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‘I am still learning’ Koker retires after 32 years



Courtesy of UWO Flickr

John Koker has spent the last 32 years as an employee of UW Oshkosh. He has been provost at the university since 2017 and will retire after spring 2023.

By Katie Pulvermacher
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Not many faculty or staff at UW Oshkosh can say they have worked at one university for 32 years. But Provost John Koker can say just that.

“I walked on a college campus for the first time in the fall of 1980 as a student and 43 years later, I’m still on a college campus,” Koker said. “I haven’t missed a semester yet. It’s been quite the blessing to be a part of this community for this long. There’s so many opportunities to get involved. (For) the last 64 semesters I’ve been at Oshkosh.”

A timeline of Koker’s career

Koker’s career at UWO started in the math department in April of 1991. He taught classes for future elementary and middle school teachers and was the adviser for the mathematics minor for elementary education majors.

“I spent a lot of time involving

myself in issues around teaching and learning elementary and middle school level math,” Koker said. “I did a lot of professional development at that time of my career.”

In the early ’90s, he became involved in professional development grants, including Eisenhower Grants and Title II Aid Grants.

“That was some of the most satisfying times of my early career,” Koker said.

During one of his breaks in January, he taught seventh and eighth grade math classes for a couple of weeks. He then ran a number of professional development workshops on Native American and Indian reservations across the Dakotas and in Wisconsin.

In the ’90s, he became chair of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Human Participants and got involved in the Faculty Development Program on campus.

“In 2000, after I had been here 9 years, I was elected chair of the mathematics department,” Koker

said. “I was chair from 2000 to 2006. During that time, I still was very involved in professional development work with teachers, but also got more involved in university service around campus.”

Koker said his life changed in April of 2006, when then-Provost Lane Earns called him to discuss the open position of Dean of the College of Letters and Science (COLS).

“I kind of laughed,” Koker said. “The first time he asked (if I was interested) I said no. The second time he asked I said maybe. Maybe the third time he asked me I said yes.”

He started that position in July of 2006 and found himself getting involved at a different level in university service.

“What I didn’t like about the dean job was I worked with students less,” Koker said. “I missed my daily interactions with students.”

After being selected for the position after a national search,

he held his dean position for 11 years. In 2017, Chancellor Andrew Leavitt called to ask him if he would serve as interim Provost as Earns had announced his retirement.

“The first time Chancellor asked me to be interim provost, I said yes,” Koker said. “I assumed the (interim) position on July 1, 2017. That’s the position I’ve been in since then. After 32 years in a variety of positions, I decided it would be a good time for me to step aside and do something else.”

Reflecting on campus accomplishments over 32 years

Koker said one of the biggest things he has been a part of while here was revamping UWO’s general education program, which he said is a big process on any campus.

“That was a big accomplishment,” Koker said. “The new (program) has been in place for 10 years. It’s time to take a good look at it to see if it’s really doing what

we want it to do for students.”

As dean, he helped bring in the first engineering technology programs to campus, which included mechanical, environmental and electrical engineering technology as majors. Just this past semester, UWO got its first engineering program for biomedical engineering, set to start in fall 2023. Work is also in progress to develop an automation engineering degree.

“We certainly have had other majors (added) along the way,” Koker said. “Women and Gender Studies moved from a minor to a major. We recently launched a number of new ethnic studies programs.”

Various buildings were constructed or renovated during his tenure. To name a few: the Student Success Center, Sage Hall, Horizon Village, the Recreation and Wellness Center, the Culver Family Welcome Center, the intramural fields and the current renovation of Clow.

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‘Forever chemicals’ largely unregulated

By Josh Lehner
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The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has proposed new standards in the regulation of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), a group of human-made chemicals used in industry and consumer products since the 1940s.

Though the standards would drastically alter Wisconsin’s current PFAS laws, they should have little impact on Oshkosh given the low PFAS levels in Lake Winnebago, according to one Oshkosh official.

PFAS easily get into the soil, water and air, but they don’t break down over time, which has earned

them the nickname “forever chemicals.”

On top of this, PFAS are very toxic to humans and animals, said Shannon Davis-Foust, a UW Oshkosh biology and environmental studies professor.

“When they get into a water body, they can have all sorts of health effects, particularly birth deformities and cancers,” she said. “It, of course, depends on the concentration you’re exposed to.”

People are most commonly exposed by eating and drinking products containing PFAS. Davis-Foust said that the effects of PFAS-laden materials are observed particularly in animals.

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Willem Flaughter / Advance-Titan

People are exposed to per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in the products they eat and drink. They do not break down over time and show multitudes of health affects depending on the concentration exposure.

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Correction Policy:

The Advance-Titan is committed to correcting errors of fact. Messages regarding errors can be emailed to atitan@uwosh.edu.

Koker: On to the next adventure

From Page 1

Taking advantage of hobbies on campus

Koker appeared in more than a dozen plays on campus in all sorts of roles.

"I was in my first play when I was 14 years old," Koker said. "I was in plays all the way through high school. When I went to college, even though I was a math major, I was in a play almost every semester. I'd say all my friends during the day were my math friends, and all my friends at night were my theater friends."

An old math professor of his told him, "It's a lot easier to make math your living, and theater your hobby."

He auditioned for his first play at UWO in spring of 1992. Sometimes he would get a part and sometimes not.

"As I aged, I got to know the faculty (of the Theatre Department)," Koker said. "I'd tell them whenever they needed an old guy, they should just call me. It was a great, fun way to work with students in a different way."

He also made appearances in various faculty, alumni and student film productions.

"The most fun (movies) I've done were movies written, directed and produced by radio/TV/film students," Koker said. "I've always tried to maintain my connection to acting."

Chair, Head of the Acting Program and Director Jane Purse-Wiedenhoeft said the productions Koker has performed in over the years were while he served as Dean of COLS or as a faculty member in the Math Department.

"If there was a role that we were unable to fill and it seemed like a good fit for John, we would contact him," Purse-Wiedenhoeft said.

Purse-Wiedenhoeft said in "Laughter on the 26th Floor," Koker had to learn a quite extensive stage combat scene. In "The Boys Next Door," he played a one-armed man who was an abusive parent.

In "My Soldiers," he was an off-stage narrator. Purse-Wiedenhoeft said this show was

toured to the regional theater festival and Koker was able to attend with the faculty and students involved in the production.

Sticking to his math roots

Koker said it has been important for him to stay involved in mathematics.

"Something that people might not know was that I used to spend time at meetings and it might have looked like I was taking notes, but I might have been working on some sort of mathematical puzzle or problem in the background, kind of multitasking," Koker said.

When he became Dean of the COLS, one of the things the college did at the beginning of the semester was host an opening day meeting. Part of that event was an address given by the dean.

"I remember being quite nervous about giving my first formal address to the college as interim dean (in 2006)," Koker said. "It was short; it was OK. In 2007 or 2008, for some reason, I started my talk with a math problem. I connected this idea of the problem and weaved it through the talk. I got a lot of positive comments that people enjoyed the math and the way the talk was framed around this problem."

So he included math in his address the following year, but after not doing it the year after that, people wondered where the math problem went.

"That became part of me," Koker said. "When you write or speak, people say write what you know or speak what you know. That's part of the way I think and the way I communicate is to compare something I know in history or mathematics."

When COVID-19 hit campus hard, Koker said the Emergency Response Team sent all the messages to faculty and staff about how things were to be handled and the decisions the university made.

Koker said he had a part in those communications, but in his own messages to the Oshkosh community, he would let everyone know he was thinking of

them and encouraging them.

"(The emails) usually started with some sort of math puzzle or problem that had to do with the day," Koker said. "I'm sure I annoyed some people filling their inboxes, but I also got a lot of positive comments about that. While we were dispersed, I tried to write some sort of silly, comforting, community building message at least once a week."

He still continues to send out emails with math incorporated in some fashion.

"I always get a kick out of the bits of math that Provost Koker inserts into his messages," Professor of Mathematics John Beam said. "I'm sure he does it mostly to amuse himself and his mathematically-oriented colleagues, but I will admit that more than a few times he's derailed the work that I should have been doing because I had to stop and think about the math."

Beam said Koker's impact on the department will be missed.

"I know that all of us are sorry to see John Koker retire, and we will miss him and his emails," Beam said.

What's next?

Koker said spending time with his grandchildren is at the top of his list of things to do with his free time.

"I certainly hope to spend more time with [my grandkids], especially before they grow up and want to spend more time with people their own age," Koker said.

He is currently the president of the Board of Directors of Habitat for Humanity Oshkosh and he also hopes to increase his involvement upon retiring.

He foresees staying involved with the university as a friend or even an ambassador. He would like to help move the mission of the university forward through fundraising, especially through scholarships for students or helping with alumni relations.

"I hope to not just disappear from the UWO community," Koker said. "I also was thinking about staying up a little later and sleeping a little later in the

morning, but we'll see how that works."

One of his favorite pastimes is golfing, which he looks forward to enjoying this summer. Besides golfing, he anticipates cooking more and having family and friends over for dinner.

Words of advice for current staff, faculty and students

Throughout his 32 years of being a faculty member at UWO, he has constantly reminded himself "students first."

"That's really why we're here," Koker said. "It should be obvious, but I think sometimes we have to remind ourselves that the job here is not about 'me.'"

Even with other opportunities on other campuses available, Koker stayed at UWO.

"I wouldn't have stayed here this long if it wasn't a good place to be," Koker said. "To be transparent, after being dean for 11 years, I did apply for a few other positions. I did have an opportunity to go a couple of times, but in the end, I wanted to stay here. I felt like there was still work and contributions to be made."

Koker said he is satisfied with his career at UWO.

"Once I received the offer to be interim provost, I knew that this was going to be the place where I finished my career," Koker said. "I've found (Oshkosh) an extremely satisfying place to live and work mostly because of the people I get to work with every day and the students I get to deal with. I'm a Wisconsin person, through and through."

Sara Pritzl, unit business officer for the Office of the Provost and Vice Chancellor, said Koker will be greatly missed.

"John has provided a well work-life balance for his staff," Pritzl said. "He created a work environment that was flexible, guided, directed and fostered to everyone who stepped into our office."

She said she was very fond of the five years she has worked with him.

"I will miss his expertise and leadership," Pritzl said.

Turn to **Koker** / Page 5

So, you're graduating ... now what?

By Candice Wagener

Closing the chapter on college and starting your first job are exciting milestones. You're also totally normal if you're overwhelmed by how many decisions you have to make.

In all the hubbub of accepting the right offer and filling out new hire paperwork, don't forget to think about your future self. Consider this before that first paycheck hits your bank account:

Which comes first: student loans or retirement?

A common question graduates ask is if they should pay off their student loans before saving for retirement. While you may be eager to wipe out that debt as quickly as possible, your best bet is to save for retirement and make payments on your student loans (and stay informed about interest rates to make sure you aren't paying more than you need to).

My new employer offers a 401(k). What should I do?

Take full advantage of that 401(k). Contributions lower your taxable income, saving you money. Make the maximum contribu-

tion that works best for your situation. Oftentimes, employers will also match a percentage of your contributions. That's free money in your future pocket!



My employer doesn't offer a 401(k). Will I ever be able to retire?

If your employer doesn't offer a 401(k) (or even if they do), you can save for retirement with an Individual Retirement Account, or IRA.

There are two types of IRAs: traditional and Roth.

The main difference between them? When you pay taxes.

A traditional IRA is tax deferred. You contribute money pre-tax; you'll owe taxes on those contributions or your earnings when you withdraw the money. If you think you'll be in a

lower tax bracket when you withdraw (age 59 ½ or older), this is a good option. You may also be able to deduct your IRA contributions on your federal income tax return, lowering how much you need to pay.

A Roth IRA is not tax deferred. You owe taxes when you contribute the money to the account, so you won't have to pay them later and your contribution can grow tax-free. Withdrawals of contributions and earnings are tax-free if your account has been open a minimum of five years, and you're at least 59 ½.

Want to see how your money will grow in different retirement accounts? Let this Banzai coach guide you through the process.

Dream big and start saving.

You may be paying off student loans, trying to scrape up enough to make monthly rent payments or keep healthy groceries in the fridge, but it's never too early to start saving whatever you can.

In fact, it's smart to start building an emergency savings account. Experts recommend you have a fund with enough to cover at least three to six months of essential expenses. Start depositing what you can because every little bit adds up.

Now, the fun part. Start dreaming big. Will your future self want to:

Buy a car? Own a house? Travel internationally? These are all good reasons to start a savings account; one for every dream, even!

Let's explore different types of savings accounts:

Savings: a basic account that earns interest and allows you to deposit and withdraw at any time.

Money Market: requires a minimum deposit, has limited account activity, but often earns a much better interest rate than a regular savings account.

Certificate of Deposit (CD): you commit your money for a specific term (typically between six months and five years), often earning a higher interest rate the longer the term. Usually requires a minimum deposit.

Write down your savings goals. Name your savings accounts after those goals. Track your progress. These small steps will make it that much easier to say "no" to takeout every night or those flashy shoes you're only going to wear a handful of times before you're over them.

PFAS: New standards and Oshkosh

From Page 1

"If you have a pet bird and you use Teflon, the fumes that come off of Teflon can kill a bird because their respiratory system is so sensitive," she said.

While scientists are still learning about the health effects of PFAS, two particular variants — perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS) — have been linked to increased cholesterol levels, changes in liver enzymes, decreased vaccine responses in children and increased risk of kidney and testicular cancer.

But very few of the nearly 12,000 chemicals in the PFAS group have been adequately studied, nevermind regulated.

What's new?

In a movement toward regulating the chemical group, the EPA proposed the first national PFAS standards for public water supplies on March 14. Many states with lenient PFAS standards, such as Wisconsin, would have to update their standards if the measure is approved.

However, stricter standards carry a price tag, as updated filtration technology and drilling for cleaner water sources may increase water bills.

The EPA's proposed standard, which would likely take effect later this year or early next year, would monitor for six specific PFAS compounds, including PFOA and PFOS, and would require systems to notify the public if contamination levels exceed the proposed standards.

PFOA and PFOS levels would each have to remain under 4 parts per trillion (ppt). Four other types of PFAS — PFNA, PFHxS, PFBS and GenX chemicals — would also be regulated under the proposal.

The EPA stated that, if fully implemented, the new regulation could prevent thousands of deaths and reduce tens-of-thousands of serious PFAS-related illnesses.

Testing for PFAS

PFAS were largely unregulated in past decades but have become the center of attention recently.

In 2020, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR)

conducted background testing of surface waters at 43 locations across Wisconsin. A test conducted on the Fox River in Oshkosh showed PFOS amounts of 0.85 ppt and 0.83 ppt for PFOA.

Additionally, testing of Lake Winnebago in Neenah indicated 2.17 and 1.17 parts per trillion for PFOS and PFOA, respectively.

The standard for PFAS in groundwater, set by the State of Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS), is 20 ppt for any PFAS chemical.

In August 2022, the state's safe drinking water code was revised to include standards for PFOS and PFOA, setting a maximum contaminant level of 70 ppt individually or combined.

This means that legal action to address contamination cannot take place until the contamination exceeds 70 ppt. However, if the level is above the DHS standard of 20 ppt, no legal action is taken, although residents must be notified by the water system.

DNR Public Water Supply Section Chief Adam DeWeese said that about 130 systems across the state participated in voluntary sampling before the August 2022 update to the state's code. The DNR then worked with systems above the 20 ppt DHS threshold.

If a system had a well that recorded high PFAS levels, the water system could take that well offline and rely on other wells. This is one of four primary methods in ameliorating contamination levels, DeWeese said.

Another method involves mixing water from a higher source and a lower source to bring down the contamination level.

A system can also find a location with lower PFAS levels and drill a new well.

Finally, a system can treat water with granular activated carbon, which absorbs natural organic compounds.

Assuming the EPA's standards go into effect, DeWeese said that there will be a grace period for water systems.

"Once the final rule is published, we'll have three years to put those levels into state regulations," he said. "We're still operating under

PFAS in firefighting foam

Though firefighting foam has historically contained PFAS, Oshkosh Fire Department Fire Chief Mike Stanley said that Oshkosh's foam has been switched to PFAS-free foam.

However, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has not yet approved an alternative to PFAS-laden foam, Stanley said.

"The [Wittman Regional Airport in Oshkosh] owns some foam, so once something is approved by the FAA, they will replace their foam," he said.

Stanley, who serves as president of the Wisconsin State Fire Chiefs Association, said that he has been working with the DNR to collect PFAS-laden foam from fire departments across the state.



Courtesy of Pexels

70; that's standard. The feds publish a number and the states have three years to promulgate those numbers."

Had the DNR conducted their 2020 sampling under the EPA's proposed standards, PFOA levels in water taken from Wisconsin Dells, Muscoda, Biron, Johnson Park and in the Mississippi River near Sturgeon Lake would have exceeded the EPA's 4 ppt standard. Water in Merrill would contain more than three times the regulatory standard.

But DeWeese said that many systems across the state have been working to lower their PFAS levels — though not required by law to do so — and the most recent reports show that water in all of these systems is under the DHS recommended level.

Going forward, DeWeese said that the EPA's standards are constantly updating with improved technology and that the state will respond appropriately.

The DNR has also released PFAS fish consumption advisories for specific areas. Information on affected areas can be found at bit.ly/41dUOXI.

What about Oshkosh?

An Oshkosh Water Filtration Department report from February indicates PFOS levels at 1 ppt and PFOA levels estimated at 0.97 ppt for water taken from Lake Winneba-

go — Oshkosh's source for drinking water.

This is far below both the current DHS standard and the EPA's proposed 4 ppt standard.

The other four compounds regulated under the EPA's new standard — PFNA, PFHxS, PFBS and GenX Chemicals — must remain below 1 ppt when added together.

Oshkosh Director of Public Works James Rabe said that Oshkosh also measured these PFAS chemicals, which came out to 0.05 ppt.

Given the low levels of PFAS found in Lake Winnebago, Rabe said that the EPA's regulations shouldn't affect the city.

"Presuming the regulations, as currently proposed, are what's implemented, I do not foresee major changes being required to our water treatment process," he said. "Our treatment process currently results in numbers well below the threshold."

Recently, Oshkosh residents received a notice about an approximate 18% increase in residents' water bills. Rabe said that this isn't attributable to PFAS, but to the Wisconsin Public Service Commission (PSC), which regulates water utilities.

"We have not done a water utility rate increase in five or six years," he said. "We had to send them (PSC) all

of our documents, and they did their accounting math and said, 'OK, this is how much of a rate increase you need to have to cover your costs.'"

Rabe said that PFAS testing has only started recently, due in part to firefighting foam testing on airfields in Marinette and Madison.

"A number of states have been working on regulations over the past couple of years," he said. "[Oshkosh] started testing in August of last year, participating in the DNR's voluntary testing program."

Despite the quickly changing technology and science around PFAS, Rabe said he's confident in Oshkosh's water filtration process.

"I think in the near term, unless we see some very dramatic changes, our treatment process is going to be OK," he said. "From what I've learned, our treatment processes of using ozone and granular activated carbon are very effective processes for removing PFAS."

Rabe said that a redesign would be necessary if the EPA creates tighter regulations beyond the 4 ppt.

"We just may have to redesign particularly the granular-activated carbon filters, since they're not designed for PFAS, if the regulations start getting close to where we're at, but not a major construction project," he said. "We are staying very much on top of these regulations, and we will adapt quickly as the regulations change."

OSA talks mildew in dorm rooms

By Frankie Kerkhof
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During the April 5 Oshkosh Student Association (OSA) Senate meeting, the topic of mildew in the residence halls was brought up for discussion by Athletics Advocacy Senator Drue Polka. The OSA Senate discussed the lack of resources in the dorm rooms dedicated to solving this problem.

Polka described her own experience in Taylor Hall during the 2021-22 school year.

"Me and my roommate tried wiping the vast amounts of condensation around the window with towels, but once there was a lot of mildew (at the time we thought was mold), we filed a work order report," she said. "This, unfortunately, was not a good experience because they

had us move our entire room around so they could get to the window without being on a bed, just to wipe it with a towel (something we could have done). The only reason we filed the order was so that someone knew we were having this issue."

UW Oshkosh Chief Facilities Officer JoAnn Rife explained the residence hall cleaning procedures.

"Every room over the summer has its floors extracted, furniture cleaned and walls and baseboards wiped down," Rife said. "Each room is inspected for any mold growth. Cleaners for the college utilized a mold killing cleaning solvent. In those instances where mold has been discovered on walls or ceilings, the issue has been and will continue to be handled by cleaning and killing the mold with a cleaning solvent that



Rife

eradicates the issue. Every AC/heater unit has been cleaned by the college, again using mold-killing solvent."

Rife stresses the importance of what she called the three C's: climate, cleaning and communication.

"Controlling room climate is essential to the success of managing indoor air quality and comfort," she said. "Moisture and humidity provide conditions that are favorable for growth of mold."

to Resident Life staff immediately, she said, as it can take only 24-48 hours for substances to grow.

"Residential Life staff should always be the initial contact for indoor air quality, humidity or mold issues," Rife said. "This means in your own room and in bathrooms and kitchens."

Rife said students living in the residence halls with concerns should make a report to their community adviser, hall director or the main Residential Life office during business hours and submit a work order.

But students should also maintain a clean space by hanging up damp or wet towels, bath mats and any wet clothing articles — including shoes — to allow for thorough drying after use and to prevent substance growth or musty odors, she said.

Students should also:

- Clean any spills immediately and thoroughly.
- Empty trash regularly into the dumpsters outside.
- Vacuum carpet or rugs, sweep floors and dust your room regularly.
- Avoid leaving open food containers out, seal all containers after use and refrigerate perishable foods.

The health and safety of our students and staff are the top priority at UWO. Reports of mildew or mold are taken seriously," Director of Residence Life Lori Develice Collins said. "If a student is concerned their room may have mildew or mold the first step is to complete a work order."

Work orders can be submitted at tma.uwosh.edu:442/.

Abortion ban exceptions controversial

UWO Democrats remain unimpressed by GOP proposal

By Anya Kelley
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The Wisconsin Republican party proposed an exception to the state abortion ban just three weeks before the monumental state Supreme Court election.

When *Roe vs. Wade* was overturned, Wisconsin's abortion law defaulted to the 1849 abortion ban that makes abortion a felony for anyone, other than the pregnant person, to provide an abortion.

Under this law, almost all abortion would be considered a class H felony: up to six years in prison and up to a \$10,000 fine.

Wisconsin law defines abortion as an act that "intentionally destroys the life of an unborn child."

This differs from many state heartbeat laws because in Wisconsin, an unborn child is defined as "a human being from time of conception until it is born alive."

Though the Wisconsin abortion ban does not outlaw self-managed abortions, abortion pills are currently not available in the state.

"The exception that Republicans are currently trying to add to the law is that for women who have been raped and incest up to 12 weeks," said Eliza Farrow, the diversity, equity and inclusivity student services coordinator for the UW Oshkosh Women's Center.

Farrow emphasized that after 12 weeks, no matter what the circumstances, the ban would be back in place.

"There is a thing in place that protects the life of the mother, but it's all not very clear," said Farrow. "So that's the only exception so far in Wisconsin."

Farrow said there is a lot of misinformation circulating about the abortion issue. Debates are taking place between both parties concerning what exactly it means to

protect the life of the mother.

"Some Republicans have said that, for instance, ectopic pregnancy (pregnancy in which the fetus would not be viable and would be outside of the uterus – a life threatening condition) is not life threatening and that could be a potentially viable fetus that [the mother] would have to carry to term," Farrow said. "People debate even things that medical professionals have said like, 'hey, that's literally not gonna work.'"

Farrow said that the rules of the new exception are not only vague but limiting. One in every six American women become victims of rape or attempted rape in their lifetimes. However, only 310 out of every 1,000 sexual assaults get reported meaning over two in every three go unreported.

"It's hard to have enough evidence that police or lawyers will actually even take it to court," Farrow said. "The ability to show burden of proof tends to be so high that nothing happens and because of our legal system, a lot of times, folks just decide that it's not worth reporting it and being retraumatized."

Farrow explained that it is not clear in the bill how they would determine if somebody had actually been a victim of rape or incest.

"It could be really stringent as it has to go to court, the person has to be prosecuted," Farrow said. "In that case it would be too late ... because you said 12 weeks."

Isabella Wishnie, the co-chair for the UWO College Democrats, said she is trying to keep a positive mindset when it comes to reproductive rights in Wisconsin.

"It does give me a little bit of hope, you know, coming from having a total abortion ban to now, there being these exceptions that, you know, some states don't have," Wishnie said. "In a perfect



world, we wouldn't need these exceptions — people would be able to just choose what they would want to do. But this does make me a little bit hopeful moving forward."

Wishnie said she hopes this exception will help move the state of Wisconsin to an agreement about abortion rights, but she believes that is still a far way away.

"We are still very much a divided state," Wishnie said.

Wishnie said she feels that the Wisconsin GOP is using this abortion ban exception as an attempt to cater to the left.

"It's a way for them to still kind of have this control, and in a way, have their own ban like the total ban," Wishnie said.

Kayla Weinberger, the vice president of the College Democrats, said she feels Wisconsin still has a long way to go.

"[The GOP] wanted to put an idea forward that shows they are willing to be reasonable," Weinberger said. "The idea

brought up right before the election," Weinberger said. "I'd heard from a lot of younger people our age that a lot of people had voted conservative in the past ... were changing their voting preferences because that's how much [reproductive rights] matters to people."

Weinberger said she feels abortion has been a hot button issue since she first started becoming politically aware. She said growing up in Catholic school, abortion was a touchy subject.

"I definitely want there to be a middle ground [but], at the same time, I've noticed a lot of conservative politicians are utilizing what's unknown and people's fear to get support," Weinberger said. "Nothing motivates people more than fear unfortunately."

Weinberger said she has begun questioning the GOP's thought process.

"Another reason a lot of Democratic Wisconsin politicians were not in favor of this bill ... is because it only adds on to the 1849 bill," Weinberger said. "Don't you think it's time for us to just make something entirely new?"

The president of the College Republicans was contacted for comment and did not reply to the request.

that this exception is their idea of being reasonable and actually listening to the people is really eye opening."

Weinberger said some of the Republicans in Wisconsin don't have a read on what a majority of Wisconsinites are asking for.

"It's a step, but it's definitely not enough," Weinberger said, "which is why Gov. Evers vetoed it."

Weinberger said she felt conflicted about the proposal of the ban exception.

"I never lie to get too much into conspiracies, but it definitely was interesting that [this] was

UWO introduces biomedical engineering major

By Josh Lehner
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UW Oshkosh's engineering and engineering technology department will begin offering a biomedical engineering (BME) degree next semester as the field continues to grow in the United States.

The UW System Board of Regents approved the degree March 31, and UWO Chancellor Andrew Leavitt called it an exciting and historic day for UWO.

"We are grateful to the University of Wisconsin System Board of Regents and UW System leaders for reviewing and approving this new, exciting, responsive and futuristic program at UWO," Leavitt said.

UWO now joins other UW System schools like UW-Madison, UW-Eau Claire and UW-Milwaukee, who already offer the major.

BME focuses on using engineering to solve medical problems, such as the need for pacemakers, prosthetics and even futuristic technology like stem



Courtesy of UWO Engineering and Engineering Technology

Biomedical engineers combine problem solving with technical knowledge in biology, healthcare and engineering.

cell engineering and using 3D printers to create artificial body parts.

Engineering and engineering technology department chair Greg Kleinheinz said that the degree prepares students for a diverse range of medical fields, including work with implants and prosthetics, work with medical devices and organ and tissue engineering.

Electrical engineering technology professor Ahmed Nasif said that he expects a significant demand for the degree based on increasing enrollment in health-related UWO programs, as well as a growing job market from businesses in the state and region.

The BME job field is expected to grow 10% by 2031, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Nasif said that the BME curriculum contains a diverse range of courses featuring both lecture and hands-on components. These courses include mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, kinesiology, engineering and engineering technology.

"The four-year bachelor of science in BME degree program is planned to be 129 credits (50 credits math and science plus 46 credits engineering and allied fields plus 33 credits general education)," he said. "The students are required to take a 'biomedical design project' course in their senior year, which emphasizes real-world problem solving, design and implementation. The program culminates with a capstone project or an internship experience in the BME area."

Nasif believes that the program will improve both the engineering and engineering technology department and UWO broadly.

"The BME program will enrich the department of engineering and engineering technology and UWO at large by adding new



Nasif

Kleinheinz

courses, laboratory resources and faculty expertise," he said. "The program will build on the existing strength of the department, as well as create new collaboration opportunities with other allied academic units. The program aims to attract new majors to our campus to meet the increasing demand for this new and exciting major."

The new degree will be the department's fourth. Degrees in electrical engineering technology, environmental engineering technology and mechanical engineering technology are already offered.

Willow Project to create lasting global damage

By Mattie Beck
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The Willow Project, a recent oil drilling project in northern Alaska, will affect those all across the country, even in Wisconsin, Jim Feldman, the director of environmental studies at UW Oshkosh said.

The project will create an increase in climate change due to the natural resources being put into the atmosphere.

"The real cost is that it takes fossil fuels that were safely stored underground in the form of petroleum," he said. "[It eventually] sends those resources into the atmosphere in the form of carbon dioxide, thus exacerbating climate change."

Feldman said the project was actually introduced before Joe Biden's presidency, but was recently approved by his administration to start the project in Alaska.

"This is the approval by the Biden administration of a new large petroleum drilling project in an area of the north slope of Alaska called the National Petroleum Re-

serve," Feldman said. "It had been greenlighted during the Trump administration but held up in court."

The opposition toward the project comes from what will be put into the atmosphere from it.

"We need to stop taking fossil fuel resources out of the earth and putting them into the atmosphere," Feldman said.

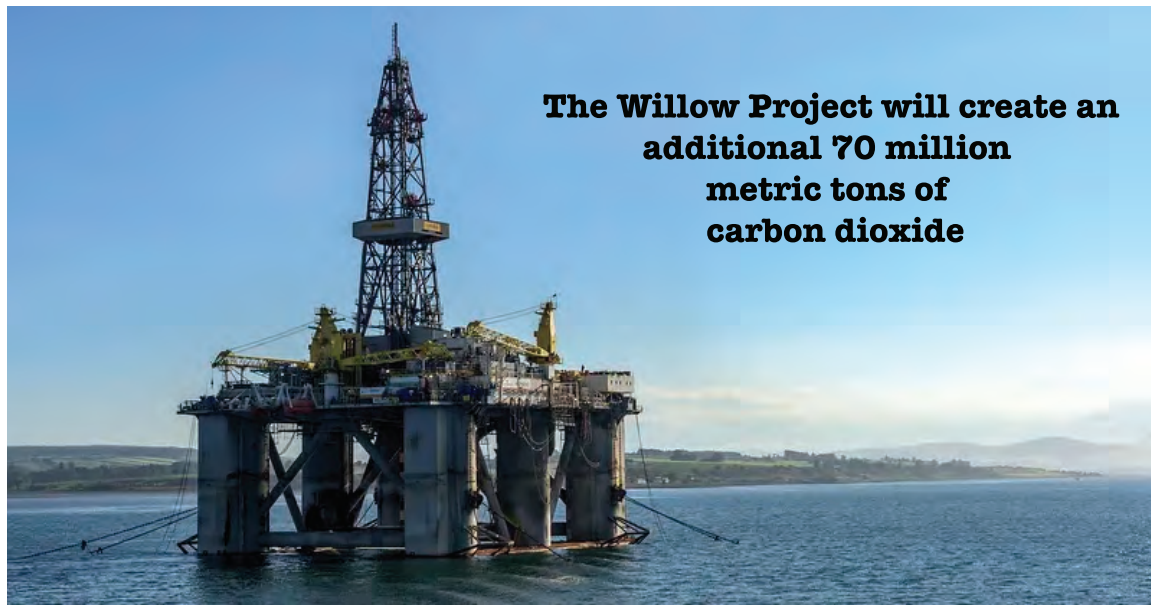
According to the Washington Post in their article "What is Willow? How an Alaska oil project could affect the environment," the project will create an additional 70 million metric tons of carbon dioxide in the U.S.

That number is estimated to be equal to about 0.03 percent of all U.S. emissions in 2021.

The main reason for the project is due to the reliance the U.S. has on fossil fuels.

"The pros, I suppose, have to do with energy security," Feldman said. "We are still dependent on fossil fuels and on petroleum, and until we are not, we will need to produce oil."

The project is also happening due to its cheaper prices based on location, Bradley Spanbauer, the



The Willow Project will create an additional 70 million metric tons of carbon dioxide

Courtesy of rawpixel

While the Willow Project will help with energy security, it will amplify climate change and take away fossil fuels.

sustainability director at UWO said.

"One might argue that the pros are more oil for the U.S. at a cheaper price because it will originate within the U.S. versus being procured from a foreign entity," he said. "It is being sought by ConocoPhillips Co., who has other oil drilling operations in the same part of Alaska."

The project goes against some of Biden's previously proposed plans, Spanbauer said.

"This approval to expand U.S. oil extraction flies in the face of the Biden administration's previous claims of keeping oil in the ground to avoid further damaging the environment," Spanbauer said. "And contributing to rising emissions

which is exacerbating climate change."

Spanbauer said the project will ultimately harm the planet as it continues forward.

"If the project moves forward, the construction of the platforms, pipelines and roads will alter habitat for all organisms in the area, including humans, and potentially expose them to harmful environmental hazards from bringing this oil up to the surface," he said.

The project will cause long-lasting damage across the globe, Spanbauer said referencing the atmosphere.

"It will contribute to climate change, which has many far-reaching and devastating effects," Spanbauer said.

Along with the environmental damage, the consequences include an eventual increase in gas prices, Shannon Davis-Foust, a senior lecturer in biology and environmental studies at UWO, said.

"I'm not sure if prices will go down, but in the long run, they'll go up," she said. "We also simply need to have more emphasis on renewable energy and energy efficiency."

Davis-Foust said there should be a change toward clean energy in reference to this project.

"It's simply going to contribute more carbon to the atmosphere," Davis-Foust said. "Like I said, we need more emphasis on clean energy."

Beekeeping club participates in Bee Campus USA

By Payton Murphy
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UW Oshkosh is one of many campuses across the United States that prides itself on its environmental sustainability efforts, harboring programs such as the Sustainability Institute for Regional Transformations (SIRT) and the Green Fund, and advocating for sustainable activities such as recycling and composting.

Standing at the center of these environmentally conscious efforts and organizations is UWO's Sustainable Beekeeping Club.

The Sustainable Beekeeping Club, started in 2020 by Oshkosh alumni Mariah Parkin, advocates for and facilitates environmentally sustainable practices and activities, as well as providing students with the opportunity to learn how to care for the world's most important pollinators: bees. Most recently, the club has been focusing on working towards becoming a certified Bee Campus USA affiliate.

Bee Campus USA, a green initiative started by the Xerces Soci-

ety for Invertebrate Conservation, is a national program that focuses on conservation of natural pollinators in an effort to facilitate environmental abundance and growth. Currently, only 166 colleges and universities across America meet the criteria to qualify for a Bee Campus USA certification, with a mere seven of these schools being located in Wisconsin.

The Sustainable Beekeeping Club hopes to make UWO the next campus to obtain this certification.

"It's another thing that's implementing sustainability and making us unique and making us stand out," club president Alyssa Bohn said. "We're saying, 'Hey, we're actually taking initiative' instead of just saying that we're sustainable."

In order to become certified as a Bee Campus USA affiliate, certain criteria must be met on campus. A few of these qualifications include creating a habitat for pollinators by increasing the presence of native plants, reducing the use of pesticides and creating signage advocating for pollinator conservation.

The Sustainable Beekeeping Club has been working tirelessly to



Advance-Titan File Photo

The UWO Sustainable Beekeeping Club was started in 2020 by alumni Mariah Parkin. The club advocates for sustainable practices and activities while teaching students about bees.

not only meet, but excel in meeting the required criteria and to garner the money required to apply for the program.

"I think getting more native pol-

linators would be beneficial to the ecosystems here on [the] Oshkosh campus," Bohn said. "It will just promote more sustainability and obviously help us with keeping

the ecosystems healthy and more intact.

Currently, active discussions regarding the steps and resources required for UWO's Bee Campus USA application are ongoing and are proving to be productive, with strong indicators that the club will be able to finish applying for the certification in the near future.

Students who are not part of the Sustainable Beekeeping Club can also lend a helping hand in assuring UWO obtains Bee Campus USA certification by respecting and advocating for native plant species on campus, fostering an environment where pollinators can thrive by respecting and maintaining pollinator nesting areas, acknowledging and making a place for signage related to Bee Campus USA and other green efforts and more.

To learn more about Bee Campus USA commitments and initiatives, visit: beecityusa.org. To learn more about the Sustainable Beekeeping Club, contact club advisor Shannon Davis-Foust or club president Alyssa Bohn or visit the club's Instagram page.

Koker: Gold sign reminds Provost to keep learning

From Page 2

"His continuous support over the years has been instrumental in my career growth."

During his time as a student, Koker made lifelong friends. He encourages students to go out of their way to make connections.

"I stay in touch, interestingly after almost 40 years, with my college roommates," Koker said. "Another great thing about college is that you make these friends, not just because you live



together. I also met my wife at college. I look forward to spending more time with her."

Koker said his biggest accomplishment has been seeing thousands of students graduate.

"I'm a first generation college student," Koker said. "I was the first one in my family to go onto college. I had no idea what I was getting myself into. Maybe that's why I never left."

Upon retirement, Koker is reflecting on his career.

"We're never finished," Koker said. "We can stay in school as long as we want. What I always encourage people is lifelong learning. That's something we need to do our entire lives."

A little gold sign in his office says "I'm still learning."

"I put that right by my door so every time I leave, I remind myself that I'm not finished yet and there's a lot of things I don't know," Koker said. "We've accomplished quite a bit and we should celebrate our accomplishments, but we shouldn't just rest on those. We should always try to become better and learn new things and try new things and do things differently."

Arts & Entertainment

Bye Gosh Fest provides entertainment

By Mattie Beck
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Bye Gosh Fest has been held on the UW Oshkosh campus since 1979 and has provided students with an entertainment experience to end the semester.

The headliners for this year's Bye Gosh Fest are former Disney Channel stars Aly and AJ. Their opener is local band Mubus.

The event, put on by the Reeve Union Board (RUB), has included a wide variety of artists over the years who students vote on in the semester, to perform in the Kolf Sports Center parking lot.

RUB adviser Dylan Bram said in previous years Bye Gosh Fest has had artists such as Bob Dylan, Skillet, Michelle Branch and T-Pain.

"The overarching theme of the event is to celebrate the end of the year," Bram said. "So even if you have not heard of the headliner or concerts don't do a lot for you, we still hope that people come to celebrate."

Bram attended Bye Gosh Fest during his time at UWO, and the event looked a lot different when Bram was in college, with a smaller-scale event taking place.

"Back then, it was on a smaller scale and happened near Reeve and the NBC (Nelson, Breese and Clemans Halls) Village," Bram said. "The music, which I believe was Nappy Roots at my first Bye Gosh Fest, played on a small riser stage on the Reeve Marketplace patio."

Bram said when he attended he felt the impact of the event was a way to show care for the students.

"The main impact I felt was celebratory and a sense that UW Oshkosh really wanted their students



Courtesy of UWO Flickr

Bye Gosh Fest is an event that provides students with a chance to get free entertainment at the end of the semester.

to know how much they were appreciated," Bram said.

Bram hopes this event has the same impact on students today.

"I hope to this day that students come to this event and feel a sense of accomplishment that they made it to this moment," Bram said. "A beginning celebration before summer, graduation or whatever the future has in store for them."

The event this year has a few new elements, Bram said.

"All of us on RUB would like to highlight a couple new elements this year, including six food trucks and a street magician," he said.

The event is mainly planned by students on the RUB executive

board such as Casie Frentzel, the RUB live music chair.

"Planning Bye Gosh Fest is not easy work," she said. "There is a lot of coordination involving the headliner, the openers, production companies and collaboration with other team members."

This is Frentzel's first time planning the event and second time attending.

"Last year, I was not on the executive board yet, but I was being trained by Emma, our current president, and live music chair at that time," Frentzel said. "I had not seen a Bye Gosh Fest in person until last year, so it was a completely new experience for me."

Frentzel said that the impact of the festival on her is how it showcases the hard work of the RUB executive board.

"I think it's a representation of our student organization for a closing event at the end of the year," Frentzel said. "There are components of all of our chairpersons that day."

The aspects of different chairs are represented all throughout the festival."

"We have bucket hats from our crafty adventures chair, a wandering magician from our entertainment chair and from our special events chair, we have inflatables, novelties and more," Frentzel said.

Frentzel said as a whole, the impact for students is the fact that this is a student-led event.

"For the student body, I think that the impact is that a student organization can put this on," Frentzel said. "It's a great [representation] of what we can do as students for students."

The event is a celebration of the year and a way for students to enjoy themselves, Frentzel said.

"It's a way to celebrate with campus that the school year is coming to a close," she said. "We put a lot of work into this day and seeing lots of people show up and enjoy themselves makes it worth it."

A closer look at Eroding Winds Record Shop

By Payton Murphy
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It's no secret that the picturesque downtown Oshkosh is home to many wonderful small businesses, shops and restaurants. The area acts as an activity hub for local shopping, dining, entertainment, housing and much more for students and residents alike.

But among all of these businesses, one shop sits at the center of the local music scene and stands as a staple of local entertainment and interest.

Eroding Winds Record Shop, located on 436 N. Main St. next to Oblio's Lounge and across from Britton's Walk-Over Footwear, is a self-described "vinyl-focused brick and mortar retail store."

Eroding Winds offers a unique and intricate experience for music lovers in the Fox Valley area, selling records, both new and old, for every music genre under the sun.

To many in the Oshkosh area, Eroding Winds serves as a center for music appreciation and music related activity.

To owner Adam Bartlett, the shop is a dream come true. Bartlett's love of music became a passion when he began working for the Exclusive Company in 2000.



Willem Flaughter / Advance-Titan

Eroding Winds has been open in Oshkosh since 2016.

Even at the age of 17, Bartlett knew that his future lay in music. Since then he has done a lot of work in the industry, such as working for content distributors, being a member of multiple bands, working for music labels, booking shows, operating an online store and even founding his own media label, Gilead Media. According to Bartlett, things really began to take off after he decided to open a storefront for his company.

"When it came time for the online store to outgrow my basement, I had to find a place to rent," Bartlett said. "It made sense to open up a storefront if I was already paying rent for a space and I already had the knowledge to run a shop."

Bartlett, a native of the area, decided that the city of Oshkosh was the perfect place to open his storefront. Thus, he moved back to the area after living in Ohio

for some odd years and opened the Eroding Winds storefront in 2016. Since then, Bartlett and his team have enjoyed more than half a decade of successful business and interest and support from locals.

As business grew over time, so did business opportunities, eventually leading to the grand opening of a second Eroding Winds storefront. The second storefront, located on 229 E. College Ave. in Appleton, was opened to the public on July 8, 2022, and has since garnered mass success.

When asked about his reasoning for opening a second storefront in Appleton, Bartlett claimed that it was a strategic business move.

"It just made perfect sense to fill the void left behind when the Exclusive Company closed," Bartlett said. "The population is greater in the Appleton area and people buy a lot of records up there, so it was a perfect evolution and a once in a lifetime opportunity that needed to be taken."

Bartlett has enjoyed operating the successful shop, taking in the highs and lows that come with being an owner of a small business. In his time operating Eroding Winds, Bartlett has come to find the most joy in ordering records for the shop, as well as getting to

talk to shoppers about music.

"I love ordering records for the shop and looking through used buys," he said. "That's one of the most fun parts, getting to spend money on cool records and talk to folks at the store (about cool records)."

Eroding Winds is unique and stands out as one of the few operating record stores in the Fox Valley area, as well as being one of the most successful record retailers that the Fox Cities has ever known. Bartlett and his storefronts fill a need for the community, actively fostering local residents' love for music.

"It's a lot of work to stay on top of all the new music folks are looking for, but it's been a joy to supply that for the community," Bartlett said. "Of course people can find records at antique malls and the like, but being a true brick and mortar record shop is something special and unique, it's an honor to be that place."

Eroding Winds Record Shop is located on 436 N. Main St. in Oshkosh, or 229 E. College Ave. in Appleton, for an in-person shopping experience like no other in the Valley. For more information about the shop, visit erodingwinds.com/ or visit the storefront locations.

Arts & Entertainment

New mural to highlight Oshkosh

By Kelly Hueckman
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Oshkosh is on track to join over 60 other cities as part of the "Greetings Tour" project, which creates postcard-inspired murals to encompass a city's local culture.

"We love working with communities to create something that everyone can take pride in," Greetings Tour muralist Victor Ving said.

Ving and photographer Lisa Beggs began the mural project in 2015 after completing their iconic "Greetings from Chinatown" mural in New York.

They took a year-long trip to California, which inspired the artist duo to take their work on the road.

Since then, they have been traveling full-time in their RV with the goal of creating murals in all 50 states.

Ving said he and Beggs didn't expect what was at first just a year-long road trip would evolve into a vast project.

"In 2015, we officially started the "Greetings Tour," packing our lives into a 24 foot RV and leaving New York City," he said. "What we didn't anticipate was that one year on the road would lead to almost six years of living full-time as traveling muralists, creating over 60 murals in more than 25 states."

The "Greetings from Oshkosh" mural will be the third annual mural since 2021, an addition Downtown Oshkosh Business Improvement Director Jessica Meidl said she believes will be welcomed



Courtesy of Greetings Tour

The Greetings Tour artists have traveled all around the country creating murals for different cities that highlight aspects of the city.

warmly by the community.

"I can already tell the community is really excited about it from the announcement we made on social media," she said. "We see residents, students and visitors taking photos in front of our current murals all the time and the ones we have right now have made such an impact on our community."

Each mural features large, block style letters reminiscent of mid-century postcards incorporating key features of specific cities.

Ving said he does this by collaborating with local figures and other artists.

"We take great care to ensure that our murals incorporate important landmarks, cultural references, history, nature and local artist collaborations when possible," he said. "We draw inspiration for the imagery directly from the community we're painting in, but we also strive to help narrow down concepts that are truly unique to the city."

For example, one of Ving and Beggs' murals in Chicago features the city's famous sports teams, the city skyline and even Chicago-style pizza.

The "Greetings from Oshkosh"

mural will also feature work from indigenous, Green Bay-based artist Cainen Shooter, who is commissioned to create one of the block letters.

Meidl said that although the final images included in the "Greetings from Oshkosh" mural are not finalized yet, she has a few ideas of some key aspects.

"The letters and background [will] represent the water that surrounds our community, the history that shaped our city and includes art, architecture, landmarks, events and businesses we're known for all over the

world," she said.

Meidl said she hopes the collaboration between locals and the final mural will improve the experience of community members and tourists alike.

"This project will continue to be a catalyst for public art and will add to the quality of life in Oshkosh," she said. "Projects like this continue to add to the quality of life in Oshkosh and the more things we continue to do like this only makes our city more appealing to shoppers, tourists and residents."

Oshkosh campus features different plant life

By Mattie Beck
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Throughout the UW Oshkosh campus, there is a wide variety of plant life found on the campus grounds.

The variety of plants included comes from the Sustainability Institute, which helps upkeep these plants on campus.

Bradley Spanbauer, the sustainability director for the Sustainability Institute for Regional Transformations (SIRT), said the variety of plant life includes native and non-native plants.

"Plant life on campus ranges from regular, non-native turf grass, to a diversity of garden-variety plants in perennial beds, to native forbs and shrubs found in our bioswales and prairies," he said. "[And] over 1600 trees on the Oshkosh campus alone."

The upkeep of the plants looks different depending on the type of plant.

"Upkeep ranges from regular mowing during the summertime for turf grass, to weeding and invasive species removal in perennial beds, prairies and bioswales," he said.

There is also a different upkeep for all the different trees found on and around campus.

"We also have to maintain our trees with trimming during "R"



Advance-Titan File Photo
There are many native and non-native plants found on campus.

months (months with the letter R in them)," Spanbauer said. "We also plant 10-20 trees per year as part of our Tree Campus Higher Education designation."

Spanbauer said some of the special plants on campus that require the upkeep include plants from surrounding areas in Wisconsin.

"One particularly interesting one is the Dwarf Lake iris," he said. "Which is endemic to Wis-

consin and is an endangered species, found in our spring ephemeral gardens which are found next to Halsey and Harrington (there is signage by them)."

The special plant life on campus is indicated by signage that includes a picture of the plant, the scientific name of the plant and a description of the plant.

Spanbauer said the importance of these plants on campus comes from their historical context and

longevity in the area.

"They have been found here for thousands of years and have evolved along with animals, so the animals use them as habitat and forage sites," he said.

Along with that, the plants also offer a lot to the ecosystem where they are planted.

"Plants offer oxygen while absorbing carbon dioxide," Spanbauer said. "Many plants offer ecosystem services such as holding soils together to prevent erosion, filtering and cleaning rainwater after heavy rainstorms, and also are a source of natural beauty."

As for the upkeep of these plants, the former grounds supervisor for the UWO campus grounds and current grounds supervisor for the Fond du Lac campus Lisa Mick, said it depends on the plant.

"The natural turf requires mowing, fertilization and weed treatment as management has determined," she said. "In a more natural, holistic approach we would use compost and compost tea to provide the 'food' for the grass plants until we build up the soil so that it creates its own cycle of care."

Some of the plant life requires more upkeep than others, such as what is known as the annual plantings.

"The edible and annual plantings are the most time-intensive next to the natural grass. They require yearly planting, synthetic fertilizer and hand weeding," Mick said. "Although they are labor intensive, they are one of the areas most appreciated by the campus community."

The plant life is taken care of by the grounds crew on campus and is supported by volunteers and student employees, and is a lot to take care of.

"It's a daunting task and sometimes overwhelming," Mick said. "There is an ongoing battle between what people believe to be beautiful."

With the constant upkeep, Mick said there is a possible solution to help ease the amount of work.

"I believe with the current climate (both literally and figuratively) we need to go with a more holistic and natural course in the care of this campus, this will mean that weeds exist," she said.

Mick ended by making the point that when considering plant life, there is more than just the campus population that is on campus.

"On a small scale we are stewards of this campus and all that visit; not only the humans, but the bugs, birds and other wildlife," she said. "We can't let them down."

CAMPUS COVID STORIES

Humans of Oshkosh share their stories of hardship, perseverance



VICKI STADLER AND MANDY OLESEN - Custodial staff

By MaryAnn Reindl
(Edited for space)

During the early days of the pandemic, UW Oshkosh became a ghost town. Students were sent home and most of the staff worked from home. Only those deemed “essential” to the operation of the university were required to work in person on campus.

For the custodial staff, working remotely wasn’t an option. They had a job to do — get the campus clean and safe enough for students to return.

Custodial supervisors Vicki Stadler and her daughter Amanda “Mandy” Olesen know what they and their staff do matters. They also know that much of their work is done without fanfare and goes largely unnoticed by students and staff.

The line between custodial staff and residence life staff became blurred during the pandemic. It became all hands on deck when state officials, anticipating overwhelmed hospitals, asked UW Oshkosh to house an overflow of COVID patients. The custodial staff spent the early days deep cleaning Horizon Village. (The overflow of sick patients never occurred in the area.) Still, with all the uncertainties and unknowns about the deadly virus, Mandy had to keep her own

fears at bay. According to the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention, almost 200,000 people died from COVID in the U.S. between March-August 2020.

“I have anxiety, and I have a couple autoimmune diseases that I have to worry about. I’m worried about taking COVID back home to my family,” said Mandy, a married mother of two. “It’s scary. And my mom is older. If we take this home, or if one of us gets sick, how do we deal with that, not just at home, but also here at work? It’s really stressful.”

After cleaning and prepping Horizon, the custodial staff tackled the remaining residence halls. Students are usually required to clean their own rooms, but COVID changed that. The students left many of their belongings and trash, which meant the custodial staff had to pack up the rest of the students’ belongings and label them for future pickup, on top of cleaning.

As supervisors, Vicki and Mandy keep their work lives professional, but they know they have a unique bond as mother and daughter, and this bond strengthened them during the early days of COVID.

“One of my biggest challenges was trying to keep myself focused and not panic,” Vicki said. “I’m in a position of authority. And if the authority panics, it’s just gonna spread through the crew. You have to present the front that it’s

going to be OK. And if you have to break down, you do it at home.”

Home to both was a refuge and also a place of concern as both their spouses were also deemed essential workers and worked during the pandemic. They all worried about bringing the virus home to their loved ones.

“My mom at that time was 78 years old,” Vicki said. “I had so many things go through my head. Do I stay away? I don’t want to take this to her if I’m exposed. It’s heart-wrenching because you need human contact, and during that time, human contact was almost impossible.”

In fall 2020, UW Oshkosh opened its campus for in-person instruction. Vaccines were still many months away, which meant the University had to anticipate a surge in COVID-positive cases. The gymnasium in Albee Hall was converted into a COVID testing center. Students who tested positive or who were exposed to the virus were immediately sent to isolate or quarantine in “the COVID dorm,” Webster Hall. And the custodial staff were routinely called on to clean the one place they knew where the virus hung out.

To clean the COVID dorm you started in the basement of Radford. First, you picked up your walkie-talkie so you could stay in contact with the rest of the custodial staff, and then you headed to a storage room to suit up in medi-

cal coveralls. After putting on the plastic face shield over your masked face, you pull the hood of the suit over your head. After grabbing some plastic gloves and booties to carry with you, you make the short trek from Radford Hall to the entrance of the Webster. You slip the booties over your shoes and pull the nitrile gloves on your hands. By now, there is sweat dripping down your face and soaking your clothes underneath. The suit has been trapping your body heat ever since you put it on, but it’s now time to get to work.

“It’s hard to catch your breath because you have your mask and the face shield,” Mandy said. “We tried to rotate our custodians through that so not everyone got too winded or overheated.”

Vicki shared another hazard of suiting up for COVID dorm duties. “I don’t know how many times I set my keys or walkie-talkie down because there is nowhere to put them in those suits,” she said. “And I’d have to go back and figure out where I left them.”

Vicki said she is proud of the role she and the custodial staff played during the pandemic. “I love my job. I like being that backbone. I’m incredibly proud of myself, my crew, and everybody who was here because we didn’t give up. We didn’t give in. We didn’t say no. And that’s what we do.”

Campus COVID Stories began with Humans of Oshkosh founder Grace Lim and four UW Oshkosh honors students with the goal of showcasing the storylines of students, professors, coaches and other faculty from 2020 to the present day. The full book can be found here: archives.uwosh.edu/covidstories. [All photos courtesy of Patrick Flood]

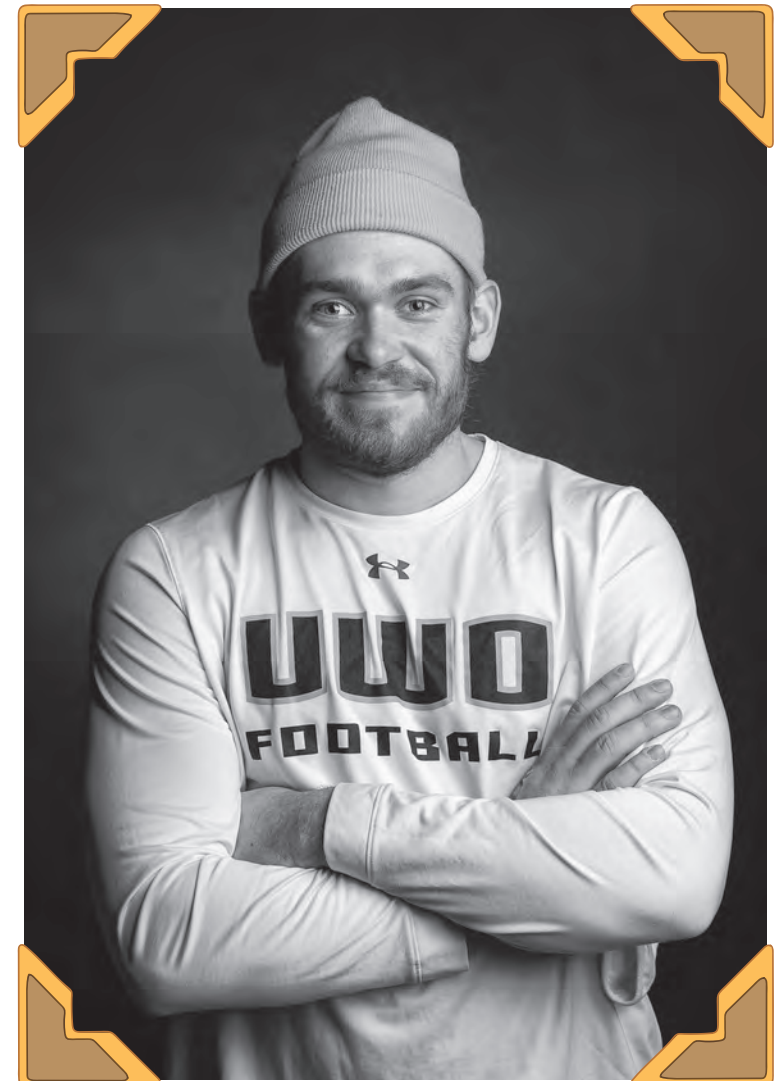
JOSH KRIDELBAUGH - Pre-Kinesiology major

Life as a student athlete is not easy, especially in the time of COVID. My start to college and college football was as unprecedented as it gets. Having to mask up, social distance and limit our face to face interactions hindered my social life dramatically. It was difficult to meet and hang out with my teammates knowing anyone of us could have the virus and just simply pass it on to everyone in close proximity.

I was looking forward to big team lifts and eating together in Blackhawk, our dining hall, after practice. That didn’t happen because of COVID safety protocols. So I ate by myself. I was going to gray-shirt my freshman year fall of 2020, which means I could work out with the other gray shirts but not be on the official roster until the season was over with. It’s a pretty common practice for freshmen to take that extra year. However, our season got canceled because of COVID, and we were blessed with the opportunity to practice a lot with the older guys from day one. We started practicing in October, and that was weird. Football usually started in August.

Since the virus was still relatively new, we had to social distance on the field and wear masks underneath our helmets and in the locker room. In February, we practiced in-doors. We still had to wear masks. We had some brutal conditioning and having masks on made it even more brutal. I was doing everything I was hoping I’d be doing as a college football player, but there was something missing. I missed hanging out and getting to know my teammates. At this point, the biggest piece of what was missing for me was eating as a team.

Our coaches recognized that we were missing that crucial part of team bonding. One day in spring of 2021, our dining hall had “premium night” which means higher quality foods like steak, brisket, shrimp alfredo and such were on the menu. The coaches shortened practice and told us to go and eat with each other. The older guys joined me and other underclassmen. We ate some good food. We had no masks on, we socialized. It was the best 30 minutes of my school year because things kinda felt normal.



SARA HAGEDORN - Animal Lab Manager and Training Coordinator for the Animal Care and Use Program

“I work with students and I work with animals. You can’t just walk away when things get rough.”

Arts & Entertainment

Senior Sendoffs

Former EIC misses newsroom frenzy

By Cory Sparks
sparkc21@uwosh.edu

As someone who constantly thinks ahead, I have to admit this: the day of me writing my senior sendoff snuck up on me.

I remember walking down into the basement of Reeve as a freshman who agreed to write an Opinion Editorial on my first week on campus. Leo Costello, the opinion editor at the time, asked me to meet the team.

I'm a radio/TV/film major, so I did not anticipate this encounter materializing into anything.

However, when I walked through the office door, I witnessed a sense of chaos that I was immediately in love with. All of the editors were on InDesign, critiquing each other's work. The copy desk was running edits back-and-forth.

What most would see as a frenzy, I saw as a lab of ideas, togetherness and tireless work to produce a weekly publication for UW Oshkosh.

I first learned what a senior sendoff was in December of 2019. While I got the gist of the purpose being an opportunity for each journalist to say goodbye, I didn't fully grasp the meaning of leaving that place until I became fully invested in it.

From being hired as the sports editor in February of 2020 to finalizing my last issue as the editor-in-chief in 2022, The Advance-Titan was my life. I was in the office multiple days out of the week and in the ballpark of 10-12 hours straight every Tuesday night with the rest of the staff.

Most of us operated on a reduced amount of brain cells, coffee, orders from Titan Underground and a playlist that had played through four or five times by the time we got out of there.

It sounds crazy, but you know what? I wouldn't trade my experiences with these wonderful, dedicated individuals for the world.

The Advance-Titan is where I built all of the fundamental skills that have me heading in the direction I am.

The constant reminder of AP Style infractions as a freshman made me into a writer who obsessively checks over his own work.

Getting interviews by any means necessary during a global pandemic taught me to be respectively relentless when it comes to getting the most detailed, accurate story by deadline.

Hours and hours of staring at a screen and adjusting minute details to assure a layout is perfect gave me an eye for catching errors. Late hours spent polishing an 8-12 page paper all built me into a sound and confident journalist.

All of those attributes were developed when I was given the opportunity to rank up from the paper's sports editor to the managing editor, and finally, the editor-in-chief.

This job came with battles for the freedom of speech, split-second pivoting on stories to assure we could fill copy space and so many other chaotic scenarios that came with invaluable lessons.

While I wasn't as involved as I would have liked to have been my senior year as I hectically juggled

responsibilities working in TV, the A-T will always be family to me.

Now for the toughest part: the thank you's.

Thank you to Leo Costello for introducing me to an on-campus organization that molded me into the journalist and man I am today.

Thank you Carter Uslabar for handing off the EIC baton to me and pushing confidence into a once timid college junior.

Thank you to Greg Sense for being my partner in crime as a co-sports editor in my first semester as a staff member.

Thank you to Jacob Link and Nolan Swenson for taking over the sports section of the paper and filling it with newly implemented ideas and content. Jacob, I still have no clue how you balance football with school while writing the most in-depth and compelling sports stories I have ever seen.

Thank you to Owen Peterson for taking over the EIC job with conviction. As someone who was heading into his last semester, you took an upscale in responsibilities where many would have preferred to coast.

Thank you to Katie Pulvermacher for being the A-T's backbone for the last three years. You are a phenomenal current EIC, and your high-motor work ethic that you've had since first starting at the A-T will take you wherever you want to go.

Thank you to Vince Filak for becoming a biggest fan and mentor of mine all in one. Your support through instruction and cut-and-dry style of critiques pushed me to be a critical thinker. The hours



Cory Sparks / Advance-Titan
Cory Sparks worked as a reporter in 2019 before taking the role of Assistant Sports Editor and then Sports Editor in 2020. He became the Managing Editor in 2021 before being elected editor-in-chief in the same year.

of talking Cleveland and Chicago sports were a pleasant bonus, though.

Finally, thank you to Barb Benish. I don't know if there is an adviser out there who is willing to do more for her students. When I stumbled upon my first A-T story meeting, I remember you referring to the staff as your kids. Over the last four years, everything you've done has embodied that claim.

Whether it's bringing us food, staying late on production, going to war with us over our access to staff or simply reminding me that you'll always be here for anything, you mean the world to me.

To anyone who has ever worked on the staff or is currently working,

thank you for binding together and putting your hearts into the stories.

While telling the stories of our wonderful athletic program through feature stories on teams and athletes, I discovered I can't stay away from sports.

Following graduation, I am taking over as the play-by-play announcer for the Kenosha Kingfish, and I'm 100% sure that wouldn't have happened without my experience in this invested campus newspaper.

This place taught me journalism, decency, organization and passion for one's craft. For that, I'll forever be in debt to The Advance-Titan and all of the wonderful people involved in it.

Copy editor diagnosed with eye fatigue

By Trent Allaback
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I joined the Advance-Titan in the fall of 2021 during a tumultuous transition from UW Oshkosh-Fox Cities to the main campus of UW Oshkosh. I was very unsure where (or if) I would fit in at a place where so many people my age seemed to be established, focused and at home after having a few years of college under their belt.

I came to the office on production night initially curious about writing for the paper. Before I knew it, I was sitting at the copy desk, untrained but jumping into my first edits. Looking back, it's one of the most important things that happened to me in my first days at UWO.

As a non-traditional student, I felt somewhat deprived of the early days of college where everybody is a little lost and looking for a community where they can meet new people with similar interests and passions.

When I went to the production office, I was immediately greeted warmly by everybody and quickly given the opportunity to be part of the process of production. I was able to work on some articles and begin to learn the ins and outs of copyediting.



Trent Allaback / Advance-Titan
Trent Allaback began working at the Advance-Titan in 2021 as a sports reporter and copy editor.

I had no idea what I was doing, but with the help of our fearless chief copyeditor Kyiah and several other great editors, any questions I had were answered.

A few hours later, I left feeling two things I'd never felt before: genuine eye fatigue from reading for so long, and a deep sense of accomplishment that in my experience only comes from playing a part in a group effort to make something great.

To be honest, I still feel like a novice copy editor, but I am definitely going to miss the weekly de-

bates about AP style, appropriate use of punctuation and sentence structure that I've grown so accustomed to.

Kyiah and Savannah, thanks for all the fun conversations and commiseration. Best of luck to you both. Your commitment and attention to detail has been inspiring. Don't forget — baseball is just tag with extra steps.

Later on, I tried my hand at writing for the sports section. In my brief time as a sports writer, I got to work on articles that turned out to be some of the most fun writ-

ing I have done in college. There were a few frustrating moments and close calls with deadlines, but I always felt supported by the staff at the A-T and learned so much about useful journalistic writing styles that I would not have otherwise been exposed to as an English major.

Although other obligations stopped me from writing as much as I would have liked to, I thoroughly enjoyed being able to experience the process of writing for publication.

The friendliness of the staff and the community that I discovered at the A-T enabled me to be more willing to try new things on campus. When other opportunities for being involved outside of class came up, I always thought of the A-T as an example of the good things that can happen when you take the leap to try something new.

I had the opportunity to get involved with the Wisconsin Review, UWO's very own on-campus literary journal (which I will shamelessly plug here — reach out if you're interested!) and I found that it was much easier to take that first step and reach out to advisers and club members after my experience at the A-T.

Thanks to the A-T, I was able to see extracurricular activities for

what they truly are: a wonderful opportunity for students to explore their interests, learn new things and interact with great people who are inspiring in their commitment and reassuring in their shared experiences.

The A-T helped me to understand that no matter what paths students might take during college, we are all battling many of the same struggles. It's allowed me to interact with people that, like me, were uncertain, tired, stressed and a little bit jaded, but above all deeply passionate and dedicated to doing their best to build each other up and improve themselves through the difficult but incredibly rewarding work of being involved in student publications.

I can't really imagine what these past two years would have looked like if I hadn't decided to step outside of my comfort zone and gone to that production night. It has made all the difference in my sense of belonging and purpose during my condensed time at UWO.

To everybody in the office, I want to sincerely thank you. Keep doing what you're doing. It's been so great to play a small part in the wonderful things that you do for UWO.

Sports

Track runs at Drake

By Evan Stapleton
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The No. 13 ranked UW Oshkosh's track and field teams recently competed at the 113th Drake University Relays, coming away with four top-eight finishes over the three-day event.

Over the weekend, several Titan runners achieved personal bests while competing against athletes from multiple divisions at one of the most prestigious events of the year.

Senior Steven Potter secured fifth place in the men's 1,500-meter run with a personal record time of 3:47.21, besting his previous time of 3:49.36, now the second-fastest in school history.

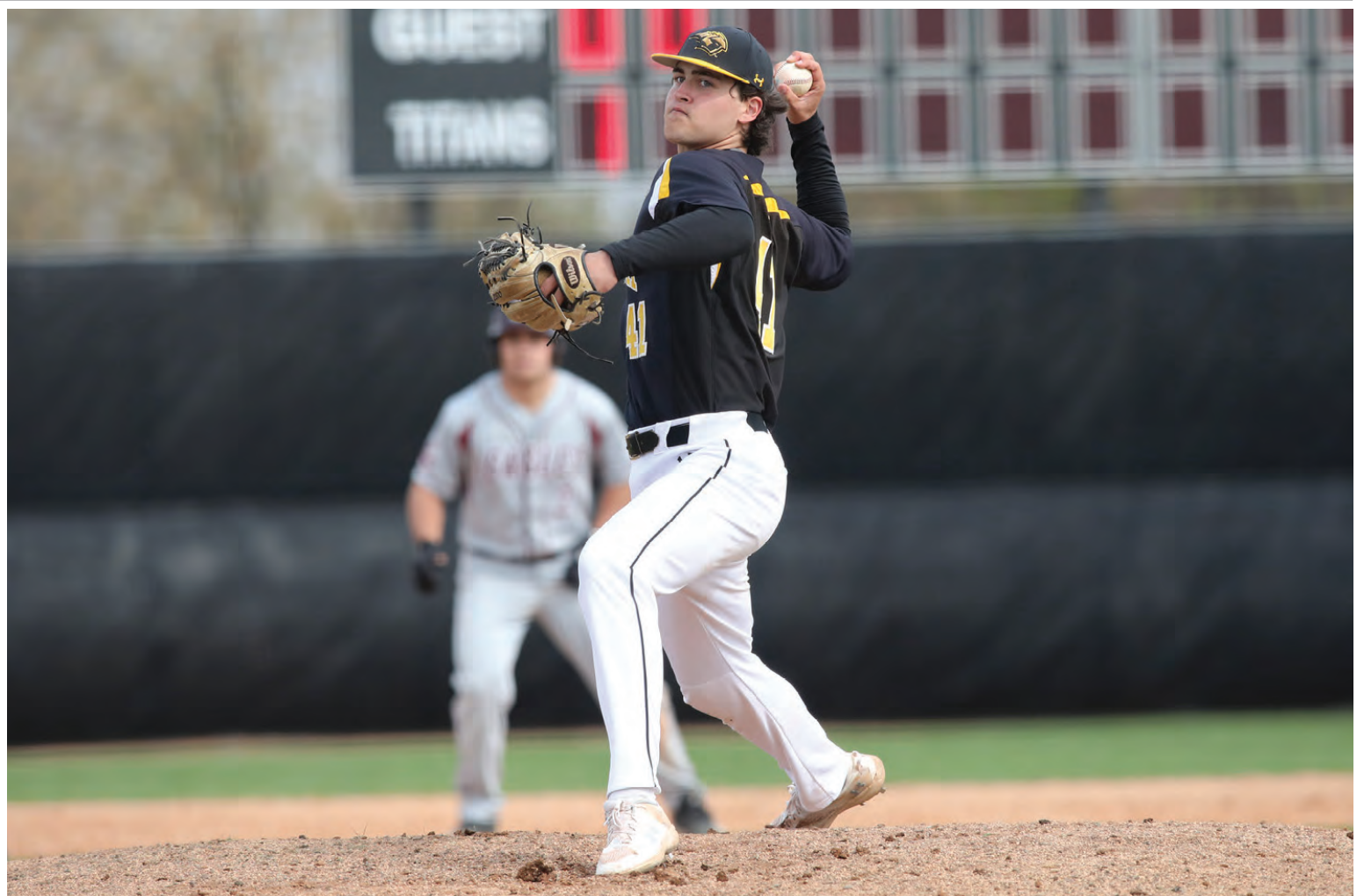
After Potter's impressive performance in the 1,500-meter run, he reflected on his experience competing in races with a mix of higher-division competitors.

"I've been in races like this before where there's a mix of Division I and Division III competitors, and I'm the only DI guy or sometimes facing just one other D-III runner," said Potter. "The setting in those races is so different, especially at a huge place like Drake because the atmosphere is just electric so you have to lock in and focus on your performance, hitting your marks from the start."

Potter has now followed up and broken his personal best for a second time this season that is leaving a mark in school program history.

"It's a pretty cool feeling to be consistently placing in many of my races and I keep reminding myself that I have what it takes to go under that record for sure," Potter said. "The current school record stands at 3:45:19, and I have to keep pushing myself to remember that I can achieve that goal."

Turn to *Track* / Page 13



Courtesy of UWO athletics

UWO's Connor Walters pitches against La Crosse April 29 at Tiedemann Field. Walters has a 3.60 ERA this season for the Titans.

UWO splits La Crosse series

By Jacob Link
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The UW Oshkosh baseball team split the season series with UW-La Crosse, defeating the Eagles 9-2 in the first game of UWO's doubleheader April 29 before falling in the second game 13-2 at Tiedemann Field.

Oshkosh, ranked No. 15 in the nation in the recent d3baseball.com Top 25 poll, remains tied with UWL, ranked No. 16 in the nation, for first place in the Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference standings.

In the first game of the doubleheader, UWO shortstop Matt Scherrman finished the contest with a game-high three hits, going 3-for-4 with two doubles, a home run and two runs scored.

Oshkosh pitcher LJ Waco secured his sixth victory of the season, pitching seven innings on the mound and allowing no runs on

three hits while striking out nine batters to remain undefeated on the season. Aaron Huibregtse pitched an inning of relief, giving up two runs on three hits and striking out two batters. Logan King pitched the final inning of the game, allowing no runs and one hit.

Scherrman kicked off the scoring in the first inning with a solo home run to left field to give UWO a 1-0 lead. Neither team scored another run until the fifth inning when Mason Kirchberg smoked a solo shot to left field and Jake Surane hit an RBI single to center field, giving the Titans a three-run advantage.

Oshkosh erupted for five runs in the sixth inning behind a two RBI double from Kirchberg, an RBI single from Nicholas Shiu and a two-run home run from Connor Giusti, extending UWO's lead to 8-0. Zach Taylor added another homer, this time a solo shot to left field, and the Titans found themselves leading by nine runs after the seventh inning.

La Crosse scored two runs after a pair of RBI singles from Jack Olver and Ty Hamilton in the eighth inning, but it was not enough as Oshkosh cruised to its 24th win of the year.

In the second game, the Eagles jumped out to a 3-0 lead in the first inning and never looked back en route to the 13-2 victory.

UWO's Cameron Mulvihill earned his second loss of the season, allowing seven runs on eight hits and striking out four batters. Trey Tennessen pitched 1.1 innings of relief, allowing four runs on three hits and walking one batter. Josh Jansen pitched the final 2.1 innings, giving up two runs on four hits and striking out two batters.

Offensively, Surane paced the Titans with two hits, both doubles, and finished the game 2-for-4 with a run scored.

UWL scored three runs in the first inning after Anthony Vivian doubled to right-center field, driv-

ing in two runs, and Hamilton hit an RBI single up the middle. In the bottom of the first inning, Scherrman singled to center field, scoring Surane from third base and cutting the deficit to 3-1.

La Crosse extended its lead to six runs in the top of the second inning when second baseman Mac Born smoked a grand slam to left-center field. The Eagles exploded for six runs in the fifth inning behind a two RBI single from Eli Roberts and a Logan Pye RBI single to the shortstop. Later in the inning, Jack Moran drove in a run after he grounded out to the shortstop and Born smoked a two-run homer to left-center field to extend the UWL lead to 12 runs.

Kirchberg singled to right-center field in the sixth inning, driving in Scherrman from third base, but it was not enough, and the game ended after the seventh inning due to the NCAA's 10-run rule.

Turn to *Baseball* / Page 12

Softball sweeps River Falls, splits Stout series

By Mattie Beck
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The nationally-ranked UW Oshkosh softball team had a strong week last week, hitting their 30-win mark this past weekend.

On Saturday, the softball team faced the UW-River Falls Falcons and won both games in the doubleheader.

The Titans swept the Falcons in the first game of the doubleheader, winning the game 10-0.

In the top of the second inning, Gabby Buikema singled to right field. Brianna Davis reached on a throwing error by the pitcher and advanced to third, scoring Buikema.

Zoe Malone singled to third base, scoring Davis and earning the second run of the game.

One inning came out of the top

of the third. Hannah Ritter singled to center field and Sophie Wery doubled to left center, advancing Ritter to third.

Buikema was out at first on a bunt, but Wery advanced to third and Ritter scored.

In the top of the seventh inning, Ritter doubled to left field, followed by Morgan Rau singling to left field and scoring Ritter. Right after that, Wery homered to left field, scoring Morgan Rau.

Buikema walked, followed by Davis homering to left field, scoring Buikema. Immediately after, Haylie Wittman homered to left field.

Ana Iliopoulos walked and advanced Malone to second. Ritter singled to left field, advancing Iliopoulos to second and scoring Malone.

Turn to *Softball* / Page 12



Courtesy of UWO athletics

Oshkosh's Haylie Wittman hits the ball against UWW April 22 at UW-Oshkosh Softball Park.

Sports



Scoreboard

Friday, April 28

Baseball

Game 1:
UWO - 2
UW-La Crosse - 8
Game 2:
UWO - 13
UW-La Crosse - 3

Saturday, April 29

Baseball

Game 1:
UWO - 9
UW-La Crosse - 2
Game 2:
UWO - 2
UW-La Crosse - 13

Softball

Game 1:
UWO - 10
UW-River Falls - 0
Game 2:
UWO - 5
UW-River Falls - 1

Golf

UWO - 6/14

Track and Field

Men's - 5/18, 65 pts.
Women's - 5/19, 49 pts.

Sunday, April 23

Softball

Game 1:
UWO - 11
UW-Stout - 1
Game 2:
UWO - 3
UW-Stout - 4

Tuesday, May 2

Baseball

UWO - 4
MSOE - 5

Upcoming Events Over Break

Softball

5/6 - UW-Platteville at 1 and 3 p.m.
5/11-14 - TBA WIAC Championship

Baseball

5/5 - at UW-Stevens Point at 12 and 3 p.m.
5/6 - at UW-Stevens Point at 12 and 3 p.m.
5/11-13 - TBA WIAC Championship

Track and Field

5/5 - at WIAC Outdoor Championships
5/6 - at WIAC Outdoor Championships
5/12 - at UW-La Crosse Eagle Open
5/18 - at Augustana College Midwest Twilight and at UW-La Crosse Final Qualifier
5/25-27 - at NCAA Division III Outdoor Championships at Rochester, N.Y.

Stay tuned to our website all summer long for coverage of Titan athletics

Softball: UWO tied for second in WIAC

From Page 11

The Titans scored seven runs in the top of the seventh inning to end the game.

The second game was a long game, with the Titans winning 5-1 in the seventh inning.

In the top of the first, Ritter singled to shortstop and advanced to second on a passed ball, Morgan Rau doubled to center field, scoring Ritter with the first run of the game.

No scoring happened until the top of the fourth inning. Davis singled to first and stole second and Wittman singled through the left side, scoring Davis.

At the top of the fifth Morgan Rau reached on a fielder's choice, Wery doubled to center field advancing to third on the throw and scoring Morgan Rau.

Buikema singled up the middle, scoring Wery, bringing the score of the game to 4-0.

The Falcons scored one run in the bottom of the sixth, earning their first run of the game.

In the top of the seventh Morgan Rau walked and Caitlin Williams pinch-ran and advanced to second and third on a wild pitch.

Buikema reached on an error by left field and scored Williams, ending the game 5-1, claiming victory over the Falcons.

On Sunday, the Titans split the doubleheader against the UW Stout Blue Devils, winning the first game and losing the second.

The first game was a sweep for the Titans, winning the game with an 11-1 score.

In the top of the first, Abby Garceau reached first on an error and advanced to second on a wild pitch. Morgan Rau grounded out to first base, scoring Garceau.



Courtesy of UWO athletics

UWO's Zoe Malone hits the ball against UW-Whitewater April 22 at UW-Oshkosh Softball Park.

The top of the third saw three runs for the Titans, with Morgan Rau doubling to left field and advancing to third on the throw, scoring Ritter.

Wery homered, scoring Morgan Rau and ending the inning with a 4-0 score.

In the top of the fourth Sydney Rau singled on a bunt, stole second, and Wittman singled to left field and advanced to second on the throw, scoring Sydney Rau.

Garceau doubled to right field, scoring Wittman and ending the inning with two runs.

The Blue Devils scored one run in the bottom of the fourth, their first run of the game.

In the top of the fifth, Lizzie Slobodecki pinch ran for Morgan Rau, and Wery singled to third, advancing Slobodecki to third.

Davis walked, and Sydney Rau was hit by pitch, advancing Davis

to second and Wery to third, scoring Slobodecki.

Wittman doubled to right center, advancing Sydney Rau to third and scoring Wery and Davis. Wittman advanced to third on a wild pitch and Sydney Rau scored.

Iliopoulos walked and Garceau singled to shortstop, scoring Wittman with the last run of the game, the Titans won 11-1, earning the Titans their 30th win of the season.

In the second game, it was a close battle with the Titans ultimately losing by one run to the Blue Devils.

The top of the first started with Wery hitting a sacrifice fly out to right field, advancing Ritter to third and scoring Garceau.

In the top of the second, Sydney Rau walked and stole second, and Iliopoulos singled down the line, scoring Sydney Rau.

No further runs were scored

by either team until the top of the fourth when Iliopoulos singled to center field, scoring Davis.

The Blue Devils scored two runs in the bottom of the fourth inning, the score at 3-2. In the bottom of the sixth the Blue Devils scored two runs to gain the lead with a score of 4-3 to win the game.

The Titans played against UW-Stevens Point May 3. Check the UWO athletics website for more information.

UWO will play at home May 6 against UW-Platteville.

WIAC Standings

UW-Whitewater	9-1
UW Oshkosh	7-3
UW-La Crosse	7-3
UW-Platteville	7-5
UW-Stevens Point	4-6
UW-Eau Claire	3-7
UW-Stout	3-9
UW-River Falls	2-8

Baseball: Titans win two games over UWL



Courtesy of UWO athletics

UWO's Matt Scherrman hits the ball against UW-La Crosse.

From Page 11

The Titans fell 5-4 to the Milwaukee School of Engineering May 2.

UWO combined for 22 hits as the Titans split their April 28 doubleheader against UW-La Crosse, falling to the Eagles 8-2 in the first game before winning the second game 13-3 at Tiedemann Field.

Taylor paced the Titans with four hits on the day, and Scherrman drove in a total of three runs in the doubleheader with a home run and two doubles.

In the first game, UWO took a lead in the first inning, but UWL scored eight runs in the final eight frames to secure the comeback victory.

UWO's Connor Brinkman pitched eight innings as the starter,

allowing five runs on nine hits and striking out five batters to record his first loss of the season.

Scherrman drove in both of Oshkosh's runs, going 1-for-4 in the game with a home run and a run scored.

In the first inning, Scherrman knocked in the first run of the game when he grounded out to the UWL shortstop, scoring Jake Surane from third base to give UWO a 1-0 lead.

La Crosse's George Seaman responded with a two RBI double in the second inning and in the next frame, Vivian smoked a solo homer to right field to give the Eagles a 3-1 lead.

In the bottom of the third inning, Oshkosh narrowed the deficit to a run after Scherrman smashed a solo

shot to left field for his sixth home run of the season. The next two innings remained scoreless for both teams until Born hit a solo homer to left field in the sixth inning to extend UWL's lead to 4-2.

La Crosse added a run in the seventh inning on a sacrifice fly from Logan Pye and in the ninth inning, the Eagles put up three more runs to cruise to the win.

In the second game, the Titans took the lead in the first inning and never looked back on route to a 13-3 victory in eight innings.

Connor Walters picked up his second win of the season, going 7.2 innings on the mound and allowing three runs on 10 hits while striking out three batters.

Offensively, Taylor led the team with three hits, finishing the contest 3-for-5 with three singles, three RBIs and three runs scored. UWO left fielder Kirchberg had a three RBI game, going 1-for-3 with a three-run homer and two runs scored.

The Titans jumped out to a 1-0 lead in the first inning after Scherrman doubled to left field, driving in a run. The Eagles tied the game in the top of the second inning with a sacrifice fly from Tim Urlaub, but UWO retook the lead when Ethan Schreier grounded out to the second baseman, driving in a run.

In the top of the third inning,

UWL tied the game at two runs apiece after Moran scored on a wild pitch. The Titans took the lead for good in the next frame when Shiu tripled down the right field line and came around to score on a throwing error from the La Crosse second baseman.

UWO extended its lead to 6-2 behind a three-run shot from Kirchberg in the fifth inning, and the Titans added two more runs in the seventh inning after RBI singles from Taylor and Jake Andersen.

La Crosse narrowed its deficit to 8-3 after designated hitter Hamilton hit an RBI single down the right field line in the top of the eighth inning. In the bottom half of the inning, Oshkosh exploded for five runs behind a pair of two RBI singles from Taylor and Marsh to give the Titans a 10-run advantage. The game ended after the inning due to the NCAA's 10-run rule.

UWO will hit the road to take on UW-Stevens Point in a doubleheader May 5 at Zimmermann Field starting at noon.

WIAC Standings

UW-La Crosse	15-5
UW Oshkosh	15-5
UW-Stevens Point	15-5
UW-Whitewater	11-9
UW-Platteville	7-13
UW-Stout	6-16
UW-Eau Claire	1-17

Sports

Bowling hopes to carry momentum

By Nolan Swenson
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The UW Oshkosh bowling club offers a chance for students to compete in bowling at the collegiate level, in both competitive and casual leagues, and is gearing up for next season.

Vice President, social media manager, board member and team captain Matthew Steffen said that he and the coaches are beginning planning for practices in order to improve for the next season.

“The coaches and I have talked about how to be overall better in practice,” he said. “To set ourselves up better for weekends and enjoy what we’re doing when we go out and do these tournaments.”

Cole Hietpas said that the club is open to different levels of players. Players range from those who travel to different tournaments, to those who just practice with the team.

“The club can have a competitive atmosphere if you want it to,” Hietpas said. “We have a traveling team that competes around Wisconsin, the Midwest and even Las Vegas, but if you are more of a recreational bowler who just wants to learn more about the sport, that is okay too. You are still more than welcome to join the club and come to practices to improve your game.”

Steffen said that the team was successful throughout most of the season and is ready to grow off that success.

“We have competed in 14 tournaments,” he said. “In the conference we were top five in every tournament ... Sectionals was a month ago, and ... [we]



Courtesy of Matthew Steffen

UW Oshkosh Bowling Club takes a group photo at the bowling lanes after a competition. The team competes in events across the Midwest and in Las Vegas.

wound up finishing towards the bottom half, we’re going to take away from that and learn as much as possible. It’s a young team so there is a lot of room to grow.”

In order to grow, Steffen said the team will continue to work through the summer and add to the team.

“Over the summer we have summer practices,” he said. “We

started this last season so that people can keep growing in the off season in order to make sure people can keep getting work done ... we’re also recruiting people to keep the youth of the program as well as expand so more people can come to tournaments and get them to where they’d like to be.”

Steffan said that he encourages everyone to join the club due

to the opportunities it provides.

“Please give it a chance,” he said. “If you want to come and get a little bit better at bowling, reach out to someone in the club. We would love to make you a part of it. We have league options as well once a week. There are a lot of opportunities on the team for fun and competition.”

Hietpas said that competing in the club is a great opportunity

for all members to improve themselves.

“Collegiate bowling is one of the best ways for bowlers to improve their game,” he said. “Whether you accrue accolades and accomplishments or not. Ultimately, college bowling is one giant learning experience, and it is up to the bowlers to take advantage of the opportunities as best they can.”

Track: UWO ends regular season

From Page 11

Potter wasn’t done yet after the 1,500-meter run, also competing in the men’s 800-meter run, where he secured a fifth-place finish with a time of 1:51.00, setting the bar as the fastest time recorded by a UWO runner this year.

“I’ve pulled off the double before, on separate occasions, at WIAC Conference meets. It means three races in a week, but I’ve gotten used to it over time,” said Potter. “Going into the race, I knew that some of my competitors had already run multiple races, which gave me an advantage, and I was able to capitalize on that.”

On the women’s side, Cyna Madigan left her mark at the event with an impressive showing in the women’s 800-meter run.

In the 800-meter run Madigan finished in sixth place with a time of 2:10.24, setting the team’s season-best and achieving a personal record. In the field events, Senior Jonathan Wilburn secured third place in the men’s triple jump with a distance of 49’ 5 1/2” (15.07m), setting a new team season best by more than a meter.

Potter attributed his success this



Courtesy of UWO athletics

Oshkosh’s Cyna Madigan runs in the 800-meter at Drake Relay.

season, as well as the team’s accomplishments, to the significant role played by his coaches and teammates.

“The team and coaches have been a big part of my success as we all work together, and having that team aspect is fantastic,” said Potter. “We keep tabs on each other’s performances, and seeing

my teammates improve and set records every week is awesome. It really helps everyone stay motivated and focused on getting better.”

The Titans will have a chance to defend their 2022 title as they compete in the upcoming WIAC Championships hosted by UW-Whitewater from May 5-6.

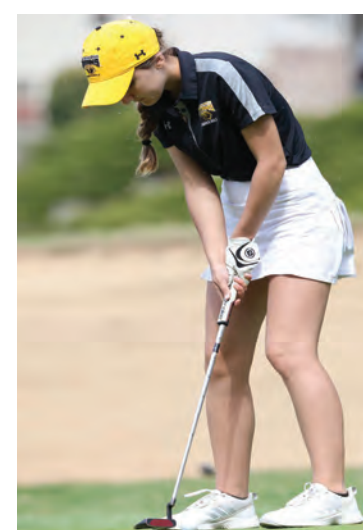
Spring golf ends

By Dylan Przybylski
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The UW Oshkosh women’s golf team competed during two weekends this spring semester. The first event was during the weekend of April 15-16 and the second event was during April 21-22.

The first event was the Titan Match Play Event at Mascoutin Golf Club. The Titans won the first round against Marian University (Wisc.) 4-1. Alyssa Dreher, Taryn Endres, Lauryn Davis and Ava Downie all won their matchups. On the second day, UWO lost their matchup against UW-La Crosse 4-1 on the second day. Downie was the only Titan to win on that day.

The second event was the UW-Whitewater Spring Invite. After the first day, the Titans were in fourth place out of fourteen teams and UWO would go on to end the event in sixth place. Davis finished in a tie for 17th shooting an 84 on day two for a final-round score of 169. Josie Hofer shot an 83 to finish in a tie for 23rd and a final score of 172. Dreher shot a



Courtesy of UWO athletics

UWO’s Josie Hofer putts.

93 (173 final) while Downie shot an 87 (175 final). Hailey Matenaer shot a 98 in her second round to finish with a final of 193.

Competing individually at the UW-Whitewater Spring Invite, Titans Sophia Steel and Kylie Herrin shot a 96 and 100, respectively.

That concludes the UWO’s Spring season and the Titans will return in the fall after summer break.

Opinion

Thank you... it's thrifted!

Thrifted is no longer casual – it's a competition

By Aubrie Selsmeyer
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Scavenging through someone else's hand-me-downs may not appeal to everyone, but those who choose to take it seriously.

The negative stigma that used to follow thrifting has taken a 180.

I can't count the number of times I have worked up the courage to ask someone where they bought a piece of clothing and they respond with, "Thank you... it's thrifted."

I never knew how intense thrifting could get until I entered the realm of the Goodwill bins.

It is far from the leisurely stroll through the meandering racks of clothing in a typical second-hand clothing store.

It is a competition against hordes of well-dressed teenagers to see who can dig through piles of clothing the fastest.

The bins – for those who aren't as familiar – are fluorescent rooms with carts upon carts of unsorted clothing priced cheaply by the pound to save thrift stores the hassle of sorting it all.

Nowadays, many people thrive reselling clothing from thrift stores.

Resellers do the dirty work for those who aren't as willing to give up their afternoons to play tug-o-war over a sweatshirt with bleach stains on it but are willing to pay for it.

With the increase of thrifting follows the increase of gatekeeping.

Gatekeeping is a term that refers to those who withhold information about certain things so that not every trend goes mainstream.

Wikipedia defines gatekeeping as such: "A gatekeeper is a person who controls access to some-



Aubrie Selsmeyer / Advance-Titan

According to research conducted by Gitnux, "The U.S. resale industry is estimated to have annual revenues of \$17.5 billion, including antique stores." Thrifting and reselling is not a new mainstream trend. People have been making a living out of it for years.

thing, for example via a city gate or bouncer, or more abstractly, controls who is granted access to a category or status."

Entering the Goodwill bins feels like waiting in line for a club you aren't old enough for with a lousy fake ID.

There may as well be bouncers at the sliding doors by the shopping carts.

Thrifted is no longer casual; it's a competition.

Spending an entire day in a stale room of unwashed clothing – directly off the back of someone, is deemed worth it for walking away with a single pair of cargo pants.

And it's not like thrifting is some breakthrough thing. It has been around for years, along with the bins. The hype has just seemed to ramp up in recent years.

Welcome to the world of vintage. If something is faded just right you can label it vintage, even if it's last year's edition.

It will never get easier to stomach paying absurd amounts for vintage knowing that the piece of clothing you have in your hand most likely costs a couple cents from a thrift store. But for fashion, we all do it.

One student described the time

she accidentally was at the bins when new carts got rolled out from the back. She recalled a loud buzzer and being corralled with a crowd of people behind tape on the floor.

"I swear I am not making this up, but I'm pretty sure I heard a loud buzzer signal everyone they could go dig," she said. "It was jam packed and everyone had to be behind a specific area marked with yellow tape until all of the bins were out."

She said it was a race of shopping carts navigated by judgmental resellers competing for the same prize.

"The buzzer sounded and everyone took off," she said. "I never knew how intense people got over this kind of thing. I also learned that before digging in the same bin as someone else, it's thrifting etiquette to ask the person who was there first if you can accompany them."

Many of these people have it down to a science. They will forage for hours and walk out with garbage bags bloated with clothing.

Whether you are a casual thrifter or a competitive one, there's bound to be something for everyone.

The Gripeline

This week's UWO Yik Yaks

- "If you're flunking right now, will UWO let you come back next year?"
- "Where should I get a good fake?"
- "Dog I just woke up wtf happened?"
- "If a guy calls me a queen is that flirting or am I in the friend zone?"
- "Can I pay for a parking ticket with my student account?"
- "Studying for finals just makes that bottle of Titos on my shelf look more appetizing by the second."
- "It's either finals week or my final week."
- "This whole semester has really taught me that it can always get worse."
- "Darn. Outta Tinder likes."
- "Cannot wait to block my roommate on everything."

Letter to the editor

Embrace artificial intelligence

By Jon Hesselmen
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In today's fast-paced and technology-driven world, productivity tools like the artificial intelligence powered chatbot ChatGPT are becoming an essential part of the professional landscape.

Companies are benefiting from ChatGPT by freeing up workers to handle more complex issues while the model handles routine tasks.

It can quickly sift through large amounts of data to facilitate data-driven decision making as well as create basic content.

Overall it is becoming a common tool for professionals to increase productivity and improve

outcomes. As such, it's important for students to have the opportunity to use similar tools in their academic work to prepare them for the workforce.

ChatGPT can help facilitate menial work done by skilled individuals. It requires human input and subject knowledge of the task they are completing to be leveraged effectively.

It does not replace the critical thinking required to complete work, but instead allows users to complete work more efficiently. ChatGPT is no different than students using spell check for grammar or a calculator for math.

Similar to tools like Microsoft Word or Excel, using ChatGPT

is a learned skill and requires experience and practice.

By allowing students to incorporate ChatGPT into academic work, educators can help them learn the types of tools they will encounter in future careers.

Artificial intelligence will be the next tool in automation that will be critical for professionals to be competitive in their respective fields.

It will likely become a tool as standard as Microsoft Office and likewise will enable experts to complete more work faster.

By embracing this technology, we can help ensure that students are prepared for the challenges and opportunities of the modern workforce.

Opinion

Got a case of the Sunday Scaries?

Use these helpful tips to make the most of your weekend

By Kelly Hueckman
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Do you find yourself wasting more of your Sunday trying to figure out what to do rather than actually getting anything done?

Do you feel like your weekend responsibilities have piled up at the last minute?

Is the final day of your weekend full of dread instead of relaxation?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, you may be suffering from a case of the Sunday Scaries.

The Sunday Scaries, also known as the Sunday blues, is the feeling of anxiety or dread of having to go back to work or school the next day.

According to a LinkedIn survey, 80% of Americans are worried about the upcoming work week.

Gen Z is the most likely of any other generation to feel this apprehension, with 94% feeling the Sunday blues.

Maybe it's the hangxiety or maybe it's the daunting week looming ahead, but the Sunday Scaries can ruin a perfectly good day. Use these tips to make the most of your weekend.

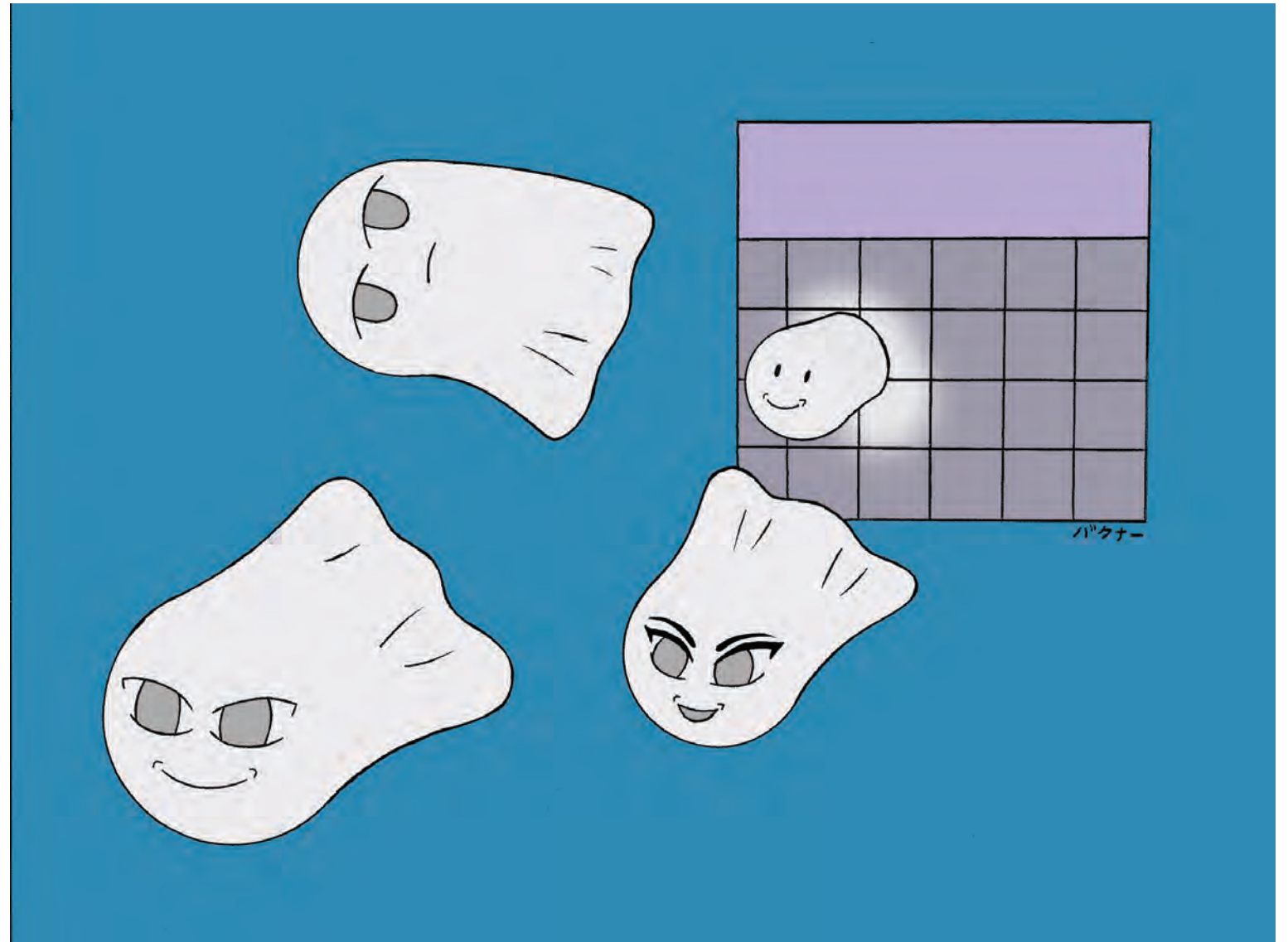
Tie up loose ends

Set up your weekend for success before it even starts by finishing up your responsibilities at the end of the school/work week.

Of course, this is easier said than done, especially with hectic schedules and heavy work loads.

But, if you have 15 minutes on Friday afternoon to catch up on emails or an hour to finish up your last assignment, bite the bullet and do it before you start your weekend festivities. I know it's tempting, but the bar will still be there when you're done.

This might be particularly difficult for all of the chronic procrastinators out there (myself included,) but having your responsibilities taken care of will allow you to be more present for



To prevent the Sunday Scaries, it's a good practice to plan out your week to avoid feeling overwhelmed Monday morning.

your weekend and enjoy yourself more overall. Plus, you can get to bed earlier on Sunday night.

Set work boundaries

In the age of quiet quitting, this one might be a bit controversial, but it's important to create a healthy work/life balance.

Unless you're getting paid to do so, don't burn yourself out with extra work or work-related emails off the clock.

If you're in the position to do so, set boundaries with your workplace so you can recharge for your next shift.

Unfortunately, as a student, you

can't just ignore your professors or their assignments just because it's a weekend. But, you can show yourself a little grace here and there. The occasional C in a pile of A's won't kill your chances of graduating, but it might make for a more memorable weekend.

Make your Monday less... Monday

Everybody hates Mondays, and that's what makes Sundays even worse.

So, theoretically speaking, if you make your Monday suck a little less, your final weekend day shouldn't be so bad, right?

By starting your Monday with something you enjoy, Sunday evenings might bring more excitement than dread.

Maybe it's a trip to your favorite coffee shop, the newest episode of your favorite podcast or wearing a cuter outfit than normal, but having something to look forward to each week could help beat your Sunday blues.

Make 'to do' and 'have-done' lists

The anxiety a Sunday so graciously provides often results in feelings of inadequacy, especially when it comes to work or school.

Michael Buckner / Advance-Titan

There's a lot to get done, so organizing everything you need to do into a tangible list can help you clear your head and make a game plan.

At the same time, make a list of previous work or school accomplishments. Remembering your abilities can help you become more confident and stop yourself from sweating the small stuff.

Odds are, getting to where you are took getting through some seriously scary Sundays.

Be proud of yourself for not only getting through the week, but the weeks before. If you did it before, you can do it now.

What can be done to reduce harm by AR-15s

By Anya Kelley
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The history of the AR-15

The company ArmaLite was founded 1954 in Hollywood, California. They received funding from the Fairchild Engine and Airplane Corporation which turned into Fairchild-Republic, a military aircraft manufacturer.

AR is often mistaken for an automatic or assault rifle but it's actually short for ArmaLite.

In 1959, ArmaLite designed the AR-15 and sold it to Colt. That's when production began.

Colt manufactured automatic rifles for U.S. troops during the Vietnam War. This gun, which was based on the design of the AR-15, was known as the M-16.

In the '70s, Colt's patents for the AR-15 expired, opening up the design to other manufactur-

ers. This was about the time the gun began being marketed to the average citizen by Colt and others.

Now, America has 20 million AR-15 style rifles in circulation.

What sets an AR-15 apart from other guns?

AR-15s can cause serious harm to the human body. Because of the high velocity of the shot and the ability to fire off rounds in rapid succession, the AR-15 has the capability to decimate the human form.

The Washington Post interviewed Joseph Sakran, a trauma surgeon and gunshot survivor who is advocating for gun violence prevention. Sakran said a bullet shot from an AR-15 has the ability to "pulverize bones, it can shatter your liver and it can provide this blast effect."

Body tissue rips apart and, in some cases (especially those regarding young children), leaves human remains unrecognizable.

ABC 7 New York says the traditional handgun causes clear entrance and exit wounds that are roughly the same size.

Semi-automatic rifles, such as the AR-15, create wounds of different sizes while destroying the inner tissue construction.

How could we remedy the mass shootings?

In an ideal world, I think a complete assault rifle ban would be the best choice for America. However, I know that's extremely unlikely.

One of the biggest problems we face right now is just how much carnage these weapons cause. The largest magazine an AR-15 can carry is a 100-round capacity drum magazine.

With the rifle being automatically reloadable, a 100-round capacity magazine can cause massive devastation.

Currently, only 14 states have any sort of magazine capacity restriction. For example, Colorado limits magazine capacity to 15 rounds or less.

Most of these states ban any magazines holding over 10 rounds for rifles.

Though reducing magazine capacity wouldn't stop mass shootings, it would lower the amount of deaths and injuries.

Also, reducing access to dangerous weapons would be a huge help.

Right now, all you need to purchase a gun in the U.S. is a valid photo ID, confirmation of your current address and the ATF Form 4473 or Firearms Transaction Record.

The ATF form acts as a sort of background check to make sure the individual doesn't have a criminal record or isn't ineligible for any other reason.

There is a loophole in the current law that is allowing guns to get in the hands of dangerous people.

Under federal law, only licensed dealers are required to do background checks. That means private sellers, including online and gun shows, are not being held to the same standard.

Though individual states have started closing the loophole, federal action is needed.

With magazine capacity limits and a more strict background check process, the U.S. could drastically reduce the number and the harm of mass shootings.



**OUR
DOORS
ARE
OPEN.**

