease as well, with now only 79.9% of students being enrolled full-time, down from 82.6% in the previous year.

Despite a loss of almost 500 students overall, YSU saw an increase in degrees received by students in the academic year of 2019-2020, one of its highest years to date.

The university handed out 2,352 degrees in the 2019-2020 academic year, as opposed to 2,218 from the previous school year.

News Brief

WOMEN'S RETIREES OF YSU TO OFFER SCHOLARSHIP

The scholarship committee of the Women Retirees of Youngstown State is accepting applications through March 1, 2022, for the 2022-2023 academic year. The scholarship is awarded to a full-time, junior female student who has a minimum of a 3.0 GPA. The recipient must be a U.S. citizen and be enrolled in a degree-seeking program. Information about the scholarship is available at ysu.edu/financialaid/scholarships. Application forms may be printed from the website or picked up at the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships located on the second floor of Meshel Hall at YSU.



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Contact Mary Dota by email at mfdota@ysu.edu

Selective honor society provides insight about its organization

By Samantha Smith
The Jambar

Youngstown State University's National Society of Collegiate Scholars is an organization for students to build on their leadership and service skills while also providing opportunities for scholarships and more.

David Hughley III, a junior marketing major and co-president and treasurer of NSCS, explains more of what the organization is.

"We are one of the more selective honor societies in the country," he said. "Scholarship, leadership and service are our three main pillars, and we take pride in that."

An important skill the organization can help with, he said, is communication.

"If you improve your communication skills, both verbally and in writing, you'll set yourself apart drastically,

and we really pride ourselves on that," Hughley said.

He explained what the recruitment process into the NSCS is like for students.

"For a small fee — it could be waived depending on their situation — they get accepted, they get a letter and then there's a virtual induction ceremony," Hughley said. "Then, afterward, they'll have to put their information in this application portal for scholarships."

He said the student is immediately given resources for networking and scholarships upon acceptance. Students who receive an invitation for recruitment will go through this process.

Samantha McCullough, a senior biochemistry major and co-president of the NSCS, explained more about the invitations.

"It is an invitation society," McCullough said. "We go through and we send out invitations to anyone who meets the qualifications throughout the university."

She said if a student feels that they fit the requirement — a 3.0 or higher GPA — for the organization, they can request an invitation at nscs.org.

As of now, Hughley said the organization is still in its planning stage in terms of hosting events, volunteering and more. He said the organization wants to make sure it has many students interested and able to join before events begin.

"There is no pressure in joining an organization like this," Hughley said. "It might be seen as selective or really high-end — it's nothing like that. You can really come to us as people first, like if you have stuff going on. We'll always be here to help you and try our best."

For more information on YSU's NSCS, visit its webpage at nscs.org. For any questions about NSCS, contact Hughley at dehughley@student.ysu.edu or McCullough at smmccullough02@student.ysu.edu

CUTTING DOWN THE COMPETITION



Photos by Henry Shorr / The Jambar

Senior Zane Ross lines up another bullseye.

Ax-throwing bar launches in downtown Youngstown

By Henry Shorr
The Jambar

On Phelps Street, Jaren Petta runs downtown Youngstown's first ax-throwing bar out of the old Rhine Haus: Youngstown Axe and Tap.

Petta gained experience running an ax-throwing bar in Colorado before coming back to the Youngstown area. "I've always thrown things — a football or a baseball. I had a friend in Colorado that opened up an ax-throwing place and when I congratulated him, he said, 'I need someone to run that for me, so come to Colorado,'" Petta said.

A year and some change later, Petta moved back to Youngstown, and after working at a few ax-throwing bars in the area, he decided to open one of his own.

The furniture and decor of the Rhine Haus is still very present in Youngstown Axe and Tap with one big change: there is an ax-throwing lane caged off inside the

bar.

Petta spoke on how the novelty of the activity in the area is helping drive business.

"It's fairly new in Youngstown. Where I was in Colorado, we definitely had a draw to that, being an 'outdoor activity' type of state. Here in Youngstown, we are starting to pick up, business-wise, here and I know the other place [Fat Axxes] is doing very well," Petta said.

An ax-throwing bar, popularized through videos on social media, is exactly what it sounds like: a place to get drinks, socialize and hurl hand-axes at wooden targets.

"It is not as scary as you have seen on YouTube. This is a fairly safe activity. I'm here the entire time, I watch you guys and give you tips, tricks and pointers. I really watch and make sure that you guys are being safe, not hurting each other or my lanes or axes."

For the uninitiated, an ax-throwing lane has two targets made of wood planks, a stump to hold the axes when they are not spinning through the air and a score-

board to be used however one wishes.

There are multiple ways to grip and throw the ax, and Petta is there the entire time to help each patron discover the best way to get an ax to "stick" the target.

"Everybody has their own adjustments to ax-throwing, it takes a little bit of time for them to get the hang of it. But once you do that first stick, you're addicted," Petta said.

Senior math major Zane Ross spoke about his time at Youngstown Axe and Tap.

"I would say [my experience] was really good," Ross said.

He had previous experience before coming to Youngstown Axe and Tap and is glad to see more bars like this popping up around the Mahoning Valley. He sees its size, location and activity as a perfect gathering place.

"I would consider this a great place to go. If you have a group of people and you want to go out for a drink, this

is a great place to do it,” Ross said.

That seems to be the running thread, according to Petta. There is a small learning curve, but everyone eventually gets the hang of it and has a good time hurling axes at targets with numbers on them.

“Everybody does fairly well, actually. I like to have people come in before they’ve been drinking downtown. Maybe a couple of beers is okay, but we try to keep you guys as safe as possible, so if I do see someone that is acting irregular, I try to not let them throw,” Petta said.

Petta cultivates a safe environment. There are no surfaces to set a drink down on inside the lane, keeping the two activities as separate as possible. The lane is also enclosed in a metal cage inside the bar to keep any po-

tentially errant axes from flying out of the lane, however unlikely that scenario may be. Petta has not seen any problems with patrons throwing under the influence.

“It has been a good crowd down here — I haven’t had to have anybody stop throwing or anything like that because they got too intoxicated. It’s a really good time,” Petta said.

Patron Janis Wood enjoys the vibe that Petta cultivates in the bar.

“It’s really quiet and calm until everyone starts throwing axes,” Wood said.

Business has been picking up for Petta as people become more comfortable returning to bars and other indoor spaces.

“We are starting to get that gathering of people as the days go on, becoming more busy, booking-wise. So if you do book, make sure to do so early so you can make sure to get a spot in here,” Petta said.

As more people come to see Youngstown Axe and Tap as a location for parties, events and other gatherings, Petta looks to the bar’s future.

“I definitely see more lanes. Right now we are just doing the single double-lane that we have here. We eventually want to do two, three, four — as many as we can in here — really pick it up and get the people of Youngstown involved in ax-throwing,” Petta said.



Close-up on hitting a bullseye with an ax.

Remembering the past, celebrating the present and looking toward the future

Black History Month begins at YSU

By C. Aileen Blaine
The Jambar

Black History Month kicked off Feb. 1 and is a month dedicated to the recognition of the many contributions Black Americans make to the American story. Youngstown State University has a calendar full of events to celebrate.

At its origin in February 1926, Negro History Week originally incorporated the birthdays of Frederick Douglas and Abraham Lincoln. In 1976, former President Gerald Ford encouraged Americans to acknowledge the accomplishments of Black Americans. Since then, the celebration now spans the length of February.

Carol Bennett, assistant provost of the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, said she decided to stray from this year's theme of Black health and wellness set by the National Association for the Study of African American Life and History. Instead, YSU's theme this year is Remembering the Past, Celebrating the Present and Looking Toward the Future. Events range from movie nights and seminars to karaoke nights and open discussions on current issues.

On Feb. 8, a "Shades of Blue" discussion will take place. Black police officers will share their experiences of working in law enforcement and the situations

they've faced.

"[During the Black Lives Matter protests], they had to go out and disperse crowds and were even told to use force when necessary," Bennett said. "How does that affect their lives? How does the injustice and inequality affect them?"

Next week, Cryshanna Jackson Leftwich, chair of the politics and international relations department, will share and discuss what it's like to be one of the few Black female tenured faculty members at the university.

"I will touch on ... discussing the importance of 'representation' at [predominantly white institutions] of faculty and staff," Jackson said. "I will also talk about the challenges of bringing up racial inequities to administration and other faculty when you are the only African American in the room."

Her presentation will also provide suggestions and solutions to create a more inclusive environment in the classroom and on campus.

The showing of the film "Judas and the Black Messiah" later this month will open the floor for a discussion about Fred Hampton and the role the Black Panther Party has played in helping communities and assistance programs. The film will also open the floor for dismantling the misconceptions about the party.

"A lot of people don't know — and a lot of people

don't understand — what the Panther Party was really all about," Bennett said. "They were not racist, and they were not against the police, but they were protecting the community, and they were so important in our after-school programs we have today."

For those interested in having some fun, the campus Black Student Union will host a karaoke competition night. Participants can join teams and compete.

"It's a way to get students out, have some fun and de-stress," Bennett said.

Black Student Union will also host a guest speaker, an elder from the community who grew up in the South. In her talk, she will share her experiences about moving to the Mahoning Valley and her past.

Feb. 26 brings a Men of Color Summit, a public discussion providing men a space to talk about how they navigate masculinity in a changing world.

"I want to get a student organization together, and I'm hoping that the summit will help that," Bennett said. "I'm also hoping that it will grow until we can have it larger, have other schools register and we get donations to keep it free and open to the public."

For more information or a calendar of events, visit the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion's website.

Want to see an event covered?

Contact The Jambar by email at
jambarnewspaper@gmail.com



Photo Contest

Do you want your photo featured in The Jambar?

All current YSU students and faculty: send your photos to jambarnewspaper@gmail.com for your chance to be featured!

Photos by Jambar Staff



Man on the street: Best places for students to study

By **Samantha Smith**
The Jambar

Youngstown State University's campus provides various areas for students to study and do homework for their classes. With multiple options, which places do students prefer to study at and why?

Rhette Potenzini, a senior English major, said the Maag Library is the place to study.

"I would probably say anywhere in Maag Library, in one of the study rooms they have," Potenzini said. "It's quiet there. No one is really going to come in there if you're in there to bother you."

Gavin Willoughby, a freshman majoring in integrated social studies, also talked about why he chooses to study in Maag Library.

"It's so quiet, I really like it in there," Willoughby said.

Maag Library Hours

Monday-Thursday	7:30 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.
Friday	7:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Saturday	9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Sunday	1:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

"I like the second floor mainly because it's really quiet."

Another student, sophomore psychology major Cyrus Dzikowskz, mentioned how he likes to be by himself when studying.

"Personally, I focus a lot better when I'm by myself.

If other people feel the same way, they should probably study in their dorm, at the Courtyards, their apartment, or just their house," Dzikowskz said. "But I know the library is very quiet and everyone keeps to themselves."

Students are able to study at Maag Library longer now because of a recent extension of its hours, reflecting what they were previously, before the pandemic.

Rami Mousa, a freshman exercise science major, said he prefers to study in DeBartolo Hall.

"I would say the best place to study is DeBartolo because it is always quiet in there," Mousa said.

The key to the perfect study area for a lot of students is quietness. To see where each building is and to pick the perfect study area, visit the campus map on YSU's webpage.

Have a news tip or information to submit to The Jambar?

Email jambarnewspaper@gmail.com

THE JAMBAR POLICY

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The Jambar encourages letters to the editor. Submissions are welcome at thejambar@gmail.com. Letters should concern a campus issue, must be typed and must not exceed 400 words. Submissions must include the writer's name and telephone number for verification, along with the writer's city of residence for publication. The Jambar does not withhold the names of guest commentators. Letters are subject to editing for spelling, grammar and clarity. Letters will not be rejected based on the views expressed

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Quote of the Week

"All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given to us."

—J.R.R. Tolkien,
The Fellowship of the
Ring

Freezing Febrrrrruary

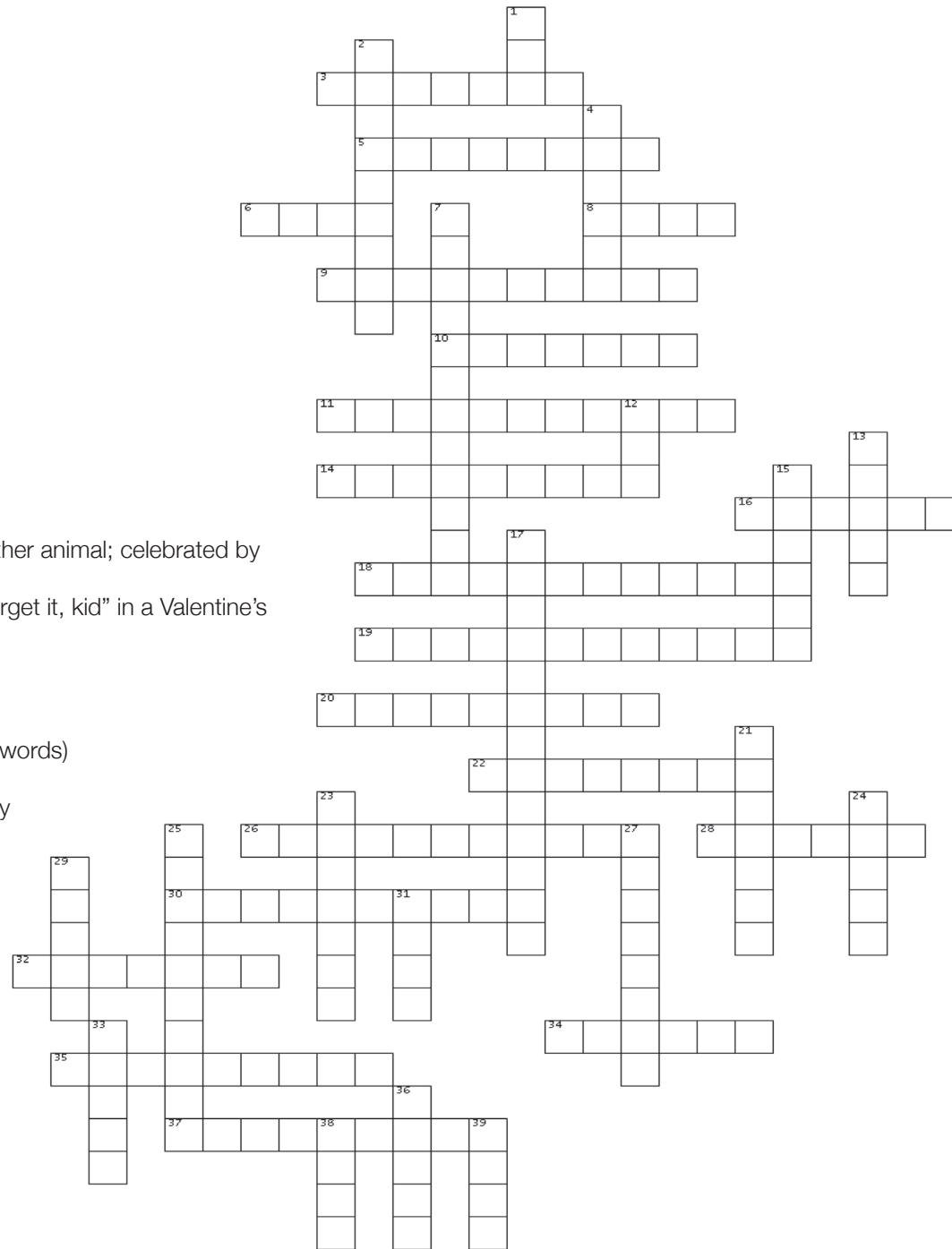
Crossword Clues

Down

1. To attempt to gain the affections of
2. A common Valentine's Day treat
4. The idea of Groundhog day comes from what other animal; celebrated by Germans
7. This character receives a candy heart stating "forget it, kid" in a Valentine's Day special with his name in the title (2 words)
12. Color associated with Valentine's day
13. The title of the first Valentine
15. Star of Groundhog Day film
17. Celebrated on the third Monday in February (2 words)
21. Advocate for women's suffrage born in Feb.
23. Winged figures representative of Valentine's Day
24. ___ are red, violets are blue
25. Female friends celebrating on February 13
27. Snow White's prince
29. 2022 is the year of the ___
31. The Spanish word for "love"
33. No need to fear his arrows
36. A sweet pet name
38. Liesl's love interest in "The Sound of Music"
39. To more than like

Across

3. Tormentor of a Paresian opera house in love with ballet-student-turned-soprano, Christine
5. A celebration preceding Lent
6. Name of aforementioned rodent
8. "Fifty Shades of ___"
9. A fruit that frequently gets covered in chocolate and given out as a Valentine's Day gift
10. 16th president with a February birthday
11. A heart-shaped candy
14. A person one is to marry
16. Romeo's star-crossed lover
18. A celebration marking the start of the Chinese lunar calendar (3 words)
19. Location of Groundhog Day ceremony
20. A weather-predicting rodent
22. Seen at night in February, named for the heavy type of precipitation that occurs this month (2 words)
26. A smell, say, that lures others to you
28. Indicative of six additional weeks of winter
30. A Roman festival held annually on February 15
32. Singer of "Crazy in Love"
34. This country, boasting a red maple leaf, celebrates Flag Day in February
35. YSU's dance marathon, held in February
37. Annual NFL championship occurring in February (2 words)



The Jambar Editorial

Unnecessary renovations on our dime

Youngstown State University has continuously proposed new construction plans and ideas for over the past four years, but recently the university has chosen to consider renovating Kilcawley Center.

With the decision to demolish the Lincoln Avenue parking deck, YSU is pushing for one of two options: a new Kilcawley Center where the old deck is or the renovation of the currently standing center.

To renovate the center would be a mistake as the building opened in 1974 and isn't even the oldest building on campus. Fedor Hall was built in 1949, Jones Hall was constructed in 1931 and Fok Hall, the oldest building on campus, was built in 1893, according to YSU's catalog.

Ward Beecher Hall, erected in 1958, underwent construction and additions until 1997 and has suffered from leaking roofs and several eyesores to the outside of the building for some time and could use renovations more than Kilcawley.

In addition to the fact that other YSU buildings need improvements more, the question of what would happen to

everything housed inside Kilcawley remains.

Kilcawley is home to not only the majority of dining options on campus, but it also houses study locations for students. With renovations happening inside of the building, studying — alongside dining peacefully — would be interrupted and near impossible.

Penguin Xing, Accessibility Services, Student Counseling, Conference Services, Graphics Services, the Resch Center for Academic Success, Student Government and Student Media are all housed inside Kilcawley Center, alongside many other important services for students. If Kilcawley undergoes construction, would these services vacate or would they work under risky, loud and chaotic conditions?

Renovation isn't a new conversation for the Kilcawley Center, as renovation talks date all the way back to 2011 when the university failed to follow through on renovations to the center and reallocated funds to other buildings according to both a 2011 and a 2013 archived Vinindicator article.

YSU hasn't shied away from simple repairs be-

fore the decision to fully renovate the building was approved. Bathrooms in Kilcawley next to the Dunkin' Donuts are the most recent updates, with newly working accessibility buttons to open the doors.

Repairs around Kilcawley don't just stop there. YSU had bids out for contractors to work on various things in the center since July 2021 as seen in a recent bid sheet on the ysu website.

On websites for contractors, YSU has several renovations contracts up for repairs to bathrooms, costing \$180,000; plans for new doors, hardware and mechanical grilles, costing \$25,000; and plans to renovate rooms 1034 and room 1035 at \$76,500 according to Construction Journal.

Existing plans for Kilcawley Center, separate from the newly-proposed project — totaling to the amount of \$285,000 — include restroom repairs, improved plumbing and electrical systems, and other superficial repairs.

The Jambar Column

Losing taste, smell and common sense

The first week of this semester was a very special time for me. It was truly a different experience than any other welcome back I have had in my years at college, and one that I will never forget. Namely, because I didn't even return to school until the second week, because I had COVID-19.

I want to start off by saying that I'm fine — my sense of taste and smell are fine, and I have no lasting health effects. There is no sign that I was ever sick, except for one thing.

While I didn't lose my sense of taste or smell, I did seem to lose my common sense.

Feeling a bit dingy is to be expected with any illness, but to still find oneself troubled weeks after is a new experience. Even once you are safe to go back to everyday life, the remaining confusion can be very hindering.

In the past two weeks, I've been extremely frustrated with my brain. Not only did I lose my house key, but I got lost on the way to class and to a room I was in just the day before. I spent an hour searching for my headphones, only to realize they were on my head the whole time. I even started to get ready for class on a Sunday.

At first, I was concerned that something was genuinely wrong. I can be a bit eccentric at times, but not that bad. I swore something must have happened to cause such confusion.

After spending two days allowing the internet to convince me that I suffered a stroke or had a life-threatening concussion, I finally opened up to others and admitted that something was wrong.

And to my surprise, most people I spoke to who also had COVID-19 were able to relate. They too experienced this phenomenon.

One friend of mine took an Uber home from work before remembering she drove there that day. Another forgot their birthday when filling out import-



Mac Pomeroy

ant paperwork. Unexpectedly, people were hit with just as bad of mental fog as I had been, if not worse.

Yet, despite this seeming to be so common, this lingering effect of confusion is also a not-so-commonly

discussed side effect. Same as many experienced it, nearly all of them had moments of believing that something worse must have happened.

While many of my columns have a lesson involved, or some advice, the message here is simple.

If you have recently dealt with COVID-19, and now find yourself feeling confused and forgetful, it's okay.

I am sure others have written about this subject, but in case you haven't seen anyone saying it, here it is. The mental exhaustion, thinking you developed some sort of brain damage — that's normal. Forgetting information that you typically use everyday — that's normal, too.

Your body just went through a great ordeal to heal itself. Your mind is just taking a bit longer to recover, but it does get better. Slowly, you'll come out of the fog and go back to normal.

Of course, if this confusion holds, please talk to a doctor in case there is an underlying issue.

But, for the most part, if you're like me and have a habit of panicking over any medical issue, calm down. Take a deep breath. It's all right, and you will heal. It will just take a little bit of time, patience and a pinch of humor.

Now, if you'll excuse me, has anyone seen my key?

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Men's basketball rebounds

By John Ostapowicz
The Jambar

The Youngstown State University men's basketball team took a trip north to Cleveland on Friday, Jan. 21 to take on Horizon League opponent Cleveland State University. It was a close game, but Youngstown State ultimately fell short at 64-61.

The last time the Penguins played the team was Sunday, Jan. 9 at home, where they fell short 86-80.

The men's basketball team's defense was fundamental in keeping the game within reach. The team was able to score 21 points off turnovers.

When these two teams last faced each other, Youngstown State committed 14 turnovers and allowed 14 points off them. In the recent matchup, the team struggled again to protect the ball with 13 turnovers.

Youngstown State's standout player, junior guard Dwayne Cohill, was able to keep the game competitive by scoring 20 points, six rebounds, three assists and three steals. Cohill came out firing on all cylinders as he helped cut a 10-point second-half deficit with a chance to win the ball game.

Besides Cohill having a strong performance on the court, senior guard Tevin Olison had a pivotal second-half that helped keep the game within three points. Olison scored 18 points, six rebounds, one assist and two steals.

The men's basketball team then traveled to Fort Wayne, Indiana, to take on another conference oppo-

nent, University of Purdue Fort Wayne, on Sunday, Jan 23.

Purdue Fort Wayne overwhelmed the Penguins by forcing 17 turnovers. Off those turnovers, the Mastodons scored 29 points.

Despite turnovers being the biggest factor in the loss, sophomore forward William Dunn had his second-best career game in the matchup. He had an impressive all-around game as he was a perfect 8-for-8 in the paint and 3-for-3 beyond the arc, putting up 20 points.

With the losses to both Cleveland State and Purdue Fort Wayne, this allowed the two teams to have a season sweep against the Penguins.

In response to the losses on the road, Youngstown State men's basketball head coach Jerrod Calhoun said he thinks the team is right where he wants them in terms of playmaking, but the team has to stay the course to win games.

"All the games we've lost were right there. Bottom line, we're a play or a rebound away," Calhoun said.

The men's basketball team took Calhoun's words to heart as it took on both the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay on Thursday, Jan. 27 and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee on Saturday, Jan. 29 at the Beegly Center, completing Youngstown State's season sweep of both teams.

Green Bay had no answers for the Penguins' dominant performance in the paint as the team scored 32 points, which helped lead the team past the opposing team 63-50.

Cohill was a huge factor in the game with 18 points alongside his teammate Dunn, who scored 11 points and eight rebounds. Senior forward Michael Akuchie dominated with 13 points and seven rebounds.

After the game, Akuchie stated that the team is half-way through conference play and that it has to take advantage of every opportunity available.

"These next games mean a lot as far as seating and taking advantage of every opportunity, especially every game we have to play," he said.

In regard to taking advantage of every opportunity, Akuchie did just that against Milwaukee, scoring a career-high 33 points, 22 of them coming in the first half, leading his team to victory 86-72.

His strong performance earned him the Nike Horizon League Men's Basketball Player of the Week.

During the post-game press conference, Akuchie was adamant about the amount of confidence his coaches had in him going into the game, which fueled his 33-point game.

"I think them reiterating the amount of confidence they have in me — that helps me out tremendously, more than they know," Akuchie said.

The Youngstown State men's basketball team face off against Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis tonight in Indianapolis then travel to Chicago to match up against the University of Illinois Chicago tomorrow, Feb. 5. To listen or watch the game, check out 570 WKBN or ESPN+.

Penguin bowlers strike out

By Cameron Stubbs
The Jambar

Youngstown State University's bowling team made the trip to the Prairie View A&M University Invitational in Arlington, Texas, this past weekend Jan. 28-30.

Last year's trip to the PVAMU Invitational was a successful one as Youngstown State finished 8-5 and grabbed four top-10 wins against opponents in Baker's matches.

Ranked eighth in the National Tenpin Coaches Association Top-25 poll, the Penguins have high hopes heading into the Lone Star State.

Day One resulted in multiple close losses as Youngstown State went 0-5 in Baker's matches. A total pinfall of 4,979 for day one placed the Penguins in eighth place.

Day Two was dominated by freshman Jade Cote who topped 215 in all of her five individual games. Youngstown State went 3-2 in Baker's matches on Saturday and advanced two spots to make it into sixth place.

The pins were falling in Youngstown State's favor as wins were secured over Prairie View A&M, No. 15 Fairleigh Dickinson and No. 19 Sacred Heart University.

Facing No. 4 North Carolina Agricultural and Technical University and No. 13 Tulane University resulted in close losses.

Youngstown State bowlers Cote, Kirsten Moore, Lyndsay Ennis, Ellie Drescher and Emma Wrenn combined for a 1,114 pinfall total in a single match. This was the sixth-best traditional match total in program history.

Day Three resulted in Youngstown State taking a step back by losing 982-925 in a traditional match vs No. 3 University of Nebraska. Youngstown State also lost 4-0 to North Carolina A&T and 4-2 to Fairleigh Dickson in Baker's matches.

Cote finished sixth overall in pinfall with 1,300. Cote, the five-time Canadian youth bowl champion, had an average score of 216.67 per game, which was the seventh-best ever score at a tournament by a Penguin bowler.

Her total pinfall was four pins shy of making the all-tournament team. Ennis finished 14th in total pinfall with 1,251 while Moore was not far behind with 1,231.

Head coach Doug Kuberski was impressed with Cote's performance over the weekend.

"[It was] really impressive to see her getting comfortable, obviously a big transition for her crossing the border from Canada to here. She's only 17 years old," Kuberski said. "To come here in a new country, in a new environment, and really has made a lot of progress since the first event here in October in terms of her getting comfortable. You can see her gaining confidence on the lanes and becoming a leader on the lanes."

Youngstown State finished with an overall record of 3-8 with a total Baker's score of 4,979 and an average score of 198 per game.

Up next for the Penguins is another southern road trip to Jonesboro, Arkansas, for the Mid-Winter Invitational held during the weekend of Feb. 18-20.



Photo by Kyle Wills / The Jambar

As of Feb. 2, Ritz averages a near double-double of 17.3 points and 9.5 rebounds per game.

Ritz in a league of her own

By Kyle Wills
The Jambar

If you ask senior basketball player Lilly Ritz who she would compare herself to, she would say others think she's like Kevin Garnett or Giannis Antetokounmpo. However, she sees herself as her own player.

Athleticism runs in the family. Her brother Kyle played basketball and ran track at Wheeling University, while her sister Molly played basketball at Notre Dame College. Her dad even reached the majors and pitched nine seasons in MLB for the Detroit Tigers and Colorado Rockies.

With a family of athletes comes many competitions, and the Ritz family is always challenging each other. These challenges can range from friendly competitions to taking their talents to the court.

"There's competitions everywhere. It could be from doing the dishes fastest to playing a card game. We usually have a three-on-three basketball game every year. My mom and my brother aren't the most athletic, so it's a little funny to watch them," Ritz said.

Her love for basketball ignited in junior high while watching her sister's high school team.

"My whole family played it. When I was in middle

school, my sister was a senior in high school. Her team went to the Final Four of high school, and after that I wanted to get there. I really wanted to be a winner," Ritz said.

In high school, she set all-time school records at Cambridge High School with 1,553 points and 1,115 rebounds. She was also named Second-Team All-State as a junior and First-Team All-State as a senior.

The Cambridge, Ohio, native was also a member of the soccer and track and field teams. She qualified for the state championship four times in the high jump and placed second at the state meet as a junior. She earned First-Team All-Conference accolades in soccer as a senior as well.

Ritz played her last two seasons at Wheeling where she led the nation in rebounding during the 2019-2020 and the 2020-2021 seasons. She was second in scoring last season with 23.6 points per game and also recorded a double-double in her final 33 games as a Cardinal.

Despite achieving numerous accolades throughout her basketball career, she remains thankful for the opportunity to keep playing the game she grew up loving.

"It's really incredible I get to experience [this] and get the opportunity to play basketball every day and really it's about what I have to do to win the game and be the

best teammate for my team," Ritz said.

So far this season, Ritz has been the shining star for the team as she's made the transition from Division II basketball to Division I seamlessly. She currently averages a near double-double of 17.3 points and 9.5 rebounds per game, and has also been named Nike Horizon League Player of the Week twice this campaign.

"I needed to show myself I could play Division I basketball, and once I got on the court, it was really easy for me. It took a couple games to get back into my drive," she said. "The biggest [difference] was the physicality. [At Division I] you really have to work hard to want to get the ball, so you have to do all the little things to be able to win.

Throughout her career, her parents, Kevin and Sally, have been her biggest supporters. It wasn't always easy for them to attend every event between their four children, but they still remain their biggest fans today.

"They've been to every basketball game, every track and field meet and soccer game in high school. They had to go to three siblings' games. It was always good to see them in the crowd and before every game, I always find out where they're at," Ritz said.

Women's basketball outscored in 4th quarter, falls to Oakland

By Kyle Wills
The Jambar

The Youngstown State University women's basketball team will try to regain momentum in Wisconsin following Sunday's loss to Oakland University. The women now sit at 18-3 for the season and 12-2 in conference play.

The Penguins started the weekend homestand with a victory Jan. 28 over the University of Detroit Mercy 78-59. They got multiple players involved offensively as five players scored at least 12 points.

Seniors Lilly Ritz, Chelsea Olson and Megan Callahan, junior Paige Shy and sophomore Malia Magestro, all scored in double figures.

Olson was one rebound shy of a triple-double as she finished with 12 points, 10 assists and 9 rebounds. Despite lighting up the stat column, she just wanted the team to come out victorious.

"Sometimes I'd rather be far away from it than miss it by one rebound. It's still a good number and still helps

our team," Olson said.

Offensively, the women shot 41.9% from the field and 30% from 3-point range. However, they struggled at the line as they converted only 68% of their free-throw attempts.

Defensively as a team, the Penguins held the Titans to 38% from the field and 26% beyond the arc. The team was also able to force 20 turnovers.

Two days later, Youngstown State was defeated by four points in comeback fashion against Oakland 56-52. The Penguins entered halftime with the lead, but fell apart in the fourth quarter, being outscored 20 to 10.

Ritz recorded her eighth double-double of the season with 15 points and 14 rebounds while Olson and Shy also helped the offense with 14 and 13 points.

It was an off day for the Penguins as they shot just 36% overall and 17.2% from long range. The team also had 16 turnovers, seven coming in the fourth quarter.

In the contest, the Golden Grizzlies shot 42% overall and 25% from beyond the arc. They also converted 83% from the charity stripe.

The Golden Grizzlies were matching the Penguins' intensity. Shy said during the game, the team's sense of urgency wasn't there.

"I feel like they outworked us and wanted it a little bit more. Coach said they outscored us 20 to 10 [in the fourth quarter]. I feel like we need to learn from it and move on," Shy said.

Head coach John Barnes said it was an off night for the Penguin offense and the team cannot win with a performance like that.

"We missed a ton of open shots. I felt like it just wasn't our day. We had open [3-pointers.] We had open layups all day. You can't do that against a good team and [Oakland's] a good team," Barnes said.

Youngstown State will look to remain in first place in the Horizon League as it takes a road trip to Wisconsin this week. The Penguins will play the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay tonight at 8 p.m., and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee at 2 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 5.



Women's basketball looks to rebound in road trip to Wisconsin.

Photo by Kyle Wills / The Jambar