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The Parthenon, April 3, 2012

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SGA Presidential Candidates Face Off in Debate

By **NOLAN DUNCAN**
STUDENT REPORTER

This year's Student Government Association Debate featured candidates whose campaigns focused on student wellness.

Marshall University held the 2024 Student Government Association Debate on Monday, April 1. The debate was hosted and broadcasted by the W. Page Pitt School of Journalism and Mass Communications.

The candidates – presidential candidate Brea Belville and her vice presidential candidate Conner

Waller and presidential candidate Nico Raffinengo and his vice presidential candidate Luke Jeffrey – debated across podiums on various issues presented by the hosts and their prospective student bodies.

Belville and Waller's campaign focuses on the ideas of innovating, elevating and advocating for students. Their platform aims to improve the mental and physical health of students as well as campus safety.

The campaign highlights various organizations that focus on the wellness of campus and a noticed dis-

connect with the mission of wellness. The goal is to charter what exactly the goal of wellness is.

With the campus carry act going into effect July 1, both tickets explained how they would tackle the new legislation if elected.

The Belville campaign said they recognize the concern amongst both students and administration. While there are different policies already in the works, they will push for training sessions that would differ from the courses offered.

"We understand that many students

are quite concerned with their safety," Waller said. "We have decided to push for student self defense trainings that would be offered on a small scale basis."

The Raffinengo campaign detailed their plans, saying they believe the best way to counter the issue is by listening to university officials about what policies they are pushing. Raffinengo said his administration will listen and work to create the best policies to counter campus carry.

"Guns on campus just do not belong here," Raffinengo said. "It's nothing we can do because the legislature didn't want to listen to the student interest. We can be proactive about it, but it has a lot of contingencies because of the legislation."

Raffinengo and Jeffrey's campaign focuses on nutrition through their slogan of "Nourishing Leadership."

The "nourishing" aspect of their platform aims at improving student meal plans and setting up business deals through Sodexo to expand dining options to local businesses.

The platform's efforts will also focus on improving the campus dining options. Jeffrey said the "leadership" aspect of their platform is reflected in their cabinet, and their 15-member cabinet will have the freedom to innovate in the areas they care about the most.

Both campaigns said their biggest strength is their diverse cabinets.

Belville said she found a lot of strength in her cabinet. She said having a cabinet that is diverse in thoughts, beliefs and lifestyles would provide better insight into the student body.

SGA Debate
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The candidates for student body president and vice president pose during the debate. L-R: Brea Belville, Conner Waller, Luke Jeffrey, Nico Raffinengo.

Photo by Abigail Cutlip

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Lecturer Argues Partisanship is Demolishing Congress

By SARAH DAVIS
NEWS EDITOR

Compromising in the legislative branch has been stigmatized, said an American politics specialist said.

“Compromise is now a dirty word,” said Peter Hanson, the latest lecturer in the Amicus Curiae Lecture Series. “Any Congress elected by polarized voters is likely to have high level of conflict. That’s exactly what we have.”

The fourth Amicus Curiae of the 2023-2024 academic year took place Thursday, March 28, in the Brad D. Smith Foundation Hall.

Hanson spoke on his book, “Too Weak to Govern: Majority Party Power and Appropriations in the U.S. Senate.” Hanson is a political science professor at Grinnell College and holds a doctorate from the University of California at Berkeley.

Hanson said his 1996-2002 work in the U.S. Senate under Democratic Leader Tom Daschle gave him a glimpse of the condition of our nation’s lawmaking system.

“I can remember how we were frustrated by the growth of partisanship during that time,” he said. “Those problems have really only grown since.”

He went on to discuss his desired values of Congress, saying that the governmental body should be representative, responsive and accountable. The people and their parties need to be adequately represented, he said, and should know what’s happening on Capitol Hill. He said there should also be an open line of communication between citizens and their elected officials and more discussing than arguing.

The blame as to why they have not achieved these may be more preva-

lent than some suspect; voters.

“The sobering news is that the source is the American people themselves,” Hanson said. “We are divided at a mass level bipartisan-ship, and this ultimately is what’s driving the polarization that we’re seeing in Congress.”

His findings are consistent with those in the research center Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. In her paper entitled, “Polarization, Democracy and Political Violence in the United States: What

the Research Says,” Rachel Kleinfeld, a Carnegie senior fellow, said that a lot of the problem is a mere misunderstanding between Americans.

“The American public feels affectively polarized largely because of misunderstandings about the other side (though the misunderstandings seem sensitive to actual ideological differences),” Kleinfeld wrote. “The rapidity of U.S. polarization compared to similar wealthy, consolidated democracies suggests that

domestic issues in the United States are likely to be driving more of the country’s polarization than issues affecting many other countries.”

Hanson’s largest suggestion to the Senate is to throw out the filibuster. He said it’s a tactic to get one’s way rather than a democratic tool.

“Abolish the filibuster,” he said. “Get rid of it. Put a stake through its heart.”

Hanson also said that even though these changes would better the system, the House and Senate— by na-

ture— aren’t meant to be perfectly tied with a bow.

“Congress is never going to be popular; it’s never going to look good from the outside,” he said. “Even in the best of times, it looks like a collection of people bickering.”

However, he argued, the American people should take its purpose seriously and honor it, even if it is messy.

“It’s not a pretty task, but it’s a vital task,” he said. “It’s the purpose of politics.”



Peter Hanson speaks during his Amicus Curiae lecture on the three values of Congress.

Photo by Sarah Davis

Severe Storm Smacks Marshall and Surrounding Area

By **REAGAN CLAGG & KAITLYN FLEMING**
STUDENT REPORTERS

Severe weather walloped the Tri-State Tuesday morning, April 2, damaging Marshall's new baseball stadium and trapping a person in an elevator.

Storms passing through Marshall's campus resulted in a brief power outage that caused the elevators in Corbly Hall to stop working.

Jana Tigchelaar, director of graduate studies in the English department, said she observed an individual become trapped while attempting to descend in one of Corbly Hall's elevators.

"We had all gathered in the lobby area and had been standing there for about 10 minutes when the power flickered," she said. "We then heard people buzzing the alarm."

Tigchelaar went on to say she and other individuals were attempting to prevent people from ascending in the elevator but had missed the individual

trying to descend.

"I called 911, and the fire department came," Tigchelaar said. "She was stuck in there for about 20 minutes, although it probably seemed longer to her."

The firefighter who responded to the call, Captain Heath Hesson of the Huntington Fire Department, said his crew was at another call on the 31st Street Bridge when the call from Corbly Hall came in.

"When we got there, the elevator in Corbly Hall was stuck on the first floor and the doors wouldn't open," Hesson said. "There was one subject stuck in there."

Hesson went on to say it was roughly nine minutes total to arrive at the scene and rescue the subject. His team brought a halligan, a tool similar to a crow bar, to help pry the inner door.

Hesson said the individual appeared to not be rattled by the incident.

"She was actually very calm," he said.

Likewise, Tigchelaar said the previously trapped individual explained she took the elevator in an effort to quickly pick up her brother.

In addition, Lieutenant Dicky Parker of MUPD said they were responding to several elevator calls on campus.

"One of our calls was to an elevator in Old Main," Parker said. "We had to go to the calls one by one."

Meanwhile, the fence surrounding the Jack Cook Field, Marshall's new baseball stadium, came loose from the foundation during the storm. In addition, equipment littered the field.

The damages were not limited to Marshall's campus; the village of Proctorville in Ohio closed to non-resident or non-emergency traffic, and damages were reported near the mall in Barbooursville.



Huntington firefighters responded to the incident in Corbly Hall.

Courtesy of Jana Tigchelaar

New Transportation Available on Campus

By **NOLAN DUNCAN**
STUDENT REPORTER

Marshall University's sustainability manager said students will have a new way to travel around town without fear of finding transportation.

On March 27, Marshall University unveiled a new version of the Rolling Thunder bike share program.

Amy Parsons-White, the sustainability manager for Marshall University, said the new program comes with 60 bikes and six hubs. She said some hubs will be near Pullman Square and the Landing.

"If you want to go downtown and watch a movie, you would be

able to ride your bike down there, park it, come back out and ride back to campus," Parsons-White said. "It really allows students to get around town without having to worry about finding transportation."

Parsons-White said the program is especially beneficial for students who do not have personal vehicles. She said the bike share program gives students a free hour of riding every day.

Eric Hayworth, the recycling coordinator for Marshall University, said the new bikes are electric assist bikes. He said these new bikes are designed with an electric motor that gives the bike extra power whenever the rider pedals.

"There are three speeds," Hay-

worth said. "Once you get into that third speed, you barely have to pedal, and it'll maintain your speed."

Hayworth said there has always been a strong interest in bike usage at Marshall. He said when the original bike share program existed, Marshall was breaking records, and achieving records higher than larger universities.

"I think it's because the Marshall was such a tight-knit campus," Hayworth said. "You can cross it with a bike in under a minute, so it was very handy to, you know, check the bike out at the rec center, zip down to this end and lock it up at the library."

Hayworth said he believes that Huntington is becoming a bike-cen-

tric town. He said that because of the new program, a bike lane will be built on Fourth Avenue from campus to the hospital.

"Huntington it's in itself is becoming a bike-centric town, and the Marshall students really have accepted that they don't need a car," Hayworth said. "It saves a ton of money for a lot of the lower income students."

Parsons-White said the original program fell through because of the previous company shutting down. She said the new program is in partnership with Charleston Mobility.

Parsons-White said she hopes students will take advantage of the free daily hour.

"We have a lot of students who

never leave campus and don't realize what's going on in town," Parsons-White said. "Just riding a bike actually produces dopamine, which reduces depression; being in the sunshine produces dopamine, which reduces stress. So just getting out on the bike and riding around, even if you just ride around campus, is going to help with your mental health."

Parsons-White said there are no immediate plans to open up the project for the wider Huntington community, but she said she has reached out to the city for discussions.

Parsons-White said the program is a great way for Marshall to lower its carbon footprint. She said this new program allows Marshall to serve as a beacon for the community.

SGA Debate Continued From Page 1

“Our cabinet is representative of many different people and students and backgrounds on this campus,” Belville said.

Jeffrey said their cabinet is what will allow their platform to be representative of the Marshall student body.

“No single individual, or collective group of people can actually be qualified to represent the entire student body because it is so diverse,” Jeffrey said.

The Belville ticket will focus on improving relations between the student body and SGA. She said they are always willing to talk to students about ideas and improve the open-door policy with the SGA lounge, making it easier for students to know where and when SGA members can be found.

The Raffinengo ticket has been working with student organizations to better push what they say students want: raising the student presence at events.

They also aim to take a more active role in involving SGA with the general student body. Jeffrey said while the SGA lounge is a nice space, members should be more involved outside amongst the local community.

The Belville ticket plans to create an international charter similar to other universities to improve student wellness, by consolidating resources, so they can better support students. Belville said she wants to move to the “Live Safe” app, which has been proven by other universities to be more helpful than the current system Mar-

shall uses.

The Raffinengo ticket believes their goal is timely due to the push for the innovation district. Because of the growing district, Raffinengo believes Marshall’s administration would be supportive of his goals. He said if his primary goal does not go through, he hopes to at least find ways to create better meal plans for commuter students.

Voting for the student body candidates begins on April 2 at 8 a.m. and ends on April 3 at 2 p.m. The winning ticket will be announced April 3 at 4 p.m. in the Memorial Student Center lobby.

Luke Jeffrey works as the social media manager for The Parthenon.



The Belville/Waller and Raffinengo/Jeffrey tickets debated Monday, April 1.



Photos by Abigail Cutlip

Current SGA President to Continue Serving Marshall



Courtesy of Marshall University News

By **NOLAN DUNCAN**
STUDENT REPORTER

Walker Tatum has a distinct idea for what he wants to accomplish in his new position with the Marshall University Foundation, said the executive director of alumni relations.

“Walker has this really clear vision of where he sees the university going, and it aligns with where the foundation and the president sees the university going, too,” Matt James said.

On March 14, Marshall announced in a news release that Tatum, the current student body president, would take up the role of director of alumni engagement for the foundation.

James said Tatum’s role will involve him working to build the alumni chapters and engage younger alumni. He went on to say, as part of the foundation’s rebranding, the goal is to show that alumni can help in more ways than just monetary donations.

“There’s really no better ambassador than to bring your current student body president,” James said.

“Somebody that literally is going to be a member of the young alumni community in just a few months.”

Tatum said, although he is a biology pre-med student, his time on the Student Government Association and the Board of Governors made him realize the opportunities he had been granted. He said he enjoyed the work he did with SGA and chose to apply for the position because he wanted to continue what he was doing but with alumni.

“One thing that they can give us is their time,” Tatum said. “I want to do my best in this capacity to tap into that generation of younger alums so that our alumni chapters continue to grow.”

As part of this goal, James said a new academic model involving alumni as academic mentors for juniors and seniors will be implement-

ed on campus. These new alumni mentors will serve as extra advisors for juniors moving into their senior year.

“It’s called Herd Connect,” James said. “As students go from their junior to senior year, one thing that’s going to make Marshall unique across the country is that we are incorporating alumni mentors into our academic advising model.”

James said although Tatum’s time in SGA influenced the decision to hire him, the main factor was his commitment to the university.

“He has the skill set. At the core of this is his deep passion and commitment for Marshall University,” James said. “I think if you literally cut the man’s arm open, he would bleed Kelly Green, and that’s the center of this.”

James said an important part in

choosing Tatum was the support from older alumni, who recognized that a young representative was needed to fulfill President Smith’s goals. He said only two people at the foundation hall interact with alumni regularly, and the older community already had enough representation. For Tatum, this new position will allow him to fulfill his goal of leaving a legacy on campus. He said he knew someday a future student body president would look back on his administration. “No matter what you continue to do in life, whether you stay in that position or you continue to prosper or get another opportunity,” Tatum said, “you’ll always have something close to your heart that you know you worked on and that you helped and that you put time into.”

Campus Couples: Vicki and Michael Stroehler

By **KAITLYN FLEMING**
STUDENT REPORTER

Amidst the symphony of musical academia, harmonious pairs form within shared passions for the arts—such as a couple within the Marshall School of Music.

Music professor Michael Stroehler said the story of meeting his wife, music professor Vicki Stroehler, “is a typical nerd story.”

The couple met in graduate school at the University of North Texas while Vicki was working at the front desk of the music library that Michael often frequented, they said.

“I asked her to lunch,” Michael said. “She looked at me and said, ‘How about tomorrow?’ and then we went.” The couple had their first date at a restaurant located across the street from the courthouse where they would eventually marry, they said. “We just sat and talked for hours,” Vicki said. “I know that the waiters were confused.”

In addition, the couple attended a party and sat and talked under a grand piano for hours, Vicki said. She went on to say that, because she was studying musicology and music theory and Michael was studying music education, they had a bit of a forbidden romance due to department rivalries.

“It was a bit of a Romeo and Juliet situation,” she said, “like the Montagues and the Capulets.”

Michael and Vicki continued to nurture their relationship—even while being long distance.

Vicki said they felt compelled to get married after witnessing another couple not being able to make decisions regarding the other’s health due

to the other couple not being legally married.

“We always knew that we were going to get married,” Vicki said. “This just kind of sparked it.”

However, their initial plans to get married at the courthouse did not go smoothly, Michael said.

“I got a speeding ticket on the way to get married,” Michael said. “I was late getting our marriage license.”

Michael went on to say that he had a work trip in Washington, D.C., which Vicki accompanied him to as a honeymoon.

“We almost missed the plane,” Vicki said. “I think we were the very last people to board.”

Despite the pair’s initial mishaps, they eventually married at the courthouse.

“We did not do things traditionally. We did them backwards,” Michael said. “We lived together, did long distance, had our honeymoon, got married and then had a ceremony after.”

The couple said they powered

through all of the chaos—something Vicki said she appreciates.

“There is never a dull moment,” she said. “Our conversations are lively, and he makes me laugh.”

In addition, Michael said he values Vicki’s devotion.

“She has been extremely loyal and supportive,” Michael said.

The pair said they typically do not cross paths at work; however, they show support to each other’s individual ambitions and goals in any capacity possible.

“Each of us will have different things going on at different times,” Vicki said. “We know when the other person needs support.”

For example, Michael said he is currently lending support to Vicki in her venture to write a book.

“I am the chief-nag,” he said. “I am getting on to her to write.”

Both Michael and Vicki said they enjoy spending their time hiking, bicycling and spending time with their dogs Nellie, Scout and Abby.



Vicki and Michael Stroehler

Photo Courtesy Vicki Stroehler

Conference Raises Awareness for Suicide Prevention on Campus

By **BAYLEE PARSONS**
COPY EDITOR

Self-awareness and education are important factors in helping those with mental health struggles, said the coordinator of Marshall’s West Virginia Collegiate Suicide Prevention Conference.

“Lots of times, we tell people, ‘Oh, just reach out. We know where for you to go,’” said Paula Rymer, associate professor for the Master of Social Work program. “Why don’t we reach in?”

“There’s a lot of people that aren’t going to reach out because they’re really self-conscious, or they think nobody’s going to listen,” she added.

The conference, which took place April 1-2 in the Memorial Student Center, served as a means of educating students on the resources available to them.

Sponsored by Marshall University Suicide Prevention Education Across Campus, this conference was the third on suicide prevention at the university. However, this year marked the second to be considered a West Virginia collegiate conference, with representatives from different state colleges in attendance.

“We’ve been working on trying to create a partnership across the state and work together on developing safety nets—ways to keep students safe and engaged and giving them the feeling of belongingness on campus,” Rymer said.

Attendees had the opportunity to hear speakers and participate in workshops relevant to students and faculty members. The conference also provided West Virginia social workers certification for 11.5 continuing education units.

“These are workshops not only for professionals, but we’ve also had them to help students,” Rymer said. “There’s been different kinds of workshops to help them, like mindfulness workshops.”

Graduate student Katherine Lambert took part in leading a workshop on academic burnout for the conference.

“Hannah and I lead a small, six-week therapy group in East Hall called Bounce Back from Burnout,” Lambert said, “and we just took a few pieces from what we’ve done so far and incorporated it into an hour-long fun session.”

Lambert said it’s important to include lighter subjects and activities in the conference because it revolves around such a difficult topic.

“Since this is such a serious topic – I mean, it’s about suicide, it’s really heavy – we wanted to keep it lighthearted and have people focus on their own wellbeing and how their feeling, not only in academics but also career-wise,” Lambert said.

Even as a graduate student and volunteer for the conference, Lambert said she learned new pieces of information from the speakers.

Rymer, for instance, taught attendees about her specialty, suicidology, a field she began teaching at the university in 2018.

Rymer’s suicidology research pilot program Suicidology Research and Study Lab is currently part of the College of Health Professions and the Department of Social Work; however, she intends to spread it campuswide, broadening awareness for suicide prevention on campus.

Baseball vs. Virginia Tech Postponed



Jack Cook Field suffered damage from the storm on Tuesday, April 2.

Photo by Kaitlyn Fleming

By **JOSEPH DICRISTOFARO**
SPORTS EDITOR

Severe weather in Huntington postponed Marshall Baseball's game against the No.11 ranked Virginia Tech Hokies April 2.

With winds whipping up to 80 mph and driving rains on Tuesday

morning, the Athletics department postponed the second matchup of the Herd and the Hokies.

The Herd is still looking to find its groove this season with a record of 9-18. The first matchup against Virginia Tech, who was ranked No.13 at the time, ended in a close 4-2 win by the Hokies.

On the road this season, the Herd has struggled, only tallying one win away from Jack Cook Field and 11 losses.

Marshall's chances at home have been higher, however, accumulating a record of 7-3 on the banks of the Ohio River.

The Herd is coming off a det-

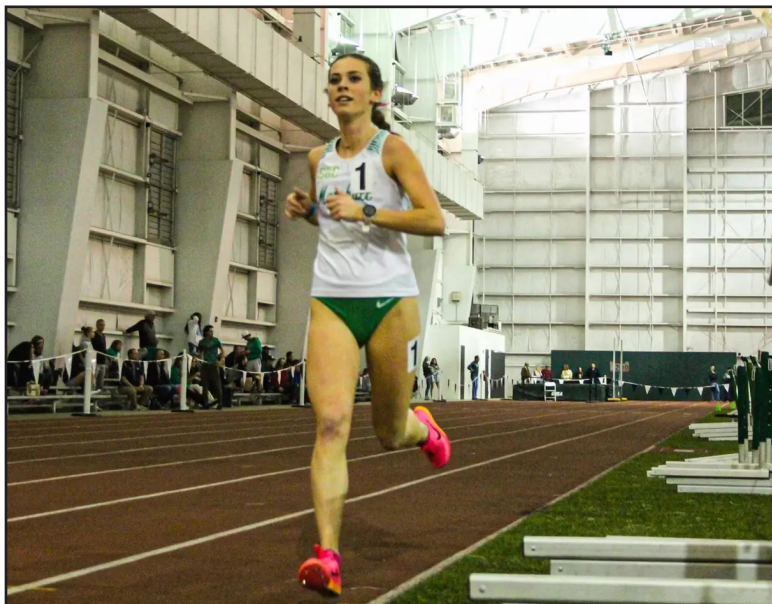
perimental 19-2 loss against the Appalachian State Mountaineers in Boone. In the three-game series, Marshall took the first game and came up short in the following two outings.

There is no current makeup date for the contest against the Hokies. The Herd is currently 3-6 in Sun

Belt Conference play.

Marshall returns to Jack Cook Field on Friday, April 5, to host a three-game series against the Texas State Bobcats who are 4-5 in conference play.

Herring's Historical Career Continues



Herring is a Parkersburg, West Virginia native.

Courtesy of HerdZone

By **JOSEPH DICRISTOFARO**
SPORTS EDITOR

Marshall Track and Field senior Abby Herring is no stranger to making and breaking records, as she did once more on Friday, March 29, in Raleigh, North Carolina.

Herring broke the university's 10K record with a time of 33:08.07, a record that she, herself, set last year for the longest track event.

This accomplishment adds to the runner's storied career in Kelly Green. Earlier in the year, Herring set and broke her school record in the 3K event.

The track has not been Herring's only dominant showing in her career, as the senior has also excelled at Cross Country. Herring was

the first female qualifier for the NCAA DI Cross Country National Championships.

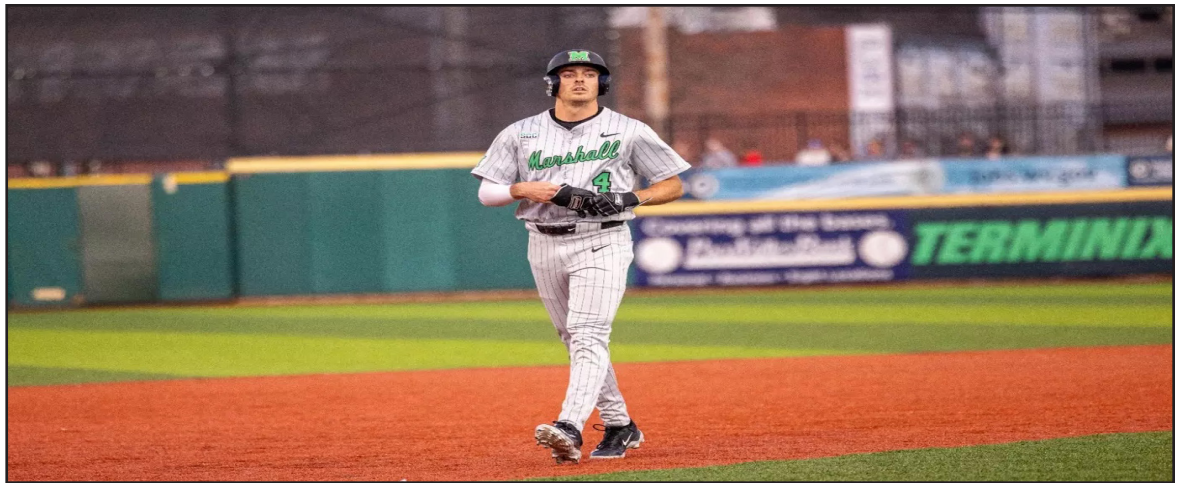
"Running at the National Championships was a surreal experience," Herring said. "Being surrounded by so many talented individuals and decorated teams was awesome.

"I never would have envisioned myself to be on the start line here at the beginning of my college career, but with the help of my awesome coach, Caleb Bowen, and supportive teammates, I did," she added.

Earlier this season, Herring also broke the school 5K record by over a full minute.

The track and field team will head to Tampa, Florida, on Friday, April 8, to participate in the South Florida Invitational.

App State Dismantles the Herd



The Herd gave up 10 runs in the second inning of the final game.

Courtesy of HerdZone

By **BEN COWER**
STUDENT REPORTER

The final contest of a three-game series for Marshall Baseball ended short on Saturday, March 30, as the App State Mountaineers shelled the Herd 19-2 across seven innings in Boone, North Carolina.

The game stopped after only seven innings due to the umpires' use of the NCAA's baseball mercy rule, otherwise known as the 10-run rule.

"We obviously didn't pitch well," said head coach Greg Beals following the contest. "But we had a few chances on defense to help out the pitching staff, and we were not able to make those plays."

The Herd committed two errors in the contest while also surrendering 19 runs on 13 total hits from the Mountaineers' batters. Eight different players for App State collected hits on a multitude of Marshall pitchers; three of those eight substituted into the lineup during the contest

The Mountaineers clobbered home five runs in the bottom of the first inning and then doubled

that amount in the bottom of the second inning with 10 runs. The score was 15-0 in favor of App State after just two full innings, taking advantage of a struggling Marshall pitching department.

Carter Lyles began the day on the mound for the Herd and was pulled after just the first inning after allowing five hits, five runs and a walk against nine total batters faced. Griffin Miller entered the contest in relief of Lyles and was buried brutally by the Mountaineers' batting department, surrendering nine runs and two walks on 11 batters faced.

By the time Cole Agemy stepped atop the mound as the Herd's third pitcher of the day, the score was already 14-0. Agemy finished out the second inning and surrendered another run, walking three more Mountaineers.

Peyton Schofield entered the contest to start the third inning and attempted to right the ship for the Herd, surrendering no runs across the next three innings with four strikeouts against 13 separate batters. Lenny Washington finished

pitching for the Herd, entering the contest in the bottom of the sixth inning and surrendering four more runs to App State.

In response, the Herd collectively managed two runs on five hits but stranded six players on-base across the contest. Marshall hit a two-RBI home run that cracked off the bat of starting left fielder Elijah Vogelsong in the top of the sixth inning, bringing home Owen Ayers. The run batted in was Vogelsong's team-leading 20th of the year.

"It's disappointing," Beals said. "We started the day with an opportunity, and we did not take advantage of it."

Marshall now falls to 9-18 overall, with a 3-6 record in Sun Belt Conference play. After the cancellation of Tuesday's scheduled contest at Jack Cook Field versus the 11th-ranked Virginia Tech Hokies, the Herd's next contest is Friday versus the Texas State Bobcats. First pitch is scheduled for 6:00 p.m. at Jack Cook Field.

College Students Grapple with Overwhelming Expectations

By **KAITLYN FLEMMING**
STUDENT REPORTER

We've all heard the phrase, "Everything, everywhere, all at once," or have even seen the Oscar-award winning film.

In an analysis of the Daniel Quan and Daniel Scheinert directed film, *Film Colossus* said, "Philosophically speaking, if you're everything, everywhere, all at once, then you're nothing."

That statement is heavy and leaves room for several questions. What does it mean to be everything, everywhere, all at once?

Who is putting this existential pressure on individuals? Does this philosophy impact someone's life purpose?

This phrase can be a common theme for college students—especially overachievers. It is almost first nature to try and be every-

thing...everywhere...for everyone...all at once.

I know more students than I can count on two hands who are sacrificing every facet of their being to succeed. Sometimes we need to ask ourselves if this is always a positive thing.

I believe currently, students are burning the candle at both ends in order to fulfill every single role in their busy, multi-faceted lives.

What people seem to forget is college students do not singularly fulfill the role of 'student.' College students are students in addition to being employees, friends, daughters, sons, volunteers, leaders, athletes, grandchildren etc.

This abundance of roles leads to college students yearning to fill these positions with as much tact as humanly possible—even if it means sacrificing their own happiness.

This occurrence is not attributable to anyone, just merely an occurrence of life. However, there are things both college students and those who care about college students can do to remedy this.

Individuals invested in supporting college students must understand it is rarely a matter of "Sorry, I don't want to," but simply a reality of, "My schedule is mapped-out to the minute that I can't possibly do this unless I eliminate meals and sleeping."

The college student in your life is never purposely ignoring you—

in fact they would probably much rather attend your third cousin's birthday dinner than write their upcoming research paper or pick up a shift at work.

Supporting a college student may mean hanging out with your college friend differently than normal. Perhaps you catch up at a coffee shop while working on homework or grab a quick lunch between their classes.

Respecting boundaries is crucial, but it does not solely rely on family and friends; college students hold the main responsibility for setting and adhering to their own boundaries.

There is power in having the ability to say no when it protects your peace.

College students are often conditioned to say yes to almost everything in order to please others, dodge confrontation and avoid the dreaded FOMO, or fear of missing out.

While college students should experience as much as they can within their time at the university, they should not say yes to experiences at the cost of their mental health.

This isn't to say college students should hole-up in their dorm and do schoolwork every waking hour. However, college students should not say yes simply out of obligation or pressure.

Stretching-oneself too thin may present negative consequences. In



Photo by Abigail Cutlip

such cases, someone is often left disappointed, whether it be those who care about a college student or the college student themselves.

I think it is safe to say college students everywhere can relate to the looming pressure of achieving the perfect balance of socialization, academics, work and self-care.

Spoiler-alert: it is just not possible. Unless you are a superhero or possess Hermione Granger's time-turner, there will never be an equilibrium. And that's perfectly okay.

As college students, it is vital to understand perfection cannot always be reached.

It is important to take time for ourselves to discover our interests and partake in hobbies that nurture our soul.

College students cannot be everything, everywhere, all at once.

The Parthenon, Marshall University's student newspaper, is published by students every Wednesday. The editorial staff is responsible for news and editorial content.

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THE PARTHENON'S CORRECTIONS POLICY

Factual errors appearing in The Parthenon should be reported to the editor immediately following publication. Corrections the editor deems necessary will be printed as soon as possible following the error.

Kentucky Poet Connects with Appalachian Students

By **BAYLEE PARSONS**
COPY EDITOR

It's okay for a person to appreciate where they come from, even when they know it's not perfect, a Kentucky poet said after her reading at Marshall on Wednesday, March 27.

"I think it's more important to love a place that's flawed," Nickole Brown said, "because if you abandon it and leave it behind, well, then nothing ever gets fixed."

Brown, author of collections "Sister" and "Fanny Says," visited the university as the second guest for the A.E. Stringer Visiting Writers Series for the Spring 2024 Semester.

Although she now resides in Asheville, North Carolina, several of Brown's works focus on growing up in Kentucky and critique the state's general practices and attitudes—particularly about nature.

"Her work speaks in a sort of Southern trash talking way about Appalachian nature as beautiful, damaged, dangerous and in desperate need of saving," said Ryann Province, a sophomore creative writing major.

Brown read excerpts from her essay, "Rise," as well as her poems "A Vegetarian's Guide to Table Manners in Kentucky," "Anthem" and "Parable," her only poem of 2023.

An avid animal lover, Brown's inspiration for "Parable" came from her time spent sitting with horses on Shaman Hill in North Carolina; the poem is a cry of sympathy for animals—specifically the horse, cicada and rooster—mistreated by humans, especially due to climate



Photo by Baylee Parsons

Nickole Brown read her poetry in Drinko Library for the A.E. Stringer Visiting Writers Series.

change.

Even so, Brown said she would not have the kind of literary material she employs without her Kentucky upbringing.

Referring to her hometown outside of Louisville, she said, "Once I stepped away from it, I realized I'd severed my roots, and I needed to go back to the way I spoke when I was a child. I needed to go back to those stories and the place from which I came because that's where the complexity and the stories are."

Brown added that even though the "cards are stacked against" Appalachians, there are advantages to growing up in the region as well.

"There are some things you have in your favor: you have persever-

ance, you have the stories—I mean, this is a storytelling culture, and this is not the kind of culture that gives up easy," she said.

Brown urged students to fight for what they want and to push back against Appalachian stereotypes.

Professor Sara Henning, the coordinator of the series, said she invites writers like Brown to the university in an attempt to inspire students.

"It is my belief that bringing writers to campus creates a transformative learning experience for students over and over," Henning said.

'Roleplay' Film Addresses Sexual Assault on College Campuses

By **CYD COLLINS**
STUDENT REPORTER

Exploring themes of sex and consent for college students, the "Roleplay" documentary's first public screening took place in the Joan C. Edwards Performing Arts Center's Francis-Booth Experimental Theatre on Thursday, March 28.

Directed by Katie Mathews and produced by Darcy McKinnon, the film follows a group of college students at Tulane University in New Orleans, Louisiana, along their process of writing the script for a play about sexual assault and sexuality on college campuses.

The students vary in race, sexual orientation and experiences with sex and consent, using their stories and emotions to drive the development of the script forward. The students made rewrites and alterations throughout the process to feel better represented in the play.

During filming, the students faced difficult questions about relationships and identity with each other, and some were reminded of their past sexual experiences during rehearsal of certain scenes. Many of them were also processing their own traumas or difficult conversations during the play's production, which pushed the realism the cast wanted to emphasize.

Mathews originally polled Tulane University about sexual assault on campus, which sparked the idea for the play. The results indicated that 40% of students had experienced sexual assault of some kind at the university.

This documentary was meant as a way for students to voice their experienc-

es and be honest, as Mathews saw a lot of her own experiences in these college students and wanted to bring awareness to this issue.

McKinnon is a documentary filmmaker who joined the production of "Roleplay" after filming had started. While in attendance at the screening, McKinnon gave a talk about the film and the play itself to highlight what production was like and how this film sparks conversation.

"I think everybody, when those statistics come out, whenever it happens—whether it's a particularly newsworthy terrible incident or whether it's people really starting to understand how pervasive sexual violence can be—the impulses are always to do something about it," McKinnon said.

In reference to these impulses, McKinnon said, "I think to tell kids how to act, like, 'Don't drink. Don't go out late,' or tell women how to act, and there's a desire to do something, and I think it's a really difficult problem to solve."

Because this is a problem within our interpersonal relationships and culture, McKinnon said, the medium of a play is effective because theater and acting are about interpersonal relationships and making things feel more human and raw. Sexual assault is a topic brought up on many campuses, and the film's goal is to open the door to discussing it to bring about change in the culture around it.

"Roleplay" is currently available for licensing and is in production in high schools and colleges around the country.

BeyondMU: Gov. Jim Justice Faces Millions in Debts and Unpaid Taxes



By **MATTHEW SCHAFFER**
MANAGING EDITOR

West Virginia Gov. Jim Justice is beginning to feel the pressure as his debts mount, a challenge he will have to overcome as he convinces his constituents he is the right person to replace Sen. Joe Manchin on Capitol Hill.

Justice is the current front-runner for the position since Manchin announced his intention to retire his seat in November; however, the current Republican governor faces over \$300 million in unpaid business loans and \$3.5 million in unpaid state sales taxes, which may have an impact on his bid.

On Feb. 5, a tax lien was placed on the governor's Greenbrier Resort in White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia, stating the resort owed over \$3.5 million in unpaid taxes for the period between June and October of 2023.

In a statement by the West Virginia Democratic Party Chair, Mike Pushkin said Justice's debts could have more than paid for the \$2 million congress proposed for

Alzheimer's research at West Virginia University which had bipartisan support, a rarity in the state's congress.

"Where are the governor's priorities? He gives \$10 million to fund a baseball stadium but rejects \$2 million for Alzheimer's research," Pushkin said. "The governor is the poster child for bad debt. West Virginians deserve leaders who uphold the highest standards of fiscal responsibility and integrity, leaders who understand the true value of investing in our state's future."

Meanwhile, Carter Bank & Trust of Martinsville, Virginia, announced its intent to begin auctioning off the land, specifically the Greenbrier Sporting Club, at the resort as they attempt to recover over \$300 million in defaulted business loans owed by the governor – a debt the governor has vowed to fight.

Later that month, Justice's coal company, Southern Coal Corporation, was found in contempt by a federal judge after failing to pay BrickStreet Mutual Insurance Co. collateral for financial obligations. Southern Coal owes BrickStreet, which provides worker compensation and employers' liability insurance, over \$500,000 after obligations paid to the coal company.

These financial trilas are just some of the recent bad dealings by Justice. According to a review by ProPublica,

his companies across agriculture, hospitality and coal mining have landed him over 600 lawsuits across more than two dozen states over the past three decades. The suits have been filed by workers, government agencies, business partners and vendors with over \$140 million in settlements.

When asked by MetroNews about the debts, the governor has often turned to Trumpian refutation or ignorance, stating the \$3.5 million in unpaid sales taxes was "brand new news to me, but I'll check it out."

While these debts have all correlated with his businesses, Justice also carries tens of millions in personal debts and liabilities that were disclosed when he filed his Senate candidate financial disclosure form, including \$25 to \$50 million to JPMorgan Chase.

Justice, who a little over a decade ago made it onto Forbes 400 peaking at a net worth of \$1.7 billion due to the sale of several coal mines to a Russian mining company in 2011, has had his assets reevaluated at just over \$513.3 million in 2021 due to several debts and

dealings in recent years.

Despite a history of bad faith dealings and debts, including several that directly impact the livelihood of many West Virginians, the likelihood of this shaping the landscape of the state's senatorial race is meek.

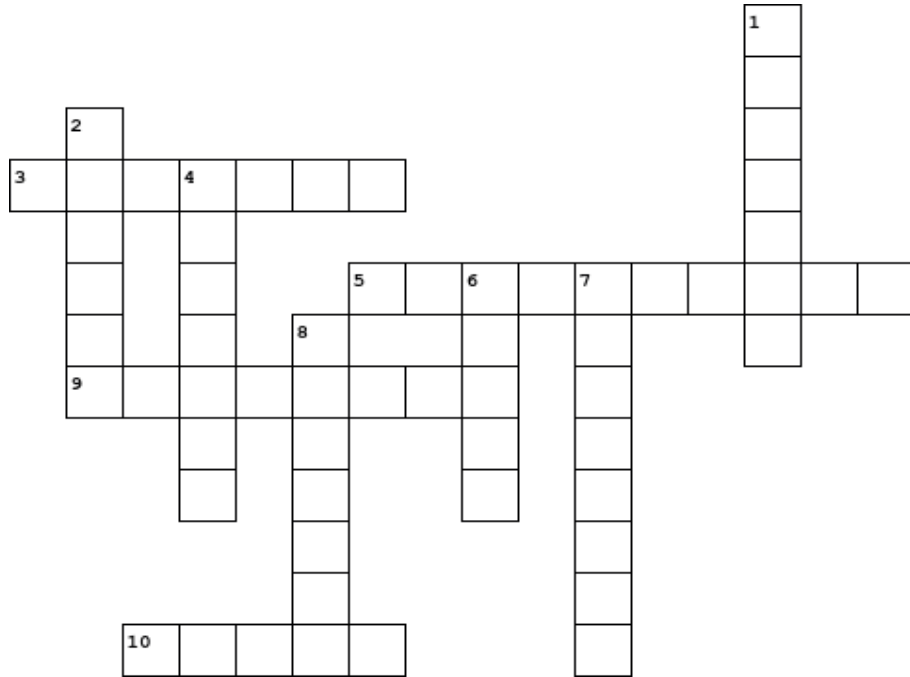
As of April 1, Justice is polling at 55.4% over his Republican challenger, state Rep. Alex Mooney, who is polling at 17.1%. With the state acting as a party stronghold over the past several decades, it is unlikely that a democratic challenger will pose a real threat to the seat.



Gov. Jim Justice, who faces both personal and business debts, announced his bid for the U.S. Senate for 2024.

Courtesy of AP Photo/ Walter Scriptunas II

Parthenon Puzzle: Crossword #19



Down

1. Gov. Justice hopes to take this senator's seat
2. Candidates took stage for the SGA ____
4. This Oscar-winning duo, also known by their first name
6. Umpires called Marshall's baseball game against App State early, citing this rule
7. A film "exploring themes of sex and consent for college students"
8. Nickole Brown's only 2023 poem

Across

3. Marshall's own pop culture convention
5. Peter Hanson, political specialist, said this was a dirty word on Capitol Hill
9. Severe weather caused one person to be trapped in this
10. Rolling Thunder program makes these available to peddling students

Crossword answers can be found at marshallparthenon.com

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Confessions

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Saturday 3:30 pm-4:25 pm
or by appointment

HerdCon Draws in Local Creatives



The sixth annual HerdCon took place in the student center and Drinko Library.

By **CYD COLLINS**
STUDENT REPORTER

Getting people involved with HerdCon by finding people who are interested in the same comics, games, and shows is a great way to build community, said a member of the library staff.

“I see this as an amazing recruitment tool,” said Michelle Alford, a coordinator for the pop culture convention. “It’s an amazing way for us to show off what our students and

faculty are doing. We’ve got a huge, nerdy population around here and a huge creative population.”

The sixth annual HerdCon took place on March 29 and 30, bringing together Marshall, local Huntington and Tri-State communities. Marshall alumnus and creator of the popular comic ‘Wynonna Earp,’ Beau Smith, appeared as a special guest at this year’s event.

Alford served as a coordinator for the first HerdCon in

2018. She said the convention has slowly expanded its venue over the years, and her goal is to get as much of Marshall’s campus involved as possible.

HerdCon traditionally features numerous booths and tables hosted by university staff and students, offering free items and games for attendees. This year, the Housing and Residence Life table sent participants on quests for prizes. Meanwhile, the WV Autism Training Center hid QR codes around for students to scan and solve puzzles while simultaneously learning about Autism Spectrum Disorder in exchange for Star Wars and sensory themed prizes.

Some booths also sold homemade treats and Girl Scout cookies, and the Memorial Student Center’s food court remained open for the event.

Meanwhile, the cosplay contest this year had five categories: juniors for those 12 and under; novice for those over 13 with little experience; journeyman for cosplayers who are over 13 and have participated in contests before; and Master

for experienced cosplayers. Additionally, the Exhibition category provided a noncompetitive space for all ages and skill levels.

Arcsilva Cosplay won the masters category, cosplaying as Lucifer Morningstar.

Sponsored by the University Libraries every year, HerdCon began in 2018 with over

1500 attendees at its first event.

Monica Garcia Brooks, the dean of libraries, said she had the idea to put on a convention at Marshall after attending several other comic conventions.

HerdCon is made possible year after year by the library staff.



Photos Courtesy of HerdCon/Abigail Cutlip

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