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Stolar parts with college



STOLAR

By **SAMI MIRZA**
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Assistant Dean for Student Leadership and Engagement Eric Stolar is no longer at Allegheny College, with Feb. 9 having been his final day. Stolar spent just over four years at the college, starting with two years in the admissions office before spending two years in Student Life. Many of his responsibilities — including overseeing Fraternity and Sorority Life and the Grounds for Change coffeeshop — have been transferred to Associate Dean of Students for Community Standards and Wellness Gretchen Beck.

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Moody's cuts credit rating

Cole: 'It has no bearing on our current or multi-year financial plan'

By **SAMI MIRZA**
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Moody's Investors Service downgraded Allegheny College's issuer and debt ratings from Baa2 to Baa3 last week, citing "double-digit operating deficits" and "weak financial operations." The Feb. 14 action is the third downgrade by Moody's since 2016.

Credit ratings, much like individuals' credit scores, evaluate an institution's or business' ability to borrow money and are generally used as a measure of financial strength.

The Baa3 rating is one step above a non-investment-grade, or "junk" rating — under which the institution is considered likely to default on its debts and would be a risky borrower. This was reflected when business outlet Bloomberg picked up the story with the headline "Longtime Pennsylvania Liberal Arts College's Rating Cut to Brink of Junk."

Cole responds

President Ron Cole, '87, responded to the rating action — and Bloomberg's headline — in an interview Tuesday morning, saying he was "disappointed" with Moody's decision but that it was not "unexpected."

"The only bearing it would have would be on interest rates that we might seek if we went out to debt through bond issuances, and we don't plan to do that," Cole said. "It's unfortunate that Bloomberg chose to sensationalize this rating by Moody's. It does no good, I think, to do that for any institution, but again, it has no bearing on our current or multi-year financial plan."



SAMI MIRZA/THE CAMPUS
Bentley Hall houses senior administration, including the office of President Ron Cole, '87.

Moody's rating action, released Feb. 14, noted that the college still has "significant financial resources" in the form of around $289 million in cash and investments. At the same time, the report said that the college faces an uphill battle against "strained student demand" and continued spending deficits.

However, Cole said that the college's budget is balanced, though not with recurring streams like tuition revenue. Instead, donations and other one-time revenues make up the "operating margin" between recurring revenue and expenses.

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Credit overload limit raised

By **SAM HEILMANN**
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The credit load amount at which students incur a course overload fee is being raised from 20 to 24 credits.

Provost and Dean of the Faculty Angela Haddad explained that the decision to up the credit cap was a result of discussions within the Finance and Facilities Committee and listening to student concerns.

"It certainly does provide enough bandwidth for students to explore, to consider a variety of options," Haddad said.

Implemented for the class of 2026, the course overload fee is equal to the per-credit tuition fee for a given semester, according to the Financial Services website. For the 2023-24 school year, the fee is $2,263 per credit over 20 credits— $9,052 for a 4-credit course. Come next fall, students will not pay the fee until they reach 24 credits.

Haddad explained that there are several reasons for the fee.

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ASG fills three cabinet seats

Froning floats resolution on Israeli war on Gaza

By **SAMI MIRZA**
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Allegheny Student Government voted in permanent leadership for its finance and sustainability departments at its General Assembly on Tuesday, Feb. 20. ASG was filling three seats: The director of the treasury, who handles the paperwork and behind-the-scenes monetary work; the director of finance, who will handle more of the public-facing work of the Finance Committee; and the director of Environmental Affairs and Sustainability.

All three candidates were introduced by Vice President Sam Ault, '26, and were approved without discussion or opposition. When the vote results were announced, ASG responded with some of the loudest celebratory knocking this year.

For finance, ASG promoted from within its own ranks; Senator Lyndsey Robinson, '24, was selected to be the director of the treasury. Ault described Robinson as "a natural candidate for the position."

"Lyndsey's got great leadership and great background with ASG finances, and has been filling some crucial gaps and providing a lot of really important labor and help through the process of us not having anyone sitting in the position," Ault told senators.

Robinson has sat on the finance committee since the start of this academic year. She fills half of a seat that has been empty since the end of October, when Hunter Goerman, '25, resigned as treasurer.

Andrew Strobel, '24, applied to fill Goerman's seat in November, but was voted down by Senate without discussion. Robinson was among those who voted down Strobel's nomination, saying that the treasurer's job had to be split in two to be manageable.

Robinson was also part of a group of senators that spoke with Strobel after the GA. Strobel left that huddle, saying "I don't appreciate being talked to like that," as he walked across the third floor of the campus center.

When the junior class senators introduced a constitutional amendment that would split the treasurer's position in two, Robinson spoke in support of the change.

"I feel like having two positions would help smooth things out," she said during discussion at the Dec. 5 GA. ASG approved the constitutional amendment that week.

Robinson will be joined by Class of 2027 President Ella DeRose, who was voted in to be director of finance.

"Ella has great leadership experience, both from her days in high school and now as freshman class president," Ault said. "She has a strong background with finance; she's also already shown some interest in ASG finance, and has been taking active interest in the role and what finance does."

By moving to Cabinet, Robinson and DeRose leave behind two empty Senate seats, bringing the total number of senators down to 14. The smallest class is the seniors, with just two senators.

DeRose also vacates her seat as class president; she will be succeeded by Senator Aubrey Carion, '27, who served as class vice president.The final seat — that of sustainability director — was filled by Elizabeth Dyer, '25.

See ASG | *page 2*

The Campus wins five Keystones

Four members of The Campus staff were honored in the 2024 Student Keystone Media Awards, the Pennylvania NewsMedia Association announced on Thursday. The awards, given for work published in 2023, span from news coverage to cartooning, and represent the most won by The Campus' staff since 2015.

News Editor Anna Westbrook, '26, took first place in the "Ongoing News Coverage" category, for a series of stories reporting on campus-wide internet issues throughout the fall semester. Westbrook also recieved an honorable mention in the "Public Service/Enterprise Package" category, for a story on the planned return of the Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity to Allegheny's campus.

Opinion Editor Sam Heilmann, '26, recieved an honorable mention in the "Editorial" category for three pieces published in the fall — "Barbie is more than a blockbuster," "Lacking connection" and "More time in Meadville."

Moving beyond the written word, Editorial Cartoonist Henry Grefenstette, '26, won second place in the "Cartoon/Graphic Illustration" for three entries from his series "Cognitive Dissonance."

Editor-in-Chief Sami Mirza, '24, recieved the Ralph Flamminio Memorial Award for an investigation last spring into the harmful side of Yik Yak, coverage of the September passing of Cinna Krushel, '27, and reporting on the Allegheny Student Government's November debate on filling their empty treasurer's seat.

The Ralph Flamminio Award is given to a college journalist "passionate about journalism and the First Amendment, and a champion for a better-informed citizenry."

The Campus competed in Division II of the contest, which includes all four-year colleges with enrollment under 10,000 students. This includes institutions like Lehigh University in Bethlehem, Duquense University in Pittsburgh, and Slippery Rock University in Slippery Rock.

The winners will be celebrated at a lunch in Harrisburg on April 12.

In this week's Campus...

BIDEN'S AGE: DEAL OR NO DEAL?

Contributing Writer Chloe Snyder, '27, delves into her concerns about Biden's age and comes to a conclusion about whether or not he is an acceptable candidate.

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FRIGID PUNISHMENT

The Ultimate Frisbee team's fundraiser subjected members to truly harrowing ordeals, like a pie to the face in 20-degree weather. The pictures are worth a look.

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HARD LAUNCHING SOFTBALL

Allegheny's softball coach says the team is the strongest it has been in the last 12 years. The first pitch of the season takes place next week.

Page 8

FRIDAY
H: 41° L: 17°
Snow: 30%
Sunrise: 7:05 a.m.
Sunset: 6:03 p.m.

SATURDAY
H: 28° L: 21°
Rain: 15%
Sunrise: 7:03 a.m.
Sunset: 6:04 p.m.

SUNDAY
H: 46° L: 34°
Rain: 15%
Sunrise: 7:02 a.m.
Sunset: 6:05 p.m.

ASG *from page 1*

"Elizabeth has really great ideas about wanting to get more people into sustainability initiatives and it's shown a huge willingness to collaborate and search initiatives," Ault said.

All three new cabinet members were sworn in at the end of the meeting and took office immediately, moving to the long cabinet table at the front of the room.

The sustainability directorship was one of three cabinet positions that would be eliminated under a constitutional overhaul recommended by Attorney General Will Lowthert, '24, at the Feb. 13 GA. Lowthert recommended that the duties of the sustainability director be combined with the Student Affairs portfolio, among other changes.

However, the idea of consolidating cabinet positions faced criticism from constituents, and when Director of Community Relations Cam Lesher, '24, asked on Tuesday about the process for a motion to discuss the recommended overhaul, the answer seemed to be "no."

"I think those have to be presented by Senators, and nobody seems interested so far," replied Class of 2024 President Sasha Holguin.

In other business, Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Kaleialoha Froning, '24, said that she was working with her committee to draft a resolution regarding the Israeli invasion of the Gaza Strip.

"If members of Senate are interested in sponsoring and being a part of the writing or editing of the resolution, please see me after GA or send me an email," Froning said. "For constituents, if you'd like to voice any thoughts or comments about it, please stop by our next committee meeting this Friday, 5pm, in the ASG office."

Israeli forces have killed almost 30,000 people and injured another 70,000 in the narrow strip of land since Oct. 7, actions that have been called a genocide by scholars and human rights advocates. Israel has defended its actions, as justified retaliation for an attack by militant group Hamas that killed just over 1,100 Israelis.

Some Allegheny students and faculty have demonstrated in support of Palestine this semester, holding a series of vigils in the campus center lobby at the end of last week, phone-a-thons to encourage elected representatives to call for a ceasefire and a rally last month on the Gator Quad.

ASG next meets at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 27, in room CC 301/302 of the Henderson Campus Center.







SAMI MIRZA/THE CAMPUS

Top: Lyndsey Robinson, '24, is sworn in as ASG's director of the treasury.
Bottom left: Elizabeth Dyer, '25, is sworn in as ASG's director of environmental affairs and sustainability.
Bottom right: Ella DeRose, '27, is sworn in as ASG's director of finance.

RATING *from page 1*

"Moody's rating is based on our operating margin, which is strongly dependent on enrollment," Cole said. "It does not necessarily account for non-recurring revenue that we've been able to use for balancing our budget."

The budget conundrum will not be solved by reducing expenses, according to Cole, who said the college will not be downsizing in order to fully balance the budget.

"I believe we have more of a revenue problem than an expense problem," he said. "We're always looking for efficiencies, so we can always look for ways to save expenses, but we're focused on rebuilding revenue rather than reducing expenses."

Cole also pointed to the college's debt to the Crawford County Industrial Development Authority — which totaled around $50 million in June 2023.

"Relatively speaking, Allegheny College is carrying very low debt for our institution and that's from prior capital projects," Cole said, noting that Moody's ratings have not affected payment of that debt. "That's why we still have a relatively strong balance sheet; we have low debt, we have a strong endowment — it's a modest-size endowment, but it's strong and doing well. The key variable is our operating margin."

S&P Global

At least one other rating agency agrees. S&P Global gave Allegheny an A- rating in a report published in June 2023, with a stable outlook. An A- from S&P is three ranks higher than a Baa3 from Moody's, according to Overbond.com.

S&P pointed to the college's "relatively consistent retention and selectivity" to explain their rating.

"They were looking at similar variables, but they also took into account the progress that they've seen Allegheny toward changing our outlook for enrollment, that we are not sitting idle, that we're working towards solutions, " Cole said. Moody's outlook on the college's rating is "negative," driven by what the report sees as an uphill battle against a shrinking market. Allegheny's enrollment has steadily dropped for more than a decade, from a height of around 2,100 students to, as of last fall, just over 1,200 students.

College administrators — including Cole — have also sounded the alarm on a "demographic cliff" of fewer high school graduates, expected to hit in the next few years.

"Deeply unbalanced financial operations and strained student demand provide for escalating credit challenges," Moody's analyst Christopher Collins wrote in the report. "With weak demographics and elevated student market competition, both pricing power and revenue growth will remain suppressed. Absent a meaningful strengthening in student demand, generating material operating performance improvement will prove difficult given the college's limited economies of scale and high educational expenses per student at just under $47,000."

The report went on to state that an upgrade in ratings could come with an increase in student demand and progress towards enrollment targets, as well as improving expense margins. If the college does not restore student revenue growth by next fiscal year and liquidity erodes further, then Allegheny's credit rating could be downgraded again.

Strategic Pathway

Cole's response? The strategic pathway launched last year, which outlines five goals including improving college operations and financial stability.

"The strategic pathway is designed to build enrollment," Cole said. "I have confidence in the plans that we've mapped out, our Board of Trustees has confidence and we're gaining momentum around this as we go forward."

Balancing the budget is only one of the primary goals of the pathway though, with the others including connecting with the broader Meadville community, as well as expanding and improving academic programs. To Cole, at least, the idea is a revitalization beyond the simple calculus of more students = more revenue.

"Rebuilding enrollment to me means rebuilding a vibrant and inclusive campus," Cole said. "It's not just about enrollment connected to our operating margin, it's about providing an opportunity for students from across the country and our region to gain a world-class liberal-arts education. It's about engaging students with our faculty and staff, who care deeply about student outcomes."

He said it was "ironic" that the interview happened on Tuesday — the day the college formally announced $21 million in donations to capital projects. $16 million of the gifts come from longtime donor Patricia Bush Tippie, '56, including $10 million to renovate Brooks Hall. On Tuesday, the college announced an additional $5 million anonymous donation to begin work on Reis Hall.

"Throughout the course of this spring, I'm very excited that we will be announcing other major gifts and investments, investing in our core strengths as an undergraduate liberal arts institution as well as looking for how we'll innovate going forward," Cole said. "We have a lot to be proud of, and a lot of reason to be confident in our future. The Moody's reading has no bearing on that right now."

Moving forward

In the short term, Cole pointed to increases in applications and commitments for the Class of 2028, who will matriculate in August of this year. This comes despite slowdowns with the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, which means that prospective students are committing without knowing much of their financial aid package.

"Deposits are up by about 30 percent from where they've been — and that's even with the delays in the FAFSA," Cole said, adding that the trends were "good signs" for restoring enrollment. "The overall goal of rebuilding to a school of say 1,500 to 1,600 students, that's a multi-year goal. It not only includes attracting new students but helping to assure the success of our students once they're here, so they will retain and complete their degree."

For members of the Allegheny community that do not agree, or want further information, Cole said that they should reach out to him and his administration.

"Allegheny has an amazingly strong future," Cole said. "I would encourage anybody who has questions to ask them, to not make assumptions, to not be swayed by sensationalized headlines, to lean in with me and with us to shape a strong future for the college."

STOLAR *from page 1*

Stolar's departure was quiet, only publicly acknowledged during a cabinet report at the Allegheny Student Government's Feb. 6 General Assembly.

In an interview last week, Dean for Student Life Trae Yeckley declined to comment on the specifics of Stolar's exit.

"We don't comment on why employees leave the college, but we are, you know, we wish him the best," Yeckley said.

Stolar did not respond to a request for comment sent via Facebook, and his institutional email redirects to Beck.

GFC leadership did not respond to a request for an interview.

Student leaders who worked with Stolar were notified in advance, though that did not make his resignation any less unanticipated.

"I don't want to say I was necessarily shocked or surprised, but it was definitely something a little bit unexpected," said Interfraternity Council President Alexander Matlak, '25. "I never heard talks or anything of him, like, leaving and then I heard that he had his two weeks notice in and then that he would be gone."

Part of the surprise — at least for Panhellenic Council President Kat Lynch, '25 — was the timing. Many FSL organizations, including IFC and Panhel, elect new leadership at the start of the calendar year.

"We found out like the week after primary recruitment ended, and it was my first week as Panhel president," Lynch said. "We had transitioned on Sunday and I got an email, I think either Monday or Wednesday saying his last day was a week from the coming Friday."

Though the timing of Stolar's resignation may have been out of the blue to some student leaders, the reason was not, at least for Lynch.

I know that he had a lot on his plate here," she said. "I also know the trend in our offices of quick turnover."

Stolar is the second departure from the third floor of the campus center in as many semesters; former Director of the IDEAS Center Lisa Nicole Smith left with little fanfare in early September. In addition, Vice President for Enrollment Management Ellen Johnson left last month.

As assistant dean, Stolar's portfolio included advising FSL and GFC, as well as running student leadership programming and leadership awards.

In practice, this meant part of his job was to act as a liaison between FSL groups and other parts of the college, from Public Safety and Physical Plant, to upper administration and other fraternities or sororities. Lynch said that Stolar was at every night of primary recruitment for sororities last month, and that he was a resource for sorority presidents and vice presidents.

"I know I went to him many times as the recruitment chair, when I was just confused with the school's rules, stuff like that," said IFC Vice President Andrew Myers, '25. "Even as the risk manager for Delt (Delta Tau Delta), I went to him a couple times just with like, 'How can we work better with the school?'"

Beck will fill Stolar's position in an interim capacity as the college reviews the assistant deanship to see if it is still effective.

"Anytime we have a person vacate a position, we always evaluate that position to see if it's filling the needs — and is there any way that we can, you know, make it fit the needs of the campus better?" Yeckley said.

After the position and job description are evaluated, the job will be posted — likely by spring break — to be filled as soon as possible.

"It's something that's a really high priority to us, especially because fraternity and sorority life make up a good percentage of students on campus, GFC is such a beloved staple on campus," Yeckley said. "We want students to know that they are a priority, they continue to be a priority and we want to make sure that they have the support and that seamless transition."

That seamless transition seems to be happening, according to FSL leadership.

"She (Beck) has just sort of stepped up and been doing everything that Eric would have been doing," Matlak said. "I haven't seen any lack of or drop off of anything — if anything, maybe even a bit of a more increased presence."

It is the same story for Lynch, who noted Beck's past years as FSL adviser.

"She has lots of experience with Panhel and IFC, and I've definitely seen that," Lynch said. "We've had a great working relationship so far, and I haven't really noticed major disruptions any more than what would happen with the transition of Panhel presidents."

As for who comes next, both Matlak and Myers said they are hoping for more of the same. In particular, Matlak said that both Stolar and Beck were good at "active listening" and letting students lead their own organizations.

For his part, Myers pointed out that Stolar was not a member of a fraternity, though Beck was in a sorority. He said he hopes that the next FSL lead is someone that was in a fraternity or sorority at a small Division III liberal arts college like Allegheny.

"Greek life at a state school, or even something like Penn State or Pitt, it's very different from the Greek life environment that we have here at Allegheny," Myers said. "Eric and Gretchen, so far, have done just absolutely amazing jobs letting that Greek life really blossom here at Allegheny."

Beyond coordinating with FSL and GFC, Stolar also spearheaded the deployment of Engage, a platform for clubs and organizations to advertise events and share documents. However, the system has struggled to gain traction; The Campus reported in November that just five clubs had an active presence on the site. This week, there were just four events listed on Engage — including three regular meetings.

Speaking last Thursday, Feb. 15, Yeckley said they had heard that the esports team had pulled the rosters of the Legion of Allegheny Gamers and the Allegheny Role-Playing and Gaming Organization from Engage.

"I did hear from a club yesterday that they were able to use Engage to identify members of different clubs so that they could collaborate together," Yeckley said. "It's a great place to store info while we have it."

Otherwise, Yeckley said, Engage will be "continuously" evaluated to see if it is still meeting students' needs.

"We're continuing to look at, 'Is this the right platform for us?'" they said. "I can't answer that right now — as for right now, it is, but that doesn't mean that it is going to continue to be the right platform moving forward."

Regardless of what happens to Engage or the assistant deanship, both Yeckley and Matlak said that Stolar will be missed.

"He was a really good fit here, he was a really good fit in admissions, and we miss his, his presence, and his laughter, and his hard work, and his two dogs," Yeckley said, adding that they were still in contact and on good terms with Stolar.

"We all are gonna miss Eric and we all like, miss the sort of energy and person that he was," Matlak said. "But I think we're all really excited and just looking forward to the future and looking forward to these next steps."

CREDIT *from page 1*

"We set our tuition based upon what we think is a reasonable load of credits for students to complete in a semester, and that is what we build our tuition models on," Haddad said. "In addition, in all honesty, you want to discourage students from taking too many credits. An overload of credits should be a rare situation, not a common situation for students to make progress towards their degree."

What looks like too many credits on paper can prove to be not enough for some students, however. Olivia Alexander, '26, and Graham Carr, '26, were motivated to write a petition against the overload fee.

"We've done a lot of talking to a lot of people, and a lot of it's hearing that people are upset," Alexander said. "Freshman who are unaware of this, who are learning about this now, and seniors who keep saying to us, 'I would not be able to graduate on time if I would not have overloaded.'"

Both Alexander and Carr participate in multiple choirs and musical groups, which interferes with their plans to major, minor and explore other areas of interest in their classes.

"I'm getting a lot of credits from the choir, which is great, and also unhelpful when it comes to the 20- credit limit," Alexander said.

In their petition, which was circulated located in Grounds for Change and at tabling in the CC lobby earlier this month in early February, Alexander and Carr argued that the fee went against the philosophy of a liberal arts institution.

"The fees associated with overload credits deter students from exploring courses beyond their majors, hindering the development of a well-rounded, diverse student body," the letter states.

The petition garnered around an estimated 200 signatures and was sent to Haddad along with President Ron Cole, '87, and Chief Financial Officer and Vice President of Finance and Administration Linda Wetsell on Feb. 14. Unbeknownst to Alexander and Carr students at that point, a decision had already been made to increase the credit cap.

"The analysis was presented to FFC, they discussed it," Wetsell said. "They made their recommendation of endorsement to the cabinet. Since it's a policy, the cabinet is the one who blesses that and we have approved that."

Haddad added that the petition only justified the decision.

"That conversation we had been working on for a while," Haddad said. "I received the letter the day we were going to have the discussion with FFC. It was great to hear the students' opinions and read about it, and it did solidify that we had made the right decision with the credit overload fee."

Haddad also stressed that student input via Allegheny Student Government was one of the ways that concerns can be were addressed. ASG President Nicole Recio Bremer, '25, explained that student involvement in ASG and non-ASG college committees — including FFC — is how student concerns can make their way to administration.

"The way students can get involved on campus and get their concerns raised through the proper channels … is by participating in college committees or also coming to our Ggeneral Aassemblies and raising concerns through different senators or just in ASG as a whole," Recio Bremer said.

When the status of the fee changes in the upcoming semester, students will still be required to get approval from the registrar before overloading their schedule.

"Again, we want to wanna make sure that students are not overburdening themselves," Haddad said.

ATTENTION

The Campus will be on scheduled hiatus from print publication for the next three weeks.

Our next print edition will run on Friday, March 22.

We will not print the week before (March 1), of (March 8), or after spring break (March 15). We skip March 1 and 8 because most members of the community will be off campus by the time they circulate, and we will be off March 15 because printing the week after spring break would require working through the break.
The hiatus will allow our wonderful staff a chance to enjoy their time off.

During the hiatus, we will continue to publish stories online at alleghenycampus.com and on our social media accounts.

Thanks for reading and enjoy spring break!

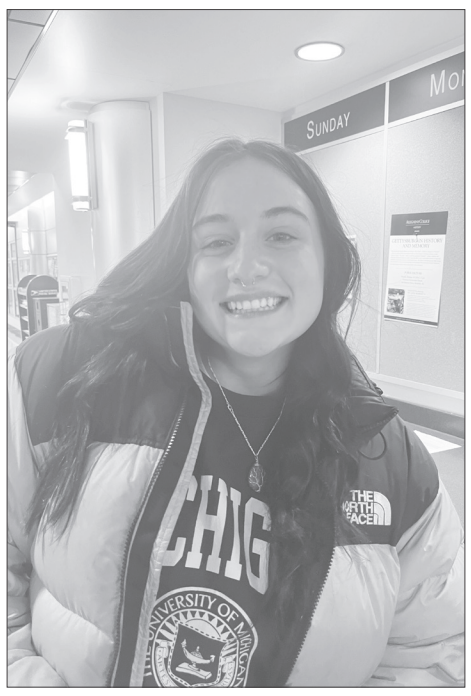
The Campus

Ask Allegheny

Who do you think is going to perform at the spring concert?



Jason Gyamfi, '25
Major: Political Science
Minor: Psychology
"Ice Spice."



Cat Marchando, '26
Major: Neuroscience
Minor: Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies
"That is a good question. I have no clue but I just saw on Yik Yak that people were like 'We want Pitbull'... That would be 100 percent the dream, yes."



Maddy Segar, '24
Major: Theater
Minor: Biology
"Flo Milli."

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.

There were no reports of crime this week.

THE CAMPUS
Since 1876

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Biden's age is a problem: You should vote for him anyway

By CHLOE SNYDER
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Few questions have been more salient — or more controversial — in this election season than the thorny question of President Joe Biden's age. At 81, Biden is the oldest president in U.S. history and he would be 86 at the end of a second term.

Like most other Democratic voters, I have deeply conflicting feelings about this unprecedented problem. Having an octogenarian president is clearly far from ideal, and Biden's frequent gaffes and doddering demeanor regrettably do not inspire much confidence. It is understandable that voters would be concerned about these weaknesses in the president, and my party does itself no favors by blithely dismissing these sensical worries and sweeping them under the rug. The U.S. president has one of the most important and mentally strenuous jobs in the entire world. The idea of any 81-year-old — particularly an 81-year old who occasionally appears fatigued or confused — occupying that position is uncomfortable, regardless of how impressive their credentials and achievements are.



Image Source: Wikimedia Commons
At 81 years old, Joe Biden is the oldest person to serve as U.S. president.

Additionally, I, like many other young progressive Democrats, see Biden's advanced age as a symptom of the frustrating gerontocracy that has come to dominate our government in recent decades. The highest branches of the federal government are dominated by elderly people; washed-up establishment figures who do not need to care about the long-term consequences of their actions (or inactions) because they will not live to see them, who refuse to cede their iron grip on power so that younger people can enter politics, who willfully ignore the progressive views and priorities of younger voters and continue to force their lukewarm centrist views on the entire party and down voters' throats.

Biden is past his prime and out of step with the needs and wants of many young liberal voters, so needless to say I would prefer a younger candidate who was more closely aligned with progressive priorities and more responsive to certain concerns. I am at the same time acutely aware that my preferences are at odds with the hard, cold political realities of this election. However much I may desire someone else, however unideal Biden's age is, however concerning or out-of-touch his behavior might be, the hard truth that all people who care about democracy and the fate of the free world must swallow is this: there is no alternative to Biden.

There is not going to be a more youthful Democratic nominee, there is not going to be a miraculous third-party victory, and Donald Trump will almost assuredly win the Republican nomination. No one is coming to save us from this mess. A Biden-Trump rematch in the general election is essentially guaranteed, and in light of that unfortunate fact I believe that a vote for Biden is the only option.

I do have reservations around Biden's age and would have liked him to step aside, but the chilling existential threats posed by Biden's opponent make these concerns about the president's age look trite, irrelevant and frankly silly.

Trump is openly authoritarian, both in his rhetoric and in his policy agenda. He routinely uses dehumanizing, fascistic, racist language (horrifyingly, he has a few times accused immigrants of "poisoning the blood of our country") — he has never apologized for attempting to violently overturn a democratic election and he continues to damage our democratic norms by promoting the lie that he won. He favors draconian policies on abortion and LGBTQ rights; and he and his team have promised to destroy any semblance of objectivity within the federal government and pack it with supporters if he returns to office.

We should not forget, either, what a parade of horrors the first Trump term was. Willful, jeering cruelty infected our society and became the backdrop to our lives; the norms we value were threatened, and the office we had been taught to respect became a vehicle for the spewing of venom. All-out assaults on the human dignity of various groups became disturbingly commonplace.

A second Trump term, with an even more vengeful and emboldened Trump, would be worse than the first. Biden has flaws — his age among them — but he does not display authoritarian inclinations. He at least pretends to care about the institutions and norms that hold our country and our world together, and does so with a modicum of compassion, intelligence and decorum. His opponent cannot say the same, which is why I shake my head at those who are willing to gamble on a second Trump term due to Biden's age. The president's age is problematic, but the question of age cannot, and should not, be allowed to distract us or to overshadow the more consequential questions that we will be forced to ask ourselves this election cycle, such as what the fate of our democracy will be or whether convicts are allowed to assume the presidency. No matter how insecure Biden's age might make us feel, the fact remains that an elderly president is far better than a malevolent one.

Love and Chicken

Lessons learned from being sick in college

By EMMA CONTI-WINDLE
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When I was in elementary school and I stayed home sick, the world seemed to stop. This wasn't a frequent occurrence, for the anxiety of missing work often outweighed the discomfort of a sore throat. Looking back, I was insane. The work I was missing was a set of 12 subtraction problems, but no one personified the phrase "academic weapon" like 10-year-old me. I was lethal.

Despite my best efforts, however, there were a few times I had to resign myself to the brown leather couch in my living room where my best friend was a coffee table adorned with a tissue box bigger than my head, a green mixing bowl for the dirty tissues, a beige mug of tea and a regularly-disinfected remote. My mom would call off of work and between conference calls and naps, we would watch comedies or Disney princess movies until it was time for a soup dinner and an early sleep. I was incredibly lucky that my mom had the freedom to take care of me— that on those days, beyond my own anxiety about my 12 subtraction problems, all I had to worry about was feeling better.

As I went through high school during a pandemic, my anxieties surrounding illness did not improve much. The combination of my irrational fear of missing school for one day and falling irreparably behind, and my fun-loving-dramatic-doom-and-gloom nature, left me terrified of being sick.

Post-COVID, I think it became very easy to adopt the mindset that a tickle can become two-week quarantine or worse in a second. I'm lucky to say that I am not immunocompromised or at any particular risk when I am sick, but I believe I've reached the level of paranoia where if someone coughs within a three-mile radius, I'm convinced that the end is near.

And so two weeks ago, when everyone at Allegheny started hacking up their lungs and getting fevers that broke 100 degrees fahrenheit, I was in a panic. The night I started noticing the illness around me, I drank a copious amount of EmergenC and Liquid IV, took Ibuprofen, Allegra and a cocktail of vitamins, and drank a full Hydro Flask of water before I went to sleep. Within 48 hours, I had a sniffle. Within 60 hours, I had a headache. And within 72 hours, I had a fever, chills, full body aches, an absolutely sinister cough. I considered drafting a will.

Granted, I am a drama queen, I am anxious, and just like anyone, I hate inconveniences. But we get over it.

College campuses are petri dishes. There is no way around it. People get sick. I was sick, and of course, I knew that this too would pass and that I would get better. On that Super Bowl Sunday, however, as I wrote out-sick emails to my professors and peers, I started to cry.

But why?

I thought of my mom and my table-best-friend and the tissue box and COVID and being quarantined in my childhood bedroom away from my family during the winter months of 2020 and it hit me; I wasn't afraid of being sick. I was afraid of being alone.

This was the first time I'd been truly sick away from home. My mom wasn't going to walk in the front door with a bowl of soup or a hug. I was an adult, a sick adult whose missed work and missed meetings could never be recovered, and all I could do was sit in my dorm in Baldwin Hall and send a few emails.

I was not in control. I was sick. I was alone. It sucked.

I also think I was having a fever nightmare that somehow made me believe that because of the one day I had missed, I was going to fail at college and never feel better again. A common side effect of the 2024 Allegheny College Plague: utter despair.

I laid in bed coughing, crying, snotting, sleeping and pondering 'Why is my head hurting so bad? What am I missing in class? Why couldn't I fight this off? This is definitely what being hit by a truck feels like' — the typical dramatics.

And then I heard a knock at my door. I buckled myself disembarking my ridiculously high-lofted bed and I looked through my peephole. It was my friend holding a Limon and Chile bowl with grilled chicken from Burgers and Fries because I prefer that to the Limon Chile chicken. In other words, it was an angel who knew what chicken I liked and brought me dinner.

As I devoured my bowl of protein, fiber and carbohydrates that would carry me on my healing journey, I tasted an ingredient that I didn't know I desperately needed: love.

One by one, responses to my out-sick emails rolled in with messages of concern, well wishes and offers of help. Having just joined a sorority, this support was even more amplified. I had a family at school.

The love and chicken ignited an epiphany within my pounding head; I am not alone. I am just sick and in college. And life goes on.

The love and chicken ignited an epiphany within my pounding head; I am not alone. I am just sick and in college. And life goes on."

—EMMA CONTI-WINDLE
Class of 2027

I think there is a positive there. I think we take better care of each other.

And now that I'm better, not having a fever nightmare, and much less emotional, I still get teary-eyed writing this. Because here we are at college, legal adults, scared most of the time, anxious most of the time, sick most of the time, but we are not alone.

We have love and chicken.

Wildfires in central Chile near Vina del Mar

Bensel says historic fires evidence of climate change

By **ZAYNAB JEBUR**

Science/International Editor

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Chile is dealing with prolonged wildfires that first broke out on Feb. 2 in the Valparaiso region. Since then, the fire has spread to other regions in central Chile, including O'Higgins, Biobio, Arucania, Maule, Libertador, Los Lagos and Santiago Metropolitan. The wildfires are a consequence of rising temperatures in 80% of the country and a dry season from January to March.

"You have drought conditions in Chile very similar to what California was experiencing a year or two ago — seven or eight years of drought and extremely warm and hot conditions this year," said Terrence Bensel, chair of the Environmental Science and Sustainability department. "Partly because of climate change and partly because of the El Nino that is gripping the Pacific basin region right now."

The climate conditions contributed to a prolonged spread of wildfires are very high temperatures, that kind of prolonged drought and strong winds due to El Nino.

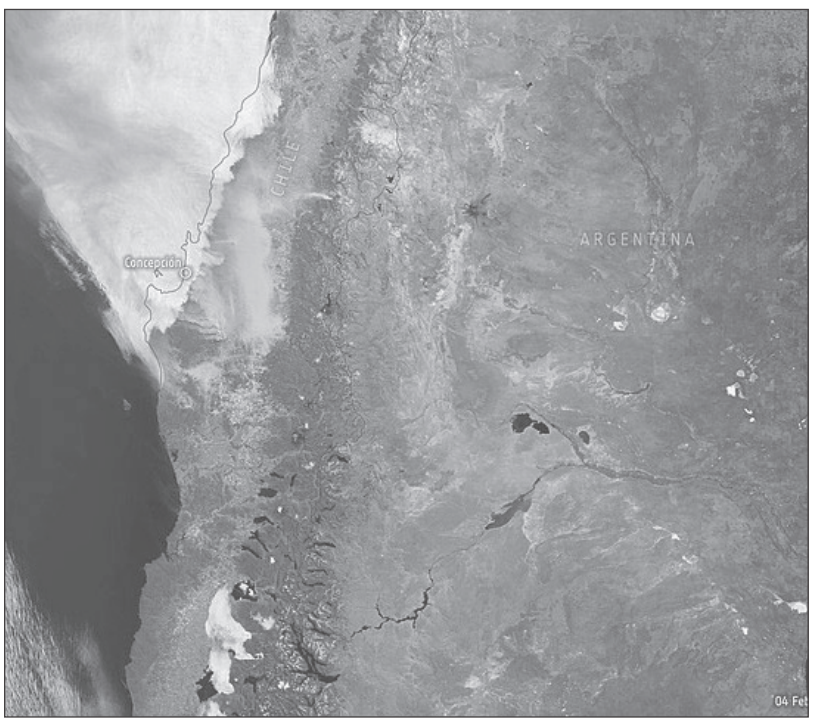


Photo contains modified Copernicus Sentinel data

Wildfires burn in Chile in February 2023.

"Once the fire gets going and then you add high wind conditions to that, it's going to really fuel the spread of the fires once they're started," Bensel said. "The drought and the heat can be directly linked to this kind of synergy between climate change and the episodic El Nino event that is happening."

Chile's hot and dry climate means that wildfires are common — though this year, more than 130 people have been killed and around 70,000 acres have been ravaged, according to the New York Times.

"It's certainly not normal conditions there," Bensel said. "Chile is used to having fires. It's not a completely unusual thing for them, but the scale of the fires and intensity of the fires is so much greater this year because of that."

There are a lot of factors that are contributing to such a devastating fire.

"One other factor that doesn't get talked about enough that is an issue there and in other countries is that they have large monoculture plantations of eucalyptus trees and eucalyptuses are really good trees to spread fires," Bensel said. "Once it catches fire, it really blows up and fires spread even faster."

Looking at the land make up of central Chile where the fires began, there is a high prevalence of forests and tree plantations.

"Even in the absence of that, this would've been a bad fire year, but that just again kind of exacerbates what seems to be a trend in places that aren't accustomed to these kinds of fires," Bensel said.

From Meadville's lack of snow to Chile's fires, there is a new precedent being set for the future. Rising temperatures worldwide are having an obvious impact on the weather.

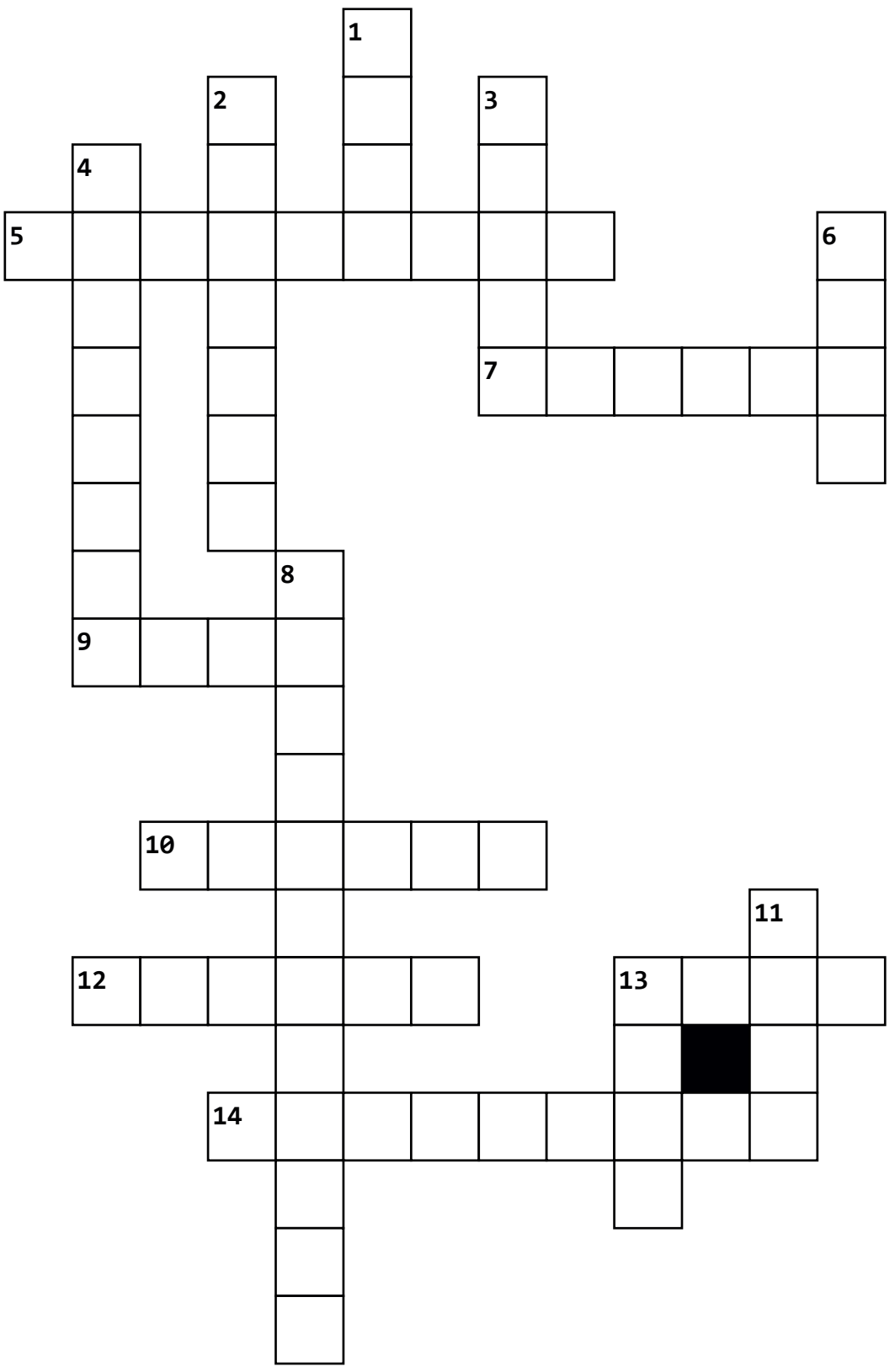
"This is very much a new normal," Bensel said. "These kinds of things shouldn't surprise us anymore and it is a very clear signal, or very clear signature of the changes we can expect with climate change."

In January, Colombia also suffered from forest fires that destroyed 162 square miles in the surrounding area of Bogota. At the same time, a fire broke out in the south of Argentina at Los Alerces National Park that destroyed around 4 square miles. This January was the hottest January on record, according to the Copernicus Climate Change Service

"These kinds of out-of-the-ordinary events are not isolated, they're not random any longer," Bensel said. "Statistically and scientifically, no longer can you say, 'There are always weather extremes and there's always this and there's always that.' This is direct proof of a changing climate and what the consequences will be."

These consequences are not standard and can lead to devastation — in the Chilean city of Vina del Mar, whole neighborhoods were destroyed, leaving at least 1,600 people homeless according to Al Jazeera.

"It will mean more deaths, it will mean more economic damage and harm that comes with it and that should be a wakeup call that is no longer some far off, distant problem that we can speculate about," Bensel said. "It's right here, it's right now and we are feeling the effects of it."



Superscience

By **JOSEPH KLEPEIS**
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Across

5. H. Ducreyi variant that is most well known
7. Climate event that occurs in Pacific Ocean (two words)
9. The adhesive substance that Neanderthals were discovered to have made
10. Sea that a megastructure was found in
12. was an answer in the last Campus crossword on Feb. 2
13. New type of protoplanets that models show could exist
14. Professor of Biology, Biochemistry, and Global Health Studies

Down

1. Length of time that NASA wants volunteers to pretend they are on Mars
2. These have largely gone unchanged for 250 million years in butterflies and moths
3. South American country experiencing wildfires
4. What dinosaurs in Africa were doing before an asteroid struck
6. Material that a soon-to-be launched Japanese satellite is made from
8. Name given to first dinosaur 200 years ago
11. Skin infection that mostly affects children

Answer Key

Across
5. chancroid, 7. ElNino, 9. glue, 10. Baltic, 12. Bensel, 13. flat, 14. Humphreys

Down
1. year, 2. genomes, 3. Chile, 4. thriving, 6. wood, 8. Megalosaurus, 11. Yaws

The Comedy Corner

Wizards, Dentists and Tipping

By **JOSEPH KLEPEIS**
Staff Writer
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Police in Leicestershire, England, dispatched firearms officers to an Enderby hotel following a report of a man carrying a large knife — but it turned out to be a Harry Potter fan with a wand, the BBC reported on Feb. 12.

"Thankfully the situation was resolved peacefully," said one of the responding officers. "Our Auror unit was handling a dark wizard in Loughborough so this could have gone south quickly."

The Pittsburgh Union Progress reported on Feb. 9 that riders who use the light rail system in downtown Pittsburgh can expect delays of 30 minutes or more on most weekends through March.

"30 minutes? I can't believe that," said a Pittsburgh resident who takes the train to work. "Usually the delays are 45 minutes to an hour, glad to hear they're finally doing something positive."

Pittsburgh Magazine highlighted on Feb. 12 a three-bedroom home atop Mount Washington that has a view of downtown from its two-story deck. The view was described as priceless.

That's good to know for future reference that $475,000 (the price the home is listed at) is when something becomes priceless.

An FBI informant has been charged with lying about President Joe Biden and his son Hunter Biden's ties to a Ukrainian energy company, according to Politico.

"It's true I lied about the ties," said the informant. "I told everyone they wore Windsor knots, when in actuality they wore the half-Windsor."

The informant, if convicted, faces a maximum penalty of 25 years in prison.

"I didn't even reveal the worst of it all," said the informant. "These half-Windsor knots weren't even knots. They were clip-ons!"

Spotlight PA reported on Feb. 15 that Penn State trustees and high-ranking university representatives met privately twice in January to discuss whether to name the football field at Beaver Stadium after former head coach Joe Paterno.

That's like the Philadelphia Eagles renaming Lincoln Financial Field after Bill Cosby.

AP reported on Feb. 15 that a New York City man managed to live rent-free in a landmark Manhattan hotel by exploiting an obscure local housing law.

Mickey Barreto had moved from New York City to Los Angeles when his boyfriend informed him about a loophole that allows occupants of single rooms in buildings constructed before 1969 to demand a six-month lease. Barreto claimed that because he'd paid for a night in the hotel, he counted as a tenant.

He asked for a lease and the hotel kicked him out. He then took legal action – all the way up to the state Supreme Court, where he finally won.

The judge ordered the hotel to give Baretto a key. He said he lived there until July 2023 without paying any rent because the building's owners never wanted to negotiate a lease with him, but they couldn't kick him out.

This all came to a grinding halt when Barreto filed paperwork claiming ownership of the entire hotel and tried to charge another tenant rent.

Can you blame the guy? They say go big or go home, and he had no home.

The Irish Examiner reported on Feb. 16 that University College Cork has dropped plans for Cork University Dental School and Hospital to move to a bigger site, despite its dean warning that the current building is "untenable" without significant investment.

"We were chomping at the bit to build this," said a UCC administrator. "But the idea has bit the dust. It's a hard pill to swallow. I guess we bit off more than we could chew."

The Meadville Tribune reported on Feb. 17 that the Meadville Police Department is currently seeking tips.

Tipping culture really is out of control.

Mac McClung won his second NBA Slam Dunk Contest on Feb. 17.

With any luck, McClung will be able to win two more dunk contests in the future. That would bring his contest wins up to four, the same number of games he's played in the NBA.

The Oregonian reported on Feb. 19 that Portland restaurant Magna has just launched a lunch menu.

The lunch will be a la carte at The Oregonian's 2021 Restaurant of the Year. It will be between 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.

"The new lunch menu will be called the Magna Carta," said one of the chefs. "Anyone who orders at 12:15 p.m. will get a special discount."

The concept of a silent book club is gaining popularity in the Pittsburgh area.

The rules of Silent Book Club are simple: No assigned reading, no homework and no small talk required. Members are expected to show up at a designated meeting place with whatever title they're enjoying, sit and read. They can share thoughts if they want, but they don't have to, according to the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review.

This does sound nice and all, but it also just sounds like a library without being a library.

Disclaimer: All quotes are fictious. Any lack of joy as a result of this article is unintentional and we claim no responsibility.

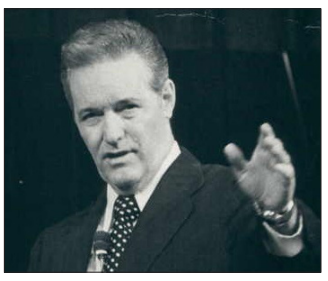
This week in history

The Rex Humbard Affair

By **PIPER BOOKER**
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In the thirteenth edition of the 83rd volume of The Campus, one article made the front headline. "Students Vote Apology for Revival Disturbance." Underneath it is two more stories. "Humbard Wants Apology" alongside "Rex Humbard, Revival Preacher Holds Meeting in Field House."

In the span of a week, Allegheny College witnessed an event so interesting it required three stories in one edition. The situation held so much attention that, including Letters To The Editors, took over almost five pages of the newspaper itself. The question lingered: what had happened to cause such an



HUMBARD

outcry on campus?

On Monday, Feb. 22, 1960, Allegheny College was the location of a revivalist service for famous Ohioan televangelist Rex Humbard. According to The Campus, the televangelist's team had booked the David Meade Field House under the guise of "a quartet" performance. While Humbard did bring along the Weatherford Quartet to Meadville with him, there was no mention that the quartet would be a part of a revivalist service. The college, alongside the public, allegedly only found out about the revivalist service when they saw it in the paper "nine days prior to the date set for the rally."

Immediately, the college did its best to correct the situation at hand. However, Chaplain Charles Ketcham was told that "the Cathedral organization had already made video tapes advertising the affair, and, according to Mr. Humbard, it would have cost his organization $1,500 to change these tapes." Though the college did not want to host a revivalist service, there was nothing that could be done: the advertisements had gone out.

Allegheny students did not share the same stance as the college. While the college's position was to show Humbard respect, it became clear that students did not plan to follow the college's wishes. Students planned to cause "trouble." As The Campus reported, "Before and during the program students played cards, knit, studied, or sat watching and waiting. Signs appeared in one corner of the student audience with such remarks as "Oh, Lawd, I'm for Zen," "Hallelujah," "Barf," "Unfair to Organized Atheists," and "I'm a sinner. So what?" During Humbard's service, "a cross with fire crackers exploding from it was seen burning on a bluff outside the field house" as a way to mimic Humbard's renowned use of fireworks in his program.

Allegheny students were not the only audience, however. Humbard's service was open to the public, and Meadville residents were more of a fan than many students. As the rally ended, The Campus reported a woman running up to the microphone, saying, "I came sixteen miles and brought my children here, and I am thoroughly ashamed."

Meadville residents were in uproar, disgusted at the way students treated Humbard. The Campus does not report specific public opinions, except for Letters to the Editor from alumni and students alike, but there is an overwhelming assumption that Allegheny College's relationship with some Meadville residents was tainted by student reactions to Humbard.

In response to the backlash, the Allegheny Student Government voted to release a public apology. Then-President Lawrence Pelletier, who had attended the meeting, expressed that students had done the "very opposite" of what their actions at the rally intended to do: express discontent with a religion with which "many of us cannot agree."

Nevertheless, Pelletier spoke out against the way that students acted, saying that it was not gentlemanly or ladylike. While the student body voted to release the public apology, they wanted to make it clear that the apology was to those in public attendance, not to Humbard himself. The apology ends, "Although we cannot support the religious views expressed during the service, we realize that our actions were intolerant and wish to extend, our apologies to those in attendance."

Humbard was not happy with any apologies that the college community tried to give. As reported by The Campus, Humbard felt as though "the disturbance Monday was planned, and that either the president, the dean, the Chaplain, and the faculty or the students authored the plot."

Allegedly, Humbard felt only one thing could make the situation right: if he was allowed to return to the college and host another revival service with no disruption. If the college agreed to do this, Humbard would "consider that the students were responsible for the 'plot.'" According to Allegheny's public relations officer, Pelletier would (most likely) only respond if and when Humbard contacted college officials. Humbard did make a return visit to Meadville, but not through the college. As reported in the March 4, 1960, edition of the Campus, Humbard was returning to preach on March 7 at the Joyland Rollerdome.

This incident made such an impact in 1960 that Rex Humbard made The Campus' April Fools issue, then called The Hemlock Cup. Humbard is featured in a story about a brawl with Allegheny's Air Force Cadets. In this story, he is jokingly named the dean of students. In another story, Humbard is jokingly told to be holding a mass meeting for all male students that night at 11 p.m. in regards to the 'Air Farce' (Air Force). The last line of the article states, "Rex Humbard will also speak on 'How to be a Martyr in Five Easy Steps,' for the battle-minded cadet."

JaDE Spring Benefit Concert set for Sat, Feb. 24

By **EVELYN ZAVALA**
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The Jazz and Dance Ensemble Spring Benefit Concert is an annual performance to raise funds for the Crawford County Special Olympics through their performance, raffles and fundraising.

On Feb. 24 at 7 p.m. in the Shafer Auditorium, JaDE along with other organizations such as the Egg Detectives and Orchesis will be performing in the fundraiser.

JaDE President Haley Fabich, '24, gave an overview of what audiences can expect at the concert. The upcoming concert is going to be the biggest show JaDE has had in the last couple of years, with a total of 16 pieces, According to Fabich.

"There are going to be several dances done by JaDE dancers, a piece we will be performing with Special Olympics athletes, we have four studios coming from off-campus to come to perform with us," Fabich said.

The four studios that will be in attendance are Oil Region Ballet Company, Allegro Dance Arts, LLC, Sovereign Ballet and Patterson School of Ballet, Inc. according to Fabich.

"We choose the organizations mostly based on interest," Fabich said. "The only prerequisite is just that they have to be family-friendly just because we try and make this a really good community show people can bring their kids to and get a lot of community engagement and donations."

Co-Fundraising Chair Beth Ma, '26, gave insight into the fundraising that has been done prior to the show and how the upcoming concert will be raising funds.

"We always do raffle baskets and I try to leave it up to the organizations that we ask who agree to make a basket," Ma said. "Some organizations like to do a comfy, cozy sort of thing while other people might choose to do an arts and crafts kit…mostly we request that the value be at least around $20 to $30 and that they set up a pickup time for us before the show."

Prior to the show, JaDe held a Valentine's Sale where they sold candy bags, crochet hearts and crochet flowers which allowed them to raise over $500, Ma said. This kind of fundraiser was new; in previous years they had used Penny Wars.

In preparation for the show, JaDE members have practiced twice a week for two hours on Thursdays and Sundays, Ma said.

"So many members are either dancers or choreographers or on the board of Orchesis so we start the day Orchesis ends," Ma said. "The choreographers are done choreographing and we have finished learning and polishing all the pieces so tech these next few days is going to be important to us in making sure we're one with all the pieces."

Financing is a challenge JaDE faced during the process of planning for the event according to Ma.

"I think the only small issue might have been that we weren't able to get funding from ASG for the raffle baskets because the way we've done it in prior years has changed or, from what I understand, it was supposed to be a certain way and just didn't happen in past years that way," Ma said. "This year they are really cracking down and just reinforcing certain rules that are meant to be there."

Performance Chair Jayne Seth, '26, described the impact she wants the concert to have on the community.

"I hope the audience realizes how much work goes into putting on a show like this through a student-run organization," Seth said. "And also, that even though life may be difficult or more challenging in different ways for some people, that doesn't mean that they can't still enjoy the things as everyone else."

Fabich said all the pieces are choreographed by members of JaDE and explained the process of gaining piece approval.

"We have people do choreography proposals every year, so we do one in the fall semester for the Cookie's and Milk performance and we do another proposal for our benefit concert," Fabich said. "We watch everyone's proposal and we vote anonymously and whoever's piece gets chosen, those are the ones that we do."

In preparation to perform with the Special Olympics athletes, they are asked to practice once a week. There will be five athletes performing with JaDE when in previous years it has been around three, according to Ma.

"We are always trying to showcase a high level of performance and technique from all of our members," Fabich said. "People are donating and people are coming to the show to support us so we want to make sure that our performance matches what people are donating for."

> "We are always trying to showcase a high level of performance and technique from all of our members."
>
> —HALEY FABICH
> Class of 2024

The 'Ultimate' Fundraiser

By **AB SNYDER**
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A frigid 20-degree day was nothing to the leaders of the Ultimate Frisbee club who stood last week in the Gator Quad to raise money for the team. For $3, students were allowed to pie club members in the face from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 15 and Friday, Feb. 16.

The goal was to raise funds for the club's games, equipment and overall expenses.

"We kind of stole the idea from the other campus organizations that have done previous things, like the frats," said Team Captain Elle Carpenter, '25. "We put our own twist on it."

The Ultimate Frisbee club's roster has 43 people, with captains for the men's team, women's team and mixed teams.

Leadership had originally made the decision to host an event after the Allegheny Student Government lifted some of its previous restrictions on club fundraising, said Ultimate Frisbee President Michael German, '25.

German has been president since last semester, and a part of the club since he arrived on campus.

German considered day one to be a pretty big success.

"A lot of people showed up to get punished," German said. "A lot of the team showed up, which I'm happy about, and we had a good turnout."

Day one of the fundraiser saw $150 donated on Venmo within the first hour. There were also alumni who contributed to the donations. By the end of the first day, the club raised about $300 and another $100 the second day.

Most of the funds raised go towards Ultimate Frisbee's trip to the annual High Tide Ultimate Tournament, which takes place in Myrtle Beach over spring break.

ASG funds 70% of the Myrtle Beach Trip, so the club took it upon themselves to find a fun way to raise the remaining 30% of costs.

Many people are looking forward to the tournament, with the team taking a roster of 24 people to High Tide, Carpenter said. Last year, the team placed second overall at the tournament.

Given the success of the fundraiser, German said that the club would absolutely be open to more fun events in the future — though hopefully in warmer conditions.

"It's definitely something that we can do more of," German said.

> "A lot of people showed up to get punished."
>
> —MICHAEL GERMAN
> Class of 2025





AB SNYDER/THE CAMPUS

Top left: Kyle Ryan, '26, braces for impact during a fundraiser for Ultimate Frisbee on the Gator Quad Thursday, Feb. 15.
Top right: Bridgette Rourke, '26, pies Ryan in the face.
Bottom left: Hailey Herring, '26, adds a second pie to the mix.
Bottom right: Ryan triumphantly holds the two harrowing baked goods in celebration.



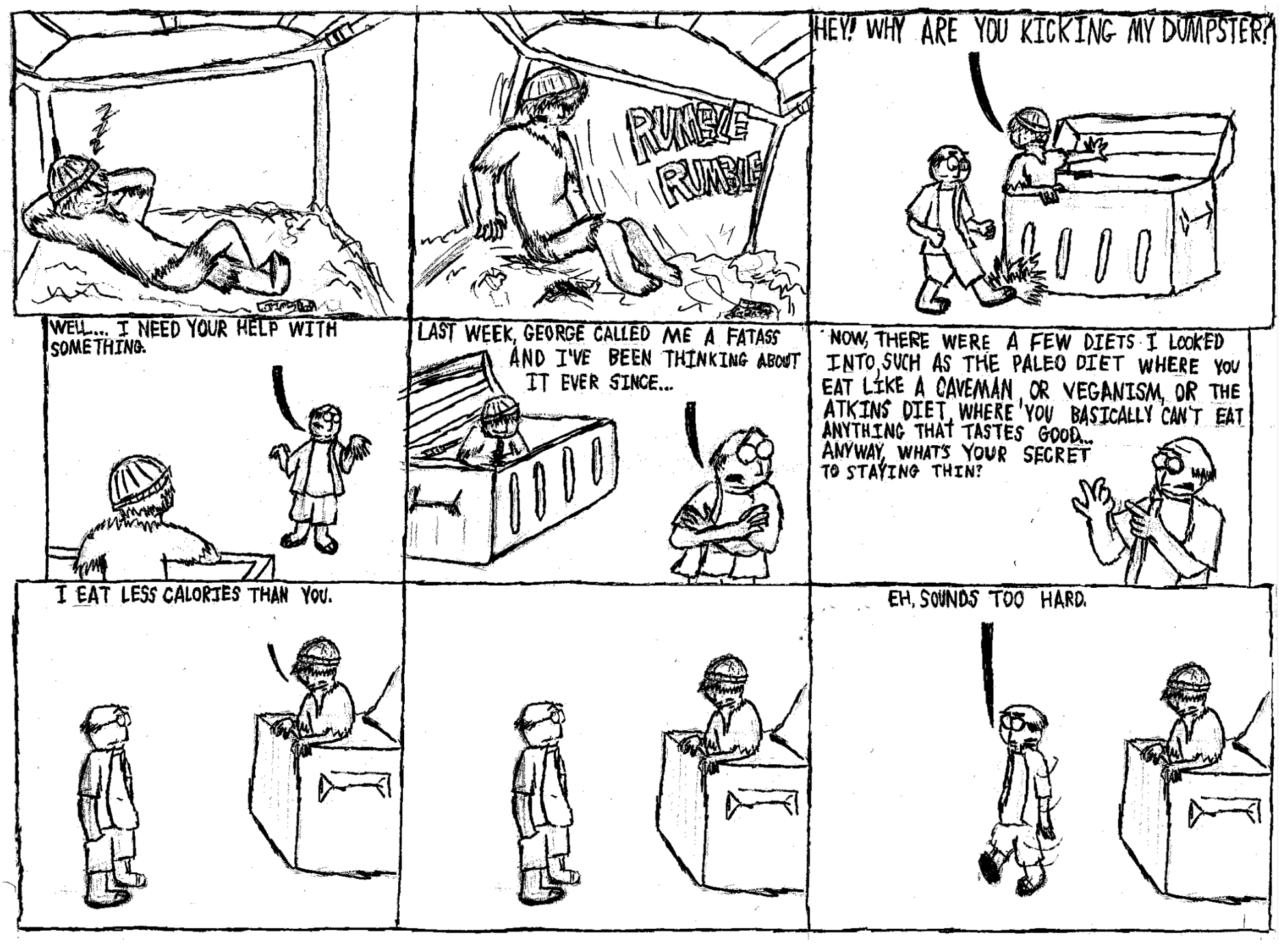




AB SNYDER/THE CAMPUS
Members of Allegheny's Ultimate Frisbee team gather around their table on the Gator Quad during the first day of their fundraiser on Thursday, Feb. 15.

Cognitive/\Dissonance

By **HENRY GREFENSTETTE**
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Softball looks to build on success from last year

By **KYLE CHANDLER**
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The day continues to get closer until Allegheny softball takes the field for another season of action. Just over a week away, opening day is set for March 3 against Concordia College.

The first quarter of the season will be played in Clermont, Florida, as the Gators begin the year on their annual spring trip. It is a chance for players to make a desirable impression in a different swamp, and everyone is excited to get the ball rolling.

"This is the strongest team we've had in the last 12 years that I've been here," said head coach Beth Curtiss.

> We want to win the PAC. We want to go to the post season — these players within the program, they really want to go to the NCAA tournament, and not just experience it but also compete.
>
> —BETH CURTISS
> Head Softball Coach
> Allegheny College

Taking over at the helm for the 2013 campaign, Curtiss and company put together one of their best seasons during her tenure last year. Binding together a 24-12 record, Allegheny made the conference tournament for the first time since 2018.

Despite losing both contests in the double-elimination tournament, it showed a monumental change from the 4-18 record held after the 2021 season.

"Right now we're at a good place with culture," Curtiss said. "There's a lot of players within this program that want to continue to see it go to new heights. The players that we're recruiting, the players that are currently here, the new additions, they all have been exposed this year to what it is that we want. We want to win the PAC, we want to go to the postseason — these players within the program, they really want to go to the NCAA tournament, and not just experience it but also compete."

An emphasis on a growing mindset was instilled as soon as last year's affairs came to a close.

Players believed they were burnt out, leading to their downfall come postseason play. They knew a different method was needed, and began working on the development of mental toughness.

"'Max Out Mindset,' we read that as a group together over (Christmas) break," Curtiss said. "It works a lot on what it takes to be able to max out as far as the physical but also mental."

Players have grown closer throughout this process, according to senior captain Hadley Horensky, '24. A four-year starter for the Gators, she has been vital in communication and bringing everyone together.

She recalled a Friday night after practice when the team ordered pizza and conversed for hours in the Henderson Campus Center.

"We spoke about what we wanted our goals to be this year," Horensky said. "And, the values that we were really holding onto, and what we want for our foundation of the team."

Many of the players competed in summer leagues to work on their crafts, including Horensky. Signing up with the Pittsburgh Power, she saw action alongside other Presidents' Athletic Conference softball athletes, including two friends, Lauren Harris of Grove City College and Emma Bliss of Waynesburg University.



Photo courtesy of Ed Mailliard

Left to right: Juliana Evans, '26, Hadley Horensky, '24, Mayley Gleason, '25, and Sophia Godzak, '25. The Gators bench celebrates at home plate after Godzak's home run in a game from last year.

The trio goes back to high school. Harris' father was the head coach of their travel ball team since 14U.

Staying close throughout the years, Horensky, Harris and Bliss get to develop their skills together and get an idea of the competition they will face in the spring.

Also getting after her fundamentals this summer was Sophia Godzak, '24. The junior stud earned First Team All-PAC honors last season, fishing top-ten in the conference in walks, doubles and on-base percentage.

"(My) dad and I put in a lot of work refining my swing, getting myself prepared for this new season," Godzak said. "Last year, we didn't end on the note we wanted. More personally, I didn't end on the note I wanted to, so I knew I had to put in a lot of work."

Godzak has been working at third base throughout the preseason, a position she is unfamiliar with. Coming in as primarily a first baseman, playing the other side of the diamond has been a challenge.

She is still confident that her preparation will pay off. Curtiss has been blasting ground balls to her at the "hot corner," and Godzak has gloved a ton of reps.

Although only in her third year, she will play in her final season. Godzak will be toting her robes early and plans to attend graduate school in the Pittsburgh area after this semester.

"This whole offseason has reminded me how much love I have for the game of softball. It's really hitting me that it's going to be my last one. I've just been enjoying practice, and having fun and laughing. I'm gonna go out with a bang and make it the best I can."

The Gators goal has been set, and a PAC Championship would be Allegheny's first conference title since 2013.

WLAX enters 30th season

By **SAMI MIRZA**
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Allegheny's women's lacrosse team is looking ahead to their home opener this weekend against Ohio Wesleyan University. The game — set for Saturday at 1 p.m. at Frank B. Fuhrer Field — will start the 30th season for women's lacrosse at Allegheny. The team is approaching the game as a "fresh start."

"I think being able to kind of take control of what we want this program to look like for the future is really something that we're trying to set out to do," said team captain Lauren Petrarca, '25. "We want to create that positive environment, create a good program, set up for success in the future."

The Gators are coming off a second-place finish in the Presidents' Athletic Conference last season. They compiled a 14-5 record overall and 8-1 in conference play, reaching the conference championship against Washington and Jefferson. On Monday, the Gators were ranked No. 2 in the PAC's preseason poll, just nine points shy of W&J.

This season, however, the Gators will have to contend with a smaller roster, with just 15 players, 12 of whom will be on the field at any given time.

"It's just a full effort to make sure that we can get the most effective defense possible, the most effective offense, same thing with midfield, just trying to train everyone in those positions, but work to our strong suits," Petrarca said.

"We'll be very well rounded this year," added midfielder Emily Herrold, '24.

At the same time, the tight bench situation has opened up opportunities for younger players to step onto the field in new ways.

"It's also really cool to see certain people step up into different positions that they might have not had in the past," said team captain Sybi Gerhart, '24. "Saturday — and the rest of the season — is going to show how much hard work we've put in so far and I think that's really awesome."

In addition to the roster changes, the Gators will be led by a new face: Georgie Volna joined the team in early November as an assistant coach and now holds the top job.

"There's just a change in our staff, so I'm now taking over the role of the interim head coach while we have a search for a head coach," Volna said. "It's looking like I'll be here for the season and then hopefully we find somebody to fill the position, and I can go back to my assumed role of assistant coach."

A graduate of Meadville Area Senior High School, Volna played four seasons with the Saint Vincent College Bearcats before graduating in spring of 2023.

The team will also be guided by volunteer assistant coach Sarah Kelly, who said the smaller roster necessitates strong teamwork.

"It's going to be really important that we work together and not against each other, and also that we work to win," Kelly said.

Volna added that she's seen a good dynamic between players.

"They're really working together well, especially in practice these past few days," Volna said.

Even as the Gators focus on efficient and collaborative play, Herrold said that it will be equally important for the team to have a good time.

"Lacrosse can still be serious and, you know, lacrosse-oriented — but just having fun on and off the field, like in the locker room, like at practice, during games," Herrold said. "A really big emphasis on just like, actually enjoying being here in the present."

That starts with the Feb. 24 game against OWU, who the Gators have lost to the past two years.

"We're really coming out with a vengeance on Saturday," Gerhart said. "It's rained every single time we played them and we've lost, so, because it's not supposed to rain (Saturday,) I see it as a good sign."

All three players hope students and the wider Allegheny community will come out to support the team. Herrold in particular encouraged students unfamiliar with the sport to give it a try.

"I think that a lot of people get intimidated to come watch because they don't understand," Herrold said, adding that friends and family of the team will be in attendance to help explain the game. "Women's lacrosse is all about finesse, so it's a really pretty game to watch as well."



Photos courtesy of Ed Mailliard

Basketball host PAC playoff game

By **KYLE CHANDLER**
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The Allegheny women's basketball season has concluded after dropping a Presidents' Athletic Conference quarterfinal playoff game at James H. Mullen Jr. Arena to the Geneva Golden Tornadoes 84-73.

It was a hot start for the Gators (13-13, 12-8 PAC). They jumped on the Golden Tornadoes (13-13,11-9 PAC) early, stringing together a 10-4 run in the first five minutes and change.

After a media timeout, Geneva roared back and outscored Allegheny 15-6 the rest of the quarter.

They kept the momentum going in the second period. Allegheny turned the ball over 14 times in the opening 20 minutes, leading to 13 points for the Tornadoes.

By the end of the first half, the Gators were in a 16-point hole.

It was neck-and-neck coming out of the break,though Geneva held the reins until the final 10 minutes.

The Gators began the last quarter on a 15-4 run, bringing the game to within six points. It was a run that came out of nowhere.

"We could decide to pout and feel bad for ourselves because we're down," said head coach Kelley Muffley on what she told her team at the end of the third period. "Or we could go the opposite and really give it everything we have for the remainder of the season and see what that does."

Allegheny's hot streak cooled off toward the middle of the quarter. Once Geneva was able to get their lead back to double digits, they were sent to the foul line as the Gators' last chance to crawl back into the game.

Allegheny's spark was too little and too late. Geneva is moving onto the semifinal round, where they will play Washington and Jefferson College in the Presidents building on Thursday.

Despite the final result, the back half of the year for the Gators was stellar. From the second week of December to the second week of February, they strung together an 11-2 record to earn themselves a home playoff game.

It was the first postseason affair hosted in the swamp since the 2015-16 season.

"Last year we took a step by making the playoffs," Muffley said. "This year we took a step by hosting the playoffs. The moment was pretty big. For some of them, it seemed like nerves really took over, so I'm hoping that what we take from this is that we've been here before and we don't come out with the nerves and it doesn't take us until the third quarter to play basketball like we know how."

Muffley praised the upperclassmen for sticking with her through the years. She said the current juniors and seniors have been with her through the ups and downs and helped change the culture for the better.

In her first year at the helm, Allegheny ended the season with a 6-19 record. In three seasons, the turnaround has been enormous.

Better yet, all five starters will be returning for the next campaign in hopes of building on what was created this year.