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Mary the Mountaineer prepares to pass the musket



Meet the Morgantown native who won gold at the Big 12 Swim Championships

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The Daily Athenaeum



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WVU faces \$35 million budget deficit

Gee outlines financial strategies in State of the University address

BY TRENTON STRAIGHT
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

West Virginia University will likely have a \$35 million budget deficit next school year, President Gordon Gee announced Monday, during his State of the University address.

Gee said the deficit could grow to \$75 million in the next five years based on student enrollment and inflation projections alone.

"We need to better understand the reality we face," Gee said in his address. "Keep in mind the University operates on a budget of \$1.3 billion. A \$35 million deficit equals about 3% of our total budget. From a short-term financial perspective, that number is manageable."

The announcement comes just months after school administrators enforced a series of budget cuts and a hiring freeze for all full-time and tem-



PHOTO BY TRENTON STRAIGHT

Gee delivers his semi-annual State of the University address on March 27, 2023.

porary positions, which they say was brought on by the pandemic and an over-anticipated enrollment.

On Monday, Gee said the University would need to consider solutions beyond budget cuts to mend

the school's ongoing financial challenges. However, he did not provide an updated timeline on the current

cuts and the hiring freeze.

"But we cannot get to where we need to be by merely halting hospitality and reducing travel," Gee said. "We still need to operate as the R1, flagship institution of our state. It's clear, therefore, that we need to get to a better place."

Earlier this month, the WVU Board of Governors tasked Gee with developing a financial strategy to address the looming budget situation. Now, the university president has floated a broad proposal to focus on student success and academic programs as a way to curb the deficit.

The number of students attending and completing degree programs at WVU will continue to be a major player in the institution's financial future, according to Gee.

From spring 2019 to spring 2022, **See Deficit page 3**

Repairs coming soon to nearly all WVU blue lights

BY JULES OGDEN
NEWS EDITOR

More than a year after many of WVU's blue light emergency call boxes were reported broken, nearly all are in the process of being repaired, school officials confirmed Monday.

Buzz around the broken blue lights began in October 2021 after The Daily Athenaeum reported that many were missing parts or had discolored lights.

Since then, the blue lights and their role in keeping students safe have been discussed among the campus community.

In August 2022, school officials told The DA that the University may consider discontinuing the emergency call system altogether, citing low usage in previous years.

"We paused on repairing when we saw and shared the data on low usage of the system," President Gordon Gee said during his State of University address on Monday.

According to Gee, there have been fewer than 10 legitimate calls placed using the system since 2019 and only one in 2022.

However, University Police Chief Sherry St. Clair said that students and parents have been vocal about their concerns over the broken blue lights since school officials confirmed their possible removal from campus,

prompting UPD to move forward with repairs.

"There was just different outlets that we've had a lot of people just contact us, and I even had parents even this weekend, bringing it up to me when we were doing WVU Decide," St. Clair said.

Members of WVU's Student Government Association also expressed unease with the potential phasing out of the emergency call system last semester.

In January, school officials confirmed 13 of the 30 blue lights were still inoperable, citing supply chain issues and a delay in repairs.

However, as of Monday, 21 of the blue lights are operational with parts for eight more on the way, according

to St. Clair.

She said six of the broken blue lights are in the process of being repaired to address issues with the discontinued 3G network. Two more are awaiting parts for other maintenance issues.

According to St. Clair, the blue light call box located in Area 2 behind Woodburn Hall requires further investigation before being repaired, as it has power issues from unrelated construction in the area.

"There's no good way to fix that right now, so we're gonna look to see what we're gonna do with that one," St. Clair said.

St. Clair said the University will continue to encourage students to sign up for the LiveSafe app, which

students can use to call 911 or share their location along with other things when they feel unsafe.

In 2022, 22 LiveSafe users used the app to call for help, 276 users provided tips via chat and 191 provided tips to LiveSafe at work, according to Gee.

To help encourage students to download the app, the University has added LiveSafe registration tables in Oakland Residence Hall, the Law School and the Mountainlair.

"I do feel the LiveSafe app is extremely reliable and more accessible," Gee said. "We will continue to review each blue light location, evaluate the need and repair as quickly as parts are available."

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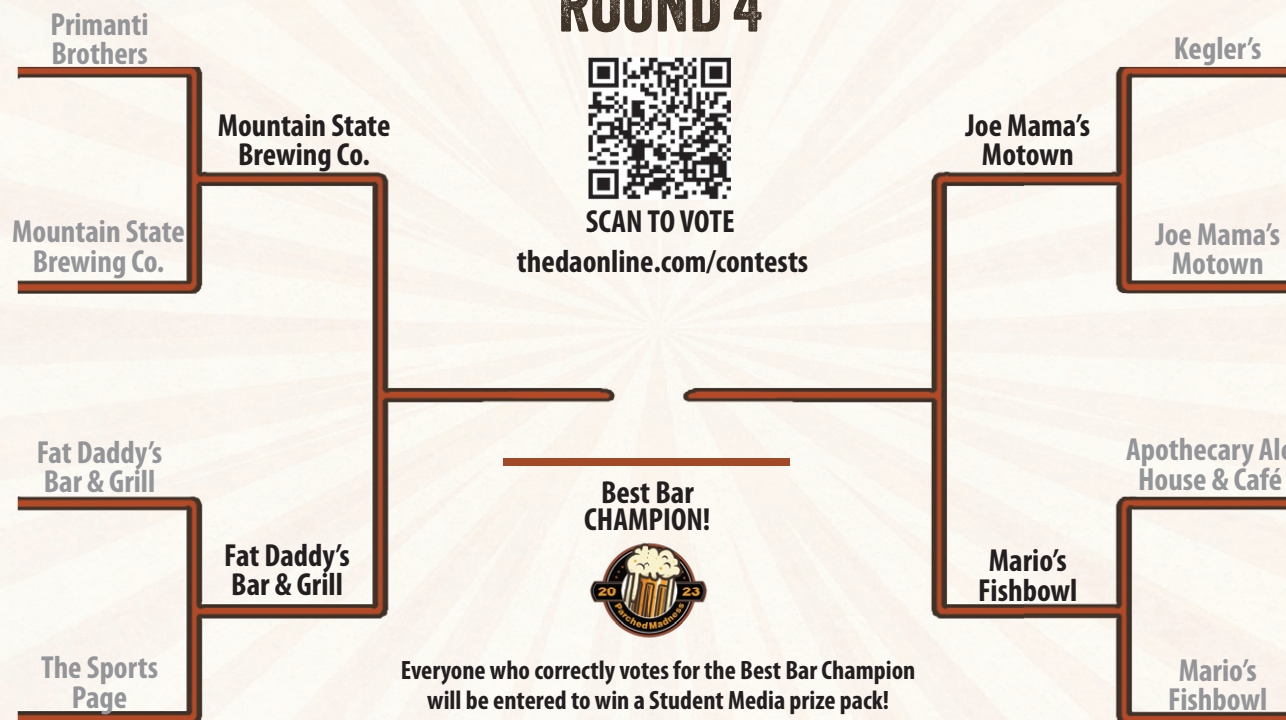
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What happened to the Pride Practice Facility?

BY DREW JONES
CORRESPONDENT

The Pride of West Virginia has been promised a new practice field since 2020 — one that would be better for their soles and their souls.

However, construction on the field was never started, and now WVU School of Music administrators say the project cannot start until the band has raised enough funding.

Currently, the band practices in the parking lots of either the Coliseum or the WVU Canady Creative Arts Center, and band members and faculty were told that a new practice facility would be open and ready to use by fall 2022, according to Cindi Roth, the president and CEO of the WVU Foundation.

Some students in the Pride of West Virginia have likened the promise of the practice facility to a joke.

“They said it [this year] was going to be the last we were practicing on the asphalt lot, and we wouldn’t have to deal with basketball game traffic or people trying to park on the practice field while we were practicing,” Chloe den Uijl, a senior in the Pride, said.

“For the most part, it sucked for the upperclassmen because we were promised this nice turf field and faux indoor facility, and then they made the promise for next year. We kind of see it as a joke at this point because nothing has happened.”

Badyn Woodford, a freshman in the Pride, mentioned similar concerns.

“At the groundbreaking ceremony in 2021, they released architectural renderings and had announced that it would be ready by this past semester — except it wasn’t. With no new expected date, we’ve started joking that it will be

2030 before this facility opens.”

Other members of the Pride said they were disappointed in both the lack of construction and the lack of demolition of Hawley Field, which, according to the band website, is where the new Pride practice facility is planned to be located.

“We feel like our needs as a band aren’t being met, and that our efforts aren’t valued. We put in hard work, and we deserve to do so out of harsh weather and not in a parking lot,” current Pride member Taylor Schwartz said.

“Our current area for practice takes a toll on our bodies, not only in harsh weather, but also with the asphalt surface being about twenty degrees hotter than the ambient temperature. We put in as much work as any other athletic team and work our tails off to put on a show for WVU fans and faculty alike. We deserve better.”

Scott Tobias, director of bands for WVU, had similar concerns.

“I have the same questions the students do. Ever since the groundbreaking ceremony, the project has been at a standstill,” he said.

“I’ve seen no emails or updates regarding the amount we have to fundraise, or about the progress of the field.”

Keith Jackson, dean of the College of Creative Arts, said that during spring break this year, the budget for the project decreased by \$1 million. The cost increased during the pandemic due to the rising price of building materials.

“Phase one had a budget, pre-pandemic, of \$1.2 million. Over the pandemic, that increased to \$2.6 million, and then it decreased to \$1.6 million recently. Phase two will have roughly the same cost. With phase three in the future, we do not have an estimated



PHOTO COURTESY WVU BANDS

A concept design of the Pride in formation on their practice field.



PHOTO COURTESY WVU BANDS

A concept design of the Pride practice facility pavilion.



PHOTO COURTESY WVU BANDS

A concept design of the storage room under the practice facility's pavilion.

cost on it yet,” Jackson said.

Jackson said the first of the three project phases was the field.

The other two included the construction of a storage facility and bathrooms and the canopy over the field in collaboration with Athletics.

Jackson said that the band

has been accepting donations for the project. While they only have \$1 million in hand, more was pledged on behalf of band and University alumni, as well as a grant from the Mayor Foundation.

He said that before construction can begin, the University must have all of the

money needed for the project in hand.

“The pandemic and fundraising were our two most heavy-hitting delays. However, I have been told that we are now able to start scheduling groundbreaking,” Jackson said. “Whether that is a ceremonial groundbreaking or

proper groundbreaking, I do not know.”

Jackson said if groundbreaking begins in the spring, the project should be complete by the end of the following season.

Deficit

Continued from page 1

total student enrollment at WVU decreased by more than 10% — a steeper decline than in previous years — according to data provided by WVU Institutional Research. This matches a larger trend of college enrollment across the state, which has been dropping for more than a decade.

“We had lower freshman enrollment in 2020 and 2021, as well as our international and transfer enrollment. All negatively impacted our financials,” Gee said. “Both years

were costly, not only from a financial perspective but also from a cultural and health and well-being perspective.”

Moving forward, Gee said the University will need to address the specific needs of students coming out of the pandemic.

“Our students are also overwhelmed, frustrated and anxious and they still feel the challenges of the pandemic as we do,” he said.

About 25% of WVU students are Pell Grant eligible, which Gee said means they have an “exceptional financial need.”

On Monday, he announced WVU Pledge, a new scholarship designed to support first-

time freshmen who are recipients of the WVU Promise Scholarship. The new program could cover the cost of tuition and fees, as well as campus living and dining expenses for eligible students.

“It is imperative that we remove as many barriers as possible to allow our brightest West Virginia students access to higher education. Ensuring that their basic needs are met allows them to focus on their education and their future.”

However, some students still have concerns about the affordability of college.

During a Q&A session Monday, Sindupa De Silva, president of the WVU Graduate and

Professional Student Senate, asked Gee if graduate students should expect additional measures to reduce the cost of attendance.

“It’s a huge hindrance to our success and our experience at this university ...,” De Silva said. “So I’m curious as to when we address a lot of these challenges and try to make success more accessible, will fees be part of that conversation?”

In response, Provost Maryanne Reed noted her department’s recent effort to increase the graduate worker stipend to \$15,000.

“I would argue that as an institution, we’ve done every-

thing we can at this moment in time to support our grad students ...,” Reed said. “But you saw, we have limited resources. It’s not a matter of will. It’s a matter of ability to meet those challenges.”

Gee and Reed noted that the University’s ongoing academic transformation process, designed to measure the “health” of degree programs, will also play a key role in cutting the deficit.

“I think what you’re hearing is that we need to accelerate that process,” Reed said about the school’s academic transformation efforts. “And so my team and I are beginning to develop an approach to that

process.”

While Gee did not share specifics about the University’s financial plan or its timeline Monday, he noted the plan is under development and will aim to secure the school’s financial growth and stability in the coming years.

“We will address our structural budget deficit and create a solid financial foundation,” Gee said. “We simply must do that.”

More information will be provided about the plan during a Campus Conversation scheduled for 11 a.m. Thursday, according to April Kaull, director of news for University Relations.

Mon Health offers free STI testing, resources

BY ANNA GOLDIZEN
STAFF WRITER

The Monongalia County Health Department (MCHD) offers free STI testing and resources to students and other members of the WVU and Morgantown communities.

All tests are kept completely confidential and are performed free of charge. The department also offers free treatment for certain STIs and referrals to specialists if a patient tests positive.

"I don't think a lot of students or a lot of people in the community are aware of the free and confidential services we offer," Jennifer Goldcamp, director of nursing for the MCHD, said.

The MCHD offers testing for chlamydia, gonorrhea, syphilis, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C and HIV. Self-swab tests are also available for chlamydia and gonorrhea.

Treatment for certain STIs may require payment, but it can be charged to students' insurance.

"I don't think a lot of students or a lot of people in the community are aware of the free and confidential services we offer."

-Jennifer Goldcamp, Director of Nursing for the MCHD

insurance.

"[For] Hepatitis C, there is treatment. It's very expensive treatment that is covered by most insurance, and we would also be able to make referrals," Goldcamp said.

After a patient is tested, their test is sent to the West Virginia Office of Laboratory Services for processing. Results are usually available in a week, Goldcamp said in an email.

Patients will be called by a nurse to inform them of their results once they are available.

While STIs such as Hepatitis B are incurable, they can

be treated to manage symptoms. The department offers resources to educate the community on how to prevent transmission and infection.

"There's no [cure] for Hepatitis B, but we do offer vaccines that protect against that, and our nurses can educate you, our community, our patients who come in, and [they are] happy to check their immunization status," Goldcamp said.

Goldcamp said that MCHD's resources are important because they provide students with the means to get tested for STIs privately.

"My children are in college.



PHOTO COURTESY MONONGALIA COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Jennifer Goldcamp, director of nursing for the Monongalia County Health Department.

I appreciate their open communication, but some things they want to keep private, including some STI screening," Goldcamp said.

MCHD also offers free birth control, another resource that remains confidential.

"Sometimes you just don't

want to use your doctor, or maybe you know the people who are in your doctor's office," Goldcamp said. "A lot of people come to the health department for just that confidentiality."

MCHD is open on weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30

p.m. and is located at 453 Van Voorhis Rd.

Students interested in being tested should make an appointment by calling 304-598-5119.

For more information, visit the Monongalia County Health Department website.

New class brings awareness to diabetic-safe meals, lifestyles

BY SARAH RANSOM
STAFF WRITER

WVU Extension is offering free diabetes education classes beginning in April for anyone who has diabetes or pre-diabetes or for their caretakers.

'Dining with Diabetes' aims to provide knowledge about diabetes and how it can affect the body, as well as a chance to learn how to change lifestyle routines.

"It gives us the opportunity to help educate people about what diabetes is, what's happening in their bodies and how to have conversations with their physicians," Gwen Crum, WVU Extension Family and Community Development agent, said.

The main purpose of the classes is to teach attendees how to prepare diabetic-safe meals and provide meal plans. In the classes, there will be live demonstrations of diabetes safe recipes, and participants will be given handouts to help them keep track of the curriculum.

"A lot of people don't understand what diabetes is, what is happening in their body, what are the potential complications that can come from developing diabetes and the other health concerns that they might face down the road if they're not managing it early



PHOTO COURTESY WVU EXTENSION

Dining with Diabetes is a free program that is open to individuals with diabetes or pre-diabetes, their family members, and their caregivers.

in the diagnosis," Crum said.

According to Crum, WVU Extension will also provide classes in October and November this fall. Classes will take place every Wednesday for four-week sessions, and participants are encouraged to attend all of the sessions offered to get the full experience and education about eating safely with diabetes.

"I think it is great that WVU Extension is providing classes for this," LaShauna Barbour, a type 1 diabetic, said. "I believe it will help a lot of young diabetics learn to take control of their diabetes before it is too late."

All classes are free, and WVU extension provides virtual and in-person options with varying times to allow

flexibility for participants.

"It's not something that you should be ashamed of nor something that should be put on the back burner," Malia Whiting, a student and a type 2 diabetic, said.

Anyone interested in enrolling can visit WVU Extension's website to register and learn more about the program.

WVU launches new scholarship

STAFF REPORT

WVU President Gordon Gee announced a new scholarship program on Monday designed to support some students with the cost of attendance.

The program — deemed the WVU Pledge Scholarship — will help cover tuition and fee costs for recipients of the Promise Scholarship who have an expected family contribution (EFC) of zero.

"It is imperative that we remove as many barriers as possible to allow our brightest West Virginia students access to higher education," Gee said in his address. "Ensuring that their basic needs are met allows them to focus on their education and their future."

Gee noted that about 25% of WVU students qualify for the Federal Pell Grant, saying those students have an "exceptional financial need."

According to WVU's Financial Aid website, the program will cover the full cost of tuition and fees, as well as the standard cost for a residence hall room and meal plan.

In Morgantown, a standard dorm room costs \$4,350, and the Go 13 meal plan costs \$5,262.

Described as a "last-dollar-in program," the value of each scholarship will be determined by a student's cost

of attendance after receiving other programs like the Pell Grant and Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant.

Students will be automatically considered for the scholarship based on the following eligibility:

- Be an incoming first-time freshman for the fall 2023 semester
- Have submitted their FAFSA by the May 1, 2023, deadline
- Be admitted to the Morgantown, Beckley or Keyser campus by June 1
- Be a Promise recipient with an EFC of zero per the FAFSA
- Live in a residence hall during each semester the scholarship is received

Recipients can renew the scholarship each school year, as long as they continue living in a campus residence hall and meet the renewal requirements for the Promise Scholarship. They would also need to have remaining costs not covered by other financial aid.

Students registered for WVU Online coursework are not eligible for the scholarship, according to the University.

More information about the WVU Pledge Scholarship can be found on WVU's Financial Aid website.

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Roush prepares to pass the musket

BY SAVANNAH JONES
CORRESPONDENT

After a sophomore year like no other, Mary Roush is preparing to end her tenure in the buckskins.

Mikel Hager's selection as the new Mountaineer Mascot at the men's basketball game against Kansas State game marked the beginning of the end for Roush, but she will not be leaving empty handed.

"Being a Mountaineer has been the biggest honor I'll ever have in my lifetime. I've been able to travel the state of West Virginia, the place I was born and raised, and see places I've never seen before," Roush said.

The sophomore from Mason County, West Virginia, was the third woman ever to be WVU's mascot, preceded by Natalie Tennant in 1990 and Rebecca Durst in 2009, and the first freshman selected for the

position.

While her tenure will go down in history books, it's not the most important part of the position for Roush.

"It really didn't matter at what age I won, or whether I was a boy or girl. My experience was amazing because the position of the Mountaineer is amazing," Roush said.

During her one year tenure, Roush traveled the country for various sporting events, her favorite season being basketball season. She noted that the Pitt, Virginia Tech and Baylor games were unforgettable.

"I was very lucky to get every single appearance that I had, and I enjoyed every single second in the buckskins," Roush said.

Additionally, Roush said she appreciated the position because it gave her an outlet to encourage children that had grown up in a rural community like she had.

"I got to go into an elemen-

tary school somewhere in West Virginia and tell those kids, as long as they worked hard, their dreams could come true — because that's exactly what happened to me," Roush said.

While the job was a lot to handle, Roush took mostly online classes to ease the workload.

"It's a really, really big responsibility to be the Mountaineer, and you've just got to make time to be the Mountaineer, to be a student, and to be a good friend and colleague to your peers," Roush said.

Hager will take over as the Mountaineer Mascot at the WVU spring football game on Saturday, April 22.

"My advice for Mikel would just be to soak it all in and to, just be really proud of himself and own it. You know, it takes a lot to become a Mountaineer, and he's done it, so now it's all about just enjoying it and being awesome," Roush said.



PHOTO BY LUKE BLAIN

Mary Roush leads the crowd in cheers as the West Virginia University men's basketball team plays against Texas Tech in the Phillips 66 Big 12 Men's Basketball Tournament on March 8, 2023.

Cheer to Mountaineer: Get to know Mikel Hager, the next WVU mascot

BY DREW JONES
CORRESPONDENT

Mikel Hager of Madison, West Virginia, was named WVU's 69th Mountaineer mascot earlier this month. Hager is a senior exercise physiology major with minors in psychology and communication studies.

A four-year member of the WVU Gold Cheer Team, Hager shared how he feels his experiences have prepared him for the coveted position and what he is looking forward to for the coming year.

Editor's note: The following interview has been edited for length and clarity.

The Daily Athenaeum: What was your reaction to being named the Mountaineer?

Hager: I had to pinch myself to make sure I wasn't dreaming. I've been out on the floor hundreds of times. But when you're kind of the center of everything, it's a lot different.

DA: What are you most looking forward to doing or participating in as the Mountaineer?

Hager: I'm really excited to have a larger impact on smaller communities and

young fans. As a cheerleader, I've done the game day thing, and I love it and there's no rush like running the team on the field, but I'm really excited for all the smaller appearances at the festivals, the fairs, all the grade schools and having an impact on younger fans.

DA: What do you think makes the Mountaineer so important to not only WVU but West Virginia as a whole?

Hager: The Mountaineer is kind of the physical embodiment. If you look at the statue ... it's not modeled after any one specific Mountaineer. It's kind of like an ideal. So when you become the Mountaineer, you take on that ideal West Virginian, the ideal person, you're a symbol that people always look to...

DA: Where do you want to go most as the Mountaineer that you haven't already been as a cheerleader?

Hager: It's been awesome. I've been to every Big 12 School so far, but I'd really like to go to a national championship. I think that'd be a lot of fun... I've probably been to, I'd say like 45 of the 55 counties so I'd really like to check all the other ones off my list. Just excited to kind of see the state as a whole, meet the people.



PHOTO BY JAKE TAYLOR

Mikel Hager, the 2023-24 Mountaineer mascot, leads his first cheer at the WVU Coliseum during the men's basketball game against Kansas State on March 4, 2023.

DA: Have there been any experiences as a cheerleader that you feel have prepared you to be the Mountaineer?

Hager: ...I've been stand-

ing right beside the Mountaineer for the past four years. So I've seen what happens when the gun doesn't go off. I've seen what happens when

these fans grab you in the tailgate, but you really have somewhere you have to be. So I feel like I'm uniquely qualified to have a much smaller learning curve because I've already been in such close proximity for so long.

DA: Have you had any experiences with the last four Mountaineers that have inspired you for this position?

Hager: The first time that I knew that it was something that I was really, really passionate about was my freshman year walking through a tailgate. I was just there as a fan and I saw Trevor Keys have an interaction with a young fan and seeing the excitement that it brought all the kids around... That was kind of like the lightbulb moment of like that's something that I think that I would really really like to do...

DA: Is there anything else you'd like to say as the future Mountaineer?

Hager: I'm really excited to get started and I can't thank the previous Mountaineers enough for putting me in a position to succeed, knowing that I always have them as a resource to reach out to any time I need.

Three things to do in Morgantown this weekend

BY LARA BONATESTA
CULTURE EDITOR

As March draws to a close and the weather begins to warm, there are a variety of things to do to celebrate the beginning of Spring. This weekend, The Daily Athenaeum recommends an artisan showcase, a spring craft show and a comedy festival.

1 Artisan Showcase

Head to the Erickson Alumni Center this Friday between 5 and 8 p.m. for the second annual spring artisan showcase. The event is free and open to the public.

Visitors will be able to shop local, handmade goods, receive a complimentary caricature by artist Ben Kolb and meet award-winning local artists.

More information can be found on the event's Facebook page.

2 Spring Craft Show

The Mylan Park Spring Craft show will take place this Saturday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. with more than 150 booths from across West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Ohio and Maryland.

The event will be held in the Ruby Community Center. More information can be found on the event's Facebook page.

3 Comedy Festival

On Saturday afternoon, the Red Eye Comedy Festival will return to Morgantown Brewing Company starting at 1 p.m. The show will be hosted by Lawton Parnell and feature a number of comedians including Liam Nelson, Liza Banks and headliner Brittany Carney.

Tickets cost \$15 in advance and \$20 at the door. More information can be found on Morgantown Brewing Company's website.

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OPINION

Greek Week promotes inclusive communities

SUBMITTED BY ASH ELSWICK

Every semester, the four Greek Councils of the Center for Fraternal Values and Leadership come together to host a week of festivities to create school spirit, strengthen bonds between the members of all councils and, most importantly, contribute to service and philanthropy.

In the fall we host Homecoming Week, and in the Spring we host Greek Week with very similar models for the festivity.

Leadership from each council meet and create teams with around three to four Greek Organizations, one from each council. Alongside that, there is a theme picked every semester.

Last semester it was a road trip theme where every team had a assigned city, i.e., “Nashville” or “Los Angeles” and so on.

Greek Mythology is the choice this semester, and every team is a Greek god like Poseidon or Hera. All of the creativity events surround the assigned theme when it comes to painting banners, having a homecoming parade float and more.

Each day of the week there are different activities like



PHOTO BY LUKE MORGAN

The Sigma Kappa house presents its Athena banner for Greek Week.

competitive ones such as “Greek Games” with a water balloon toss, play musical yoga mats and other activities as such to have some fun.

But Greek Week isn’t all fun and games.

The most important parts of our program are the educational and philanthropic

events throughout the week. The basis of being in Greek Life is to give to the community and serve others, which comes with friendship along the way.

The leadership team that coordinates this event every semester has consistently been including more growth

and care with the desired output of how that impacts the community. This semester, we are doing events such as “Canstruction,” where we take donated food to make an artistic sculpture which then is donated to those in need.

We also hold educational programs of Diversity, Eq-

uity and Inclusion coupled with departments within and outside of the University to share knowledge and discussion. With educational aspects, we stray from giving participation or competition incentives as we see that engagement is more productive versus attendance.

The project that we are most excited about is raising funds for the start of a community project called “Project Rainbow,” which would be the first LGBTQ+ shelter in West Virginia. According to their crowdfunding page, funds will go to “housing resources, mental health care, and eventually health care including gender affirming care.”

With a growing LGBTQIA+ community in our Greek Life, we want to use our resources to contribute to something that would make a personal impact to our students and shows solidarity to all Queer students at our university.

Historically, we have seen much exclusion of different communities and cultures from these organizations that have caused doubt in what the contribution of Greek Life does. This is a valid point and something that we need as educational institutions to reflect so that we can continue to represent the ethics and values that we have as a growing

society.

When we reflect on WVU Greek Life, there are some historical issues that are still present and we should constantly be mitigating those issues in the most genuine and productive way to where we are not undermining those who are commonly excluded and being performative to appease the image of not only Greek organizations but the University as well.

Although, there are members and leaders of the department that are changing cultures and policies to move in the right direction.

The growth of our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion sectors of being less performative and more contributive to local minorities and communities within events. Greek Week and Homecoming are a hopeful testament to what we want to do and what we can do to move forward.

Ash Elswick (*They/Them/Theirs*) is a Senior from Charleston, West Virginia. They study Political Science and Philosophy with minors in Music, Women and Gender Studies and LGBTQ+ Studies. They are a member of the Chi Omega Sorority and the Vice President of Inclusion for the Panhellenic Executive Board for the Panhellenic Council.

Food Review | Fry’d perfects late-night snacks

BY MADELINE HARRIS
FOOD CRITIC

One of the most popular sides to order out at an American-style restaurant is none other than french fries. Whether curly, straight, waffle or crinkle, students all over campus enjoy the savory side with their meals.

What if I told you Morgantown contains its very own french fry-themed restaurant. Would you believe me?

Welcome to Fry’d, Morgantown’s first french fry-themed restaurant, located at 422 High Street.

One misconception about this restaurant is what exactly they specialize in. Fry’d shares its restaurant location with Dank Dough, a separate brand that specializes in sweet treats such as cookies and milkshakes.

However, Fry’d was created out of the owner’s belief that every college campus should have a french fry specialty restaurant, according to their

website.

In order to appeal to the nightlife of a college student, Fry’d is open Monday-Wednesday from 5 p.m. to midnight and Thursday-Saturday 5 p.m. to 3 a.m.

Walking into Fry’d is as if one is walking into the past. The interior is decorated with disco balls spinning on the ceiling and brightly colored art covering the walls — to mention the 70s-like music to put their customers in the spirit of the restaurant.

The menu at Fry’d is located on vertical television screens to the left of the entrance, which is also decorated with bright colors and lots of designs. One may at first be overwhelmed with the menu, as I was when I first entered.

Ordering at Fry’d has three steps: pick your fries, pick your size and pick your sauce.

Customers can pick from hand-cut fries, sweet potato fries, tater tots, chicken fries or the establishment’s new deep-fried Oreos. From there, you pick your size: buzzed if

you just want the fries themselves, baked if you want the fries with one sauce or seasoning and blazed if you want two sauces or seasonings.

Fry’d also serves “Pre-packed Bowls,” which are some of its specialty bowls of fries. All of these options have fun names attached to them, such as Legalize Mozzarella and Cluck Cluck pass.

I decided to go with the Chili Out Cheese Fries from the menu, which comes with hand-cut fries tossed in Chili seasoning, topped with beefy chili, melted “Not Chyo” cheese and bacon bits.

Most of the time, especially later in the evenings, Fry’d tends to fill up quickly due to its popularity on campus. I would suggest arriving earlier in the evening to get your fries without having to wait.

However, the environment of the restaurant is very entertaining and certainly helps the wait.

The Prepacked Bowls come in large portions and are loaded heavily, so I

If you go:

Location:

442 High St,
Morgantown, WV

Hours:

- Monday-Wednesday, 5 p.m. to midnight
- Thursday-Saturday 5 p.m. to 3 a.m.



PHOTO BY LUKE MORGAN

The exterior of Fry’d, located at 442 High Street.

would suggest ordering them on an empty stomach. For less than \$8, they are a very filling meal which I usually end up saving for later or sharing with friends.

The Chili Out Cheese Fries are one of my absolute favorites, the cheese and the chili go perfectly together with the

seasoned fries. The cheese was warm and melted, while the chili was savory and a tad spicy. I would suggest eating this mountain of fries with a fork and, most likely, a couple of napkins.

My friends and I have all

taken a great liking to Fry’d and try to stop by whenever we are nearby for a good time. No matter what you are craving, Fry’d has the fries combination for you and the environment to make the trip worth your while.



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- Across**

 - 1 Length measure
 - 6 Crests
 - 10 Clip
 - 14 Come into view or existence
 - 15 Rout
 - 16 Helper
 - 17 Committee
 - 18 Water pitcher
 - 19 Computer picture button
 - 20 Fast plane
 - 21 Whim
 - 23 Shocks
 - 25 Gets older
 - 26 Usage
 - 27 Artifact found in rock
 - 30 Suitable or relating to a celebration
 - 34 2:1, for example
 - 35 President (abbr.)
 - 36 Lout
 - 38 From Asia
 - 39 Cause of sickness
 - 40 Carrot cousin
 - 42 Container
 - 43 Greek god of war
 - 44 Trainee
 - 45 Postures
 - 48 Trouble
- Down**

 - 1 Charts
 - 2 Epochs
 - 3 Hue
 - 4 Compass point
 - 5 Set of beliefs
 - 6 Shade providers
 - 7 State
 - 8 Poet Edgar Allen
 - 9 Classical composer
 - 10 National capital
 - 11 Costa ____
 - 12 Movie star
 - 13 Not women's
 - 22 New Jersey's neighbor
- 24 Clock time
 - 25 Continent
 - 27 Lodge
 - 28 Fertile desert area
 - 29 Save
 - 30 Potato sticks
 - 31 Snaky fish
 - 32 Nulls
 - 33 Artist's need
 - 35 Peel
 - 37 Festival
 - 40 Part of the academic world
 - 41 Space administration
 - 43 Approve enthusiastically
 - 46 Ends
 - 47 Zero
 - 48 Traditional Easter meal
 - 50 Waitress on "Cheers"
 - 51 Colored o hidden
 - 52 Taboo
 - 53 Pick
 - 54 College head
 - 55 Turn in the air
 - 56 Colt
 - 57 Comedian Griffith
 - 60 ____ Lanka
 - 62 Shade

For answers, visit thedaonline.com



Pet of the Week




PHOTO BY SARAH LESTER

Meet Possum. Possum is a three-month-old kitten who loves belly rubs and keeping his mom up all night trying to play. He sleeps all day in very funny positions. His favorite toy is his mouse and any type of box. He also loves to follow his mom into the bathroom and try to get her out of the awful, horrible shower. Possum likes to do flips when playing with his feather-wand toy, and has the uncanny ability to appear beside you when your eating. Possum loves to eat Cheerios, especially when they've been in milk!

Submit your favorite pet photo at da-classifieds@mail.wvu.edu

SUDOKU

Complete the grid so each row, column and 3x3 box (in bold borders) contains every digit, 1 to 9.

Sudoku puzzle brought to you by Jim Bumgardner at krazydad.com

For answers, visit thedaonline.com

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Meet the Morgantown native who won gold at the Big 12 Swim Championships

BY TRENT LEWIS
STAFF WRITER

Before the Big 12 Swim and Dive Championships in late February, senior swimmer Jacqueline McCutchan looked to make her mark in the conference and win big for West Virginia University.

The championship events took place in Austin, Texas, at the Lee & Joe Jamail Texas Swimming Center on Feb. 22-25. WVU faced off against Texas, TCU, Iowa State and Kansas at the championships.

McCutchan competed in numerous events at the championships, including the 200 medley and 400 relays. However, it was during the women's 100 backstroke event that McCutchan earned her shining moment.

The Morgantown native reigned victorious in the women's 100 backstroke final event, finishing the race in 54.14 to grab the only gold medal for the Mountaineers at the championships.

"When I touched the wall and looked up at the board, shock was like the first thing I felt," McCutchan said. "My teammates made it special for me and pulled out the excitement, I was just in shock that I won the event and the moment that they made for me was amazing."

While McCutchan had

been preparing to compete in the 100 backstroke event, she said the Big 12 Championships added an entirely new aspect to the race.

"I knew that my body knew physically what to do, but mentally, it's more challenging," McCutchan said when reflecting on her emotions prior to the race. "I was just trying to stay focused and rely on muscle memory."

The victory was the outcome of many years of dedication to the sport. For McCutchan, the win is not only special because of the gold medal, but because it represents her journey.

"Freshman year, winning an event was not on my radar, so accomplishing a goal that I really did not have is just, you know, it's a great feeling," McCutchan said. "It really is proof that I've progressed and I've made progress in my swimming career."

McCutchan began competitive swimming in high school for Club Mountaineer and earned West Virginia All-State honors while at University High School. However, her connection to the sport goes back much further.

"Actually, my parents met at WVU swimming," McCutchan said. "So for as long as I can remember, swimming has been like a part of my life."

McCutchan was born and raised in Morgantown, and



PHOTO BY TOLU OLASOJI

Jacqueline McCutchen poses for a picture on Senior Day at the Aquatic Center at Mylan Park on Jan. 28, 2023.

she is one of two members of the swim and dive team that are from West Virginia. McCutchan recognized that it makes her a unique member of the team.

"Representing Morgan-

town as a person from Morgantown is a huge honor," said McCutchan. "It kind of ties me to the team in a special way, which I appreciate."

As a senior member of the team, McCutchan's career as

a Mountaineer is approaching a close.

"I feel a lot of sadness that it's over, a lot of emptiness as well," McCutchan said. "It means a lot to me, the team means a lot to me, and there's

like a big void there that I'm going to have to fill, but my experience was so good and it grew me as an athlete, obviously, but more importantly, as a person."

Mountaineer Trio competes at ISSF World Cup

BY JAKE HOWARD
STAFF WRITER

While the West Virginia University rifle team concluded its season at the NCAA Championships two weeks ago, three of the team's members got to compete again this spring.

Junior Tal Engler and seniors Malori Brown and Mary Tucker all competed in the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) World Cup on Sunday in Bhopal, India.

Brown came in 11th place while shooting a 585, Tucker came in 19th with a 582 and Engler came in 31st place with a score of 578.

Brown, a senior from China Spring, Texas, and CRCA All-American, shot in all 16

matches for the Mountaineers this season, averaging a 587.5 in the smallbore and a 591.188 in air rifle. She shot an average aggregate score of 1178.668, the third-highest on the team.

Tucker, a Sarasota, Florida, native who won four individual national championships in three years at Kentucky, averaged a 591.846 in the smallbore and a 598.308 in the air rifle this season. She earned an average aggregate score of 1190.154, by far the best of any Mountaineer.

Engler is a Junior from Tzur Yigal, Israel, and averaged 585.333 in the smallbore and 592.667 in the air rifle for an average aggregate score of 1178 this season — the fourth-best on the team.

This is the fifth time WVU has sent shooters to the ISSF

World Cup in the last nine competitions.

The team sent Meelis Kisk, Patrick Sunderman and Ginny Thrasher in 2015 and Thrasher and Kisk again in 2016 alongside Garrett Spurgeon. Thrasher went again in 2017, and former teammate of Brown and Engler Jared Eddy competed in 2019.

WVU failed to capture a national championship this past season, with the team finishing fifth at the NCAA Championships and Tucker finishing runner-up in the air rifle final.

The Mountaineers took home the Great American Rifle Conference Championship. The win put the team back on top of the conference, as the team failed to take first place for the first time in eight years in 2022.



PHOTO BY TYLER PRUSINA

Junior Tal Engler prepares to shoot at the 2023 GARC Championship at the WVU Shell Building on Feb. 25, 2023.

Gymnastics prepares for NCAA Championship Second Round

BY TRENT LEWIS
STAFF WRITER

The West Virginia University gymnastics team will travel to Pittsburgh on Friday to compete in the Second Round of the Pittsburgh Regional of the NCAA National Championships at the Petersen Events Center.

WVU will be competing in the first session of the Second Round in a quad meet against No. 7 California, No. 10 Michigan State and Western Michigan. Action is set to begin at 2 p.m.

The second session of the Second Round will begin at 7 p.m. and will include No. 2 Florida, No. 15 Arizona State and Maryland. Towson and Penn State will compete in a dual meet on Wednesday to decide the fourth team in the second session.

The top two teams from each session will advance to the Pittsburgh Regional Final, which is scheduled to take place on April 1-2.

During this season, the Mountaineers suffered losses



PHOTO BY JANINE LECHEN

Senior Abbie Pierson competes on beam against Pitt and Central Michigan at the WVU Coliseum on March 5, 2023.

to Florida, Maryland and Towson in dual meets. In its second meeting with Towson, West Virginia won 196.375-196.025.

In dual competition, the Mountaineers are 12-9 overall, with victories over Ball State, Lindenwood, Kent State, West Chester, Iowa State, Towson, Eastern Michigan, Bowling Green, Texas Woman's University, Pitt, Central Michigan and Penn.

West Virginia is 7-1 at home, with the only home loss coming from a meet against Maryland on Jan. 13. The Mountaineers are 1-7 in away meets and 4-1 in neutral zone meets.

Last time out, West Virginia earned third place at the Big 12 Championship with a score of 196.225.

No. 1 Oklahoma took first place in the Big 12 with a total score of 198.400, scoring the

most points in every event. In second place was No. 14 Denver with a 197.175 score. Behind West Virginia, Iowa State finished in fourth place with a score of 193.750.

On vault, the Mountaineers finished third with a score of 49.175. They also earned third place on bars and the beam with scores of 48.700 and 48.875, respectively.

West Virginia finished sec-

ond on the floor with a 49.475 score, just behind Oklahoma with 49.575.

Senior Abbie Pierson leads the team on vault this season with an average score of 9.815. On bars, senior Kianna Yancey leads with an average 9.792 score.

Fifth-year senior Kendra Combs and sophomore Anna Leigh both averaged 9.775 on the beam, while senior Emily Holmes-Hackerd leads the team on the floor with an average score of 9.892.

At the 2022 NCAA Championships, West Virginia competed in the Norman Region but lost in the First Round of the tournament to Arizona. The Mountaineers fell just short, losing 195.925-196.525.

Oklahoma took home the title in 2022 with a 198.2000 score in the final. Florida finished second with a score of 198.0875. In third was Utah with a 197.7500 score, while Auburn earned fourth with a 197.350 score.

The NCAA National Championship Final is set to take place on April 15 in Fort Worth, Texas.



U92 SPORTS COVERAGE

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Tennis goes 0-2 in Texas road swing

BY LUKE BLAIN AND TRENT LEWIS
CO-SPORTS EDITOR AND STAFF WRITER

The West Virginia University tennis team continued conference play with a week-end trip to the Lone Star State to take on No. 59 Baylor and No. 14 Texas. The Mountaineers fell in both matches, making their record 11-6 overall and 1-3 in the Big 12.

Competition began on Friday, March 24, in Waco as WVU fell 6-1 to the Baylor Bears.

Senior Ting-Pei Chang and sophomore Camilla Bossi struggled in their doubles match against Paula Baranano and Daniella Dimitrov. The Mountaineer duo fell 6-1.

Sophomore Tatiana Lipatova and freshman Maja Dodik played in the third doubles spot against Baylor's Anita Sahdiieva and Isabella Harvison. The duo fought hard but ultimately fell 6-2, giving Baylor the doubles point.

Junior Momoko Nagato and sophomore Michaela Kucharova had a rough start in their match, as Alina Shcherbinina and Brooke Thompson took a 4-1 lead. However, Nagato and Kucharova won three straight games to make it 4-4.

Nagato and Kucharova trailed 5-4 when the match was declared unfinished.

Lipatova's singles match against Baranano was the first to wrap up, as Lipatova fell 6-2, 6-0. Dodik fell quickly as well against Dimitrova, losing 6-2, 6-0.

Fifth-year senior Pei-Ju Hsieh never found her footing in the first set against Danielle Tuhten, losing 6-2. She kept fighting through the second set but lost in deuce for a final score of 6-2, 6-1.

Hsieh's loss sealed the overall win for Baylor.

Bossi played a tight first set against Shcherbinina in the top seed but lost 7-5. Shcherbinina ran away with the next one as the Mountaineer sophomore fell 7-5, 6-1.

Kucharova had a highly competitive match in the third seed against Lisbon Kostenko. She lost the first set 6-4 but responded with a 6-4 set win of her own.

A 10-point super tiebreaker was played in place of a third set. After one rotation, the two were tied at three points apiece.

Kucharova found some breathing room after the second rotation, going up 8-4. Kostenko tried to battle back, but Kucharova won the tiebreaker 10-7.

Chang dropped her first set to Sahdiieva 6-3 but turned it around in the second set. She found herself tied 5-5.

Sahdiieva took the next game to go up 6-5, but Chang sent it to a tiebreaker.

Chang went down 0-4 before getting her first point in the tiebreaker. Sahdiieva took advantage of her fast start, winning 6-3, 7-6(1).

Just two days later, the Mountaineers traveled to Austin to take on the reigning back-to-back National Champion Texas Longhorns.

In the first doubles matchup, Chang and Bossi lost to No. 41 Charlotte Chavatipon and Sabina Zeynalova with a final match score of 3-6.

Nagato and Kucharova managed to keep a close match against No. 48 Marlee Zein and Nicole Khirin, but ultimately lost 4-6, giving Texas the doubles point.

Dodik and Hsieh were level at 4-4 in their doubles match, but the match went unfinished after the doubles point was sealed.

Bossi was off to a slow start in the singles competition against No. 76 Khirin, as she trailed 0-3 in the first set. Eventually, Bossi lost the first set 3-6 and fell 0-6 in the second.

Nagato was defeated by Malaika Rapolu 2-6, 1-6 at the No. 4 singles position. The Moun-



PHOTO BY LUKE BLAIN
Fifth-year senior Pei-Ju Hsieh prepares to hit a shot against Morgan State at Summit Tennis Academy on Feb. 25, 2023.

taineer Junior trailed 0-3 early in both sets and could not bounce back.

Lipatova lost to No. 104 Zein 1-6, 1-6 to seal the team victory for the Longhorns.

At the No. 3 singles position, Kucharova was level at 2-2 against No. 66 Chavatipon in the first set but did not win another game to lose 2-6.

Kucharova could not recover in the second set, losing 0-6.

Chang fell to No. 110 Zeynalova 2-6 in the first set of their singles match. The second set was level 1-1, but Chang could not grab another game and lost 1-6.

In the final singles match, Dodik trailed 3-4 in a close battle during the first set. De-

spite her efforts, Dodik lost the first set 3-6. In the second set, Dodik lost 1-6.

The Mountaineers have another road swing next week-end in Oklahoma, as they will take on the Oklahoma Sooners on March 31 and Oklahoma State on April 2. The competition against Oklahoma is scheduled to begin at 6 p.m.

Mountaineer track closes out competition at Raleigh Relays

BY TRENT LEWIS
STAFF WRITER

Members of the West Virginia University track and field team competed at the Raleigh Relays meet in Raleigh, North Carolina, on March 23-25. The meet was hosted by NC State at the Paul Derr Track and Field Facility in Raleigh, North Carolina.

Action for the Mountain-

eers began on Friday in the women's high jump event, as sophomore Abigale Mullings earned 22nd place with a 1.62-meter score.

On the final day of competition, redshirt senior Hayley Jackson claimed fifth place in the women's 800-meter race with a final time of 2:06.96. The final time stands as Jackson's best in the 800-meter event since the 2022 outdoor sea-

son, when she set a personal record of 2:05.92 at the Mountaineer Twilight.

Senior Tessa Constantine placed 13th in the women's 400-meter hurdle event, finishing the race in 1:01.81 to conclude action for West Virginia.

The track and field team will compete again from March 31 to April 1 at the Stanford Invitational in Stanford, California.



PHOTO COURTESY OF WVU ATHLETICS COMMUNICATIONS
Hayley Jackson gets set before a race.

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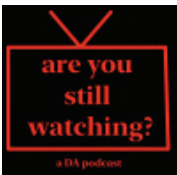


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This is DubV 411- West Virginia University's very own weekly update podcast. Every week, Maddie Harris and Lauren Taylor will fill you in on the buzz happening in the coming week on campus and around Morgantown.

WVU is such a big school with so many opportunities that there's always something fun and interesting to do. So tune in every Friday wherever you listen to your podcasts and get inspired to go out and try something new!



GradLife 601 podcast series, we'll share the achievements and insights of West Virginia University graduate students and faculty. We'll discuss their experiences and how they came to be passionate about their research. We'll also talk about life beyond the lab and academy. GradLife 601: Research and Beyond is sponsored by the WVU Provost's Office of Graduate Education and Life and hosted by Dr. Nancy Caronia, a Teaching Associate Professor in the Department of English at West Virginia University.



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