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Fall 9-16-2020

The Parthenon, September 16, 2020

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Recommended Citation

Harding, Douglas; Jackson, Denise; Keller, Meg; Hively, Brittany; Robinson, Isabella; Huddleston, Taylor; Goodrich, Grant; and Hiser, Zach, "The Parthenon, September 16, 2020" (2020). *The Parthenon*. 791.
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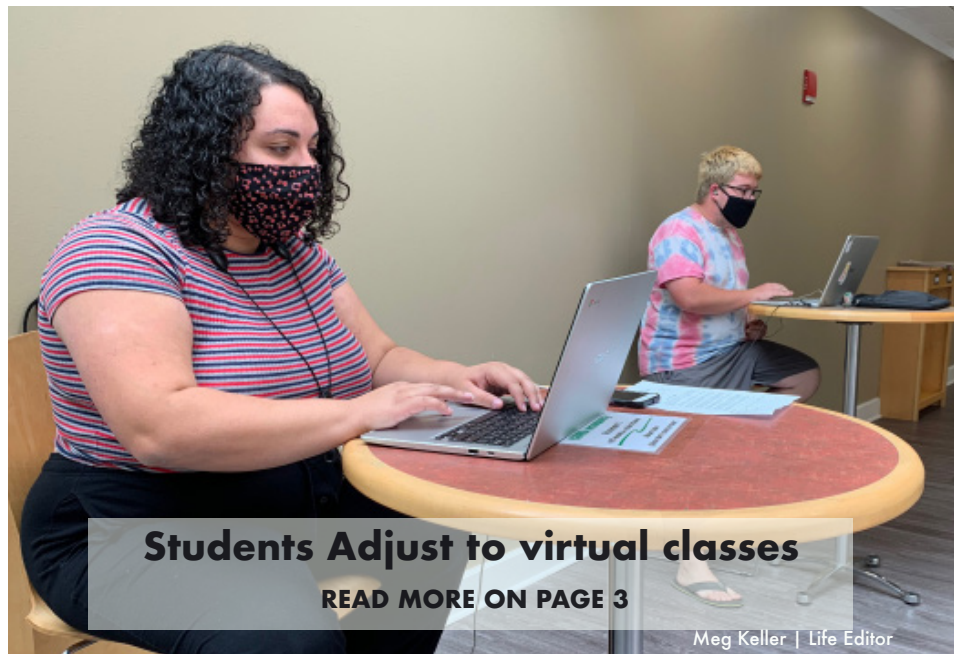
THE PARTHENON

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2020 | VOL. 124 NO. 60 | MARSHALL UNIVERSITY'S STUDENT NEWSPAPER | marshallparthenon.com | SINGLE COPY FREE



W.Va. internet speeds READ MORE ON PAGE 4

Meg Keller | Life Editor



Students Adjust to virtual classes
READ MORE ON PAGE 3

Meg Keller | Life Editor




Marshall ranked top tier

READ MORE ON PAGE 2




Douglas Harding | Executive Editor



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Marshall ranked in top tier of American universities

UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS

HUNTINGTON, W.Va. – For the second consecutive year, U.S. News & World Report’s “Best Colleges” rankings have recognized Marshall University among the nation’s top higher education institutions.

The magazine’s 2021 edition, released today, ranked the university’s College of Engineering and Computer Sciences among the “Best Undergraduate Engineering Programs (#110)” and the Brad D. Smith Schools of Business among the country’s “Best Undergraduate Business Programs (#235).”

Marshall also is the only institution in West Virginia to be given “Social Mobility” distinction.

“We have seen tremendous growth in both our engineering and business

programs at Marshall,” said Dr. Jerome A. Gilbert, president of Marshall University. “This distinction is a testament to the commitment of our faculty and staff, who have worked hard to offer more innovative curriculum and access to exciting research opportunities for our students. We have a relatively new, world-class facility that houses our College of Engineering and Computer Sciences and are on schedule to build a new state-of-the-art facility for our Brad D. Smith Schools of Business, putting Marshall in a position of strength to ensure further growth of these programs.”

U.S. News & World Report also recognized Marshall with the #161 position in the country in the “Social Mobility” category, which is a measure of how

successful an institution is at enrolling and graduating students who come from low-income households. Marshall is West Virginia’s only research university to be ranked in this category for 2021.

Dr. Jaime R. Taylor, Marshall’s provost and senior vice president for academic affairs, said he is thrilled the university has received this particular ranking once again.

“Over the past couple years, we have been laser focused on student success,” Taylor said. “Nearly 80 percent of our freshmen come from within the state of West Virginia, and almost half are first generation students. Sixty percent of our Marshall freshmen also receive need-based aid. It’s more important than ever for us to help our students

lock in their pathway to success early in college. The tuition value that they find here really makes a difference to students coming from economically depressed areas in West Virginia. And once they’re here, they’re finding success. We’ve been able to improve freshman retention – four percent higher than last year – and achieve a first-ever six-year graduation rate of 51 percent.”

U.S. News & World Report’s annual rankings compare colleges and universities from across the U.S., using widely accepted indicators of quality that include average ACT/SAT scores of admitted students, graduation and retention rates, student-faculty ratios, financial resources and alumni giving rates.

Counseling Center providing suicide prevention training

By XENA BUNTON
 REPORTER

The Counseling Center is providing two one-hour QPR suicide prevention training sessions this fall semester to students, staff and faculty.

Several students and faculty attended the first session via Microsoft Teams on Sept. 9, and the second session will be on Oct. 9, starting at 11 a.m.

The program is federally funded by the help of Prevent Suicide WV and the West Virginia College Initiative to Address High-Risk Alcohol Use, who trains counselors across the state of West Virginia to provide free suicide prevention training in QPR.

QPR is a suicide prevention technique that allows certified gatekeepers to question a person about suicide, persuade them to get help and refer them to the appropriate resource.

“QPR is not intended to be a form of counseling or treatment,” Ray Blevins, mental health specialist, said. “It is intended to offer hope through positive action.”

Blevins said anyone can prevent one from suicide if they learn how to correctly notice the signs and ask the right questions.

Some clues to notice if someone suicidal is talking about suicide or wishing to be dead,

or behavioral clues such as previous suicide attempt(s), acquiring a gun, stockpiling pills, co-occurring depression, or giving away prized possessions. Suicidal thoughts may also be triggered by changes such as being fired from a job, expelled from school, a recent unwanted move, loss of a major relationship, death of someone close, or a diagnosis of a serious or terminal illness.

Candance D. Layne, Counseling Center director, said it is important for everyone to be trained on suicide prevention.

“Students are able to intervene with peers and friends much easier and sometimes better than faculty and staff,” Layne said. “We need to be aware of ways to help others with mental health concerns.”

All those who attend the training will be a certified QPR suicide prevention gatekeeper for 3 years.

The purpose of QPR training is to recognize the warning signs and suicidal communications of people and gain skills to prevent a possible tragedy.

Angel Chornsbay, freshman psychology major, said having access to trainings like these can help students save a life.

see TRAINING on pg. 10

Business Incubator promotes entrepreneurship

By CARSON MCKINNEY
 REPORTER

Marshall University’s Lewis College of Business’s partnership with the Brad D. Smith Business Incubator is offering new opportunities for not only students and graduates, but the Huntington community.

Tricia Ball, interim associate director of the Incubator and associate director of the Marshall University Center for Entrepreneurship and Business Innovation, will work as the new leader of the entrepreneurship facility.

The Brad D. Smith Business Incubator is a partnership between Marshall’s Brad D. Smith Schools of Business and Robert C. Byrd Institute (RCBI). Ball says this new Incubator is an organization that is designed to help businesses accelerate and grow.

“This organization provides mentoring business coaching and shared office spacing,” Ball said. “We offer shared conference rooms and printers. If you were a new business just getting ready to begin, it would be expensive to purchase those on your own.”

Ball says this organization works to keep students in West Virginia after

graduation.

“Seventy-five percent of people coming out of college want to start their own business,” Ball said. “Seventy-five percent of all new jobs are created by startups.”

Ball also said that she believes the Incubator can provide economic development for Huntington.

“We have this big issue right now in the state of West Virginia where our youth wants to grow up and leave,” Ball said. “Everyone wants to get a college education out of state. I think

McKinney 2

this organization can show people that you don’t have to leave West Virginia, you can stay here and create your own jobs. We are here as a mechanism to help do that.”

Ball says her goal for the Incubator is to help create and grow transformative businesses.

“We could create the next Uber or the next Facebook,” Ball added. “This can bring people into the state, which would be huge for the economic development for Huntington, as well as the entire state of West Virginia.”

see BUSINESS on pg. 10

Marshall Alumni: Where are we now? Scott Nibert

By **BRITTANY HIVELY**
MANAGING EDITOR

College is often a place for students to find what they are truly passionate about and that is exactly what happened during Scott Nibert's years as a student.

Nibert, now an elementary music teacher at Winfield Elementary, started college with aspirations of becoming a high school band director one day.

"My certification is K12 music education. I kind of went in with the hopes of being a high school or middle school band director, but our degree would entail we teach choir, band, general music, all of that."

Nibert found a love of performing music and soon added a dual degree.

"I did a dual degree in music education and clarinet performance," said Nibert. "I didn't realize I loved performing until I got to Marshall and saw all of the opportunities for ensemble and performance solo. It really helped me gain my passion for performing."

Performing was not the only thing Nibert discovered he loved at Marshall. He also found his passion for teaching elementary students.

"I wanted to be a high school band director. I think it was my semester that I student taught, I really fell in love with elementary music and general music teaching in the elementary levels," said Nibert. "They can be fun, they can be a handful, but I love it."

With the constant changes being seen in the teaching industry, Nibert said he still feels comfortable with his career choice.

"I think with kind of how education is going in America,

there doesn't seem to be a big supply of music teachers. So, I think anywhere I look, and I'm willing to move if I need to get the job that I want, so I'm not too worried about being out of a job," said Nibert. "Now if I were to go into performance, where it's a whole lot more competitive to get a job, I think that's more of a worry, which is why I'm glad I got an education degree as well."

Nibert said music has always been a vital part of his life and it is important for students to get that education.

"There's so many studies out there that talk about the cognitive developments especially at a young age," he said. "Music has so many other subject areas math, science, even English. I mean, a lot of cognitive development comes with good music programs."

Along with the developmental benefits of music, Nibert says it is an escape for many, himself included and that more of a focus on music and arts should be in schools.

"As well as the cognitive development in kids, it's an outlet for so many to express themselves. I mean, I couldn't tell you what I had second block my junior year, but I can tell you what we were doing in band every year, every semester," Nibert said. "With art and theater, it's such an outlet for kids to really have the ability to get up and go to school in the morning, I would say. Because they're looking forward to that theater class, they're looking forward to band, choir."



While Nibert did not know the scientific correlation with the outlet music and art gives students he said it can be beneficial to a student's mental health like it is to many adults, himself included.

"I can speak from my past experiences, it really helped me out through a lot of things from a young age, even to this day," he said. "I mean, I have certain songs I listen to if I'm feeling anxious or worried about anything and I know it can help a lot of people deal with mental stress."

see ALUMNI on pg. 10

Students adapt to virtual courses, changes to semester

By **JONATHAN STILL**
THE PARTHENON

One of the biggest changes that Marshall has made to the fall semester is moving most of the fall courses to a virtual format.

Before the semester started, most of the fall classes were moved online in order to prevent the spread of COVID-19, and now most classes meet through Microsoft Teams, Zoom, or they have no meeting times at all.

Julia Costello, a freshman music education major, said while she prefers face-to-face learning, most of her professors have been very accommodating.

"I think they are doing a great job, and I really think the safety of the students is most important," Costello said. "If they think virtual is the way to go, then I support it 100%."

Costello said one of the challenges that she encounters with virtual classes is the ability to get distracted easily.

““

I think they are doing a great job, and I really think the safety of the students is most important. If they think virtual is the way to go, then I support it 100%.

—*Julia Costello*

"You have all your electronics very accessible. It's easy to just open another tab and do something else," Costello said.

Andrew Brown, a freshman jazz studies major, said the biggest challenge he faces is keeping up with deadlines.

"As for the software that's needed to submit assignments, it has been an interesting change to everything that I've come across," Brown said.

Brown said that while he does feel more challenged with the work, the virtual class setting has gone smooth for him.

The ongoing pandemic has provided many challenges for the school in the midst of getting adjusted to the new school year, but students seem to have adjusted really well to the new format despite the sacrifices needed to be made.

Jonathan Still can be contacted at still3@marshall.edu

W.Va. internet speeds worsening throughout pandemic

By **DOUGLAS HARDING**
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

As the coronavirus pandemic and resulting changes to society have forced millions of Americans to begin working from home—whether as a profession or for education—an increasing reliance upon a stable, high-speed internet connection is inevitable.

A recently released WhistleOut analysis reveals that since the pandemic started, internet speeds across the country have improved drastically, likely in accordance with that increased reliance, but not in West Virginia.

“West Virginia has taken the largest hit in internet speeds since the pandemic started, dropping 13% in average download speeds compared to the pre-pandemic period,” the analysis states. “This may be tied to pre-existing connection issues that have been prevalent throughout the state, with the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbating the strain on limited resources in largely rural areas. Similar issues have been reported in Connecticut and Delaware.”

Meanwhile, in states such as Wyoming, internet speeds have increased by more than 50%. In Alaska, they have increased by 40%; in Kentucky, 37%; in Kansas, 36%; and in Missouri, 31%.

WhistleOut’s Lauren Hannula states that the general increases in internet speeds likely are the results of state-wide initiatives to examine and improve connectivity, particularly in rural areas. Such initiatives have proven to be successful in Wyoming, Alaska and Kentucky.

The analysis also states that other potential factors contributing to increasing internet speeds include consumers’ decisions to upgrade their service plans and service providers’ decisions to improve connectivity for certain plans they offer.

In addition to West Virginia, just five other states have experienced a decrease in internet speeds since March, including Hawaii, Delaware, Connecticut and Oregon.

In West Virginia, struggles to access a stable and high-speed internet connection are anything except unfamiliar.

A Get Internet analysis from June this year ranked the state at 45 in the country for its internet speed. The only states that ranked worse are Wyoming, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Mississippi and Montana.

The issue of securing a stable and high-speed connection to the internet is not unique to West Virginia, though. In fact, tens of millions of Americans likely still lack any sort of access to the internet from the place they live.

“Internet access is not equal across the U.S.,” the Get Internet analysis states. “The type and quality of internet access varies significantly by location. Some U.S. states enjoy what is among the fastest and most reliable internet in the world. However, that is far from the norm. Over 24



MEG KELLER | FEATURES EDITOR

million Americans still do not have broadband internet at home.”

The Get Internet analysis also reveals that the likelihood of any individual to have access to a stable and high-speed internet connection is inseparable from...

see INTERNET on pg. 10

Marshall switches to exclusively mobile IDs

By **JONATHAN STILL**
REPORTER

The staff at the Campus ID Office would usually make a physical identification card for new students to carry around with them, but partially due to the pandemic, IDs will now be fully mobile. Marshall is one of two schools in the entire country to go fully with mobile IDs.

Bob Dorado, the campus card manager at the ID Office, said mobile IDs were introduced last year.

“So we had it, and we were kind of rolling it out for people just as a convenience to test the waters and make sure the technology is reliable,” Dorado said.

When the COVID-19 pandemic came around, the staff

at the ID Office had to think of ideas to minimize close contact when students would line up to get their IDs before the start of the semester.

Dorado said that by switching to mobile IDs and having students upload the photo themselves, it created a no-contact process to get the IDs assigned.

“You maintain possession of your phone,” Dorado said. “You’re not passing cards back-and-forth with anyone.”

Dorado said he is excited that Marshall is in the position to be able to do this.

“For students to be able to not have to come here to stand in line and be able to upload their own photo that we approve of, it makes me real proud of Marshall and

where we are at with our technology,” Dorado said.

Gavin Stephens, a freshman music education major, said there are pros and cons of using a mobile ID.

“Some of the good things are that you don’t have to keep up with an official ID and most college students have a tablet or phone with them,” Stephens said in an email. “Some bad things would have to be losing your phone or someone taking it.”

A helpful thing that mobile IDs can do is when students order a football ticket for any game in the stadium, the ticket is placed on the account and students don’t have to go pick it up.

Jonathan Still can be contacted at still3@marshall.edu.

“

You maintain possession of your phone. You’re not passing cards back-and-forth with anyone.

—*Bob Dorado*

Shakespeare Reimagined: Women during COVID-19

By **XENA BUNTON**
REPORTER

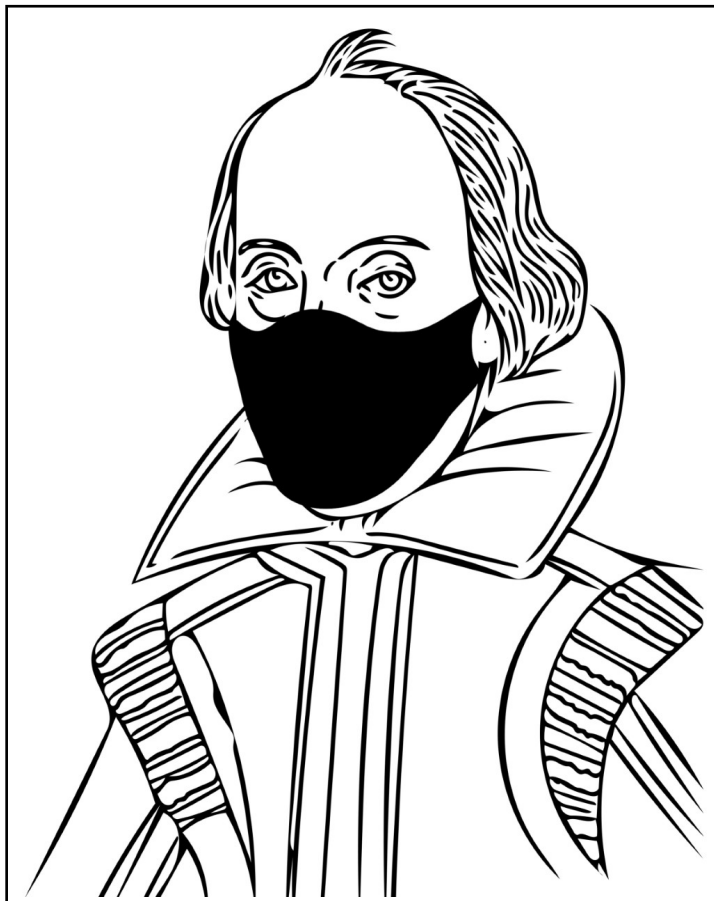


IMAGE COURTESY OF THEATRE ETC!

In the midst of coronavirus, William Shakespeare's literary pieces will be re-envisioned in the production of "Willy Shakes!" Performed by the all-female cast of the Marshall University Theatre ETC! (Educational Touring Company), schools across southern W.Va. will get the chance to see the performance via short film.

According to Charles Creighton's book, "A History of Epidemics in Britain: From A.D. 664 to the Extinction of Plague", at least 15,000 people died of the plague that hit during 1592 and 1603. Eventually the plague shut down the theaters and forced Shakespeare to write in quarantine. This time period allowed the English poet to write significant works such as "Venus and Adonis", "The Rape of Lucrece" and "Romeo and Juliet".

The deadly outbreak may have influenced Shakespeare's work in the same way that coronavirus is influencing productions today.

Theatre ETC! will be spending the fall semester filming the scenes in hopes of an edited 45-minute film, in addition to short lectures addressing Shakespeare's language regarding gender norms, politics and violence.

The group will be presenting scenes from "As You Like It", "Henry V", "Julius Caesar", "Romeo and Juliet", "The Taming of the

Shrew" and "Twelfth Night".

Although Shakespeare's plays during the 1500's did not have female cast members, Theatre ETC! is an all-female cast this school year and will change the historic gender roles of Shakespeare's time period.

Leah Turley, theatre ETC! artistic director, said a female-dominated group represents the department, as well as Shakespeare's work, as a whole.

"Educational theatre, as well as community and professional theatre, is made up of approximately 75% women and 25% men," Turley said. "Shakespeare provides endless opportunities for gender bending adaptations and treatments."

The Theatre ETC! features students of the school of theatre and dance as they produce adaptations of literary classics that they design, rehearse, and produce throughout the fall and perform in the spring for free.

Shonna Reeves, senior theatre major, said it is difficult transitioning from a live audience to a camera, even for the few students who have experience with film.

Since Shakespeare's work is royalty free, Turley said she could reimagine multiple of Shakespeare's scenes and save the company some money during the uncertain times.

Educators can receive the digital production link of "Willy Shakes!" by contacting Leah Turley.

Xena Bunton can be contacted at bunton2@marshall.edu.

W.Va. Can't Wait building "people's government"

By **SEQUOIA WARE**
REPORTER

West Virginia Can't Wait movement leaders have sustained their efforts since the primaries in June, continuing to work to elect representatives to become part of a "people's government" in the state.

Stephen Smith, cochair for WV Can't Wait and former Democratic candidate for W.V. Governor, and Britney Barlett, movement captain, are working to elect the remaining 101 candidates, who pledge to not take corporate cash, and are still on the ballot in November.

"Our job is to get as many of those people across the finish line on November 3rd as we can," Smith said. "We're mobilizing people to volunteer, to do fundraisers, to hold press conferences and get people elected who are on our side."

Since the primary election in June, WVCW movement organizers and team captains, like Barlett, have spoken to the people of West Virginia and created a "new deal" written directly by the people.

"A lot of the volunteers I had in my run were younger than me, several of them were former students of mine because

I was a teacher," Barlett said. "And that inspired them. The fact that somebody was asking them what we could do to help them to stay, rather than tell them, 'you're being selfish, or greedy,' or whatever horrible terms we use to speak about young people whenever we don't want to hear their opinions."

Smith said there is a portion of the new platform focused on keeping kids in West Virginia. According to their website, the average daily population loss for West Virginia is 33. The plan includes ideas that came from people who have left West Virginia, and students from all over the state who want to see change so they can stay in West Virginia after they get their degree. The "Take Me Home Plan" focuses on making West Virginia a place where students can find relief from student debt, which will make West Virginia the first state to pass Higher Education for All. This plan also includes a "Protect Our Children" plan to make childcare universally affordable, an "Education Plan" written by educators and parents, a "Small Business Revolution" which capitalizes more than 3,000 new businesses annually, and more that are listed on WVCW's website under the "New

Deal" platform.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, volunteers within the movement have been sticking to, what Smith called, grassroots politics. "One of the things the pandemic does is makes [voting] even more important than ever before," Smith said. He also says politics isn't about showing up at a random person's door trying to convince to do something, like vote. "...real politics, grassroots politics, real social change has always come from friends and neighbors talking to each other and encouraging one another," Smith said. "In a moment where we can't knock on someone's door, interrupt them in the middle of a pandemic, it's all the more important to be in touch with our friends, neighbors, and people close to us. For folks who want to do that WVCW will literally train you on how to do these conversations to build whatever you need to build locally."

For Marshall students wanting to get involved, Barlett is asking students to text or call her cellphone at (304)-997-4628 or email at barlett2020@gmail.com.

Sequoia Ware can be contacted at ware53@marshall.edu.

No. 23 Appalachian State to visit Huntington

By **TAYLOR HUDDLESTON**
SPORTS EDITOR

The Marshall University Thundering Herd football team is coming off an early bye-week as it prepares to take on the Appalachian State Mountaineers on Saturday.

In its first game of the season, the Herd (1-0) shut out the Eastern Kentucky Colonels, 59-0, in Huntington.

The Herd's captains for this week are redshirt junior running back Sheldon Evans, redshirt senior offensive lineman Will Ulmer, redshirt junior defensive lineman Koby Cumberlander and redshirt senior linebacker Tavante Beckett.

"App State is a tremendous team," Marshall head football coach Doc Holliday said. "It starts at the quarterback position. You just see a talented football team that is extremely well coached. We're expecting a good battle and we're excited to play."

As for the Mountaineers (1-0), it's coming off a 35-20 victory over Conference USA member, the University of North Carolina at Charlotte this past weekend at Kidd Brewer Stadium.

Marshall redshirt senior offensive lineman Alex Salguero said it was nice to be able to watch football on the weekend off.

"It was a good weekend. I got to watch a lot of football, college and NFL," Salguero said. "It was good to

take some time to myself. The whole (Appalachian State) defense looked fantastic. Marshall just has to bring their entire game on Saturday and have a good turnout."

Following its win, Appalachian State made its way into the AP Top 25 and Coaches Poll rankings, currently listed at No. 23 in the country.

The Herd's junior linebacker Abraham Beauplan said he was able to watch and scout the Mountaineers.

"They're a pretty good team. They move fast and are pretty disciplined," Beauplan said. "I was focused on the offense. We just have to be disciplined on the defense side. We got a great coaching staff. We just have to come out focused and do our job."

Kickoff is set for 3:30 p.m. at Joan C. Edwards Stadium. The game will be televised on CBS.

The original game time was scheduled for 1:30 p.m. on CBS Sports Network.

"This is a tremendous opportunity for Marshall against a nationally ranked opponent," Marshall Director of Athletics Mike Hamrick said per HerdZone. "The increased national exposure that comes with the move to CBS will be great for our university, football program and our community."

Taylor Huddleston can be contacted at huddleston16@marshall.edu.



RICHARD CRANK | THE PARTHENON

Redshirt senior linebacker Tavante Beckett celebrates a defensive play for the Herd during the Eastern Kentucky game.

Marshall vs. Rice game postponed



ZACH HISER | PHOTO AND GRAPHICS EDITOR

By **TAYLOR HUDDLESTON**
SPORTS EDITOR



Due to the rising cases of COVID-19, the Rice University Owls will not be traveling to Huntington, West Virginia on Saturday, Oct. 3 to face the Marshall University Thundering Herd in its previously scheduled football matchup.

The Owls announced that it would delay the start of football practice until late September, which forced it to postpone games with the Herd and the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) Blazers.

Marshall and Rice will continue to work with Conference USA to reschedule the game. More information will be provided at a later date.

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SPORTS COLUMN

Herd in the NFL

By **GRANT GOODRICH**
ASSISTANT SPORTS EDITOR

Four former Marshall football players made impacts on their NFL teams this weekend.

All four players happen to play on the defensive side of the ball with at least one player at each level of the defense.

Starting in the secondary, rookie cornerback Chris Jackson played significant minutes for the Tennessee Titans on Monday night in a win against the Denver Broncos.

Because normal starting corner Adoree' Jackson was inactive, Jackson was afforded the opportunity to split time with fellow rookie Kristian Fulton at the corner spot opposite Malcolm Butler.

When veteran corner Jonathan Joseph left the game with an injury, Jackson was forced into a larger than anticipated role. There were instances where the Titans were lined up with its two rookie corners on the field at the same time.

For a majority of the game, Jackson was tasked with covering 1st round pick rookie and former Alabama receiver Jerry Jeudy. Jeudy was well known in college for his superb route running, agility and quickness, winning the Biletnikoff Award in 2018 which goes to college football's best receiver.

Jackson was targeted three times while covering Jeudy, giving up no receptions, although one incomplection was a drop. Jackson also recorded a tackle, playing in 59% of the Titans defensive snaps.

Staying in the secondary, corner Darryl Roberts began his fifth season in the NFL with his second team. After playing for the New York Jets his first four years, Roberts moved to Detroit to play for the Lions.

In his first game in Detroit, he recorded two tackles with one pass defended.

Moving closer to the line of scrimmage, Jets linebacker Neville Hewitt began his sixth season in the league and his third with the Jets. He is coming off his best statistical season in 2019 when he racked up 75 tackles, six TFL, and three sacks.

On Sunday against the Bills, he made his 24th career start and recorded eight total tackles (three solo) and one pass defended.

Finally, along the defensive line, Philadelphia Eagles defensive lineman Vinny Curry entered his ninth year and eighth with the Eagles. Curry put together a solid game with three tackles, a half sack and a QB hit; but he injured his hamstring and is expected to be out for a number of weeks (at least four).

Elsewhere, Buffalo Bills tight end Lee Smith is on the active roster but recorded no stats. Defensive lineman Ryan Bee is on the injured reserve list for the Washington Football Team. Both Kansas City Chiefs linebacker Omari Cobb and Carolina Panthers kicker Kaare Vedvik are on their teams' respective practice squads.

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THE PARTHENON

The Parthenon, Marshall University's student newspaper, is published by students Wednesdays during the regular semester and every other week during the summer. The editorial staff is responsible for news and editorial content.

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THE PARTHENON'S CORRECTIONS POLICY

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

THE FIRST AMENDMENT | The Constitution of the United States of America

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people to peaceably assemble; and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

EDITORIAL: High-speed broadband should be a public utility

The onset and continuation of the coronavirus pandemic have relentlessly exposed now-unmistakable flaws in the social fabric and critical infrastructure of states and towns across the U.S.

In West Virginia, we have long known of these issues—the struggles to access necessary health care, the seemingly inescapable disease of addiction, the lack of serious political will to end rampant homelessness and income inequality.

An increasingly prevalent inclusion on this list is the issue of accessing high-speed broadband, or any form of internet connection at all.

We all understand that access to a reliable internet connection is practically essential, particularly in the weird, digital "workplaces" which have become typical in the post-COVID world.

Today, being unable to access the internet means being unable to perform your job, being unable to put food on the table, being unable to pay the bills.

For young people, being unable to access the internet may also mean being forced to drop out of college or being unable to access classwork and attend class sessions with teachers and fellow students.

It could not be more clear: access to high-speed internet connection is essential right now, for millions of West Virginians at least, and tens of thousands who live in Cabell County.

Nevertheless, the telecommunications corporations capable of providing West Virginians access to the internet—such as ComCast—are fighting relentlessly to ensure we will not acquire such access.

"At a critical time when we are trying to improve high-speed broadband and the economic outlook of our community, Comcast is attempting to squash us like a bug," Huntington Mayor Steve Williams stated Monday via social media.

Williams stated that the City of Huntington, for the past seven years, has been working on a plan to provide high-speed broadband to all Huntington residents. The city, along with Sen. Robert Plymale, has partnered with a nonprofit organization called Thundercloud.

Through Thundercloud, various other entities such as Marshall University, Marshall Health and Mountain Health Network have worked to apply for a \$2.5 million grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission. Gov. Jim Justice also has written letters to the Commission expressing his support for the grant.

Now, Williams and Plymale stated, Comcast and corporate telecommunications lobbyists have begun working to ensure that we, as West Virginians,

never see the benefits of the potential grant.

"Unfortunately, we are learning that Comcast, which only provides a fraction of the level of high-speed broadband that they claim to provide, is actively trying to torpedo this project and our grant application," Williams stated. "Every Comcast subscriber in the Huntington service area can relate to what I am now experiencing with this company—frustration. The private sector has just not stepped up to provide adequate, affordable high-speed broadband in greater Huntington, and we find it extremely frustrating that they are fighting our efforts at progress now."

Williams stated he is calling for a public hearing to investigate whether Comcast and other telecommunications companies are being honest about the services they claim to provide and to allow locals to provide their perspectives on the issue.

I think our perspective is clear.

All our lives, we have been sold the lie that perpetuating capitalism and allowing money-hungry corporations like Comcast to operate privately and without regulation is necessary for encouraging "innovation," and "choice" and "competition."

But now we see the opposite is true. We know the horror stories. These corporations do not encourage innovation and progress, they prevent them. We have no choice but to accept what they give us and to pay what they demand, regardless of quality of service. There is no competition.

Comcast and other telecommunications corporations such as Suddenlink frequently abuse their power and capital to set up monopolies on local markets for essentials such as high-speed internet connections, directly and intentionally preventing any form of competition in the market or choice for consumers.

The sole goal of these corporations is to make money—NOT to breed innovation or to ensure a wide variety of choices for consumers, and they have long revealed that when a decision is to be made to value profits or to value progress, they will choose profit every single time. They are inherently corrupt and not to be trusted or relied upon.

At some point, we have to realize that some things are essential for living in the modern world, and allowing corporations to exploit these things—and ourselves as people—for the sole purpose of turning a profit is deeply nonsensical and immoral.

We need to stop letting greedy corporations take advantage of us. In this case, we must make high-speed broadband a public utility.

Op-Ed: Know your trusted sources when it comes to election information

By **MAC WARNER**
WV SECRETARY OF STATE

Due to a 24/7 news cycle and the evolution of social media today, voters are bombarded with election information and political discourse. This, combined with a rapidly changing, unprecedented pandemic, and misinformation at an all-time high, reminds us that we must know our trusted sources and where to verify election information.

The 2020 elections will be historic. In line with recommendations from health experts, many states have made radical changes to their election protocols, including increasing absentee voting options and early voting opportunities. Some states are still in the process of determining these procedures, and such practices may continue to change based on how the pandemic unfolds.

As West Virginia's Chief Elections Official, my office works diligently to provide all voters with clear and current information about how to participate in the process. The same is true for your local source, too; your county clerk.

As your state and local election officials, we work every day to see that West Virginia voters receive the most accurate and up-to-date information related to elections. We fight against intentionally and inadvertently misleading information about elections, field numerous phone calls to answer questions and provide assistance, respond to social media comments

and messages, and work with the media to inform readers and viewers.

The internet provides a perfect forum for inaccurate information to spread like wildfire. In this election alone, my office has seen opinions and political discourse spun into misinformation, which, in turn, disenfranchises voters by causing them to no longer trust the electoral process. Additionally, both Facebook and Twitter have reported shutting down fake accounts used to spread false information and facts about voting. Some of these accounts even impersonate candidates, elected officials, and other credible sources.

While many candidates, organizations, and social media platforms do try to help spread accurate information, voters should always take the time to verify the facts. Know where to look and who to call for accurate information.

GoVoteWV.com is your one-stop location for all West Virginia election information. As your trusted source, we have arranged the website to provide answers to your most common election questions. You can also reach my office at 304-558-6000 or by email at elections@wvsos.gov, or find us on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram.

The time to make your plan to participate in the 2020 General Election is now. If you choose to vote absentee due to concerns of COVID-19, your county clerk must receive your application by Oct. 28. If you would like to vote in-person, Early Voting will occur



PHOTO COURTESY OF WVSOS

from Oct. 21 to 31, or you may head to the polls on Election Day, Nov. 3. You can find the full list of dates and deadlines, as well as any future updates, at GoVoteWV.com.

Even as the tides of this pandemic continue to change, election officials remain your tried and true source for accurate information. Know us, connect with us, and follow us for all of your election needs.

Parthe-Pet

Roman, AKA Romey-Pomey. Roman is a mixed pit. He enjoys walks, cheese and playing with his "kids" Ben and Maddie. Contrary to popular beliefs, Roman is a big scaredy cat. He is afraid of the dark, wet grass and anyone he doesn't know. He is also a bit lazy, unless it comes to loving on people.

Interested in featuring your pet in the paper? Use #ParthePet on social media or contact robinson436@marshall.edu with photos and a short bio.



Weekly Social Media Poll

	Y	N
Should Cabell County Schools resume in-person classes?	29%	71%
Should high school sports be played in any West Virginia counties right now?	31%	69%
Will campus classes resume as "normal" by fall 2021?	39%	61%
Should broadband / internet be a public utility?	92%	8%
Are you planning to attend the football game Saturday?	20%	80%

This poll was conducted on The Parthenon's Instagram, @MUParthenon, with an average response of 85 individuals.

TRAINING cont. from 2

"There are a lot of do's and don'ts for this touchy subject," Chornsbay said. "Anyone can be placed in a situation where they may not know how to respond, but these trainings help you with that."

Chornsbay said she has been in a situation before with someone who was suicidal and did not know how to properly respond but now feels comfortable after the QPR training.

The Counseling Center also provides other workshops and trainings such as the homesickness survival kit, mindfulness for the college student, relaxation techniques in a fast-paced world, stomp out stress and safe zone training.

To register for the October training, email counselingcenter@marshall.edu.

If you or someone you know is in emotional distress or suicidal crisis, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273-TALK (8255).

Xena Bunton can be contacted at bunton2@marshall.edu.

ALUMNI cont. from 3

Nibert realizes the importance of music and is working hard to adapt his lesson plans to benefit his students during the time of coronavirus.

"We can't do much in terms of singing this year, we can't do a lot in terms of instrument playing. I'm going to do as much instrument playing as I can. I'll have to have lessons created for my in-person kids as well as my virtual kids," Nibert said. "It's hard. Music is so interactive, it's hard to do online, but we will find ways to make that work and to keep kids involved as much as they can."

Nibert offered a few pieces of advice for students thinking about a career involving music.

"Really research and kind of get an idea of what you're really interested in. If you're really passionate about it, don't worry about the income, don't worry about how much money you're going to make. I feel like if you're only going in it for the money, you're probably going to be kind of miserable," Nibert said. "Honestly, research as much as you can, talk to people who are in that field. Really just go for it. It can be stressful at times, but I think just developing that passion for what you do will help you along the way."

Brittany Hively can be contacted at hayes100@marshall.edu.

BUSINESS cont. from 2

Ball also said that for business students specifically, this partnership can provide necessary, hands-on experiences.

"It's important to me that people have experience with learning opportunities," Ball said. "This provides students with internships and I think it's just a great experience that provides hands-on learning for them."

Ball says that educational programing will also be present for Incubator clients.

"This will be open to students and the public as well, so if anyone is interested in learning about anything, they would have access to that," Ball said.

Ball also said that in the future, she hopes to work towards monthly events that can be held in-person.

"I would like to do monthly networking events where we could bring together Incubator clients and members of the business community so they can meet each other," Ball said. "This would help clients a lot in terms of help with marketing or legal assistance, as well as potential customers for their business as well."

Ball said one of her main goals is to make sure Marshall Students are aware of the Incubator.

"I want students to know that this exists and that if they have an idea for a business, the College of Business, the Incubator and the iCenter are here to help students start them," Ball said.

Carson McKinney can be reached at mckinney129@marshall.edu

INTERNET cont. from 4

... the monetary situation of the individual and the general wealth possessed in the area in question.

Furthermore, this reality of inequality is unlikely to change so long as telecommunications companies remain in the hands of private owners and concerned more with profit than with quality of or access to service.

"Wealthy states tend to have average-to-high levels of coverage. However, folks living in poor cities are ten times less likely to have broadband internet at home," the analysis states. "Developing broadband in large, wealthy areas with a high population density will always be the safest investment for internet providers."

For a more contextual perspective, average internet speeds in the U.S. rank tenth in the world when compared with internet speeds in other countries.

According to Get Internet, the average download speed in the U.S. is about 55 Mbps.

The countries with the fastest internet speeds are: Luxembourg, 376 Mbps; South Korea, 109 Mbps; Japan, 102 Mbps; Iceland, 90 Mbps; Switzerland, 80 Mbps; Sweden, 74 Mbps; Netherlands, 68 Mbps; Denmark, 61 Mbps; and Spain, 58Mbps.

Douglas Harding can be contacted at harding26@marshall.edu.

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Rec Center offering in-person fitness classes

By **ALEX JACKSON**
REPORTER

The Marshall Recreation Center is providing daily, in-person fitness classes and personal training sessions.

Like other campus activities, these workouts have had to undergo changes in order to meet proper coronavirus guidelines.

Corey Buck, the coordinator of Fitness and Well-Being at Marshall University, said changes in class size is necessary to maintain social distancing.

“Our fitness classes and personal training sessions are being operated under specific COVID-19 guidelines,” Buck said. “Our class capacities have been cut by more than 50%. It is also the instructor’s responsibility to take appropriate cleaning measures after each class.”

The Rec is also keeping the information about employee’s health as up to date as possible.

“All employees at the Rec Center are doing daily check-ins for their temperature and just overall health before they are allowed to operate a personal

training session or group fitness class,” Buck said.

Buck said The Rec is offering several different classes for members to participate. Some workouts are high intensity aerobic based, while others work on strength and a few are even aquatic classes.

Buck said the classes operate in four different studios and some even take place on REC basketball courts to encourage social distancing.

For classes that use weights, Buck said that the Rec is keeping the environment as clean as possible.

“There is absolutely no chance of using shared equipment in a class by the participants,” Buck said. “Members will have their own equipment at their own designated station, and the classes are appropriately socially distanced.”

Buck said members are required to schedule themselves into the workout beforehand, so the instructors know exactly who is coming. These reservation slots open two days before each workout.

Tessa Hoy, a sophomore at Marshall University, said she has used the Rec this year and is interested in going to classes.

“I would definitely feel comfortable going to

classes,” Hoy said. “Working out with other people is a lot more enjoyable and the fact the Rec is doing it safely with all the precautions makes it very appealing.”

Alex Jackson can be contacted at jackson418@live.marshall.edu.



Brittany Hively | Managing Editor

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Marshall Smashers goes online

By ALEX JACKSON

REPORTER

Marshall Smashers is hosting online weekly gaming tournaments during the fall semester another adaptation being made along with coronavirus.

Marshall Smashers is a gaming club at Marshall University that hosts tournaments of the video game franchise, "Super Smash Bros."

"Super Smash Bros" is a series of fighting games that has a large competitive following. The goal of the games is to knock opposing players off the fighting stage until they are eliminated.

Lynne Thompson, the president and tournament organizer, spoke on how the club is adjusting tournaments this semester.

"I host these (online) tournaments every Tuesday evening," Thompson said. "The tournaments are double elimination, so at minimum, you play two games before you're out. Anyone can enter as long as they live in West Virginia."

Thompson said the club has seen a change in the community since going online.

"Once the games went online, it definitely has had fewer participants," Thompson said. "It feels like we're not as much of a community, admittedly, because the whole tournament experience feels entirely different."

Nathan Green, a junior Marshall Stu-

dent, talked about his experiences in the club and how the club has changed during coronavirus.

"The experiences I've had with the group have been nothing but pleasant; in-person group meetings were always something I looked forward to," Green said. "COVID has changed the meetings up. A lot of the people who used to come to in person meetings have stopped and do not really participate in the activities."

Green said the tournaments moving online has caused increased difficulty. Online gaming requires internet, so inconsistent connection could cause some players to struggle in gameplay.

Green said, "Some tournaments will disqualify someone if they have poor internet, but 'Marshall Smashers' does not, the tournaments are more for fun."

Green said, the 'Marshall Smashers' club is open to everyone and sets no skill requirement for players.

"The group is always trying to get new people to participate, even someone who's never touched the game is welcome to sign up," Green said. "It is also a great place for people who have just started playing to really get their feet wet in terms of competitive play."

Alex Jackson can be contacted at jackson418@live.marshall.edu.



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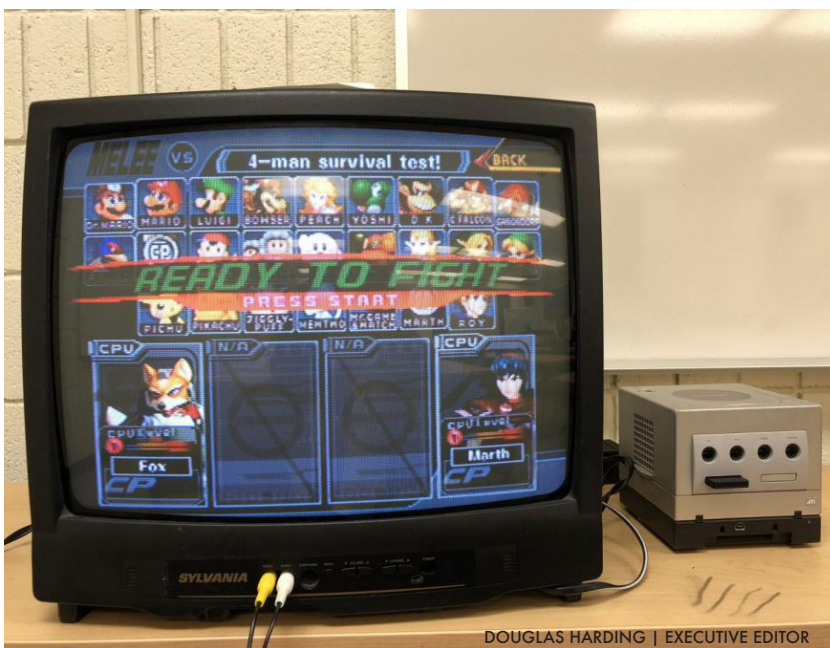
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DOUGLAS HARDING | EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Photo originally published in 2018 during in-person meetings of the Smashers.