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GATOR DAY 2023

Sessions and preregistrations jump as attendance dips slightly



SAMI MIRZA/THE CAMPUS

Students grab lunch in the form of "walking tacos" at the "Gator Done Den" in the Henderson Campus Center on Tuesday, Oct. 23.



SAMI MIRZA/THE CAMPUS

Allegheny's mascot, Chompers, sits with Student Life staff at the registration table for Gator Day activities in the campus center.

By **SAMI MIRZA**
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Allegheny students woke up on Tuesday morning to no classes and an expanded form of Gator Day. The annual academic and professional development event saw a number of new additions this year, including a new central direction for the entire event.

"This year was the first year that we developed some learning outcomes around Gator Day, and those are 12 distinct areas of development for students for academic and professional success," said Third- and Fourth-Year Class Dean Jonathan May, who headed the event's planning team. "So we asked for presenters to focus their presentation on one or more of those areas."

Those learning outcomes ranged from selecting a major and enhancing study skills to examining diversity, equity and inclusion, May said.

Another addition to this year's program was the "Gator Done Den," a gathering in the lobby of the campus center. Different student services — ranging from the Office of Community Engagement to the registrar's office — tabled during breakfast and lunch.

"They're offering on-site task services, so you can pay bills, you can put in a work order for a technology concern, you can meet with the writing consultants and get a writing coaching appointment," May said. "It's exciting — a one-stop shop for all the services."

During the lunch hour, students who engaged with the different tables could enter a prize drawing: Jahyra Williams, '24, won a whiteboard calendar while Sam Roque, '27, won a $25 bookstore shopping spree and Gracie Belfiore, '27, won a $50 bookstore shopping spree.

All told, Gator Day 2023 included 35 sessions, up from around two dozen last year. However, despite doubling the number of registered attendees, overall student participation fell by about thirty students.

In an email Wednesday, May wrote that a total of 169 students attended the event, down from 198 last year.

See GATOR | *page 2*

'Light Walk' used to talk campus safety



SAMI MIRZA/THE CAMPUS

Participants in the 2023 Light Walk discuss lighting in the parking lot of Crawford Hall on the evening of Tuesday, Oct. 23.

By **SAMI MIRZA**
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If two's company and three's a crowd, then eight might be the participants of the Light Walk, hosted by the Allegheny Student Government and the Office of Public Safety on the evening of Tuesday, Oct. 24. The participants — the director of Public Safety, dean for Student Life, director of Physical Plant and a facility manager, and four representatives from ASG — took just over 90 minutes to walk most of Allegheny's campus. The goal of the lightwalk, according to ASG, is to look for places to improve lighting and visibility under the cover of night.

What they found was better than what ASG Director of Community Relations Cameron Lesher, '24, expected.

"There are changes going on even without us pushing so hard to get those changes," Lesher said. "That made me happy to see that that's a constant thing that's being thought of."

While ASG President Nicole Recio Bremer, '25, also spoke highly of the experience, she was less impressed by the turnout.

"I would have liked more students to be here," Recio Bremer said, adding that she learned how college staff already review and update lighting. "It was productive, also, for students to learn what can and cannot be done for things that are not school responsibility."

The walk comes just over a month after a Sept. 21 sexual assault, which the Meadville Police Department said took place in a residential building on campus

"It (the Light Walk) is not the only thing we do, it's not the only thing we're working on right now, it's one of many things," said Dean for Student Life Trae Yeckley. "We want students to feel safe all over campus — not just in the residence halls but also not just outside the residence halls."

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SAMI MIRZA/THE CAMPUS

ASG President Nicole Recio Bremer, '25, points to the darkness behind College Court as a place that could use more lighting.

ASG approves club, swears in senator

By **SAMI MIRZA**
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A stripped-down Cabinet led the Allegheny Student Government through their weekly General Assembly on Tuesday, Oct. 24, re-approving a club constitution, swearing in a sophomore senator and approving just under $9,000 in club spending in a speedy 25-minute meeting.

Missing from the Cabinet table were Vice President Sam Ault, '26, Chief of Staff Daria Kutova, '25, Attorney General Will Lowthert, '24, and Director of Communications and Press Jude Gotschall, '26.

President Nicole Recio Bremer, '25, led the meeting since Ault — who normally presides over the GA as vice president — was absent.

The only item of "Unfinished Business" was a second round of voting to award Philosophy Club recognition by ASG. The organization aims to foster different ways of thinking, according to V O'Connor-Belcher, '26, who serves as ASG's director of organizational development and also represented Philosophy Club at the GA.

"(We're) basically trying to get philosophy out of the classroom and give people more opportunities to discuss philosophy, engage with philosophy," O'Connor-Belcher said.

O'Connor-Belcher highlighted an event Philosophy Club held earlier in the day at the North Village fire pit.

"I don't know if anyone went," O'Connor-Belcher said. "I didn't."

Philosophy Club was approved unanimously by the Senate. It will be the 116th ASG-recognized student organization on campus, according to a review of the college's Engage database.

During "New Business," Recio Bremer swore in Lizy Chovatia, '26, to serve as a senator for the sophomore class. Chovati, who did not give any remarks at the meeting, is the fourth senator to represent the Class of 2026.

"No progress on (our) fifth senator yet," said Class of 2026 President Lorenzo Scarnati during his report. "I will look into that soon again."

Scarnati also reported that his class would be handing out candy near the entrance of the campus center on Tuesday, Oct. 31, for Halloween.

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In this week's Campus...

CELEBRITIES' ROLE IN SOCIAL ISSUES

Staff Writer Eve Zavala, '24, writes about why she thinks celebrities' opinions on cultural and political issues should not be given so much weight.

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A LATE-NIGHT DOUBLE-FEATURE

For the third consecutive year, the Student Experimental Theatre shadow cast performed "Rocky Horror Picture Show."

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DODGING NUTS

Contributing Writer Ethan Gogal, '24, learns about the Tippie Alumni Center's Black Walnut tree and potential solutions for the walnut-dropping 'crisis'.

Page 5

FRIDAY
H: 74° L: 60°
Rain: 24%
Sunrise: 7:46 a.m.
Sunset: 6:21 p.m.

SATURDAY
H: 63° L: 48°
Rain: 59%
Sunrise: 7:47 a.m.
Sunset: 6:20 p.m.

SUNDAY
H: 56° L: 44°
Rain: 93%
Sunrise: 7:49 a.m.
Sunset: 6:19 p.m.

GATOR *from page 1*

Students that did attend included Madeline Hawkins, ’27, who went out of curiosity about what the day would look like.

“I liked how it was conference-style,” Hawkins said, adding that she learned a lot.

“I really liked learning about international trips and study abroad,” added Destiny Gee, ’27, who plans on spending a semester away and wanted to find out more information about Allegheny’s study away program.

Others, like Nickel Spartz, ’26, preferred the events focused on professional development, like the sessions on interviews and resume-building hosted by the Center for Career and Professional Development.

“It got me connected with members of the Allegheny staff I may not have been connected to before,” Spartz said.

For some students, Gator Day was just a day off from classes.

“It’s a day for me to catch up on work,” said Patrick Sharp, ’26.

Andrew Germann, ’26, spent the weekend at home, also to catch up on assignments.

“I went to all the relevant stuff last year,” Germann said. “It’s mostly for freshmen.”

Emily Adams, ’25, echoed the same sentiment.

“I didn’t really think I needed to do anything super important,” Adams said.

Despite a decrease in attendance, there was an increase in student presenters during the day.

“I’m really proud of students stepping up and getting involved with the Gator Day workshops and wanting to present,” May said.

Among them was Zula Stenger, ’25, who described it as, “an honor” to present to students about her summer abroad in Sweden studying welfare policy. Stenger was one of nine student fellows with the Center for Business and Economics who spoke about their own professional experiences in a session in the Pelletier Collaboratory.

Though Stenger’s summer abroad was not sponsored by Allegheny and required significant independent work on her part, Stenger nonetheless credited her experience to Allegheny’s “unique liberal arts education.” A Business major and Political Science/Art double minor, Stenger’s idea to work abroad came from a Political Science class, while much of the support came from the Business department’s Board of Visitors.

“You shouldn’t be afraid to go for things that seem like a long shot,” Stenger said after the session.

Not all of the sessions were specifically career- or curriculum-focused either — some sessions examined maintaining personal wellness and navigating traumatic experiences. The Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion held confidential listening sessions for students, faculty and staff to assess the community’s needs, as part of an institutional study into improving student retention.

And some sessions tied back into student involvement: among the day’s first sessions was “Event Planning 101” in the Schultz Banquet Hall. Director of Conference & Event Services Lynn McManness-Harlan used the space to walk an audience of around a dozen students through the process of setting up a program on campus.

“Everything’s an event, and everyone’s an event planner,” McManness-Harlan told students, adding that she considered the session itself an event in her setup process.

McManness-Harlan also said that the session was developed a few years ago specifically to connect student organizations with the college’s event planning resources and systems.

Next year, Gator Day will coincide with Election Day; in addition to classes being canceled and the normal schedule of sessions, students will be encouraged to vote in local, state and national elections.

“That’s going to be a really big, exciting day,” May said. “You’re going to see a number of civically-engaged opportunities leading up to Gator Day.”



SAMI MIRZA/THE CAMPUS

Jahyra Williams, ’24, poses for a picture with Chompers after winning a whiteboard calendar at the “Gator Done Den” prize raffle in the lobby of the campus center during lunch on Oct. 23.



SAMI MIRZA/THE CAMPUS

Students from the Center of Business and Economics sharing their experiences in “Professional Experiences with the CBE Fellows” hosted in the Pelletier Library Collaboratory.



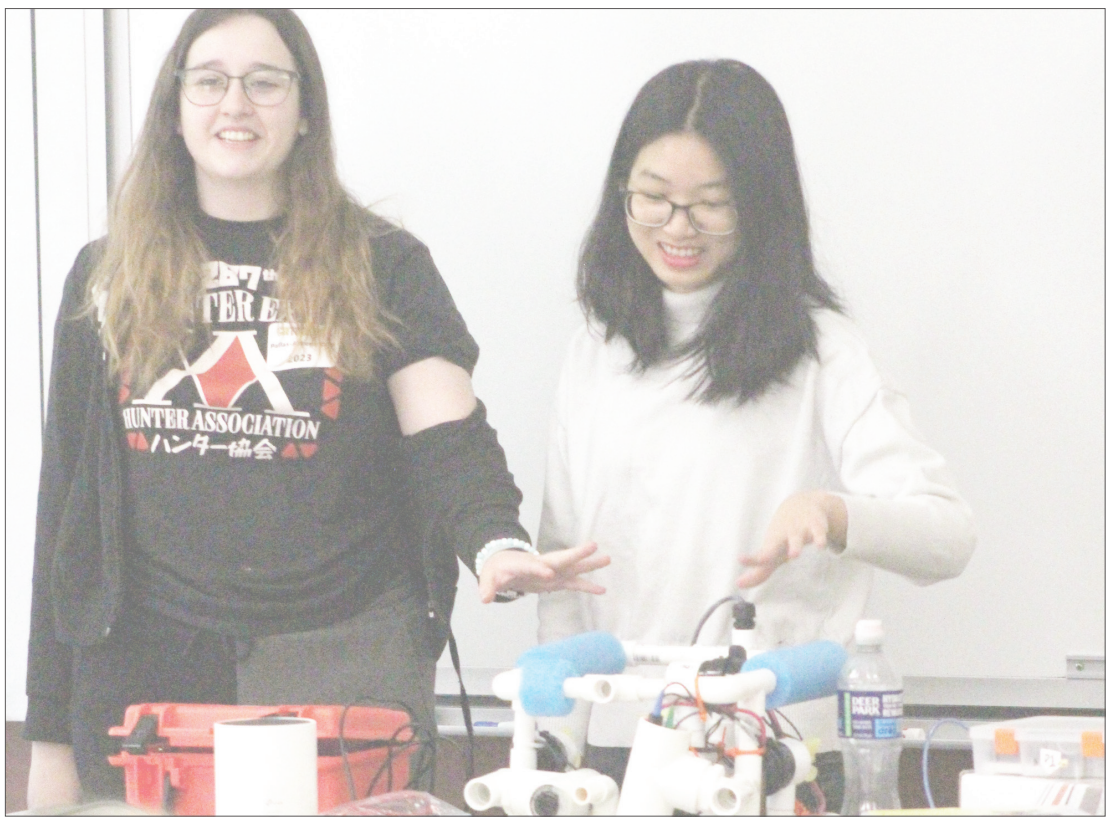
SAMI MIRZA/THE CAMPUS

Director of Conference and Event Services Lynn McManness-Harlan speaks to students during “Event Planning 101” in the Schultz Banquet Hall during Gator Day.



SAMI MIRZA/THE CAMPUS

Zula Stenger, ’25, (second from right) speaks with student attendees at an event hosted by the Center for Business and Economics in the Pelletier Collaboratory on Gator Day. Stenger was at the session to talk about her experience studying abroad in Sweden.



SAMI MIRZA/THE CAMPUS

Pallas-Athena Cain, ’25, and Trang Hoang, ’24, show off an underwater robot during the “Show and Tell” event in Alden Hall. Cain and Hoang built and programmed the device as part of research work over the summer.



SAMI MIRZA/THE CAMPUS

Biology Chair Bradley Hersh introduces himself with a haiku during a departmental event in Steffee Hall on Gator Day. Biology faculty have traditionally introduced themselves with haikus and limericks for over a decade, Hersh said, to keep their introductions from getting too verbose.

LIGHT *from page 1*

Both Recio Bremer and Lesher encouraged students to reach out both to college staff and their student representatives about safety concerns.

"If there is anything that students might not be willing to share with staff, they could share it with ASG," Recio Bremer said.

"The best thing that students can do is reach out and reach out to who they feel comfortable doing," Lesher added. "Obviously, all of these people are here because they're serving students and they're wanting to improve things. We know some basic things that we can look to improve, but we don't know those very specific needs unless that's being shared with us."

Murray to Crawford

The walk began from the Office of Public Safety at Murray Hall and headed south towards College Court. While discussing lighting on Highland Avenue, the street that runs between the Wise Center and the Henderson Campus Center, Director of Physical Plant Joe Michael explained the balancing act of outdoor lighting.

"We don't want it to be daylight, but we want you to feel safe," Michael told the ASG representatives.

Walking into College Court — a collection of small townhomes between the library and the Phi Kappa Psi house — Michael began what would become a reoccuring theme of the event by pointing out an exterior light that had been recently added.

Another recurring theme began in the courtyard of College Court itself: the cataloging of burnt-out or removed lightbulbs; two such pieces of equipment were noted over entrances to College Court apartments.

Between College Court and Sherman Street, Recio Bremer pointed out a dark path headed towards the Pelletier Library.

The path was supposed to be lit by a light on the back of an adjacent college-owned house. The bulb was hardwired to be on, but Director of Public Safety James Basinger pulled out a flashlight and confirmed that someone, likely the residents of the house, removed the bulb entirely.

Proceeding onto Sherman Street and towards the Delta Tau Delta house, ASG representatives had few critiques.

"This is better than I thought," Recio Bremer said while walking towards Sherman Street.

The group then looped back around to pass the Phi Kappa Psi house en route to Ravine-Narvik Hall. The intersection of East College Street and Highland Avenue was once one of the darkest places on campus, though upgrades to the area have now made it one of the brightest, Basinger said.

Circling up and through Ravine, Lesher suggested an additional light could be installed on the side of Ravine that faces East College Street, to light students' path from the street up to the dorm.

Michael did not disagree with adding a light there, but noted the private residences across the street. Any additional light, he said, would have to be shaded to "throw" its light to just the Ravine side of the street.

Another dozen feet down the road, however, a possible solution was found: A burnt-out streetlight maintained by the City of Meadville.

The inoperable light represented the answer to many of ASG's concerns with lighting on the outskirts of campus — the college only has control over its own property and buildings, not streets maintained by local government.

The exception to the "streetlight rule" is North Main Street, the next stop in the walk. The more ornate lights along North Main are maintained by Physical Plant through an agreement with the city, and one such light near Carnegie Hall had burnt out as well.

After walking through Loomis Street — and noting a burnt-out bulb on the front porch of another Allegheny-owned house — the walk moved back onto campus proper, pausing for a brief discussion on whether to keep the valley under the Rustic Bridge unlighted.

"Everything around it is lit, so you can see who goes in and out," said Class of 2026 President Lorenzo Scarnati.

Lesher also liked the idea of keeping the area dark.

The north end of the bridge itself has been brightened recently. When the college added a ramp to make the bridge more accessible, workers also installed a lamp, Michael said.

The group continued up past Brooks and towards the Prayer and Meditation House. Basinger pointed out an additional set of exterior lights on the PAM House that had been added after feedback from last year's Light Walk.

The next stop was the intersection between Steffee and Quigley Halls. Initially, students thought the area was too dark, but Michael pointed out that light from the nearby Steffee Hall of Life Sciences diffused into the area. He added that the Steffee lights had been newly replaced.

Facilities Mechanical Supervisor Bryan Brown added that there were lights installed on Quigley Hall that would brighten the area if they were not blocked by a clump of trees.

"Some of that light gets robbed by the vegetation," Brown said.

The walk then cut across to East John Street — the street that runs between the Vukovich Center for Communication Arts and the North Village Complex. At East John's intersection with North Main, another pair of dead or dying streetlights were cataloged.

ASG Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Kaleialoha Froning, '24, said that the route from the Vuk to NV had felt dark earlier in the year. However, a set of lights have been installed following the leveling of Caflisch Hall, the empty site of which is adjacent to the Vuk.

"It's definitely a lot better than what I remember at the beginning of the year," Froning said.

The final stop in the Light Walk was the parking lot of Crawford Hall, which Recio Bremer noted should be brighter.

"If we could do something like Ravine to this place, that would be great," Recio Bremer said.

Lighting the Crawford lot, however, runs into some of the same issues as other areas of the campus — the college only owns half the lot, and leases the other half.

All in all, Yeckley considered the walk a success.

"Any Light Walk we do is a productive Light Walk," Yeckley said. "We're able to identify lights that have burned out. It's always helpful to have students come and give us a fresh perspective — different students are taking different paths."



ANNA WESTBROOK/THE CAMPUS

Streetlights line the path between Murray Hall and the Montgomery Gym to provide illumination for students walking outside at night.

ASG *from page 1*

Cabinet reports saw a pair of short discussions on financial requests. The first came during voting, when Senator Aiden McGrory, '26, raised his placard to ask about an irregularity in the finance request.

"I don't think this total is correct," McGrory said.

Goerman had reported a total of $8,944.95 in spending — $8,914.95 from the General Fund, and $30 from the Surplus Fund.

"There might be one or two missing — I added all of them up individually as totals before I put them into the sheet," Goerman said. "I will go back and check that, because some of the clubs had more than one request."

When the meeting minutes were posted on Wednesday, Oct. 25, financial requests listed only added up to $8,352.61 — just under $600 short of the total Goerman announced.

During the meeting, the spending request was approved with no further discussion. After the vote, Co-Director of Student Affairs London Dejarnette, '24, raised a question relating to student radio station WARC's approved request to purchase club stickers.

"Can clubs purchase things that are like merch, merchandise?" Dejarnette asked, adding that they recalled a stipulation that clubs provide part of the cost for merchandise before ASG took care of the rest of the bill.

Dean for Student Life and ASG Adviser Trae Yeckley replied that the rules depended on how the purchased items would be used.

"I think what you're talking about was ASG's Finance Guidelines from — might have been last year, the year before — if it's something that's going to be taken home, like not kept in inventory, then that I think has to come out," Yeckley said.

Last year's Financial Guidelines — which remain in place until the current Senate passes their own rulebook — only discusses t-shirts under the section relating to using ASG funds to buy merchandise. That document says for clubs with "15 members or less, merchandise will be funded up to $15." It is implied but not spelled out that this amount is per-unit.

The amount funded drops as the size of a club increases; clubs with more than 16 members receive $12 per unit, and clubs with more than 30 members receive $10 per unit.

Goerman added that WARC pitched the request as going into their inventory, not just out to members.

"When they were requesting funds for their stickers, they were doing it to have them in stock for future events," Goerman said. "So that was their reasoning."

The GA closed at 7:55 p.m., and will reconvene next Tuesday, Oct. 31, at 7:30 p.m. in room 301/302 of the campus center.

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CRIME BLOTTER

Editor's Note: The weekly Crime Blotter is compiled using the Daily Crime Log available on the Office of Public Safety's web page. Crimes reported may still be under investigation. Crimes listed below are collected the Thursday before publication.

October 19, 2023
Act 64 (Drugs)
Phi Kappa Psi
Referred to Dean

October 21, 2023
Carrying a False ID Card
Baldwin Hall
Referred to Dean

October 22, 2023
Criminal Mischief
Ravine Hall
Active Investigation

October 23, 2023
Theft
McKinley Food Court
Active Investigation

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Social influence

What impact do celebrities have on societal change?

By EVELYN ZAVALA

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We live in an era where celebrity voices have become important throughout current social and political conversations. It is time to ask a critical question: Should society expect celebrities to be vessels of social and political change?

What separates the common person from a celebrity? Aside from their amazing singing voices and acting skills, celebrities are generally no different or more intelligent than the average person. Some would argue that celebrities serve an important role in amplifying social causes and fighting for issues. Across social media, I have noticed comments under celebrity posts asking them to talk about whatever current issue is most relevant at the moment.

One of the reasons I found it odd that some people expected celebrities to represent them is because many of these issues are not ones that many celebrities can relate to.

For example, at the beginning of the pandemic many celebrities, such as Cardi B, while well-intentioned, used social media to join the conversation and expressed tone-deaf opinions like condemning people who struggled to stay home despite not having the privilege of staying home at spacious mansions. On the other hand, other celebrities like Nicki Minaj spread misinformation about the vaccine, which caused many people to distrust it.

While the pandemic was global and many celebrities became victims of the virus, the experience of it was vastly different from that of the average person.

Another reason why celebrity voices should not be placed at the forefront of political and social issues is their lack of expertise and their tendency to create political polarization for the sake of performative activism.

We have all seen the profile picture changes that celebrities sport on social media for whatever social cause is popular. Despite this, whether it be a Black Lives Matter fist or a climate change awareness symbol, many of these celebrities have had many racist tweets discovered and spend billions on private jets. I use this example to highlight how inconsequential celebrity opinions are as most of them don't believe in what they amplify and fail to practice what they preach.

All of this is not to say that celebrities should be completely shut out of conversations. But their opinions should not have as much power as they do regardless of whether the opinion supports your beliefs.

At the end of the day, it is an individual choice to decide how much a person allows their favorite singer to influence and represent issues important to them. However, it is important to remember that the issues that are important to the average person could not be relatable to a person who exists in a bubble of luxury.

Additionally, a result of relying on celebrities to amplify issues has been that the social causes are often overshadowed by the celebrity involvement in them and are discarded when they decide to move on to a different social cause.

An example is the politics of 2020 when Kanye West announced that he would be running for president and engaged in political conversations. The announcement took the media by storm and it was one of the most popular topics at the time. Despite the importance politics holds in people's lives, it became entertainment, which took away the spotlight from important issues.

> "A result of relying on celebrities to amplify issues has been that the social causes are often overshadowed by the celebrity involvement in them."
>
> — EVELYN ZAVALA
> Class of 2024

Celebrities can have a positive impact on social and political issues such as when Oprah Winfrey gave a speech about combating oppression at the 2018 Golden Globe Awards. The speech contributed to the progress of gender equality through one of the most-viewed awards ceremonies on television because it acknowledged those who struggled before her and because it was a well-prepared speech.

However, it is important to consistently think critically about celebrity participation and step out of the "fan" role to think about what the celebrity is saying or doing. The champions of social change should be the people who are impacted by those issues.

Celebrity influence on social causes will always have positives and negatives. On one side of the argument, their influence brings visibility to issues. Yet, celebrities also frequently create the impression that social change can be brought about through mere virtue-signaling, such as reposting a black screen and retweeting a statement.

Going forward, society must remember that the most significant progress made in the United States has been because of the efforts of everyday people who organized and demanded change. No significant changes have ever been made from reposting.

Num Num: An ode to the childhood pet

By PIPER BOOKER

Copy Editor

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One of the core memories of my childhood was walking out back to our shed and finding that one of the stray cats in our neighborhood given birth to several, beautiful little kittens.

The cat — who I named Keep-On as a 4-year-old with no semblance of what qualifies as a name — gave birth during one of the worst thunderstorms of the year. Only two kittens survived: a long-haired black cat named Shadow and the runt of the litter, Num Num. At the age of 4, I had no idea that I had just met my best friend.

Num Num and I grew up together. I'd walk around on all fours, meowing at the slowly growing kitten who looked at me as if I was crazy. A couple years later, I finally had the muscle strength to pick up Num Num and overused the opportunity. Num Num was there, at home, for everything. Unlike my older sister and my parents, Num Num got to grow up with me. Though he matured more quickly, we saw each other at our kid-stage, teenage-stage and adult-stage.

Num Num was not a loving cat by any means. He liked to keep to himself, napping in the sun and only ever wanting you to feed him. When he wanted food, he wouldn't softly go "meow"; he would deeply, gutturally go "roaw." If you didn't feed him the exact flavor of wet food he wanted, he would refuse to eat it at all. Even though he weighed 16 pounds, he always had a cat-titude. Yet that cat-titude created a mutual, emotional bond. Throughout all of the traumas in my life, Num Num was there. Even though he despised being hugged, he'd tolerate it when he knew I was at my lowest. He'd let me cry into his fur, sometimes even butting my head to just let me know "Hey, it's okay."

As we grew up, times changed. Keep-On and Shadow left our world, and Num Num was left as the head of the household. It wasn't until my sophomore year of high school that we adopted another cat, and it was also when Num Num began to show his age.

Num Num developed kidney problems that would require medication for the rest of his life, and it was life or death when these problems first arose. As we rushed him to the hospital, desperately trying to find money to pay the exorbitant vet fees, it finally hit me: Num Num was not going to live forever. After over a decade of co-existing with a cat with such a personality, reality finally hit. Num Num had his first run-in with death.

After the surgery, things were fine. Num Num saw me graduate high school and would wish me well when I left for college. When I'd come back, he'd meow at me for several minutes before begrudgingly giving me a headbutt, admitting he missed me. But I'd be lying to myself if I said I didn't notice his slow decline. He grew slower, he slept more and he wasn't as sassy as he used to be. Then on July 19 of this year, the reality I had feared for so long came true. Num Num's kidneys grew too large for his body, and we had to make the most difficult decision of our lives. The final mutual understanding I had with my sweet Num Num was a hug. I hugged him as tightly as I could, and he laid his head back for the final time. The understanding and love was clear.

As I grieve the loss of my cat, I've had to evaluate what hurts me so deeply. What exactly am I grieving? He lived a long, beautiful 16 years of life and died of an ailment common to male cats. I have dealt with pet death before with pets much younger and deaths more gruesome. Our home is filled with other cats — cats who are arguably more loving than Num Num — so it's not as if the house is empty. Then, it hit me: I'm not just grieving Num Num. I'm grieving the loss of the final essence of childhood I have.

The 4-year-old Piper is no more, and she isn't coming back. The friends she had are long gone, and once-youthful family members are aging. The last remnant of young me died with Num Num. No longer can I cry in the same fur that once comforted elementary-school Piper. No longer do I have a pet to look at and see my entire childhood in. I lost a knowing comfort I had continued to have for 16 long years. No cat will ever be like Num Num, and no cat will ever replace him.

I've attempted to write a concluding paragraph for this piece several times. I could say that things will be OK, but that is obvious. Time moves on, and life will continue to go on without Num Num. I could say that without Num Num, I wouldn't be who I am today, which holds some merit. But as I remember my childhood pet and hold his ashes, I always go back to one point: what on Earth was I thinking when I named this cat "Num Num"?



PIPER BOOKER/THE CAMPUS

Num Num sleeping in the yard of the author.

Outing Club and GSOCS host French Creek hike

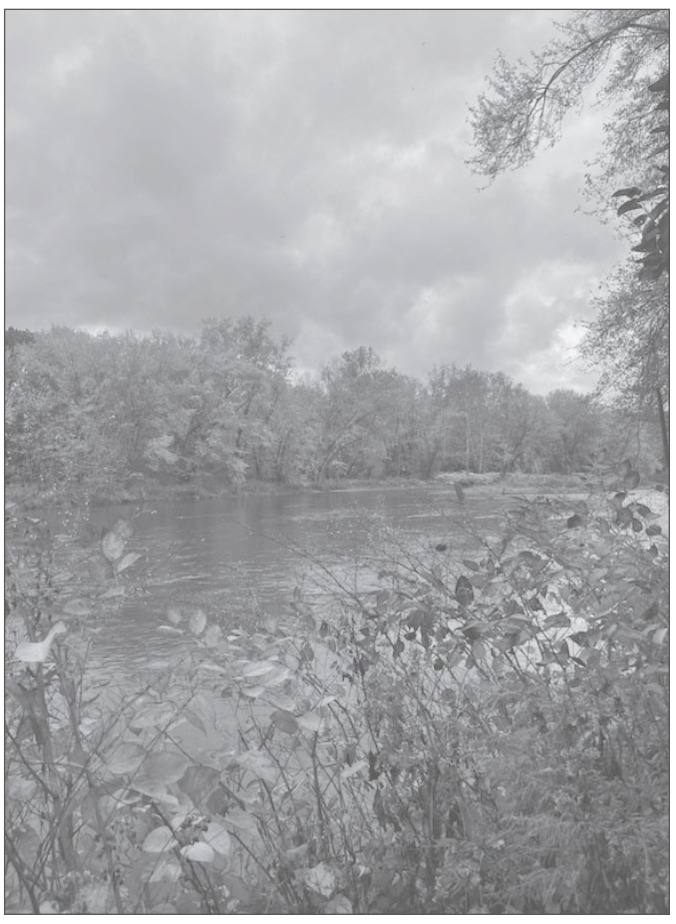
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The Outing Club and Green Students of Color Society hosted a hike at the French Creek Valley Conservancy on Sunday, Oct. 22. There, students had the opportunity to go on a hike with French Creek Valley Conservancy's Education and Outreach Specialist Judy Acker, '98, who served as the hike's leader.

Outing Club often hosts nature trips during the October Energy Challenge to encourage students to leave their rooms in an effort to conserve energy and educate students about the surrounding environment.

The French Creek hike started with students gathering at Morris Road as Acker explained the path the group would take. After that, Acker led the group straight to arrive at a cliff overlooking the railroad tracks. There, Acker discussed how working at the conservancy meant dealing with a lot of inappropriate people, especially at Brock's Lookout which is a public area.

There have been numerous incidents of visitors riding their ATVs on the trail, which poses a danger to French Creek. ATVs have the potential to disturb the already sensitive ecosystem due to noise pollution and disruption of animal habitats. After observing the view from the edge, the group took a right to walk the rest of the path before taking another right to land back at Morris Road.



ZAYNAB JEBUR/THE CAMPUS
View of French Creek from Kayden's Landing. Though not advertised, Kayden's Landing is managed by the conservancy.

The group walked across to Kayden's Landing and hiked down near the creek to check out the view. After exiting the trail, Acker went on to explain the difference between preservation and conservation. Preservation is buying a piece of land and just letting it grow wild without interference, she said. Conservation is actively managing a piece of land, sometimes by removing invasive species and trying to re-establish an ecosystem with mostly native species.

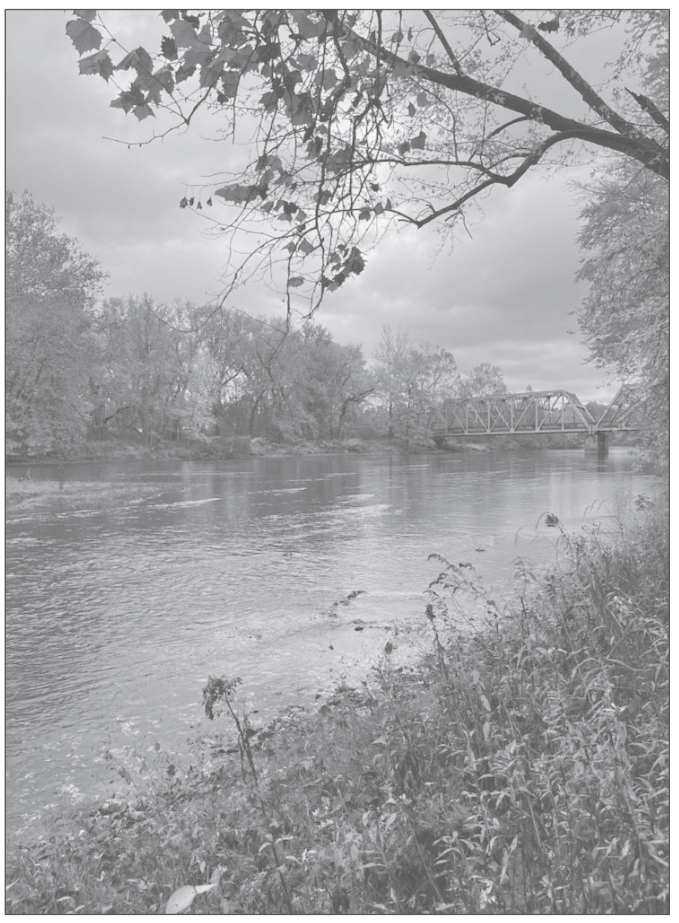
After walking through the McGuffintown Bridge in a single-file line to avoid being hit by traffic, the group arrived at the third and final site, Lupher's Landing. Acker had explained previously the site was originally going to be used as a landing dock until someone identified an endangered species where the dock was meant to go. The importance of conserving the endangered species outweighed the landing dock, so the dock was not constructed.

Not everything at Lupher's Landing is native, however. As Acker pointed out, the land houses Japanese knotweed, an invasive plant species. French Creek Valley Conservancy decided to leave the knotweed rather then eradicate it due to how many of its seeds had already spread throughout the land. She also called hikers' attention to spotted burrs from the burdock plant and explained that the plant served as the inspiration behind Velcro.

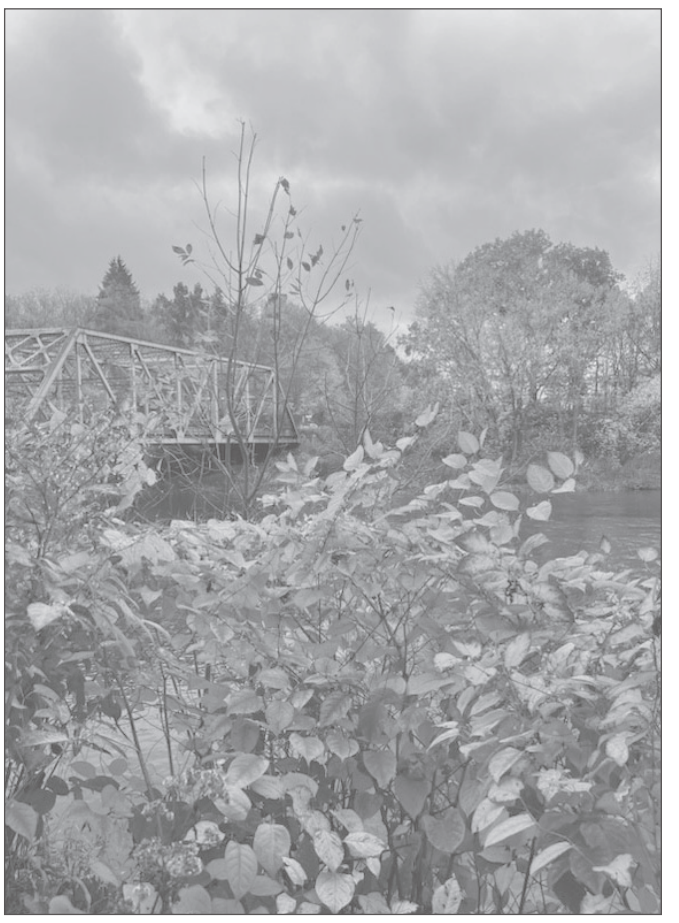
For one of the hikers, Sydney Thompson, '26, education was a highlight of the trip.

"We learned about the French Creek Conservancy and how the property we were hiking on was protected and maintained," Thompson said. "I had fun. I thought it was a learning experience and I also got to spend time with friends and get away from my studies."

After exiting the site and checking their bodies for any ticks, the group retreated back to Morris Road to conclude the hiking journey.



ZAYNAB JEBUR/THE CAMPUS
The McGuffintown bridge, which seperates Saegertown and Meadville, as seen from Kayden's landing.



ZAYNAB JEBUR/THE CAMPUS
The view from Lupher's Landing, named for the founder of the first Methodist church in Meadville.

Students dodge falling fruits from tree near Tippie

By **ETHAN GOGAL**
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Hundreds of students cross North Main Street and head towards the Henderson Campus Center to enjoy a meal, gather with friends, or attend class every single day. This mindless activity usually occurs without interruption. However, recently students have encountered a new obstacle they must dodge to safely make it to the campus center: falling walnuts.

The source of the walnuts is a century-old black walnut tree growing at the corner of the Tippie Alumni Center, beside the path to the Campus Center. Black walnut trees, or Juglans nigra, is a large deciduous tree species native to the Eastern United States that produces baseball-sized fruit containing walnuts. The trees produce their fruit during the summer months, which means any unpicked fruit drops from the tree in the fall.

"A few weeks ago, when the walnuts were falling from the tree, I saw people tripping over the walnuts that were already on the ground," said Ashleigh Dolan, '24.

The environmental benefits the tree provides are numerous, like stabilizing soil, absorbing and storing carbon dioxide, cycling nutrients, and providing habitat for birds and tree-dwelling mammals, according to Environmental Science and Sustainability Professor Rich Bowden. Black Walnut is also prized for its lumber, Bowden added, and for the walnuts, which provide nutrient and energy-dense food for wildlife like deer, bears, squirrels and chipmunks.

"The squirrels often accelerate the falling process by clipping the nuts from the branches," Bowden said. "Then they retrieve the nuts on the ground and either eat them directly or store them in food caches. The trees produce nuts annually, in varying quantities. This might be a high production year."

The tree is maintained by Physical Plant, who conduct regular monitoring and upkeep as needed.

"The tree was trimmed back about 10 years ago to remove the branches hanging over the walk," said Jim Mulligan of Physical Plant. "We are looking at trimming it back again."

However, Bowden cautioned that trimming may cause adverse health effects for the tree.

"Trimming is not likely to alleviate the situation," Bowden said. "Continual removal of branches accelerates the risk of insect, fungal or bacterial attack of the tree. Perhaps a sign suggesting to walkers that they avoid that sidewalk in the fall would be sufficient or play a game of dodge the walnuts."

Despite their differing views, both Bowden and Mulligan felt confident that all opinions would be heard and considered before making any decisions for the tree.

"When making decisions about the plants on campus we consider all impacts it may have," Mulligan said. "We work closely with other groups on campus to make sure we are making informed decisions."

The tree maintenance decision would likely slot into ongoing cross-campus sustainability efforts to make the college as environmentally friendly as possible.

"(Environmental Science and Sustainability) Professor Eric Pallant and Physical Plant Director Joe Michael lead the visioning to develop a resilient campus forest," Bowden said. "(Environmental Science and Sustainability Assistant) Professor Jesse Swann-Quinn is exploring the kinds of trees to grow on campus and has worked with his students to get a grant that will prepare educational signs on campus."

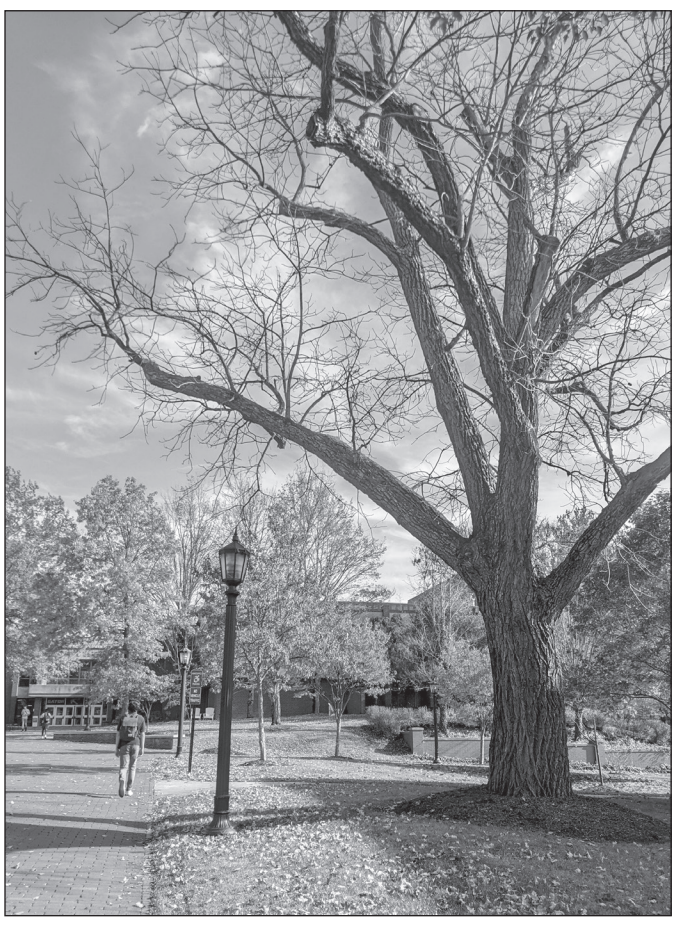
Other efforts in the environmental science and sustainability department have been made to monitor and protect the campus forest.

"Students in an ENVSC 210 (research methods) course developed an assessment of the trees on campus, including recommendations for the types of trees that should be planted," Bowden said. "In addition, the forest ecology course last year developed recommendations for specific tree planting or replacement. Both reports were given to Physical Plant and the Office of Sustainability."

In their natural forest habitats, the black walnut fruit falls to the ground where the husk breaks down exposing the walnut inside. Throughout the winter season, walnuts are a source of food for rodents, raccoons and black bears. On a college campus, falling walnuts can be a hazard.

Despite students tripping over walnuts, Dolan believes the good outweighs the bad.

"I think the risk the tree poses to pedestrians is very minimal and the environmental benefits are much greater, so I think the tree should stay there," Dolan said.



SAMI MIRZA/THE CAMPUS
This black walnut tree, located next to the Tippie Alumni Center, drops gruit every fall, though options for remedying this are limited.

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Econ 380 is taught by Prof. Chris Allison, Allegheny's Entrepreneur-In-Residence, who served as the CEO of a publicly traded technology company for almost 10 years. Mr. Allison's company was recognized multiple times by Forbes, Fortune, Industry Week and Business 2.0 magazines as one of the best small companies in America and one of the fastest growing companies in America. He was named Entrepreneur of the Year by the Ernst and Young, and the Pittsburgh Venture Capital Association.

For more information, email Prof. Allison at callison@allegheny.edu or text him at 412-389-8888.

SET 'does the Time Warp' again with Rocky Horror Shadow Cast



EMMA CONTI-WINDLE/THE CAMPUS

Members of the audience join performers from Student Experimental Theatre in dancing the 'Time Warp' during SET's shadow cast of "The Rocky Horror Picture Show" in Shafer Auditorium on Friday, Oct. 20. The show was originally set to be held in the lobby of the Henderson Campus Center, but technical difficulties forced a last-minute location change for the Friday show.



EMMA CONTI-WINDLE/THE CAMPUS

Maddy Segar, '24, and Jane Grabowski, '24, co-directors of this year's shadow cast, inform the audience that the show will be moved into Shafer Auditorium on Friday, Oct. 20. The duo were standing on the stage that SET ordinarily uses in the lobby of the Henderson Campus Center.

CROSSING BLADES *with Allegheny's Fencing Club*

By **JOSEPH KLEPEIS**
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Left: Fencing Club Co-President Ethan Borsh, '25, calls "Halt" to stop the match between Lindsay Ross, '27, and Co-President Tessa Irvine, '24. The "Halt" command is used to stop and reset play, as well as award points.

Right: Ross scores a touch on Irvine. The pair were dueling during Fencing Club's open house on Thursday, Oct. 19 on the Wise Center's Blue Courts.



Fencing Club Co-President Ethan Borsh, '25, and Alex Vanhoorelbeke, '26, engage in a match, while Co-President Tessa Irvine, '24, referees. Match officials are sometimes called "directors," depending on the competition.

NaviGator Spotlight: Prof. Caryn Werner

By **ETHAN BORSH**
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What is one piece of advice you'd give to those who wish to take a math class at Allegheny?

Talk to your professor! When I talk with a student at the start of the semester, I can find out why they are taking a course as well as their previous experiences with math. This helps me to advise them on how to be successful in the course.

What made you fall in love with teaching mathematics?

I love reading. To me, mathematics is a beautiful language which allows us to be logical and creative.

What has your career journey looked like? What is one piece of advice you'd give to your past self?

I had a pretty direct path, undergrad to grad school to post-doc and then academic position. I would advise my past self (and any current students) to take advantage of the available opportunities — apply for that internship, fellowship, or job.

Anything you want students at Allegheny to know about you, your department, or anything else?

I encourage students to talk with faculty and current students. There are many connections among math and other subjects, and a lot of interesting mathematics beyond calculus.

cOGNitlve Dizzonense

By **HENRY GREFENSTETTE**
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Running after the gold

Allegheny's cross country gets ready to compete in the PAC Championships

By **SOFIA GODZAK**
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The Allegheny men's and women's cross country teams are preparing for the Presidents' Athletic Conference Championships after competing at Gettysburg College's Aubrey Shenk Invitational on Saturday, Oct. 14. The women's team looks forward to defending their 2022 champion, while the men's team looks to win a conference title for the first time since 2016.

Over the weekend, the women's team finished fifth at Gettysburg and led all Division III teams. Three Gators were among the top 20, which included Celia Cocca, '25, Marrin Crist, '25, and Nelly Stafford, '25. Cocca was the best Division III runner at the meet with a 14th-place finish and a personal record of 22:43:1 during the 6,000-meter race.

The men's team finished fourth at the invitational and was the best Division III team in the 8,000-meter race. Some Gators to highlight are Peter Lantz, '24, who finished 24th with a time of 26:04:3, and Caleb Freeman, '26, who set a personal record of 26:09:4 and placed 27th. Sam Hetrick, '27, was also in the top 50, placing 34th at 26:20:5.

For the women, Cocca has been a notable runner so far this season. She earned PAC Runner of the Week from her performance at the Allegheny Classic, and she led the way for her team during their first race of the year at Mercyhurst University.

"Gettysburg was a breakthrough race for a lot of the team; we saw a lot of new personal records," Cocca said. "I think it was a direct influence from our last race at Lehigh; we didn't perform as well as we wanted to, and we know what we needed to change."

According to the PAC preseason poll, the women's team is predicted to win the championship.

"For this race, we must be gritty and stay motivated," Cocca said. "It's easy to stay motivated on this team; everyone has the same goal. For the women's team specifically, we've been talking about race mentality and made bracelets for ourselves as reminders during the race."

Cocca's bracelet says, "Run happy and run sure," which helps keep her going during the race.

Two notable Gators for the men's teams are Lantz and Hetrick. Lantz, a senior this year, continues to lead the team in the races and at practices.

"The men's team wants to win so badly this year," said Lantz, "We have a pack-heavy team this year with a lot of depth, and we know it's going to take a team effort to win this year."

Last season, the men's team finished runner-up to Franciscan at the Championship, but Allegheny was placed at the top of the preseason poll due to all five scoring runners placing in the top 15.

To prepare for the weekend, Lantz explained how the team has been training and what they have been focusing on mentally.

"Our team needs to calm it down and chill," Lantz said. "We've been training strong all year, and this is the time where it will show."



Photo courtesy of Ed Mailliard
Peter Lantz, '24, crosses the finish line during the Allegheny Classic on Sept. 16.

Lantz also explained how Cross Country Head Coach Ben Mourer '07, has been approaching the team well.

"Coach Mourer is great; he's getting our mindsets in the right place and giving us tips on how we can approach the race," Lantz said. "He also keeps telling us to get the job done because he knows our team can win this year."

However, the PAC championships are new for some of the Gators on the men's team this year. Hetrick has also had an impressive start to his freshman year, and he's earned PAC Newcomer of the Week twice for his performances at the Allegheny Classic and Lehigh's Paul Short Run.

"This is my first year, I don't have a base to go off of, so I'm just gonna go out and do the best that I can," Hetrick said. "I haven't had as much pressure to do something just because I've done it in the past. The one thing Coach Mourer has been saying that resonated with me is 'embrace the suck' of running a five-mile race," he said, "It's going to be tough, and I am nervous, but I know our team can pull out this win."

Hetrick also has the unique opportunity to run on some of these courses. He's a Saegertown native who only lives five minutes from campus.

"It's fun to be able to run these courses in college," Hetrick said. "It's familiar to me, and I have a great support system from my new team and my family."

The PAC Cross Country Championships are on Saturday, Oct. 28 at Thiel College in Greenville. The men's team will compete in the 8,000-meter race at 11 a.m., and the women's team will compete in the 6,000-meter race at noon.

Volleyball looking for playoff advantage

By **KYLE CHANDLER**
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With three games to go in the 2023 regular season, the Allegheny Women's volleyball team is looking to ace the rest of their competition before playoffs. Currently, the Gators hold the No. 4 seed in the Presidents' Athletic Conference, but they are well within reach of the top dogs, sitting a win and a loss behind the No. 1 seed Bethany Bison.

"Our realistic goal that is something that is in our control is to finish third in the conference," said Head Coach Kelly Barzak. "Our goal is to host the first round tournament game here."

As long as the Gators do not fall in the standings, their goal of hosting a playoff game will ensue. Beginning on Tuesday, Nov. 7, the quarterfinal rounds will take place with the No. 6 seed heading to the No. 3 seed's court, along with the No. 4 seed having the No. 5 seed be their guests.

It is uncertain who the Gators will play first come the elimination matches. They recently endured tough blow after falling to the Bison three sets to one on Oct. 19. Allegheny is hungry for redemption, and proved their capabilities with firing right back from the loss with a 3-0 win at home over the Franciscan Barons on Oct. 21.

They will need to keep the momentum going if they want to find success come post-season play. Their next match is at the Golden Tornadoes of Geneva on Friday, Oct. 27 at 7 p.m. The good news — they are confident and playing together as one perhaps better than anyone else in the PAC.

"I think we have really, really good team chemistry," said middle hitter Dagney Javes, '25. "The closer we are as a team, the beter we play together, and that's huge."



SAMI MIRZA/THE CAMPUS
The Alleghey Gators celebrates a set win during their match versus the Franciscan Barons on Saturday, Oct. 21.



Photo courtesy of Ed Mailliard
Dagney Javes, '25, goes up for the kill after being set up by Izzy Gray, '26. Javes is one of the best to do it in the PAC, ranking third in hitting percentage (30.3%) and fourth in kills (240) and points (295). When asking her about the mindset she takes onto the court, Javes said she does not think while out there. It is a reaction for her, and when overthinking occurs is when things start to go south. Coach Barzak said Javes is a special player with a wicked arm swing who can see the court really well. According to Barzak, what helps the junior prodigy is her ability to rise up quicker than anyone else on the court, giving her chances to attack more areas of the floor.

A star in the making

Allegheny's Hassenplug continues to wreak havok on the golf course

By **KYLE CHANDLER**
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Carter Hassenplug, '25, has done it again. After a fierce two rounds of battling in the Presidents' Athletic Conference's Men's golf fall championship, he has earned top spot and is taking a one-stroke lead into the offseason.

Scores will transfer over into the spring rounds to finalize the tournament in May, and Hassenplug shot a field-best even par through the first two days. Despite being above the rest, he is always searching for more and knows there is room for improvement.

"After the first day to see that I was three-under in those conditions playing, it was a nice little pat on the back," Hassenplug said. "The second day I played just as good, just a couple shots here and there at the wrong time, cost me a couple strokes. Mentally, I'm in a state where I'm three-under, four-under even though I'm even, but either way it's a good score."

Not only does the physical realm contribute to one's score, but perhaps even more imperative is the mental aspect of the game.

At the Avalon Lakes Golf Course in Vienna, Ohio, rain and cold weather made it difficult for the conference's best to stay composed. Despite the conditions, Hassenplug was able to keep his mental game in check.

"Just being prepared," Hassenplug said on what led to his success. "That's what my dad always taught me growing up — just being prepared for whatever weather you're going to play in, and take it as it comes."

While reflecting on the first half of his season, Hassenplug stated that he wanted to become more consistent on a personal and team level. While he and others strung together quality rounds, there were other moments where a double bogey or lip out on a three-foot putt would cost everybody a stroke here and there.

As a team the Gators hold second place heading into the spring PAC Championship rounds, one shot behind Washington & Jefferson. Choosing to hone in on tidying up the small details or not could result in staying where they are to finish next semester or leaping the Presidents into first place.

One of the best shots in the fall rounds from all golfers came from Hassenplug. During day one, he was staring down a 195 yard tee shot to a par-three green on the eighth hole. With water to his left, Hassenplug aimed for the center of the putting surface with draw on the ball. Fortune favored the brave, and Hassenplug landed the shot three feet to the pin, as it spun to within an inch of what would have been his first-ever ace.

Although he will have to wait another day for the all-glorifying hole in one, he had a tap in birdie after finessing a tremendous shot into a tight location.

"It was either going to be really bad or really good," Hassenplug said. "That was definitely the highlight shot of the week."