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### The Parthenon, March 3, 2021

Brittany Hively  
Parthenon@marshall.edu

Grant Goodrich

Emma Berry

Xena Bunton

Isabella Robinson

*See next page for additional authors*

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**Authors**

Brittany Hively, Grant Goodrich, Emma Berry, Xena Bunton, Isabella Robinson, Tyler Spence, Denise Jackson, and Zachary Hiser



# THE PARTHENON

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3, 2021 | VOL. 124 NO. 73 | MARSHALL UNIVERSITY'S STUDENT NEWSPAPER | marshallparthenon.com | SINGLE COPY FREE

## Ice storm and heavy rain leave much of Tri-State under water



PAGE EDITED AND DESIGNED BY BRITTANY HIVELY | HAYES100@MARSHALL.EDU

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# HEPC Reaches Out to Students Seeking Financial Aid

By **MADISON PERDUE**  
THE PARTHENON

The Higher Education Policy Commission has received 44% fewer PROMISE applications in 2021 than in 2020, and several efforts are being made to reach students before the March 1 application deadline.

Brian Weingart, HEPC senior director of financial aid, said the Commission typically receives 10,000-11,000 applications each year. In 2020, the Commission received around 9,000 applications. In 2021, however, the Commission has received only about 5,000 applications.

Weingart said the switch to virtual learning might be a contributing factor to this decrease, as teachers and counselors typically guide students through the application process in schools.

“Now, students are having to do this on their own,” Weingart said.

As the PROMISE and FASFA applications’ deadline draws nearer, the Commission has been using technology to reach students.

“We’ve been doing a lot of social media outreach,” Weingart said. “We’ve also been doing webinars throughout the year

where we try to not only get the word out but have how-to webinars to walk students through the PROMISE applications.”

Weingart said the Commission has been reaching out to high school counselors and working with the West Virginia Department of Education to help reach high school seniors and encourage them to apply.

In a typical school year, Weingart and his staff would be present in college fairs and in high schools, walking students and their families through these steps in person. Though this is no longer possible because of the pandemic, Weingart said they are reaching students virtually and are even able to send students links to share their screens as they apply online to receive live guidance.

Jessica Tice, HEPC communications director, said the HEPC financial aid team has made a tremendous effort over the past several months to educate students on the applications through extended office hours and a toll-free financial-aid hotline.

Tice said the texting program “Txt 4 Success” is also available to students. The program sends text message reminders twice a month to remind students to apply and inform them of

deadlines. Students who respond to the number are placed with a live counselor who can walk them through the college planning process.

“We are just now beginning to see numbers go in the right direction,” Tice said. Tice said several factors have contributed to this, including more high school seniors having potentially greater access to counselors as schools reopen, the approaching deadline and the efforts to reach students through social media and other digital platforms.

Tice said the HEPC has also partnered with the Education Alliance, which has led the effort to create a statewide contest for students who complete the PROMISE and FASFA applications before the deadline.

**see HEPC on pg. 10**

# The Pandemic’s Disruption of International Students

By **TYLER SPENCE**  
OPINION EDITOR

International travel was one of the first casualties of the pandemic’s arrival in early 2020. As traditional students were ushered off-campus and out of dorms, one group largely remained — international students. Many of Marshall’s small but vibrant international student community were forced to make a choice. Go home, unsure when they might be able to return to the United States, or stay in the U.S. and not know when they might be able to go home again.

“This year has been very challenging for all international students. It has been very stressful to try to plan for and navigate an unknown circumstance. We have all tried to adjust to the changes caused by the pandemic,” said Tammy Johnson, Dean of Admissions and Executive Director of Enrollment Services and the director of international admissions.

The very nature of the international travel lockdowns has been challenging to recruit new international students, compounded by the loss of the INTO program.

INTO was the university’s largest partner for international students through 2019. It is yet to be determined what effect these two factors will have on international students’ future at Marshall.

Still, they certainly have made it more difficult for both international students and faculty trying to recruit these students.

“Travel restrictions and concerns associated with pandemic created issues for both current students and prospective students who were considering first-time enrollment abroad. Those concerns are beginning to ease, and we expect to see a gradual return of interest in studying abroad,” said Johnson.

Although INTO might no longer be an asset to Marshall, Johnson said to expect the university to work with new and additional recruiting partners and create more school-to-school arrangements with universities across the world.

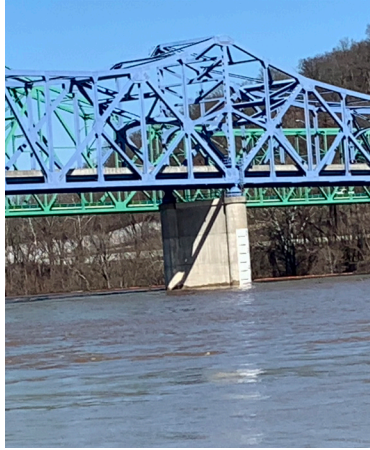
**Tyler Spence can be contacted at [spence83@marshall.edu](mailto:spence83@marshall.edu).**



Zachary Hiser | Photo and Graphics Editor



# Flood warning: Ohio River to crest Wednesday



STAFF PHOTO

Water levels continue to rise up the pillars of the Ashland Bridge.

**BRITTANY HIVELY**  
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

As power companies began restoring the last grids of power to thousands of residents, due to an intense ice-storm, heavy rains have caused a new issue: flooding.

The National Weather Service (NWS) has issued a flood warning for the area until March 4 at 8:30 p.m.

The National Weather Service website lists flood warnings for four counties in Kentucky, two in Ohio and six in West Virginia. They also listed areas, state parks and lakes that will see high water levels.

"Flooding is already occurring in the warned area. Water levels have reached above moderate flood and are still rising for the next 12 hours," the website said.

According to the NWS the Ohio River was measured at 51.2 feet in Huntington, at 9 a.m. March 2, with flood stage at 50.0 feet.

"The river is expected to rise to a crest of 51.8 feet tomorrow [March 3] morning. It will then fall below flood stage early March 4 afternoon," according to the website.

This site says residents last saw this flood level in January 2005.

The NWS also warns to avoid high waters and not risk attempting unknown waters.

"Turn around, don't drown when encountering flooded roads. Most flood deaths occur in vehicles," the website says.

**Brittany Hively can be contacted at [hayes100@marshall.edu](mailto:hayes100@marshall.edu).**



BRITTANY HIVELY | EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Huntington city workers monitored Harris Riverfront Park and set up barriers closing the park to citizens due to dangerous water levels.

# Un-Pac, organizing students for vast democratic reform

**ISABELLA ROBINSON**  
NEWS EDITOR

Following the introduction of H.R.1 to the House floor, former Bernie 2020 staffers launched Un-PAC, a new political organization dedicated to organizing students and young people to demand democratic reform.

"I would describe the For the People Act as a list of things that any country that calls itself a democracy should already have, but of course America does not," said Shana Gallagher, Executive Director of Un-Pac and former National Student Organizing Director for Bernie 2020. "The things that are most important in it fall into one of two categories: expanding the electorate and protecting the right to vote specifically for marginalized communities and getting big money out of politics."

Gallagher said the act will make voting more accessible by enacting same-day automatic voter registration in all 50 states as well as online voter registration and allowing anyone to vote by mail.

"The reason it is so important for

our generation is because young people don't have a lot of political power despite having all the numbers," said Gallagher. "We are systemically kept away from the polls, and because we do not have a lot of money to contribute to grossly expensive political campaigns, most campaigns involve politicians and corporations that do not invest in us as a generation."

The For the People Act will also increase polling locations on college campuses and in communities of color, indigenous reservations.

Gallagher said the act will overturn citizen united and end gerrymandering in all 50 states and introduce public financing of elections, which does not use taxpayer dollars to fund.

"The For the People Act will break the stranglehold that 'the millionaires and the billionaires,' as Bernie would say, have over our government," said Gallagher. She said this will simultaneously get big money out of politics and make it easier for people to vote.

"Those two things alone would

help us build and maintain political power as a generation more than any other piece of legislation that we have seen in our lifetime," said Gallagher.

Another issue the act will address is the abolition of filibusters.

"One of the ways that our Congress is broken and very undemocratic right now is that you cannot pass things through the Senate with a simple majority," said Gallagher. "A reason for that is because of the filibuster, which means that any senator can basically debate or go onto the floor and present an argument with the Senate for an unlimited amount of time and the only way that the Senate can vote on legislation is when the debate has ended."

Gallagher said that because senators can go onto the floor and debate forever, and the fact that the debate needs to officially end for legislation to pass, the filibuster is often used to block legislation.

**see UPAC pg. 10**



COURTESY TWITTER @LETSUNPAC

Following the introduction of H.R.1 to the House floor, former Bernie 2020 staffers launched Un-PAC, a new political organization dedicated to organizing students and young people to demand democratic reform.

# Spring commencement to be in person

By **BRITTANY HIVELY**  
EXECUTIVE EDITOR



Marshall University announced that there will be a spring 2021 commencement ceremony, and administration is working towards more of an in-person fall semester.

The graduation ceremony will be held Saturday, May 1, at Joan C. Edwards Stadium and will be the first in-person ceremony held since the pandemic started.

According to the press release, the event will begin at 9 a.m., rain or shine. Students will be given four tickets each for guests to maintain safe social distancing.

“Masks will be required for everyone in attendance. Graduating students also will be required to wear flat shoes to protect the football field turf,” the press release said.

Due to rising numbers of coronavirus cases, the two graduation ceremonies from 2020 were

postponed and eventually replaced with a virtual ceremony. Students who graduated during the 2020 semesters will have an option to walk during the spring 2021 in-person ceremony.

“Any student who has not been able to participate in a graduation ceremony during the pandemic is welcome to join the commencement,” said Leah Payne, director of communications. “The registrar’s office is in the process of contacting those recent graduates and current graduating students with all the information necessary for this event.”

The university said there is always a chance things can shift to virtual depending on the circumstances of COVID-19, but they are hopeful the ceremony will be in-person.

Students will not have the usual Countdown to Commencement activities, but Payne says student

affairs is planning to share a video with all the information normally available during the event.

As for the fall 2021 semester, the university plans to have most of the classes delivered face-to-face.

According to the press release, President Jerry Gilbert said there has been planning to ensure students’ and employees’ safety. Gilbert also wants to ensure students and families are aware of university decisions for the fall semester in advance to allow enough time regarding personal decisions.

“At this point, the President is hopeful we can return to about 75% face-to-face classes and activities,” Payne said. “However, it’s important to note that mask-wearing will still be required and several health and safety measures like handwashing and social

distancing will still be observed.”

With things slowly moving back to a normal routine, President Gilbert shared his hopefulness in the press release.

“As vaccinations have become more available and the positivity rate drops, we will move towards resuming pre-pandemic activities and behaviors,” Gilbert said. “I am confident we are seeing the light at the end of the COVID-19 tunnel, and I’m ready, like all of us, to return to a level of normalcy in the fall.”

**Brittany Hively can be contacted at [hayes100@marshall.edu](mailto:hayes100@marshall.edu).**

## Marshall CEO Panel to feature diverse panel of executives

### UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS

Marshall University’s Lewis College of Business and Brad D. Smith Schools of Business will host their third CEO Panel of the Dean’s Distinguished Speaker Series at 2 p.m. Wednesday, March 3. The free event will be virtual and open to all, with a media Q&A session to follow.

Amidst a pandemic and season of adversity for many Americans, the featured speakers have a depth of perspective and experience to share. They include:

Marshall alum Brad D. Smith, executive chairman and former CEO of Intuit, who will serve as the panel’s moderator. Shellye Archambeau, the first Black female CEO in California’s Silicon Valley, who serves as a board member for Verizon, Nordstrom, Roper Technologies and Okta Inc. and is the author of *Unapologetically Ambitious*. Chris Gardner, an entrepreneur, philanthropist and the author of the critically acclaimed book

*Pursuit of Happyness*, the basis for the award-winning movie starring Will Smith.

Marshall President Dr. Jerome Gilbert and Dr. Avi Mukherjee, dean of the Lewis College of Business, will provide welcoming remarks.

The conversation will explore the skills and mindsets needed to lead and succeed in today’s landscape, where talent is dispersed equally, but opportunity is not, as rapid technological, environmental and societal shifts create a lack of economic opportunity in communities across the globe. The current health and economic crises are speeding up these shifts even more. In this fireside chat, Marshall students and community members will gain insights and inspiration to apply their talent and energy, pursue their passion and create opportunities for

themselves and their communities.

“We are once again delighted about hosting this event to elevate the voices of thought leaders who can enlighten and provide dynamic discussions on a broad range of topics that influence the business world,” Mukherjee said. “The goal of the Dean’s Distinguished Speaker Series and CEO Panel is to bring executives’ lessons from the boardroom into our business students’ classrooms.”

This series was created to offer Marshall and the surrounding community an opportunity to hear from “C-suite” (top-level) executives and industry leaders on a variety of topics, in which they can offer tangible and applicable knowledge. The series provides insightful perspectives on effective leadership and taking advantage of opportunities.



# The epidemic of loneliness

## How Reddit has become a place for selling digital company

By **TYLER SPENCE**  
OPINION EDITOR

Despite the economic downturn felt by nearly all aspects of society, there has been one industry that has seen tremendous growth — online sexual content. Not just traditional pornography, but more individualized online services and platforms like OnlyFans have exploded in popularity.

One of the major platforms in this rise has been the mega-popular site Reddit, with its millions of individual subreddits dedicated to sports, politics, movie fandoms and sex workers — offering their services to lonely customers. These workers have a more customized and individualized experience compared to traditional online pornography, and in turn, demand a price. As the pandemic isolated millions and massive layoffs ensued, women took the largest brunt of the economic fallout. Many of them turned to find alternative sources of income, those like Jenna.

“I only started because I lost my job during the pandemic, but I’m not gonna stop after realizing how much money I can make.” Jenna, who does not want to be identified with her last name, said she was making nearly \$10,000 a month selling digital services through Reddit and other sites.

“When people get their stimulus checks, I make like 5x as much as usual... I feel bad for a lot of them. Some of them pay me just to talk to them.” Jenna said.

Men are already more likely to self-report feeling lonely in the United States. Even before the pandemic, three out of every five Americans self-reported as feeling lonely often. This number is even higher for members of Generation Z and Millennials, reporting loneliness at 79% and 71%, respectively, compared to 50% for baby boomers and 38% for the Silent Generation from data collected in 2019.

Many customers and sellers alike prefer the control they have over a platform like Reddit compared to other often scarier parts of the internet. Many of these subreddits have moderators who verify sellers to ensure against cat-fishing and have dedicated spaces to review the services one might provide.

It is an entire Yelp-like economy of online sexual services; however, the balance between a personal experience for the customer and a business venture for the seller is a delicate one. Customers are looking for an experience that mimics a traditional relationship they can’t find in the real world but through technology, while sellers are looking to complete as many transactions as possible. It is a scenario that will never last — for most — the money runs out eventually. But for some sellers, it seems there is never a shortage

of lonely men on the internet.

In recent months, sites like Pornhub have been under widespread criticism after reporting in *The New York Times* showed thousands of videos of underage girls, extreme violence and abuse, or a combination of both. Companies like MasterCard responded and began disallowing the use of their cards on the site. Pornhub responded by not allowing any non-verified content creator to upload videos onto the site and deleted hundreds of thousands of videos in the process. Pornhub additionally removed the ability for visitors to download videos.

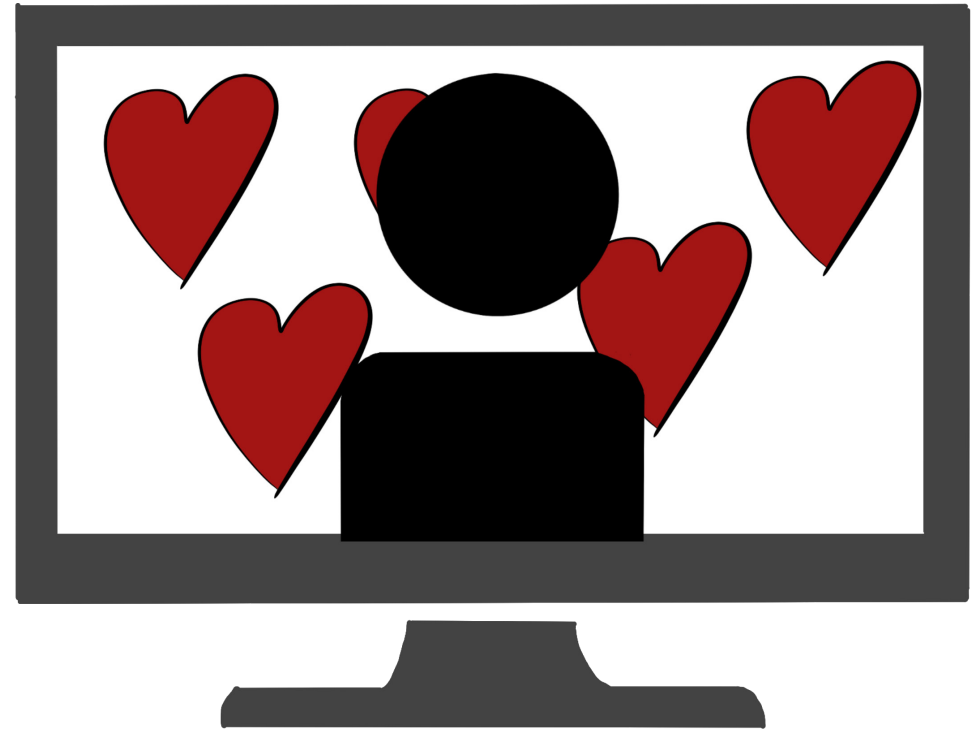
In theory, this type of sexual content sold through Reddit would be more immune to these issues, but that is not always the case. Buyers do not have to go through any verification to make a purchase and can pay through Cash App or PayPal or even an Amazon gift card. Creators in some subreddits may be verified sellers; however, there is no way to verify age without uploading personal identification to other strangers on the internet, which does not occur in these subreddits.

Maggie, from Romania, is only recently 18 years old and is still in high school. She sells content without her parent’s knowledge to make money on the side. She was inspired by her friend doing the same thing; however, she said she is lucky to get a couple of customers a month.

“Some guys are pretty gross, others are nice, and those are the ones I like doing business with. I like doing business with other people around my age,” Maggie said.

When asked if doing this type of work was tiring and demanding, both women said the work was exhausting, but Jenna said she views the work as almost therapeutic, although she said: “not everyone (who works in the industry) feels like that.”

Maggie said she uses these interactions with men to practice her English and learned how to talk to men through watching



ZACHARY HISER | PHOTO EDITOR

American movies.

Both Jenna and Maggie said there was one particular type of content that reigned supreme above others in popularity and price. Customized, commonly referred to as “customs,” are videos or pictures of customers’ specific requests. “Everyone wants customs because they have specific fantasies that they can’t fulfill,” Jenna said.

This epidemic of loneliness has been a boom to this underground industry. The demand for this type of content shows a deeper root problem many Americans have had over the past year, particularly young men. As experts are unsure of the long-term mental health repercussions due to social isolation, there is an epidemic of loneliness due to the pandemic. Millions are relying on the internet and sites like Reddit to get through it.

Whether this issue of loneliness fixes itself in time as life begins to inch towards normalcy is yet to be determined. The pandemic may have permanently created an industry that thrives off lonely people with enough cash to spend on a fleeting experience they can’t find in real life.

**Tyler Spence can be contacted at [Spence83@mashall.edu](mailto:Spence83@mashall.edu)**



# Men's basketball to close out regular season against Charlotte



ZACHARY HISER | THE PARTHENON

(Top left) Redshirt sophomore guard Andrew Taylor attempts to split the defense; (top right) senior guard Jarrod West drives strong to the hole; (bottom left) junior guard Taevion Kinsey pulls up for a jumper; and (bottom right) redshirt senior forward Jannson Williams prepares to shoot a free throw against North Texas Friday, Feb. 26.

**By NOAH HICKMAN**  
THE PARTHENON

With the final series on the horizon, the Marshall men's basketball game hopes to finish the regular season out strong against the Charlotte 49ers before playing in the Conference USA tournament.

Currently, on a six-game skid, the 49ers will travel to Huntington for games Friday, Feb. 5 and Saturday, Feb. 6, which were rescheduled from early January.

The main question for the

Herd going into this game is whether or not senior guard Jarrod West will be healthy and available for the final two regular season games after taking a hard fall in game one against North Texas.

Head coach Dan D'Antoni said that West has always been an extra voice on the basketball team, whether he is playing or not.

"(West) gives you his heart; he's a leader and always has been," D'Antoni said. "I recruited him not as a basketball player

primarily, but as a leader."

Currently, the Herd is in third place in Conference USA East with an overall record of 13-6 and a conference record of 7-5.

The 49ers have an overall record of 9-13 and a conference record of 5-9, putting it in sixth place in C-USA East.

Even with the contrasting records, redshirt sophomore Andrew Taylor said that energy plays an important factor in every game.

**see MBB on pg. 11**

## Softball to open season with seven games in five days

**By GRANT GOODRICH**  
SPORTS EDITOR

Kicking off the 2021 season with a double-header against Akron Wednesday, the Marshall softball team is scheduled to play seven home games in its first week in action. The Thundering Herd Round Robin takes place Friday, Feb. 5 through Sunday, Feb. 7.

Bowling Green, Saint Francis and Valparaiso will travel to Huntington to take place in the round robin.

The Thundering Herd is slated to take the field against the Bowling Green Falcons at 1:30 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 5. Marshall and the Valparaiso will meet twice — once on Saturday, Feb. 6 at 11:30 a.m. and once on Sunday, Feb. 7 at 1:30 p.m. Similarly, St. Francis and Marshall will face off twice but, in

this case, at 1:30 p.m. on Saturday and 11:30 a.m. on Sunday.

But before the first pitch is thrown in the round robin, Marshall must deal with Akron Wednesday, Feb. 3 at 12:30 p.m. and later at 2:30 p.m.

The Zips, unlike the Herd, have played a game — two games, in fact, losing to Delaware State on the front end of a double-header and defeating Delaware State on the back end of a double-header.

Akron and Marshall's matchup is not a new one; Marshall leads the series 9-2. The latest two games, also a double-header, took place almost exactly a year ago, Mar. 4, 2020.

Marshall took both games, winning 8-3 in game one and mercy-ruling 8-0 in game two.

**see SOFTBALL on pg. 11**

## Baseball set to begin its season

**By GRANT GOODRICH**  
SPORTS EDITOR

The Marshall men's baseball team is slated to begin its season with a three-game series against Morehead State; the first game is scheduled for Friday, March 5 at 1 p.m. at the Kennedy Center YMCA field.

The second game is set to be played in Morehead at 1 p.m. Saturday, March 6, and the final game will see the teams return to Huntington to play at 1 p.m. Sunday, March 7.

Morehead State leads the all-time series against the Herd, 14-7. The

two teams have not met since May 1, 2019, when the Eagles came to Huntington and won 8-2.

Because last season was shortened due to the Coronavirus pandemic, the Herd has not played since March 11, 2020. The Herd finished the 2020 season 5-10-1.

Notable returning players to the 2021 squad is senior Zach Inskeep and junior Peter Hutzal, who both led the Herd in batting average last season with a .328 average.

**see BASEBALL on pg. 10**



# Schedule of games: What is happening this week in Marshall athletics?

## Wednesday, March 3

12:30 p.m. - Marshall softball vs Akron

2:30 p.m. - Marshall softball vs Akron

## Thursday, March 4

All day - Marshall men's golf at the Sea Palms Invitational

7:00 p.m. - Marshall women's basketball at Middle Tennessee

## Friday, March 5

All-day - Marshall men's golf at the Sea Palms Invitational

1:00 p.m. - Marshall baseball vs Morehead State

1:30 p.m. - Marshall softball vs Bowling Green

7:00 p.m. - Marshall women's basketball at Middle Tennessee

7:00 p.m. - Marshall women's soccer vs Florida Atlantic

7:00 p.m. - Marshall men's basketball vs Charlotte

## Saturday, March 6

All-day - Marshall men's golf at the Sea Palms Invitational

11:30 a.m. - Marshall softball vs Valparaiso

12:00 p.m. - Marshall tennis vs Virginia Commonwealth

1:00 p.m. - Marshall baseball at Morehead State

1:30 p.m. - Marshall softball vs. Saint Francis

2:00 p.m. - Marshall men's soccer at South Carolina

2:00 p.m. - Marshall men's basketball vs Charlotte

## Sunday, March 7

11:30 a.m. - Marshall softball vs. Saint Francis

1:00 p.m. - Marshall baseball vs Morehead State

1:30 p.m. - Marshall softball vs. Valparaiso

2 p.m. - Marshall volleyball at Middle Tennessee

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# THE PARTHENON

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CONTACT The Parthenon: 109 Communications Bldg  
Marshall University | One John Marshall Drive  
Huntington, West Virginia 25755 | parthenon@marshall.edu  
@MUParthenon

## BRITTANY HIVELY

EXECUTIVE EDITOR  
hayes100@marshall.edu

## GRANT GOODRICH

SPORTS EDITOR  
goodrich24@marshall.edu

## EMMA BERRY

COPY EDITOR  
BERRY180@marshall.edu

## XENA BUNTON

FEATURES EDITOR  
BUNTON2@marshall.edu

## ISABELLA ROBINSON

NEWS EDITOR  
robinson436@marshall.edu

## TYLER SPENCE

OPINIONS EDITOR  
spence83@marshall.edu

## DENISE JACKSON

SOCIAL MEDIA and PODCAST EDITOR  
jackson463@marshall.edu

## ZACHARY HISER

PHOTO AND GRAPHICS EDITOR  
hiser1@marshall.edu

## SANDY YORK

FACULTY ADVISER  
sandy.york@marshall.edu

## EXECUTIVE STAFF

GRACE HEWITT hewitt23@marshall.edu  
CATHERINE BLANKENSHIP blankensh403@marshall.edu  
ABBY AYES ayes@marshall.edu  
CARTER TRUMAN truman18@marshall.edu

## 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.

## OPINION

# I hate Twitter.

By Tyler Spence  
OPINION EDITOR

Only one incident in recent memory has made me want to rage quit off of Twitter, bury my smartphone in a ditch and move to a country with an internet penetration rate of less than 50%. During the past week, young and woke protectors of the vulnerable trashed and attempted to cancel internet personality Gabbie Hanna.

In all of my years of writing, I never expected to be rushing to defend Gabbie Hanna, but here we go.

Before I begin: Gabbie Hanna is annoying, not a very good singer and sometimes even mildly offensive or blissfully unaware of herself. But her actions this week, which inspired the internet's ire, were mildly ignorant at worst and partially truthful at best.

Hanna replied to a Tweet, asking how the internet felt about tone indicators saying: "Y'all are doing too much."

I, like most people, was seemingly unaware of what a tone indicator even is. Tone indicators are abbreviations used on the internet to help readers fill in the blanks and imply tone, like /j for joking or /lh for lighthearted. These indicators are used by those who identify as neurodivergent — all for conditions such as autism or dyslexia. Tone indicators have also become frequently used by K-pop and anime fandoms, which view their use as an inclusive gesture to people in these communities and help make the internet a better place.

This movement seems sincere but has taken the wrong approach in attempting to make them more widespread.

Tone indicators may very well be a tool to help make the internet a more accessible place to navigate and maybe more appropriate and thorough than emojis, but to accuse someone of ableism

upon being unaware of or dismissive of tone indicators is absurd. It is safe to say that no one outside of these specific communities has ever heard of a tone indicator, and when looking at a list of them at first glance, they seem pretty unnecessary and silly. Some opponents of tone indicators argue the attempt to universalize them contributes to the further colonization of English to other languages. No amount of tone indicators will be able to pick up the nuances in the human voice.

Instead of advocating and explaining why tone indicators might be useful, members of Generation Z have attempted to cancel Hanna for ableism, as if tone indicators have now been the set standard for so long. To them, not respecting them might as well be like wearing blackface. This marks another instance of Generation Z meaning well, but missing the mark so widely it only aids their opposition.

The New York Times wrote an article in their style section about tone indicators in December of 2020, explaining what they are, why they are used and who uses them. If this type of article is necessary to introduce what they are in December, they are certainly not ubiquitous at the end of February.

These activists, while well-intentioned, are only hurting their cause. They are aiding the likes of Ben Shapiro to be the "anti-snowflake" warrior, and no one wants that.

**Tyler Spence can be contacted at [spence83@marshall.edu](mailto:spence83@marshall.edu)**



# The Legislature Needs to Create Opportunities for all West Virginians

## OP-ED

### Rep. Doug Skaff JR.

For the first time in my lifetime, Democrats are a super-minority in both the State Senate and the House of Delegates. It may seem to outsiders that we are more divided than ever, however, that does not have to be the case. Republicans and Democrats may have different ideas on how to get there, but we have the same goal in mind- a stronger, healthier West Virginia. Our caucus platform for the 2021 Legislative Session is focused on just that- putting West Virginians first by creating opportunities for ALL West Virginians to stay, rebuild and succeed here.

West Virginia Democrats stand for every West Virginian- our neighbors who lost their jobs and are trying to navigate the state unemployment process; the businesses and restaurants trying to keep all of their employees working while their businesses are at reduced capacity; the public-school students who do not have access to the internet at home to do their schoolwork on virtual learning days; our healthcare workers, front-line workers and first responders who are overworked and tired but still showing up for work every day; and the parents who are struggling to work, teach at home and ensure their children are thriving in the middle of a global health pandemic. This has not been an easy year for anyone- but West Virginians are resilient people. It is time, now more than ever, to put the people of West Virginia and our shared values first. The Legislature should do all we can to support each other as our state recovers.

We want to reverse the outward migration trend by supporting policies that are good for our state and her people- policies and programs that will help people stay here. We need to champion policies that give our residents a reason to stay here and give those who left a reason to come back home. Policies like enhanced promise scholarships for STEM students; revitalization programs for struggling coal communities and student loan

forgiveness and new tax credits for the people that we need to keep here in West Virginia- our college graduates, our healthcare workers, our teachers and our seniors.

Democrats plan to champion policies to rebuild and strengthen our communities. We know, as West Virginians, that strong communities are vital in recovery from whatever catastrophe that our state is facing- from the drug epidemic to the natural disasters that we seem to see every year. Just as they are after massive floods or snowstorms, strong communities will be vital as we recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.

We need to improve our infrastructure systems to ensure all West Virginians have access to affordable broadband, safe roads, clean water and healthcare resources in their communities. West Virginia Democrats pledge to support COVID testing and vaccination infrastructure, small businesses and entrepreneurs affected by the pandemic and efforts to improve the unemployment compensation process. We, as a state, need to continue to support, protect and stand up for our law enforcement, local public health agencies, emergency responders and frontline workers. As we have seen this past year, we heavily rely on these individuals – and we need to make sure that their voices are heard and that they are allowed to participate in the legislative process.

The Legislature needs to provide our communities and our people with the resources they need to succeed here in West Virginia. The Legislature should pass nondiscrimination legislation and the Katherine Johnson and Dorothy Vaughan Fair Pay Act. Helping West Virginians succeed means we also need to keep an open mind and look at policies to reduce, not shift, the tax burdens for our residents. We, as legislators, must make it a priority to create opportunities for minority communities, women, small businesses owners,

families and individuals reentering society. Strong, healthy communities and businesses will help all West Virginians prosper.

West Virginia Democrats pledge to support policies- regardless of which party champions them- that create opportunities for ALL West Virginians to stay, rebuild and succeed here. On every vote that we take, our caucus members plan to ask two questions: How does this help West Virginians? Who does it hurt?

I believe that now, more than ever, is the time to party politics aside and join together to support policies to move West Virginia forward. It is time to make West Virginians our top priority. We, as legislators, need to do all we can to help West Virginians stay here, rebuild here and succeed here because this is their home.

DELEGATE DOUG SKAFF, JR. (D-KANAWHA) IS THE HOUSE MINORITY LEADER AND PRESIDENT OF HD MEDIA.

The Parthenon is committed to publishing a wide variety of opinions and perspectives. If you wish to submit a guest column or a letter to the editor, email [parthenon@marshall.edu](mailto:parthenon@marshall.edu) or email the opinion editor, Tyler Spence at [spence83@marshall.edu](mailto:spence83@marshall.edu).

## BASEBALL cont. from 6

The rest of the Herd's schedule features non-conference matchups with Ohio and Southern Illinois. A game with West Virginia was scheduled for Tuesday, March 9 in Morgantown, but it was postponed.

The Conference USA schedule features a new format. This season's schedule will feature eight four-game series, four at home and four away. There will be one game on Friday and Sunday and a double-header on Saturday.

Although Conference USA baseball does not have divisions, Marshall will face all the teams that proliferate the eastern division in the other C-USA sports, and to that accord, the Herd will "crossover" to play Louisiana Tech and UAB. Moreover, Marshall will face Western Kentucky in two separate series.

The beginning of conference play for Marshall is planned for March 26 at Florida Atlantic.

**Grant Goodrich can be contacted at [goodrich24@marshall.edu](mailto:goodrich24@marshall.edu).**

## HEPC cont. from pg. 2

These students are automatically enrolled in a drawing for prizes like Apple AirPods, miniature refrigerators for dorm rooms, wireless printers and more. Tice said they have had two drawings thus far, and there will be two more drawings in the future.

Tice said the HEPC is also working with the Student Success Leadership Council, a group of college student leaders from around the state. Anna Williams, chair of the Council, has been working with the HEPC and college students who want to connect with high school seniors to encourage them to go to college.

"We welcome the help, and it was great to hear that current college students are thinking about the younger peers in that way," Tice said. "We had an inaugural meeting with them a few weeks ago, forming a group of high school and college students talking about how they can influence their peers to go on to college."

Students representing a dozen colleges and institutions used this first virtual meeting to encourage others to sign up for the "Txt 4 Success" program and communicate information about their families' college-planning process.

The HEPC continues to communicate with the Council on student issues. The Commission's financial aid resources are still readily available for students who wish to apply for financial aid.

**Madison Perdue can be contacted at [purdue118@marshall.edu](mailto:purdue118@marshall.edu).**

@MUParthenon



## UPAC cont. from 3

"Even though the filibuster was not a part of the Constitution and it is not a part of the Founding Father's vision, it has been used throughout the decades, especially in the early 1900s, to really block civil rights legislation," said Gallagher. "It is a relic of white supremacy, and it started becoming used often in 1917 when southern, racist Democrats used it to block anti-lynching legislation."

Today, over 200 pieces of anti-lynching legislation have been proposed in America, and none have passed. As recently as three months ago, Kentucky Senator Rand Paul used the filibuster to block anti-lynching legislation. It is not currently illegal in America to lynch someone.

"We are using taxpayer dollars to pay Senators to go to work every day and get nothing done because our system is broken and we have a weird policy that allows people to hijack our democracy," said Gallagher. "We need to reform the filibuster because it and the closure rule together are what prevents something like the For the People Act from getting through Congress with a simple majority."

Since Democrats have the majority vote in Congress, if they theoretically all agreed to reform the filibuster, they could work with a simple majority.

"This is why West Virginia so important because only two Democratic Senators have said they do not want to reform the filibuster, and one of them is Joe Manchin," said Gallagher.

Un-PAC plans to organize students of all ideological viewpoints on college campuses to pressure their representatives to pass the For the People Act.

"Joe Manchin will need to hear from students and young people across the political spectrum from West Virginia, and despite our origins on the Bernie campaign, we are nonpartisan," said Gallagher. "We want to work with every single student and young person who agrees corruption is bad, democracy is good, and this government does not represent me, and I want to see change."

David Crawley, a graduate student, will be leading the Un-PAC group on Marshall's campus. "We want the voting rights for Americans to be universal across all 50 states. If you want an absentee ballot, you shouldn't need a medical excuse to get it," said Crawley. "In West Virginia, while we did have that, technically, you had to say voting is a COVID concern, so there's no guarantee in 2022 or 2021 for the local races in West Virginia that we are going to be able to do that again."

He said his main goal is for Marshall students to have their elected officials care about their constituents' issues and not worry about them being paid off by CEOs.

The group stressed that they are nonpartisan. "Having voter reform and getting money out of politics is for everyone because if you're fighting against the big guy and the big guy is funding your representative, we lose every time," said Crawley. "That is not what democracy is meant to be."

Un-PAC will be reaching out to students on this campus by practicing an education method called "class raps," a short presentation about Un-PAC's intentions during any classes, in which professors will allow them to speak.

**Isabella Robinson can be contacted at [robinson436@marshall.edu](mailto:robinson436@marshall.edu).**

# Parthe-Pet

These two handsome guys are Axel (two and a half years old, Blue Tick Heeler) and Tank (six-years-old, Boxer). They are two of seven Grandfur babies of Angela Patterson that works at Harless Dining Hall.

They love to play and chase each other - but mostly they like to sleep.



**SOFTBALL cont. from pg. 6**

After that second game, the season would not last much longer for either team, as the onset of the Coronavirus pandemic forced season cancellations across the country.

The Herd softball team was off to an 18-7 start, yet to begin conference play. Marshall ranked fifth in the nation as a team in batting average (.357) and first in the nation in home runs per game (1.92).

Individually, junior Mya Stevenson was tied for first in the nation in total home runs. She was also tied for second in total RBIs. Coming into the 2021 season, she was named to the All-Conference USA team.

Others named to the All-C-USA team were seniors Sierra Huerta, Saige Pye and Aly Harrell. Harrell was also voted as C-USA Preseason Player of the Year.

Although Harrell did not smack as many home runs last season as Stevenson, she still hit five homers along with 23 RBIs. She did have the second-best batting average on the team (.441), but her most considerable distinction was her team-leading .602 on-base percentage, which was directly related to the whopping 23 times she was walked. At first base, Harrell led the Herd in putouts, with 142.

Not only is a majority of the batting lineup returning, but a majority of the Herd's pitching returns as well.

Senior Laney Jones returns after leading the team in strikeouts (61) last season and overall innings pitched. Also returning, sophomore Ashley Blessin led the team in ERA (3.45) and had a record of 7-0. Jones had a record of 8-2 and an ERA of 3.62, closely behind Blessin.

Relief pitchers sophomore Delaney Heaberlin and senior Megan Stauffer are back as well.

Marshall returns one of the most experienced teams in Conference USA. Although the Herd had the most preseason all-conference players, the Herd was selected to finish second in the East division behind Western Kentucky.

Marshall will get an early chance to prove the eight voters who selected WKU wrong, as the Herd will begin conference play on Apr. 2 at home against the Hilltoppers for a four-game series.

Marshall will then play four more four-game series against the remaining east division teams before the C-USA tournament begins May 12.

**Grant Goodrich can be contacted at goodrich24@marshall.edu.**

**MBB cont. from pg. 6**

"I think (energy) separates good teams from great teams," Taylor said. "At the end of the day, being able to create energy and not just (having the mindset of) it is what it is."

Charlotte is led by sophomore guard Jahmir Young who averages 18.4 points, 4.9 rebounds and 2.6 assists a game.

Senior guard Jordan Shepherd is another player who has made an impact for the 49ers this season, getting it done with his offense and defense. He averages 11 points, 3.5 rebounds, three assists and 1.4 steals.

Marshall is led by its three guards: Jarrod West, junior guard Taevion Kinsey and Andrew Taylor.

Kinsey scores the second-most

points per game out of any C-USA player (19.8), only behind senior UTSA guard Jhivvan Jackson (20.5).

West has proved to be one of the more versatile players in college basketball, averaging 13.2 points, 3.7 rebounds, 6.3 assists and 2.6 steals.

Taylor is right there with West averaging 11.4 points, 5.9 rebounds, 4.3 assists and 1.5 steals per game.

The two-game series is scheduled to take place at the Cam Henderson Center on Friday, Feb. 5, at 7 p.m. and Saturday, Feb. 6, at 2 p.m. Both games will air on Stadium TV.

**Noah Hickman can be contacted at hickman76@marshall.edu.**

PAGE EDITED AND DESIGNED BY GRANT GOODRICH | GOODRICH24@MARSHALL.EDU

# Worship Directory

HD-446147

## Fifth Avenue Baptist Church

1135 Fifth Avenue  
Corner of Fifth Avenue & 12th Street in downtown Huntington

Sunday Morning Worship – 10:45 am  
Social distancing & wearing masks required

Visit our website for Worship Services  
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for children, youth, and adults.

**www.fifthavenuebaptist.org**  
**304-523-0115**

### CATHOLIC

#### St. Peter Claver Catholic Church

828 15th St. (on 9th Ave) Htgn.  
304-691-0537

Sunday Mass: 11:00a.m.  
Daily Masses: 12:05 on Monday,  
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Confession by appointment

Rev. Fr. Douglas A. Ondeck

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**Las misas en Español:** los domingos segundo y cuarto de cada mes a las 9:30 am

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#### SACRED HEART CATHOLIC CHURCH

2015 Adams Ave. Huntington, WV  
304-429-4318

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anytime by appointment

Office Hours Mon-Fri. 9am-12pm

**Rev. Fr. Thomas**

#### St. Joseph Roman Catholic Church

HUNTINGTON, WV  
526 13th Street  
(304) 525-5202

Pastor: Fr Dean Borgmeyer

**Sunday Mass Schedule**  
Saturday Vigil: 4:30 pm  
Sunday: 8:00 am, 10:00 am,  
12:00 Noon, 5:30 pm

**Confessions**  
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# Town meeting provides sustainability updates for Cabell County

BY: XENA BUNTON  
FEATURES EDITOR

In hopes of sustainability involvement in Huntington and on campus, Marshall students, staff and Cabell county officials discuss sustainability efforts on Feb. 25 during a virtual town hall meeting.

“Not everybody who stops at a recycling bin has good intentions,” Mark Buchanan, Cabell County Solid Waste Authority, said. “Materials that were dropped in would contaminate entire loads, and it hurts me because it really undercuts our message for sustainability.”

Due to the lack of waste knowledge and mixing the wrong products in recycling bins, Cabell County residents who wish to recycle must pay a yearly fee for proper containers and access to the county facility. Buchanan said Cabell County does not have a composting facility because of improper management.

To increase the composting activity in Cabell County, Amy Parsons-White, Marshall University sustainability manager, said she has been working with senators and delegates to potentially take composting beyond Marshall’s campus.

“There is actually a Senate bill going through that could open up the rules for composting in the state of West Virginia,” Parsons-White said.

Although Cabell County has work to do with sustainability and composting, Marshall’s sustainability department and club have continuously collected data for the university to successfully pass the first plastic-pledge in Appalachia and have the first compost facility in West Virginia.

Parsons-White said she is proud of the compost facility that will allow the department to compost paper, cardboard, food waste and lawn waste. She said once the facility is operational, Marshall will be 70% waste-free.

The facility will have a typical compost that will go through a digester and a 5’ x 40’ worm bed that can hold 50,000 red-wrigglers, which will allow the department to produce worm castings.

Parson-White said the goal is to have the facility open to the public two months after finishing compost recipes and electric work inside the facility.

The sustainability department is not ready to take compost yet, but they have six outdoor compost containers placed around campus. Parsons-White emphasized that any Marshall student who wants to participate in the compost facility must put their compost in a brown paper bag.

With the help of Baleigh Epperly, sustainability club president, the plastic-pledge and compost mission on campus is also available for viewing purposes to students and staff in the Drinko Library. While studying, students can view Epperly’s piece of art on the second floor of the library.

The piece features an aged black trash bag background with waste materials collected on campus and from Epperly’s personal collection.

Epperly said she used flowers and butterflies to symbolize hope along with the will to change and transition into a more sustainable way of life. She said she created the piece to bring awareness to the plastic production and pollution crisis.

“Maybe you look at my piece, and you get mad that we are doing this to ourselves and the planet,” Epperly said. “I would hope from that emotion, an action would arise and that we can hold industries and companies accountable for the things that they are producing because it is absolutely not a



PHOTO COURTESY OF BALEIGH EPPERLY



PHOTO COURTESY OF SABRINA THOMAS

Epperly standing next to her sustainability art project on the second floor of Drinko Library.

consumer problem at all. It is definitely a production problem, in my opinion.”

The sustainability department has partnered with Sodexo General Manager, Mark Arnold, to work more on the plastic pledge that Marshall

President Jerome Gilbert signed in the spring semester of 2021.

Arnold said his job is to contact the food brands on campus to see where their efforts are with the plastic pledge. According to Arnold, Chick-Fil-A already has a paper product — but not necessarily a compostable paper product — to replace, while Steak and Shake is farther behind in their efforts to transition products.

“College campuses are — in my opinion — the best place to have these sorts of groundbreaking things happening because you have a large population, and you can affect businesses’ decisions,” Arnold said.

**Xena Bunton can be contacted at [Bunton2@marshall.edu](mailto:Bunton2@marshall.edu).**