

Breaking the Mold



PHOTO BY JORDYN SMITH

Senior biochemistry major Veronica Milligan works to create sample slides of the three molds to identify them under the microscope

By JORDYN SMITH AND VERONICA MILLIGAN

Much of the Blackburn community is aware of mold issues in Jewell Hall, the freshman living learning community dorm on campus. However, what many students, faculty and staff might not know is that there currently is fungal growth in Hudson, the academic building on campus that houses various faculty offices and classrooms.

According to professor of English Dr. Ren Draya, whose office is in the English and communications suite on the third floor of Hudson, mold growth in the building is not a new issue. Draya referenced emails dating back to 2008 in which she had reached out to the administration and requested a

solution to the long-term issue. “This is an old brick building,” said Draya. “It is in many ways a wonderful place. However, there are many serious problems because of its age and because of the fact that renovations and changes have been made. We’ve been complaining for a long time.”

Some faculty members have experienced symptoms consistent with an allergic reaction, including intense headaches. According to Draya, one professor often has to work in the library as opposed to her office. “Students are affected, anyone who has a class in Hudson which is probably everybody on campus, and certainly professors

who spend often hours in our offices. We’re all concerned,” said Draya.

Draya requested that physical plant open the transom in her office in hopes of improving air circulation. However, Draya believes that the problems might be more severe than what a few simple fixes can cover. “These are tiny bandages when what is needed is a major repair,” she said. “My gripe is not with physical plant or the student workers. It is simply the reality of a very old building that has served us wonderfully - but what’s up there?”

According to Campus Services Supervisor Torry Grady, there have been ongoing repairs to the windows and the HVAC system in Hudson. Earlier this semester, dehumidifiers were placed on the third floor. Grady blames much of the issue on this year’s particularly high moisture, precipitation and barometric pressure.

Regarding Jewell, Grady said that physical plant has been in contact with air quality specialists who have done air tests. “I haven’t seen any mold. Mildew is the biggest thing,” stated Grady, regarding Hudson. “Mold would be, of course, a problem. Mildew is still a problem, but mildew is not anything that’s going to be harmful to anybody which is why every so often we have these air quality tests and they’re scheduled whenever we recognize that there’s a problem in the building.” He added, “These buildings do get checked periodically just as part of the protocol, preventative maintenance type deal.”

We took cultures of spore growth noticed in various locations on the third floor of Hudson. One sample was collected from the air vent in

Director of Technology Services Jason Cloninger’s office, and we were able to grow and identify at least three types of mold: penicillin and two species of aspergillus (see Making the Mold, page 3). People who are allergic to penicillin may experience severe symptoms.

Grady did confirm mold growth in Cloninger’s office, which is also located on the third floor of Hudson. “I would be more prone to call that mold,” he said. Grady said that Cloninger’s office is the only area in Hudson that shows fungal growth, and links the issue to a hard rain that happened while repairs were being made to windows and lintels. “Basically what we can do right now is replace those ceiling tiles, clean the area, remove it all and hope and pray that it doesn’t get so humid outside that it creates that problem again.”

According to chair of biology Dr. James Bray, who also serves on the facilities and budget committees, “The aspergillus [is] probably not that big of a deal, but knowing that there’s penicillium [penicillin] there and that we have people that’s allergic, that something needs to happen, either dehumidifiers [or] something that would slow the growth or curve growth.”

Bray said, “Being in budget and on facilities I get to see this on both sides...and one of the biggest problems in Hudson was the company that came in and pulled all the window parts out when they were redoing the windows on the north side. This really started when they [the company that repaired the windows], for whatever reason, they

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Locker Room Break In

By GARY LOWDER

After Thanksgiving break, the Blackburn College women’s basketball team found that someone had broken into their locker room and stolen athletic gear. The team had been in Chicago on Friday, Nov. 18, and Saturday, Nov. 19, the week of the break-in, which means it occurred on Sunday, Nov. 20 or Monday, Nov. 21. This is unusual because both the men’s and women’s locker rooms are locked when not in use. Director of Campus Safety Morrie Fraser said, “We aren’t sure yet. Everything is really up in the air right now. We were unable to find anything that would indicate a forced entry. It is possible that the doors to the locker room weren’t locked but it’s also possible they were locked and there is a key floating around.” Blackburn staff with access to the locker room keys include those involved in

athletic training, some people in the athletics department, campus services and possibly security and campus maintenance departments.

The items stolen include basketball shoes, sports bras and jerseys. Fraser said, “It’s definitely possible with the price of sneakers that \$1,500 worth of items were stolen.” Freshman sports psychology major Alexia Duncan who is the team’s point guard said, “I had my basketball shoes stolen from me, they were around \$100. I think the whole situation is ridiculous because people work hard for their stuff and for someone to just come in and take it is just unbelievable.” Junior biology major Candace Pollock had a pair of \$200 Nike Hyperdunk shoes stolen and was similarly outraged. “The whole situation is absolute bull**it,” said Pollock. “The campus security is

overall garbage. We have no secure anything. We need to keep better track of keys if that’s the security we are going to use. The locks on the locker rooms at this point should be switched out because players should not be afraid to leave their equipment in their lockers.” Since Pollock made this statement Fraser confirmed that the locks have been changed.

Several of the women believe the college should try a bit harder to protect the player’s belongings. “Ensuring that your players have their equipment to play should be a prime concern,” Pollock said. “Athletic teams have been striving to make Blackburn look better, have better seasons, but that won’t happen when we have lack of equipment to play in. Not only that, but it sucks knowing someone on this campus would do something like that

to its own players.” Other players like freshman kinesiology major Lauryn Jackson are just disappointed that someone on campus would steal from the basketball team in the first place. “My mom is a two-time cancer survivor and is at a high risk of developing breast cancer so she constantly has a million things to worry about and now on top of it, she has to figure out how to get me new shoes and gear to play,” she said.

If you have any information that could help the basketball team track down their stolen equipment, or have a tip as to whom the culprit may be, please contact Fraser at morrison.fraser@blackburn.edu or head women’s basketball coach Katie Fonseca at katie.fonseca@blackburn.edu.

Mold

Continued from page 1

tore all those windows out, and then it stormed. Well you get water in the walls when that happens...I don't know that they did anything to remediate that before they fixed the windows, so now they fixed all the windows, well they basically just boarded it up in the building."

"Anytime you have any kind of climate issues like that or, you know, inner building control issues, that needs

to be addressed," Bray added. "And the bad thing about a lot of this stuff is if it gets in the duct work, it's a pain to get it cleaned out. Once you get it in the ventilation system, it's tough to get it cleaned out. It can be done, but it's tough to do."

"We have everything that we can have to battle this; really we're fighting time and the seasons, and 22 other buildings on campus that got

to be taken care of in the meantime," said Grady. "But it's not something that's been overlooked, [or] that hasn't been addressed; we know all of these problems...we wait for breaks, we wait for weekends, we wait for summer breaks, things like that and in the meantime we fight it the best we can with the product that we have until it comes back and then we do it again."

"If it's not Thanksgiving break, it'll be Christmas break. If it's not Christmas break, it'll be spring break, then summer break," said Grady. "When can we address Hudson by itself, you know, and take care of that? I wish I knew the answer to that."

Grady added, "And we're definitely not avoiding it. And unfortunately perception is reality, so what other people perceive as 'Boy, wow, I can't believe they haven't even done anything over here yet.' It's not necessarily that, it's just that we do have things that prioritize over this."

"Most of our problem over the summer was we had air units that were down so they weren't circulating air the way that they needed to," said Vice President of Administration and Finance Steve Morris. "We've resolved those issues since that time period. We still have some drywall repairs to do; some work to do in the stairwell, you can see that there's still some patching and repairs to do like that. I think that's planned for Christmas break."

Steps are being taken to address the issue in Jewell as well. Morris explained that a certified industrial hygienist took samples in Jewell and reported that some spore counts were lower than outside, but others were higher in some areas. The hygienist also reported that

the growth could potentially cause problems for people with allergies. Morris then explained that cleaning up Jewell was an expensive proposition that required a \$100,000 deductible.

Morris, who is also the chair of the facilities committee, said he was unaware of the current fungal growth in Hudson as well as any health issues related to it. "I have to admit I wasn't aware of us having that kind of activity there; I knew that we had mildew that popped up over the summertime based on the air conditioner being down but didn't realize we still had it in the environment."

He added, "My understanding was once the HVAC system was fixed that that cured a lot of the problems and once the water leaks from outside were fixed that cured a lot of the problems, but [what] we were focusing on fixing was drywall, and fixing the walls where the leak had come in inside."

"Honestly I wasn't aware of any healthy issues at all related to it. One of the first steps I would take would be to reach out to our consultant and ask her about this type of environment and what she recommends based on what we're telling her. I think that's a good place to start." Morris said he would be talking to the HVAC supervisor Kevin Wise, as well as the air quality specialist and potentially a worker's compensation insurer.

"I would say that anything [that] folks think is generating sickness needs to be a priority. Work environment's going to be important, just like the environment for students that are in a living environment. Both of those are important."



PHOTO BY JORDYN SMITH

A dehumidifier placed on the third floor of Hudson

Campus Services Faces Convocation Controversy



PHOTO COURTESY OF DANIELLE ANDERSON

Campus services worker and senior biology major Chad Harrison

By JESS WILLARD

For the past 11 years, Blackburn College has hosted a convocation on Veterans Day to honor those who have served and are serving in the U.S. military, but there is no Blackburn College Student Handbook policy that states students are required to attend this event. However, some campus services (C.S.) workers were told that they had to attend the ceremony this year or risk a write-up.

Senior biology major Chad Harrison stated, "Everyone on the 10

a.m. to 12 p.m. shift in C.S. was in fact required to attend and threatened by the supervisors with disciplinary action as it was incorporated into our 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. shift." He discussed his mixed feelings on the situation since it goes against his perception of freedom. Harrison clarified that he should be free to express his respect for veterans in his own way rather than being forced to go to an event he did not plan on attending. However, he did attend the event.

Sophomore communications major Sebastian Hitzelburger said he had also been told that C.S. workers on the 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. shift were required to attend the convocation. "I was told by one of the assistant managers that the workers were required to go to the Veterans Day convocation, or they were going to get a write-up," he said. Hitzelburger mentioned that C.S. assistant manager Jonna Hambrick had given him these instructions. He did not attend the convocation.

Hambrick stated that C.S. supervisor Torry Grady had told her that students were to receive write-ups if they did not attend. "They were told to come to the regular 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. shift. They were supposed to clean their buildings until 11 a.m. and then they would go over to the convocation with their crew heads," she said. "If they failed to go over to the convocation then it resulted in a write-up. The convocation was a 'free' hour for them. All they had to do was show up."

C.S. manager Christina Newton clarified Hambrick's statements. "A supervisor or someone had emailed Torry and asked us if all the people on the shift from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. would go because everything was let out for the convocation, so we wanted the

people who were on the shift to go, so they could receive the time for it," she said. She added that no one received a write-up.

Grady also stated that there were no write-ups issued to those who didn't wish to attend the convocation. He asked the crew on shift to spend an hour in their work areas, and then at 11 a.m., they could go over to the Veterans Day convocation. He added, "It was something that I was being nice giving them. Instead of spending two hours cleaning the buildings, they only had to spend one hour doing so. We were gonna pick up the slack on the following day or the following week." Grady also said that he did not realize any individuals had an issue with attending in the first place as he was never approached.

According to the website for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, there is no legal requirement that schools close on Veterans Day. "Most schools that do not close for Veterans Day schedule assemblies or other activities to honor America's veterans on Veterans Day and throughout the week that includes Veterans Day," it added.

Making the Mold

By Jordyn Smith and Veronica Milligan

After being made aware of the mold issue in Hudson and seeing it for ourselves, we collected and identified mold, a process that took several weeks. We took samples from the walls on third floor suites and offices. Director of Technology Services Jason Cloninger noticed the mold growth in his office in late August, but has experienced no negative health effects. He said, “I have talked to physical plant about it and they did say that they would get replacement tiles,” but these have been slow in coming. Cloninger did not seem distraught by the situation but did say, “It’s never good to see mold growing in your office.”



PHOTO BY JORDYN SMITH
In Dr. Mark Benedetti’s office, mold growth can be seen - most likely A. Niger from the dark color

Three species of mold were identified from an air vent in Cloninger’s office (Hudson 301): *Aspergillus niger*, *Aspergillus nidulans*, and *Penicillium notatum*. None of these commonly cause severe infections in humans. However, *A. niger* and *A. nidulans* can, on occasion, cause fungal ear infections. It should be noted though, that when we physically see these molds (like the picture of Hudson office 330) it is evidence that the mold is there and that it could be spreading, especially around air vents that could blow around the hyphae (the mode of vegetative growth). Those who are allergic to the medicine penicillin will also be allergic to the mold, *P. notatum*, that produces it. So in the vicinity of that mold, breathing in the spores will cause an allergic reaction characterized by red, itchy eyes, runny or stuffy nose, cough, dry skin and potentially a rash.

Procedure

- Collected samples from several places (hallway, offices, stairwell)
- Placed samples in a warmer at 37 degrees C
- Waited three days
- Used mold grown from 301 to reculture three new plates in an attempt to separate and identify colonies
- Three molds identifiable
- Created slides of each type to look at under microscope
- Veronica Milligan predicted *aspergillus niger* and



PHOTO BY VERONICA MILLIGAN
Each stalk shown is a different species. *Penicillium* is obvious because of its paintbrush like shape. *A. Nidulans* was more challenging to identify

penicillium and couldn’t identify the third

- With chair of biology Dr. James Bray’s help, confirmed *penicillium*, confirmed *Aspergillus niger*, and identified *Aspergillus nidulans*

The Federal Emergency Management Agency defines mildew as an early stage of mold, suggesting it is easier to clean up and eliminate. However, older mold that is still growing and spreading should signal concern about a larger issue.

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) reports that molds may not cause

problems for everyone, but some people inherently have mold allergies and people with immunocompromisation may react poorly to mold spores in the air. They also note that mold can cause respiratory issues in otherwise healthy people and lead to asthma symptoms for those with asthma.

The CDC provides suggestions for preventing and eliminating mold in an indoor area. Controlling mold can be done by maintaining indoor humidity levels and fixing leaky roofs, windows and pipes. If flooding occurs, thoroughly clean and dry the area that was affected.

Gimme a Break Housing

By Patrick Benedict

Attending a work college grants students an opportunity to work for the campus community not just during the school year but during break times as well. Working over winter, summer, and even Thanksgiving breaks can provide students with the much needed chance to earn additional money. However, the situation is made more stressful when students also have to move out of their dorm rooms for breaks. Generally, the workers who remain on campus for the various breaks are consolidated into one of the residence halls. During that time, the residence halls not being used are cleaned or undergo some form of maintenance. But many students wonder if this is really necessary.

The process and procedure for students moving around for break work varies depending on the break period. During the winter break students are allowed to keep many of their personal items in the room in which they normally reside during the semester. However, students who remain on campus to work over winter break are unable to access their regular room if they are moved to a consolidated dorm. This means that students have to make sure to take essential items with them. Students who go home for break also are unable to access their rooms until

the next semester, but what purpose does it serve to have break workers move out for a little less than a month only to move back in during the spring semester? Would allowing them to stay in their own rooms really be a big deal?

Furthermore students have to move into rooms that are ordinarily occupied by other students. Leaving for winter break means letting a stranger into their room for a month. Those students who do not work would have to either move all of their personal belongings out for winter break or trust that the break work student moving in would be respectful of their property.

During the recent Thanksgiving break that lasted less than a week, student workers that remained had to consolidate to a single residence hall. Students had to actively seek out a resident of that dorm hall, gather their signature and submit a form permitting them to stay in that room. For just less than a week, students had to move from their own personal space and invade someone else’s. Senior environmental biology major Mitch Elliot does not care for the whole procedure during the Thanksgiving and spring breaks. Elliot considers it “quite the headache - in my opinion - for one week out of the semester.” He believes that there may be



PHOTO BY VERONICA MILLIGAN
All three molds are visible here. Each one was recultured and grown separately to make identification easier

a better solution for the displacement. “I think it would be easier to simply have those few resident life members do rounds to each of the dorms and check up on residents as part of their rounds. Seems to be much less of a headache for everybody,” said Elliot.

Not all breaks are the same however. Elliot does not mind the displacement over summer break. “It’s basically its own semester,” commented Elliott.

Some of the reasons for

displacement are not quite so farfetched. In order for students to stay in a residence hall the college has to have them reasonably supervised by a Resident Assistant or Resident Director. During many of the breaks those students on the Residence Life staff do not all want to stay just to watch one or two students, so consolidation makes sense.

Nicole Lofton: Teacher and Lifelong Learner

By JORDYN SMITH

Although very soft spoken, Dr. Nicole Lofton has a lot of passion in her heart. The education professor knew she wanted to teach ever since she was in first grade because she enjoyed learning and playing school with her friends.

Born and raised in Chicago, Lofton attended a Catholic institution for both elementary and high school. She received her bachelor’s degree in elementary education at Roosevelt University in Chicago before attending National Louis University in Chicago to pursue her master’s degree in curriculum and instruction. She also attended Concordia University in River Forest, Illinois, to get her master’s degree in school leadership and Capella University, which is based in Minneapolis, to earn her doctorate in education with a specialization in K-12 studies. “I love learning,” said Lofton. “I mean, I still am learning constantly and I think effective teachers are lifelong learners.”

Lofton spent 15 years working in the Chicago Public School (CPS) system, first as a classroom teacher then as a reading specialist and a math specialist. She then worked at a charter school as a curriculum coordinator, then an assistant principal before she went back to CPS and worked in their central office for four years around teacher evaluation. She also worked for a year as a contractor with CPS in the office of early childhood.

Lofton also has prior experience teaching at other higher education institutions. She taught at Concordia University for seven years in the graduate teacher education department, helping students earn their master’s degrees in reading or curriculum and instruction. She also worked with undergraduates in the teacher education departments at Illinois State University and West Virginia State University.

Lofton said that she teaches college students because she wants to better prepare student teachers to work with children. “I think I do it mainly because I feel that it’s a way for me to have a strong impact in terms of educating K-12 children, so if I’m able to help their teachers to learn the appropriate skills and knowledge then they’ll be better prepared to help those students,” she said. “Also I feel that it’s just really hard for professors to give students everything that they need in order to be successful when they enter the classroom because there’s just so much that they need to know and be able to do. And because I realize it’s a problem I want to kind of help fix that issue.”

“One of the biggest things that I try to instill in the students that I work with is to be self-directed learners, because they can’t rely on their professors or their administrators to give them all the knowledge and experiences that they need to meet the needs of their students. So if they can learn to take advantage of the resources that are available for

them to learn on their own, then they’ll just be that much more successful,” she added. Lofton also has advice for current education students: “And with that comes the ability to self-assess, so to figure out where your strengths and weaknesses lie and then to be able to develop a plan in order to strengthen the areas in which you need to grow without waiting for someone to point that out to you.”

Lofton said that she has encountered both enjoyments and “challenges” so far in Carlinville. She likes that there is little traffic in the area and she also feels safe. However, one challenge she has faced is that some community members are not initially open-minded.

While she has also enjoyed her time thus far at Blackburn, Lofton hopes to have a lighter load in the future. She currently teaches educational psychology, elementary math methods, reading methods and professionalism in education. Next semester, she will be teaching the second part to elementary math methods, adolescent psychology,

language arts methods and diagnostic reading. Lofton sees herself changing various aspects of all the courses she will be teaching, including textbooks used and field experience systems. She adapts her lessons and syllabi to fit student needs and admits to over planning her own lesson plans but is always receptive to student feedback. “It’s been great, very busy,” she chuckled.

Lofton is married and has two kids of her own: a 16-year-old daughter named Kiersten who was homeschooled for seven years and now attends boarding school, and a 4-year-old son named Kaiden. Both children reside in Chicago with their father. Although she lives in Carlinville, Lofton makes weekly visits home.

Aside from her career Lofton enjoys reading, cooking, spending time with family and doing service-related projects. She volunteers at the Ronald McDonald House and writes letters to incarcerated youth. However, she does not have a lot of free time. A typical day for Lofton involves waking up at 2 or 3 a.m., grading students’ work and planning lessons until she has to leave for work. During the day she teaches classes and offers office hours at various times of the day before leaving at 4:30 p.m. She then heads home to eat, do laundry and continue grading and planning until she eventually falls asleep. “At one point, I was getting three hours of sleep a night, and sometimes not even consecutively,” she said. However, Lofton does not do work on Saturdays; she leaves those for spending time with family and tutoring elementary students in Chicago. She enjoys taking her children to museums, Six Flags and various restaurants.



Dr. Nicole Lofton in her “Professionalism in Education” class

PHOTO BY JORDYN SMITH



[Author’s Note]: Suicidal ideation is defined as thoughts about ending one’s life

Between Nov. 2 and Nov. 29, the Campus Community and Safety department and Residence Life handled a total of 21 incidents:

- Nov. 2: Suicidal ideation was reported in a residence hall.
- Nov. 3: There were two separate incidents reported: suicidal ideation and suspicion of marijuana use in a residence hall.
- Nov. 5: A report was made for suicidal ideation in a non-residential campus building.
- Nov. 6: A student injury/accident was reported at an off campus program.
- Nov. 10: Two separate incidents were reported: damage to property in a residence hall and a student health emergency in a non-residential campus building.
- Nov. 12: A car accident/medical emergency was reported off campus.
- Nov. 16: There were two separate incidents reported in a residence hall: suicidal ideation and theft from a residence hall room.

- Nov. 20: Aggravated assault (verbal and physical altercation) was reported in a non-residential campus building. A report to Clery was made.
- Nov. 21: There was a report made for property theft in a non-residential campus building.
- Nov. 22: Five incident reports were made in a residence hall: one for underage alcohol possession and four for fire safety violations. The alcohol possession was reported to Clery.
- Nov. 23: Property theft was reported in a non-residential campus building.
- Nov. 27: Two separate incidents were reported: property theft from a vehicle in a campus parking lot and suicidal ideation in a residence hall.
- Nov. 29: A medical emergency was reported in a non-residential campus building.

Spice it up this Holiday Season

By JORDYN SMITH

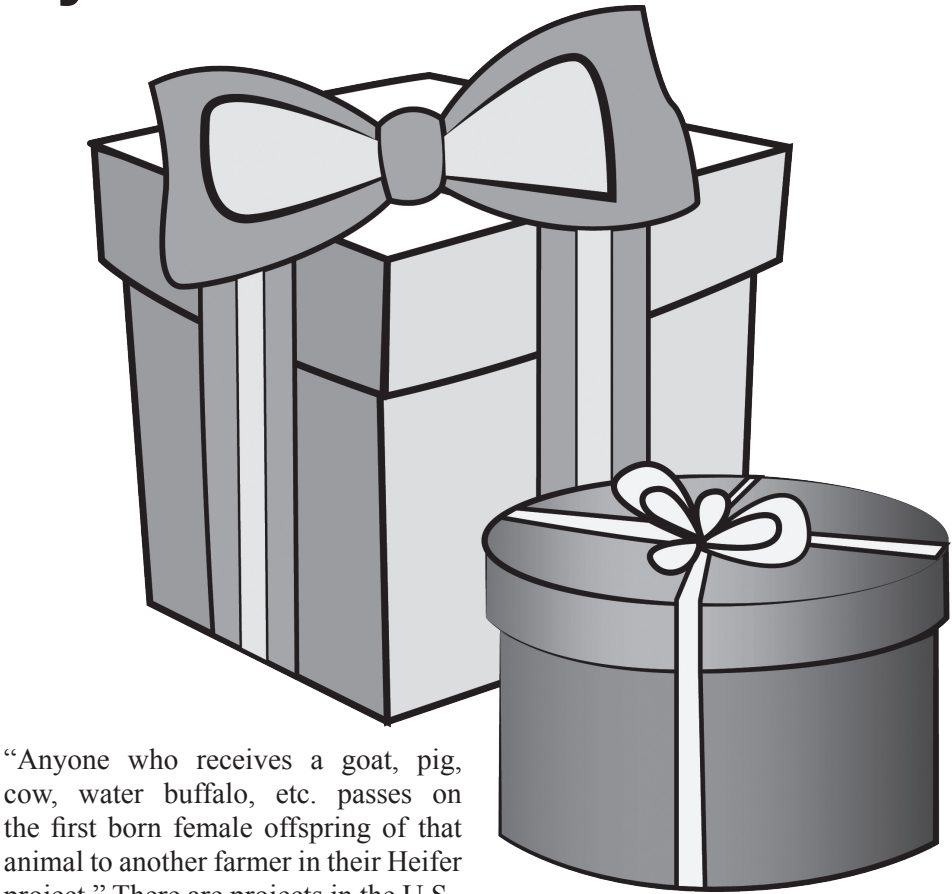
‘Tis the season for hot chocolate, mistletoe and holiday parties. If you are looking for a way to make a fun and memorable gift exchange this year at your family or work function, read on.

Re-gift: One gift exchange idea is “white elephant.” According to sassysanta.com, “white elephant” refers to a gift that can’t be easily disposed of. It is based on the legend of the King of Siam (now Thailand) who allegedly gave albino elephants as gifts. Participating members either buy a gift or re-gift an unusable or unwanted item within a certain price value and wrap it up so that it is difficult to guess what the gift is. Participants then draw names to determine the order in which members choose their gift. The first recipient chooses a gift to unwrap then the next person has the choice of either keeping the unwrapped gift or choosing another gift to unwrap, and so on. After a gift is stolen a third time, it is considered “safe” and cannot be stolen anymore. Members can even steal their own gift. Junior biology major Casey Dolen and her family do a white elephant gift exchange every year. “At my family’s Christmas, I wrapped up a big heavy box that was real fancy looking. Everyone was fighting over it and when it finally got opened, it was just a

bunch of cans of various soups.” Senior elementary education major Erin Huff once received a singing, bubble bath-taking Santa Claus.

Spend a few: Secret Santa is an exchange in which an individual draws a name and buys a gift for that person. One way to make this event more interesting is to leave clues for the recipient to guess who his or her “secret Santa” is. One way to ensure recipients receive the gift they desire is to make a Facebook page for the event and have all participating members post a comment detailing their interests.

Donate: While many Americans are familiar with the traditional Secret Santa exchange, there are other alternatives to gift giving this holiday season. If you are looking to give but don’t want a gift in return, then consider donating to a charity. One charitable option is Heifer International. This organization is primarily known for its gifts of livestock to farmers all over the world. The charity also provides training for better farming practices with the goal of creating sustainable family farms. According to Blackburn alumna Barb Oakes, who has been a volunteer educator for 14 years, Heifer’s special trademark is to “Pass on the Gift.” Oakes elaborated,



GRAPHIC BY LUIZA MYSLINSKA

“Anyone who receives a goat, pig, cow, water buffalo, etc. passes on the first born female offspring of that animal to another farmer in their Heifer project.” There are projects in the U.S., including Illinois. The closest project to Blackburn is an agro-ecology program in Pekin, Illinois, called Heritage Farmers Market. The program helps younger farming couples who lack money and resources to succeed. For more detailed information about Heifer International or to view the gift catalog, visit www.heifer.org.

D.I.P Shticks

By MICHAEL TROUTT

Before going into “finals mode” and bombarding your mind and body with stress, consider these actions and their risks if you fail to do them during Double Instruction Period:

1. Get some sleep. Pulling an ‘all-nighter’ is a bad idea. According to the National Institutes of Health (NIH), staying awake for 24 hours impairs performance to the equivalent of having a blood alcohol concentration of 0.10 percent. This is equivalent to having two to three beers in an hour, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, and is characterized by a slower reaction time, difficulty concentrating and lower proficiency

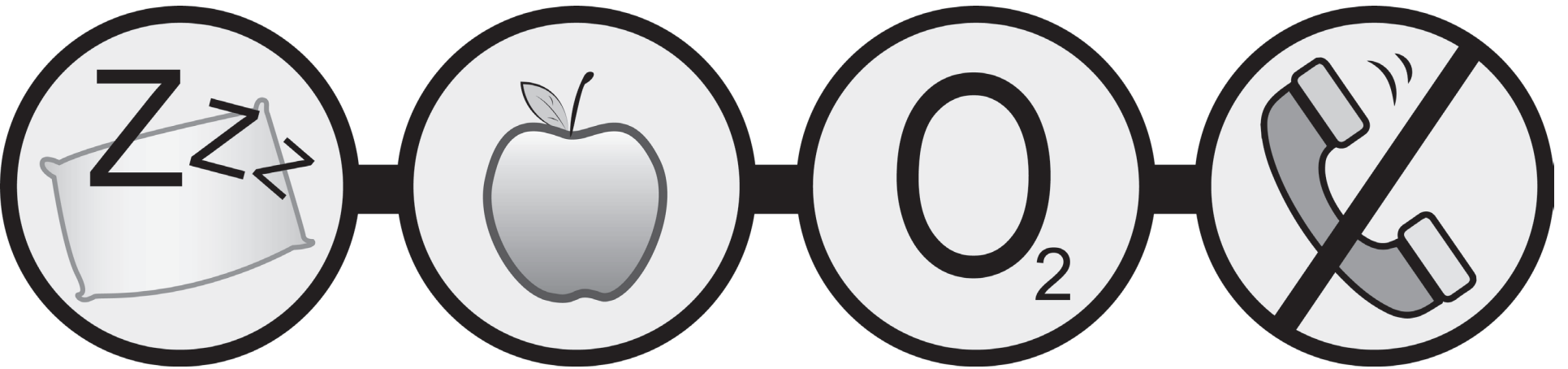
at performing tasks. Sophomore computer science major, Braydon Rekart, commented that after staying up all night “doing math or anything except simple reading becomes more and more of a chore.”

2. Eat healthy. Instead of opting for a candy bar or snack cake, try to eat plenty of fresh produce from your local supermarket. A 2015 study conducted at Oregon State University suggests that a poor diet affects short-term and long-term memory. Diets high in fat and sugar disrupt the community of bacteria in the digestive system that have been correlated with a decrease in cognitive performance.

3. Remain active. Sitting down for long periods of time is harmful to your health and learning. A body that is inactive burns about one calorie per minute, according to the Mayo Clinic. Aside from the increased risk for weight gain, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, depression and chronic back pain, brain function suffers as well. Your brain needs oxygen to function properly, and when you sit for hours, blood flow slows and so does the amount of oxygen to the brain. Blackburn physical education professor Tena Krause agreed and stated that physical activity helps students with “being more alert,” so they can perform “better in classes,

academically.” According to a 2015 study from Texas A&M University, students that used standing desks as opposed to sitting desks performed better academically.

4. Silence your cell phone. According to a study at Kent State University, cellphone use has a negative impact on student grade point averages. In another study conducted by Dr. Chris Bjornsen, a psychology professor at Longwood University in Virginia, suggested that cell phone use during class is correlated with lower test scores.



GRAPHIC BY LUIZA MYSLINSKA

Features

The Shadow of St. Nick

By PATRICK BENEDICT

Christmas is usually associated with warmth and cheer in the U.S. but in some regions of the world there are far darker undertones to the holiday. Many of these more frightening Christmas traditions center on the legend of the creature known as Krampus. In many American descriptions of Santa Claus or St. Nicholas, it is said that good children will receive gifts while bad children get lumps of coal. According to several passages in the book “Mountain Magic: Celtic Shamanism in the Austrian Alps,” author Christian Brunner explains how the legends involving Krampus state that St. Nicholas only deals with nice children and leaves the naughty ones for Krampus. Krampus is generally depicted as a large creature mixed between a goat and man with fangs and a drooping tongue that carries chains adorned with bells and a bundle of birch branches used to beat children. There are even some

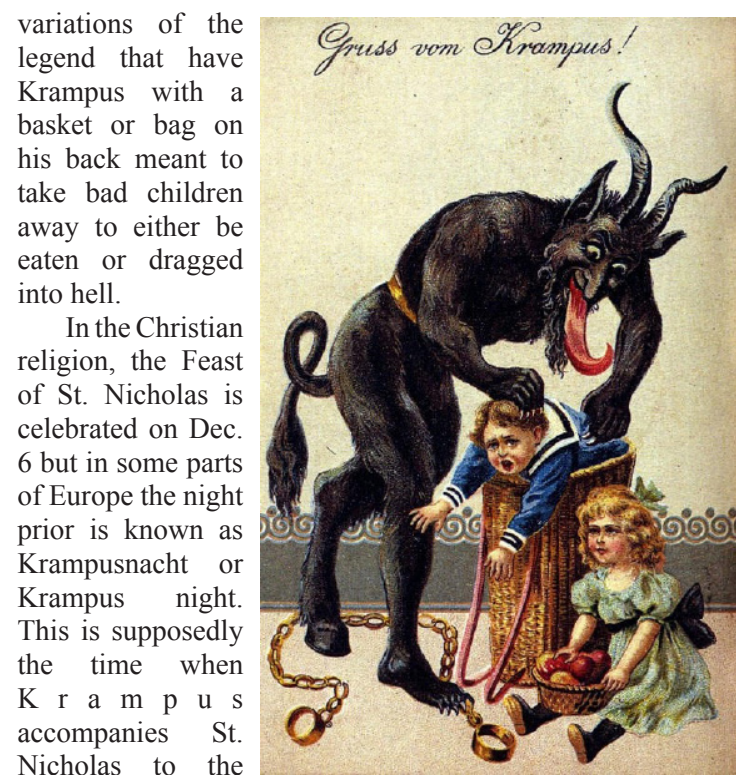


PHOTO COURTESY OF WIKIMEDIA COMMONS
A greeting card from the 1900s featuring Krampus. The card reads, “Greetings from Krampus!”

homes of children and frightens them into behaving.

The Krampus legend has been caricatured since its early origins. Some versions depict the figure as more comical than ferocious. There were even greeting cards in some regions of Europe featuring Krampus known as Krampuskarten. Krampuskarten is still a popular tradition today in parts of Europe with people still making and sending cards featuring Krampus with a hearty greeting from the beast himself.

One of the most prominent celebrations of the Krampus legend is the annual Krampuslauf (Krampus run) parades held in various villages in Eastern Europe. Young men dress in elaborate Krampus costumes and display them in the streets of their villages. These displays look more like Halloween parades than a celebration of the Christmas season. Some of the parades also include the Krampus entourage of “wild men,” which are essentially the equivalent to Santa Claus’ elves. They are meant to assist Krampus in punishing and capturing of children. These Krampus runs have also made an impact in the U.S. with several celebrations cropping up in Chicago, Los Angeles and San Francisco.

Traditional TV on the Way Out

By PATRICK BENEDICT

In the hustle and bustle of the digital age the practicality of live television is diminishing as it is much easier to watch something on your own time. With popular streaming services such as Hulu, Netflix and YouTube the cases of linear TV viewing (watching programs when they air on their networks) are becoming less and less common. With thousands of movies, TV shows and unique content available online for a considerably cheaper price, there is not really much reason for financially struggling young people to pay for traditional TV packages.

According to a 2015 Pew Research Center study “15% of American adults are now ‘cord cutters’ – that is, they indicate that they once had a cable or satellite TV connection, but no longer subscribe.” Adults are slowly moving away from watching TV in the traditional sense. The immediate access of online streaming services is a likely reason audiences find Netflix, Hulu and other services so desirable. The ability for viewers to watch something without having to wait for a particular day and time is appealing as it allows them to view a program at their own pace, otherwise known as timeshifting.

Newwave Communications’ basic cable package costs a Carlinville resident \$75.99 a month before tax. With the cost of having basic Netflix, Hulu and YouTube packages totalling to \$16 a month, the decision between cable or streaming is a no brainer for many consumers. The cost of TV packages are not even a factor for some. For example, all residence halls at Blackburn are given hookups to cable TV in each room, but, despite this service being included in the housing fees, many students still turn to internet based media. Senior biology major Nathan Boulch stated, “I use YouTube and Netflix, as well as

the occasional Amazon Prime for my ‘TV’ purposes. The only exceptions being when the internet is down or new episodes of ‘The Walking Dead’.” Even when TV is an available option, it is only something people get interested in if there is a particular show that is popular such as HBO’s immensely popular program “Game of Thrones.” Some students also use the cable available in the residence halls and several common areas on campus to watch live sporting events. However, with the growing number of students from around the country and the world, the local sports teams broadcasted in the area are not as appealing as tracking scores electronically. There are even streaming services that specialize in sporting events that are growing in popularity (NFL games on Twitter, for example). With those exceptions there is not much else that draws audiences to traditional cable and satellite TV services.

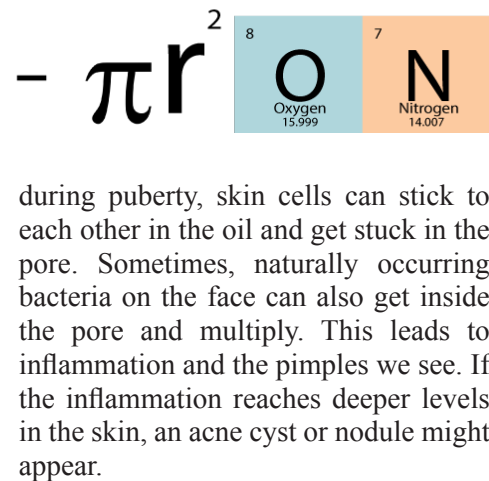
In particular, YouTube is still growing in popularity and is often used as a substitute for traditional TV. Audiences may be turning to this alternative due to how videos have become more syndicated and similar to a television series. Game Grumps, the YouTube “let’s players” (YouTube channels that show videos of video gameplay with audio commentary), structure their episodes in 15 minute blocks with commentary reminiscent of morning radio talk shows. By producing episodes that are short, channels such as Game Grumps are able to put out one to three videos a day. This simulates the draw of traditional television where audiences have to wait until the next episode to continue the narrative of their show but shortens the length of time that a viewer has to wait before that episode is released.

Science with

By VERONICA MILLIGAN

Acne is the most common skin condition in the U.S. Teenagers going through puberty suffer from this condition more than others, but the American Academy of Dermatology (AAD) reports that the number of adults with acne is growing, especially women. While the AAD does not know why they are seeing this trend, having accurate information about acne and separating facts from myths can aid in preventing and treating the condition for people of all ages.

So how does acne work? Our faces are covered in hair follicles called pores that produce the oil sebum. Typically, dead skin cells rise to the surface of the pore and are shed. When excess sebum is being produced, a common occurrence



during puberty, skin cells can stick to each other in the oil and get stuck in the pore. Sometimes, naturally occurring bacteria on the face can also get inside the pore and multiply. This leads to inflammation and the pimples we see. If the inflammation reaches deeper levels in the skin, an acne cyst or nodule might appear.

Now we know how acne is formed, so let’s address some common myths associated with acne. People often think that dirty skin or wearing makeup can cause acne. Others say that eating greasy foods and chocolate can cause acne. A popular idea is that stress leads to acne breakouts. None of this is true.

Sophomore criminal justice major Austin VanAusdall remarked that he



By DUSTY GLASS

Students at Blackburn College are offered a wide variety of major options ranging from biology to creative writing. According to the 2016-2017 course catalog there are 52 majors and 34 minors available. This starkly contrasts with the minimal number of course offerings available when Blackburn began.

The 1864-65 academic year offered two learning plans for entering students according to its course catalog: the English and Scientific course and the English and Classical course. These courses resembled their modern day counterparts but the scale of the course was incredibly broad compared to today. These two programs shared many classes such as Higher Arithmetic and Analytical Grammar in a three term rotation. They were rigid, with no electives or alternatives available, and

were presented to the student during registration. This approach carried on for years with only minor changes including additional language classes such as German, Latin and Greek.

In the course catalogs for the 1870s a new major was accepted into Blackburn’s curriculum: the Philosophical course. This course featured classes in logic and psychology as well as additional history classes. This, as well as a change in the administration of the college, set off a new pattern of expansion for the college, as they were able to add another degree: the Bachelor of Arts. Along with classical and science courses the curriculum began to look more contemporary, where students have options according to their interests. Students could pick their favorites out of several options for courses like language and the ability to earn degrees for teaching.

Features

Answers about Acne

was not surprised that these things were actually myths. VanAusdall said, “I think it makes sense because if [the cause] was stress, I feel like more college students, especially freshmen who are under all the new stress, would have more breakouts than what I see.”

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) gives some helpful tips for preventing acne. Washing your hands, face and hair often can prevent extra sebum from being on your face and reduce the chance of acne. Do this once a day, especially after exercising. Avoid over scrubbing the face because this could actually make the problem worse. Choosing oil-free makeup lessens the chance of excess oil on the face.

If acne persists or becomes severe,

there are several treatments available. Doctors, particularly dermatologists, can help diagnose the severity of acne and prescribe specific treatments. The AAD suggests using products containing benzoyl peroxide or salicylic acid for mild cases and warns that no product is an overnight treatment. They report that results should be visible within four to eight weeks. Severe acne can be treated with oral or topical medicines and with procedures like laser removal and chemical peels.

The key to helping persistent acne is to prevent and treat it early. Seeing a dermatologist, even for mild acne, could give you an idea of your skin condition and the best path for treatment.

:Major Evolution

The 1900s marked the beginning of official general education courses that all students were required to take. This allowed the courses the college taught to become better categorized and streamlined. These refined courses gave the students options that resemble contemporary majors in a more broad sense of the word, such as majoring in science or the humanities as a whole. The next two decades further refined these categories until in the 1920s the catalog first referred to the different areas of study as “majors.”

During the 1920s and 1930s, Blackburn stopped expanding on its courses and began to expand each major with more specific classes, beginning to add new majors to the program. Category names were switched around with Classical Studies replaced by the Humanities for example. This pattern

carries on to today where the school is constantly growing and updating departments in order to encourage both student success and college growth.

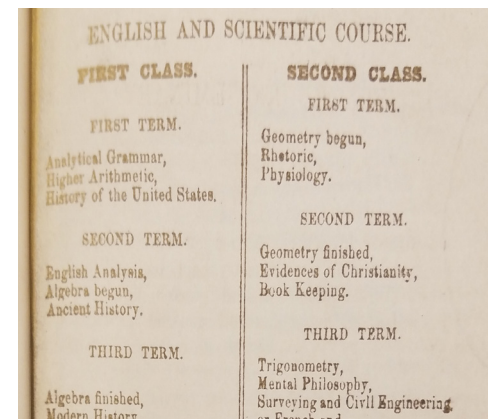


PHOTO BY DUSTIN GLASS
The first time Blackburn offered majors in its catalog



Family, Tarzan and Tattoos

By GARY LOWDER



PHOTO BY GARY LOWDER

Katrina Jahn's tattoo is placed on her left shoulder

There are few relationships that shape our lives more than those with our parents. Junior English major Katrina Jahn chose to immortalize the special bond she shares with her father by getting a treble clef accompanied with the words “You’ll be in my heart.” These lyrics are from the 1999 song of the same name by Phil Collins and was featured in Disney’s “Tarzan.” “I love that song so much, that is the song we are going to dance to at my wedding someday,” said Jahn, “It really represents the close bond that I share with my dad.”

“‘Tarzan’ is my favorite Disney movie because I really like the music in it. My dad used to watch it with me when I was younger. That song was written specifically for a mother and son, and it really perfectly reflects a parent child relationship,” said Jahn. She got her tattoo on her 18th birthday three years ago at Daddyo’s Tattoo & Body Piercing in Centralia, Illinois. “I was a little worried, but I talked to people that had gotten tattoos in the same area and how they had felt. They really helped calm my nerves a little bit,” said Jahn, “I think I went in with a very appropriate

amount of anxiousness and it didn’t end up being that bad.”

Music plays a big role in Jahn’s life. “My parents were both very musical people. They played instruments and sang a lot. I would have to go to choir practices with them when I was young,” she said. “All of my older siblings were in choir and band, so I grew up playing the flute. Music reminds me of my family, which makes me happy.”

Currently Jahn only has one tattoo but plans on getting more. “I keep an entire Pinterest board full of tattoo ideas,” she laughed. “I have lot of different ideas and, being an art minor, I really like the idea of artwork tattooed on me forever. I think it’s a really nice expression.” Other lyrics Jahn plans on getting tattooed onto her are from Doris Day’s 1956 song “Que Sera, Sera” (Whatever Will Be, Will Be). Jahn said, “It might sound cheesy, but it’s not to me because to me whatever will be will be is a phrase that has really helped me with anxiety and it helps remind me to just let things be.”

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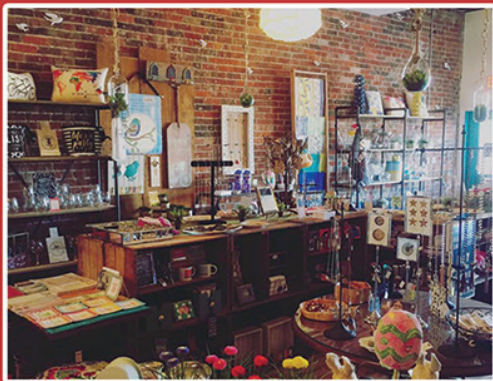
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By CALEB LONG

People like hip hop because it is full of energy; it is exciting and pumps listeners up. People also like hip hop because it’s honest. Artists like Kendrick Lamar and Tyler, The Creator are praised for rapping about the world around them and the true nature of things from their perspective. People would not think hip hop is known for being nerdy, and rappers would probably shun the term if it was

ever applied to them. However, one rapper embraces the term and is a self proclaimed “blerd,” otherwise known as a black nerd.

Childish Gambino is the stage name of musician and actor Donald Glover. Glover chose the name Childish Gambino after putting his name into an online Wu-Tang Clan name generator. Glover has been involved with music since 2008 when he released his

first mixtape “Sick Boi.” Since then, Glover has released three full length albums: “Camp” (2011), “Because The Internet” (2013) and his latest record “Awaken, My Love!” (2016). Glover is a man of many talents. Outside of music, he has an impressive resume, having co-written on the television show “30 Rock” as well as writing and acting on “Community.” Glover was also one of the key members of the comedy troupe Derrick Comedy.

I cannot honestly say that I am much of a hip hop head, but I can say that Childish Gambino is one of the best rappers that I have ever heard, having learned about him in high school. His music is honest and self-reflective while being catchy and powerful. In tracks like “3005” or “Sweatpants,” from 2013’s “Because The Internet,” Glover shows off his incredible flow and well crafted lyrics. He talks about what it is like to be a “blerd” in the modern world. In 2013’s “Because The

Internet,” Glover comments on how the internet has changed our lives and how it has affected him.

As Childish Gambino, Glover is known primarily as a rapper, but he has since progressed to tackling R&B, Funk and Soul. Glover has a great set of pipes. His 2014 EP “Kauai” featured him showing off his vocal prowess rather than his thoughtful rhymes. On “Sober” from 2014’s “Kauai,” Glover sings with attitude comparable to Michael Jackson. Glover is also influenced by bands like Parliament and Funkadelic, with Glover doing some of his best impressions of George Clinton on 2016’s “Awaken, My Love!”

Childish Gambino is not your typical musician. His wide range of skills help him craft top notch songs that are highly danceable and as bombastic as hip hop can get.

Talk Nerdy to Me : Tetris

By PATRICK BENEDICT

In 1984, video game history was made with the creation of Alexey Pajitnov’s classic hit “Tetris.” Although simplistic in its design, the game was highly addictive in its execution. The game has been adapted into numerous versions ever since it was first released from the former USSR and is available for play on nearly every gaming console today. While each version has some unique spin, the basic way to play remains the same. Players begin the game with a large open space and a single shape that slowly falls from the top of the screen. This shape is known as a tetromino and are collections of four smaller blocks into a particular shape. There are seven different tetrominoes that can fall from the top of the screen. The player’s job is to rack up as many

points as possible by arranging these different tetrominoes into complete horizontal lines of 10 blocks. This can be accomplished with the press of a button to turn the tetromino 90 degrees. Once a line is completed it will disappear and the player will score points. All the blocks that sat on top of the disappeared line then move down a block. As the game progresses, the blocks will begin to fall faster the more lines the player makes disappear. This can be treacherous because the game will end if no more tetrominoes will fit in the play space.

This means that “Tetris” is one of the few games that cannot be won. A skilled player can only keep a game going so long before the increasing speed of the tetrominoes and the

shrinking space forces them to lose. However, some players can go for a very long time.

While winning is impossible, the real mark of mastery is the score achieved. In some versions, players can speed up how quickly their tetrominoes fall which adds to their score. Some versions also include the ability to “hold” the next tetromino for later use. This adds an element of strategy to the game that truly pushes the player’s brain to the limit.

Senior exchange student Giovanna Navarro says that she enjoys the game “because you probe your abilities in fast thinking. It’s not like in chess when you only have to memorize plays. It helps you to improve your skills to solve problems quickly in real life.”

While several versions exist on many gaming consoles, free versions can be played via most mobile phone app stores and in any internet browser. Having played “Tetris” myself for many years I still find the experience extremely enjoyable after all this time. I once spent at least two hours just playing one single game without losing. As a gamer, it was one of the greatest achievements of my life. The best part of the game is that practically anyone can play and enjoy it. Whatever the reason that people enjoy the game, there is no doubt that - because it is so accessible on so many consoles - “Tetris” is a fast and easy way to pass the time.

Nifflers, Bowtruckles and Occamies, Oh My!

By VERONICA MILLIGAN

J. K. Rowling demonstrates her original and creative writing abilities yet again with a captivating plot and unpredictable creatures in the film “Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them,” which is sure to please Potterheads. The familiar Warner Brothers logo appears at the beginning and a few bars of “Hedwig’s Theme” can be heard. Nostalgia hits immediately but is soon forgotten as this exciting movie unfolds.

Danger and thrills are around every corner as Newt Scamander (Eddie Redmayne) attempts to re-collect magical creatures that have escaped from his mysterious suitcase. With the help of Tina (Katherine Waterson) and no-maj (the American term for muggles) Jacob (Dan Fogler), Newt finds New York more interesting than he anticipated. However, a lurking dark presence may put him in danger and expose the magical community.

Magic came to life as the cast apparated (using magic to move from one place to another) from scene to scene and cast spells. The effects and setting were so well done they might have once existed. Love was also in the air for Jacob, Newt’s no-maj friend, and Queenie, Tina’s sister, (Alison Sudol) who were secondary characters. Having a strong love connection between anyone but the lead characters is a great way to break from tradition, but keep that element. Sudol and Folger made a funny and sweet on-screen couple.

Despite the rumors, Rowling stood by her statement that the movie series would not be a prequel and it had almost nothing to do with the Harry Potter series. The sole links are Newt Scamander, Dumbledore, and Grindelwald. Their names and legacies are all known in Harry Potter, but their appearance in the film is purely

nominal.

There were a few hiccups though. The ending left me full of questions, some that not even the most dedicated Harry Potter fan could accurately answer. With four more Fantastic Beast movies to appear, I hope answers will be given later.

Another issue was with the mob style goblin that hardly resembled a goblin at all. In the Harry Potter movies we see goblins at Gringotts, the wizarding bank. This goblin, in Fantastic Beasts, looked incredibly human and that was bothersome because it seemed inconsistent with goblin traits in both the Harry Potter books and movies. Perhaps he wasn’t a goblin at all, but if not, that should have been made clear.

The movie was really intense, even scary at times, and deserved its PG-13 rating. The scenes involving the obscurus, a dark force of sorts,

were almost like scenes of classic possession from horror films. This was, firstly, unexpected as none of the Harry Potter movies reached this level of intensity despite their PG-13 rating. Secondly, it was historically accurate in a way because it makes one realize that that kind of magic is exactly what no-maj’s of the time feared. Colin Farrell’s brooding character Mr. Graves contributed to the dark atmosphere and all makes sense when it’s revealed he is actually Gellert Grindelwald (Johnny Depp), a dark wizard who came before Voldemort.

The further development of the wizarding world is a new adventure for Potter fans and this movie is just the beginning. The movie was thrilling and exciting every second, there wasn’t a dull moment.

The Easy Way Out

By JORDAN WOOD

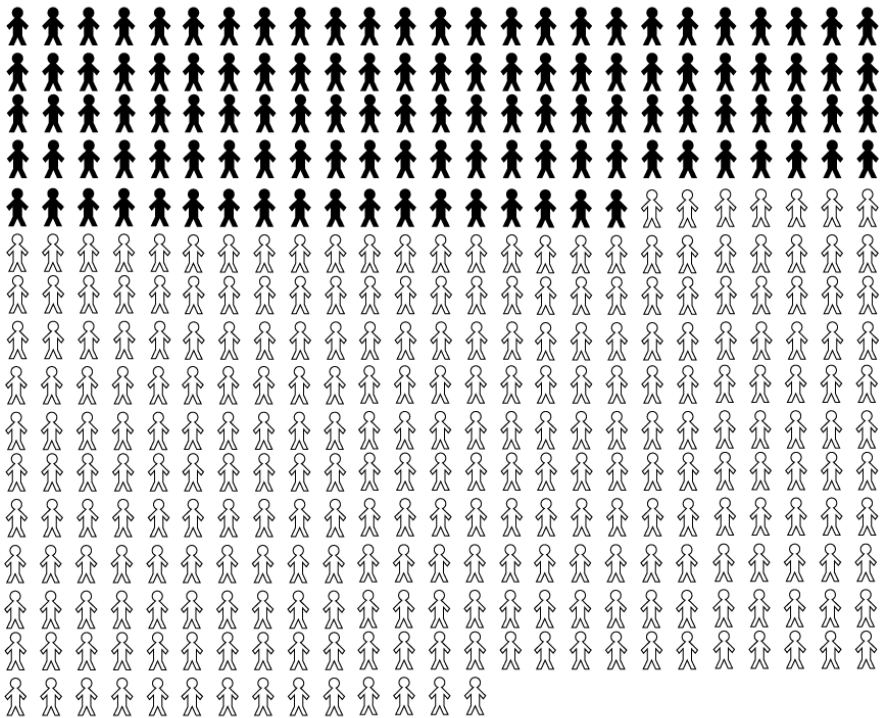
There is hardly anything that angers me more than a cheater. I cannot wrap my head around the idea that someone can go out of their way to do something so morally wrong and disrespectful, especially when it involves something near and dear to my heart – sports. There is no hiding the fact that the use of performance enhancing drugs (PEDs) have been a major problem in the sports world and have seemed to become an even bigger problem in the last few years.

Names like Barry Bonds, Alex Rodriguez, Lance Armstrong and Arnold Schwarzenegger are a few athletes who come to mind. What bothers me the most about them, and others who have used PEDs, is that they have an amazing opportunity to be a role model with the amount of attention on them. Instead, they try

taking the easy way out and ruin a great opportunity because of the stupid decision to put something harmful into their body. They not only risk destroying their reputation, but their career as well.

Adding to my frustration around this issue is that it is no longer confined to the world of professional sports. It now also impacts collegiate sports. I believe this problem is occurring because of the lack of severe consequences in the professional field.

The St. Louis Intercollegiate Athletic Conference Commissioner Angie Morenz explained the possible consequences if a Division III athlete is caught using PEDs. “If a DIII student-athlete has a positive drug test in a category other than ‘street drugs’ [they’re] rendered ineligible for the remainder of the season and post-



GRAPHIC BY JOHN HUMMER

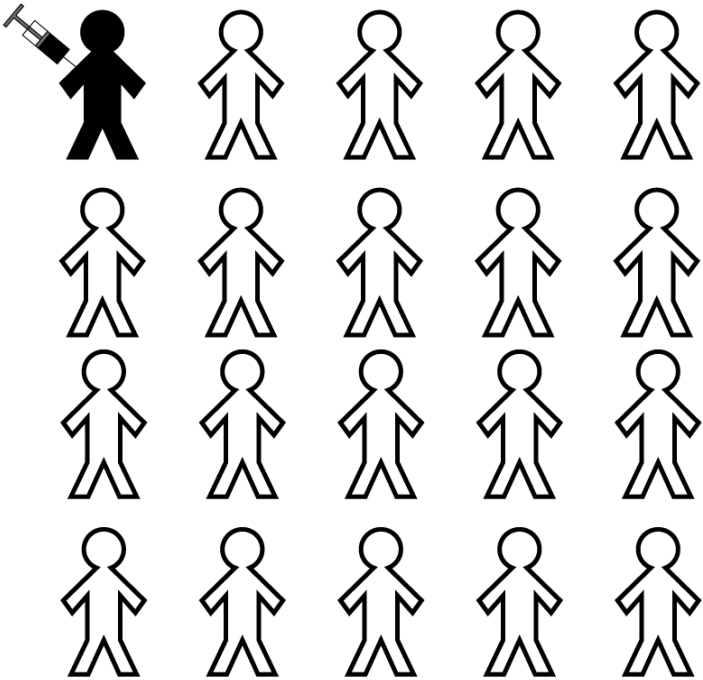
118 of Russia’s 389 members for the 2016 Olympics were banned from competition in doping scandal

season...[and] be charged a season of ...If there were a second offense of a positive drug test in a category other than “street drugs” the student-athlete would lose all eligibility.”

Morenz believes “the penalties are just right. A student-athlete’s decision has impact so they receive discipline for breaking the rules but have a chance to do the right thing, learn from mistakes, and remain an athlete if they choose. If they continue to break the rules then their opportunity to play is revoked. Collegiate athletics is a privilege, not a right.”

I completely agree with Morenz about the consequences of using PEDs as a college athlete but professional athletes must face stricter penalties. In some cases there have been severe actions taken. Alex Rodriguez faced the longest suspension in Major League Baseball history and Lance Armstrong

was banned for life and stripped of his titles and sponsorships. I think that college is the place where most people and athletes really grow up because we have no other option because for the first time in our lives, we are responsible for ourselves. At the professional level however, athletes should be aware that their choices have consequences. Cheating is cheating and there is no room for that in sports. If you cheat, especially through the use of PEDs, you should automatically be ineligible to participate for the remainder of the season. After the season is over you may be reinstated but if you are caught a second time, I believe you should be banned for life. We must take a stand and show the younger generations that cheating is not acceptable and there will be consequences just like in any other part of life.



GRAPHIC BY JOHN HUMMER

1 in 20 teenagers admit to using steroids to build muscle

Forget Freshman Advising

By VERONICA MILLIGAN

Our current freshman advising system is in its second year of operation. Previously, students were assigned advisors based on their major or interests. The new system has twenty-one advisors who work with six to twelve students each. These advisors do not necessarily correlate with the student’s major or interests. The goal is to have an added connection for incoming freshman; another point, another face for them to recognize and feel comfortable with. It is thought that the more connections a student has - especially a freshman - the more they will feel at home at Blackburn College, and the more likely that they will be successful.

Vice President and Dean of Student Affairs, Heidi Heinz gave several reasons for beginning this system including the opportunity for more student-advisor interaction,

to help incoming students adjust to college life, to create an intrusive advising opportunity and to allow for more engagement opportunities for the student. Despite these reasons, I do not see why the major advisors cannot go through training for intrusive advising or why Blackburn cannot provide more opportunity for student-major advisor engagement.

As a freshman, I was assigned an advisor in the biology department because I was a biology major. Those in the department knew best what path I should take based on my interests and academic history. They understood what classes I would be most prepared for because they taught them. Now we have advisors who may not be able to do that as well. Despite their training, they have not taught these classes and may not understand which students would be best prepared to succeed or fail in

them. Sophomore pre-med biology major Jakob Thornton went through the advising system and had an advisor who was not from his major. Thornton said he would have preferred a major advisor and that his relationship with his advisor was indifferent.

It is not just that. Imagine if you were assigned a student for just under a year. What kind of connection and relationship is that? You make an effort to support them and guide them and then they are assigned a new advisor by their major. How does this benefit the student? It does not. They lose a year of time that could have been spent with a major advisor and, if they happened to not take the best courses for the first year, they have to sort out scheduling conflicts with an advisor with whom they have not established a relationship. There is more benefit from an immediate connection with a

major advisor.

This one year timeline could also lead to apathetic parties on both sides. Both advisors and advisees may not want to make a real effort into a relationship because it is only meant to last a year. What is the point? I just cannot see a great system developing from this. I believe students should be assigned to a major advisor right away. If we are looking for more connections for freshman we need to find them more opportunities to connect with older students. Make orientation leaders a more permanent position, have dinners or events dedicated to a major where freshman, seniors, professors and alumni are invited. Maybe ask the students what would make them feel connected before they leave the school and not after.

Making the most of your winter break

Once final exams are taken and college friends say so-long, many students will head back to their hometowns for winter break. However, the grind does not have to end there and nor should it. Winter break is a great opportunity to be productive. Many students struggle to take on new projects during the semester due to the never ending deadlines of papers, projects, examinations and labs.

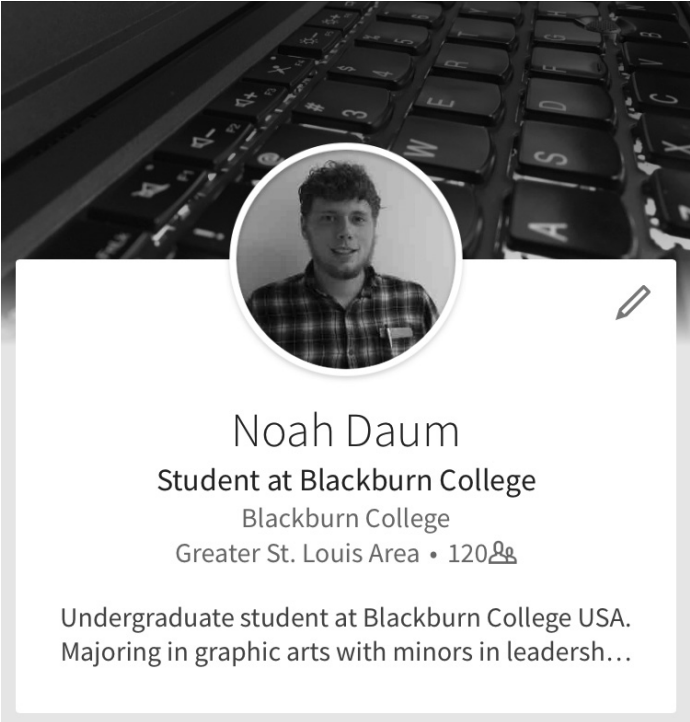
1. Give your résumé a makeover
You have spent the last semester doing all sorts of assignments, participating in the work program, studying new aspects about your major and the list goes on and on. Winter break can be an opportunity to evaluate this newly-acquired knowledge and add it to your résumé.

2. Apply for summer internships and research projects
A lot of companies will open up summer internship opportunities around winter time to give students some time to apply. Polish your LinkedIn profile, search around and apply. Websites such as internships.com and indeed.com will list opportunities by specific job as well as region.
Alternatively, use this time to apply

for research projects. Blackburn itself has opportunities including the Mueller Summer Fellowship, which gives Blackburn humanities division and history majors the chance to receive funding for self-enrichment projects.

3. Take up the hobby you have been putting off
Think about what you have been really wanting to do while spending time at school. Nothing beats getting into something new and interesting, and winter break is your chance to do just that. It could be something that develops you professionally such as designing a website, reading or even learning something out of left field (such as lock-picking). Alternatively it could be something that makes you personally happy like playing video games, cooking/learning new recipes, running/working out or starting a blog. Do not wait until new years to start those resolutions. Get an early start while you have the time to do so.

4. Catch up with high school teachers or coaches
Ever wonder how the people you looked up to (or didn’t) in high school are doing? It is pretty easy to find out; just go visit them. A lot of high



Screenshot from the LinkedIn App

schools have email systems similar to Blackburn. Contact to meet up with them and catch up on everything. They will appreciate knowing the impact they had on you and their new students can benefit from what you let them know they can expect with higher education. This is an easy way to give something

back to your community.
5. Relax!
While winter break is full of opportunities to remain productive, it is more than easy to get burned out by working nonstop. Take time for some r and r.

A Moral Protest

By ETHAN LEACH

As the country seemed to grow more polarized as the election season wore on, it came as no surprise when Americans awoke November 9 not to find a healed and united nation, but rather crowds of protesters railing against the country they say they have lost.
Weeks later, these demonstrations persist. You may or may not agree with the intentions of these protests (and it is often difficult to discern exactly what those intentions are), but like most Americans, I support their right to voice their opinions. The problem, though, comes when the Constitutionally-protected right to peaceful protest is used as an excuse for disorderly conduct, assault, rioting, and looting.
The First Amendment protects

“the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.” Although it remains unclear what the anti-Trump protests aim to achieve, given that they’re in response to a free and fair election, they would remain under the Constitution’s protection so long as they remain peaceful. Protests in Portland, Oregon, however, have turned violent, leading to dozens of arrests. Police state that protesters threw “burning projectiles” at officers, and a separate incident between protesters escalated to a shooting.
The violence seen in these anti-Trump protests mirrors the violence of some of the Black Lives Matter protests we’ve seen in the last few years. Following the death of Michael Brown in Ferguson, the Black Lives Matter

movement gained traction across the country, as people were drawn to the idea of nonviolent resistance to bring about social change. Prior to the court decision, people on both sides of the case held rallies to try to sway public opinion. Ultimately, when the verdict did not go the way that many protesters had hoped, they rioted once again.
Not only do anti-Trump protesters risk arrest and fines when they resort to violence, but they also risk delegitimizing their cause. Leading up to the election, much like in the case of Michael Brown, the majority of the country had been divided along rigid pro-Trump and anti-Trump lines. Therefore, following the election, it stood to reason that a large section of the country would be sympathetic to those protesting a Trump presidency.

When protesters are unable to put forth a reasonable list of demands, though, or when their demonstrations deteriorate into violence, they lose the respect of those undecided citizens to whom they hoped to appeal.
There is undoubtedly great power in peaceful protest, such as when Martin Luther King, Jr. marched peacefully to overturn the injustices of racial discrimination. Today’s anti-Trump or Black Lives Matter protesters may see themselves as fighting for an equally worthy cause, but they must first ask themselves what it is they aim to achieve. Once they have answered that question, they must then determine whether or not the worthiness of their cause is reflected in the morality of their actions.

the burnian

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters under 500 words may be sent to burnian@blackburn.edu, or mailed to The ‘Burnian, 700 College Ave., Carlinville, IL 62626.

GUEST COMMENTARIES

Editorials featured on the opinion/commentary page of The ‘Burnian contain staff members’ opinions. We welcome guest editorials between 400-500 words. The ‘Burnian does not endorse featured opinions. All submissions to The ‘Burnian may be edited for length and grammatical clarity at the discretion of the editors; however, authors will be contacted if content revisions are necessary.

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MISSION STATEMENT

The ‘Burnian is a student-run newspaper at Blackburn College. Our mission is to deliver accurate, interesting and timely news to the Blackburn campus as well as the Carlinville community in an ethical and professional manner.

Hockey With a Twist

By JESS WILLARD

When I was a teenager, my high school youth group traveled to White Lake, Wisconsin, for snow camp. We participated in several winter activities while we spent a week in the snow covered hills. One of these activities was broomball, which according to USA Broomball, is a sport that combines the formation and rules of hockey with some soccer strategies. Although playing broomball was common in northern Illinois, the students I’ve talked to at Blackburn College don’t typically know what it is.

Freshman criminal justice major Austin VanAusdall plays the sport once a year with his church, Cross Church Carlinville. His understanding of the sport is that you only wear tennis shoes, and it resembles hockey with a ball and uses a broom in place of a hockey stick. “It’s on ice, so it’s fun, and it takes a lot of balance and patience,” he added. “Plus, there are lots of opportunities to embarrass your friends.”

USA Broomball outlined the basics of the sport. There are typically six players on a team (a goalie, two defense players and three forwards), and the object is to score the most goals.

It’s played on a hockey rink, and as VanAusdall stated, players wear shoes with spongy-soles to gain traction on the ice.

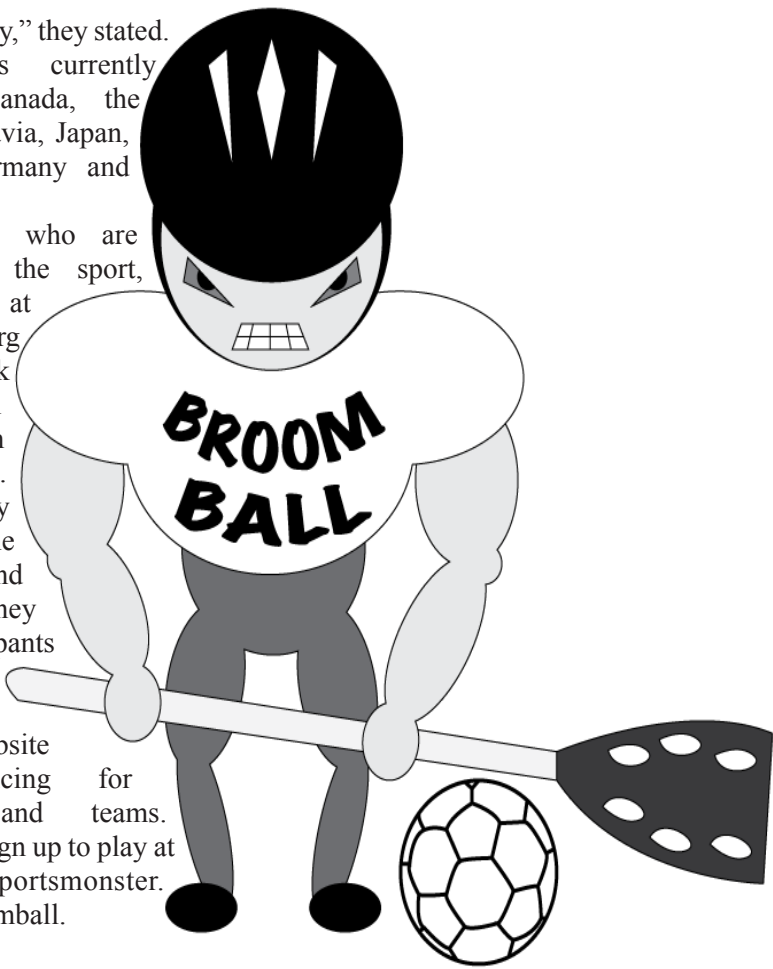
Players do utilize a six inch diameter ball, but they don’t actually use brooms to move the ball. Instead, they use a shaft with a molded broom-shaped head. USA Broomball stated, “Historically, players did use real brooms.... The ‘broom’ of today uses a molded head. For those of you who want more of the history, players would dip a corn broom in water, freeze it, then tape the broom solid.”

According to broomball.com, the sport consists of two 18 minute, stop time periods with a two minute break in between the periods. Gameplay involves the three forwards attempting to get the ball past the defense and into the net.

The sport is worth participating in for its accessibility and growing popularity. According to the website for the Belvidere Park District in Belvidere, Ill., broomball is game made for those who enjoy the excitement and fun of hockey but can’t skate. “Whether you are young or old, broomball will

sweep you away,” they stated. Broomball is currently played in Canada, the U.S., Scandinavia, Japan, Australia, Germany and Italy.

For those who are interested in the sport, it’s available at the Steinberg Skating Rink (located on 400 Jefferson Drive) in St. Louis. They provide the sticks, balls and helmets, but they ask participants to bring mouthguards. Their website includes pricing for individuals and teams. Students can sign up to play at <http://stlouis.sportsmonster.net/sport/Broomball>.



GRAPHIC BY JOHN HUMMER

Alexia Dunk-in: Freshman Point Guard

By GARY LOWDER

Now that basketball season is underway it’s finally time to fill the stands and cheer for the Beavers. One of the new players on the women’s basketball team is freshman sports psychology major and point guard Alexia Duncan. Duncan grew up in St. Louis and has been playing basketball since she was six years old. “I remember playing at the YMCA when I was really young. I might be a little short now but I was really short then,” said Duncan with a smile. She continued to play basketball through middle school and then played at McCluer High School in Florissant, Missouri. “My senior year we were told by the coaches and the community that we were one of the best women’s basketball teams to come out of McCluer in around a decade. Me and my teammates all felt pretty good about that,” said Duncan. “One of the

most memorable times of my high school career was when my team beat Fort Zumwalt East in a tournament.” Duncan’s school hadn’t gone far into a tournament in a couple years. “We beat them in triple overtime and were able to win a spot in the top three after beating them. I had around 12 points that game so I was really happy,” recalled Duncan.

When Duncan came to Blackburn she thought she was ready to play in college but she learned how difficult it was rather quickly. “College ball is a very different from high school,” said Duncan, “It’s the same game but it’s different. The tempo is much faster, you’ve really gotta learn your plays. The intensity is just so much higher.” After the women’s basketball team went 2-23 last year the team certainly has a lot to prove. “We have a lot of special talents

this year. We’ve got people who can get to the basket, people that can post hard and make really good moves. Overall we’ve got a team who can really handle the ball so I believe we’re gonna see a big improvement from last year. Even people who watched the first home game said they saw improvement,” explained Duncan. Last year’s the women’s basketball team only had six players and Duncan believes all the new people brought in during the fall semester will help improve the team’s chances this season. “Talent and work ethic are both on our side this year. We work hard in practice and we want to improve and get better. Everybody has those days where nobody feels like practicing but you gotta fight through it and strive to get better,” said a confident Duncan. She urges Blackburn students to come out and support the Lady



PHOTO COURTESY OF BLACKBURN SPORTS INFORMATION

Beavers and fill those stands. Be sure to join the Blackburn women’s basketball team in their next home game against MacMurray College on Dec. 17.



Duncan against Iowa Wesleyan earlier this season

PHOTO BY REBECCA O’CONNELL

The Highs and the Lows of Gymnastics

By JESS WILLARD

Gymnastics wreaks havoc on all parts of the body. Whether a participant in the sport is performing stunts on the high bars or landing a perfect back tuck on the balance beam, muscles get strained and bones receive fractures. The brutality of the sport is exemplified by the typical ages of retirement: late teens and early 20s. One problem many gymnasts face is figuring out how to warm up properly and stretch before performing stunts.

Junior pre-med major Ajay Minton has been involved in gymnastics and acrobatic classes due to his long-term involvement in dance (he started at five years old). “In general, gymnastics and dance requires strength and stamina,” he said. “It also requires a heavy amount of mental focus because executing a skill wrong could result in injuries ranging from dislocations to a broken neck. I have been at recitals and competitions where I have witnessed such injuries.” He added that students involved or those wishing to participate in the sport need to learn proper stretches and execute those stretches before performing any stunt.

The American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS) states there are several ways a person can warm up before participating in gymnastics. These include doing jumping jacks, running or walking in place for three to five minutes. Coaches can also be a good source for discovering which stretches will work best for certain stunts; each stretch should be held for 30 seconds. Additionally, performers should hydrate and do “cool down” exercises. According to the AAOS, “Stretching at the end of practice or competition is too often neglected

because of busy schedules.... Be sure to stretch after each training practice to reduce your risk for injury.”

In 1998, I was enrolled in the sport at the age of two. For a year, it was a casual engagement but after I moved to the Rockford area, I became more intensely involved. I was enrolled at the Gymnastics Academy of Rockford and trained until I reached Level 4 at ten years old. Some examples of the stunts I was performing included front handsprings, back walkovers and round-off back handsprings.

Then, I transitioned to tumbling after not being able to afford further training. Even though I had to quit after only eight years of being in the sport, my body was already facing irreversible damage. I suffered from multiple injuries (sprains and muscle tears) in my knees, ankles and feet, while I participated in the sport. Some damage, such as spinal problems, wasn’t recognized until I reached an older age.

To this day, I suffer from pain shooting through my foot at any point in time. My ankles will give out when I walk between buildings on campus. My kneecaps constantly ache after any sort of physical exertion, and I can’t sleep on my back due to the pain in those muscles. Despite these problems, I don’t regret any time I spent in gymnastics. There was a strong dynamic between my coach and I. I also had the opportunity to perform stunts that most people can’t dream themselves doing. The problem isn’t the sport itself – it’s performing to the point of physical damage.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF AJAY MINTON
Junior pre-med major Ajay Minton has taken several gymnastics and acrobatic classes

No Sleep for Blackburn Athletes

By JORDAN WOOD AND JESS WILLARD

It’s no secret that college athletes have a busy schedule. At Blackburn, it’s no different and athletes are faced with an ever-growing list of “number one priorities” including their school work - classes, homework, and studying (approximately 12-15 credit hours), team commitments - practice, games, and studying game film and scouting reports (between 3-5 hours a day), and the work program (10 hours per week).

The transition from high school to college is hard for many as they find themselves completely responsible for themselves for the first time in their life. Freshmen are quickly becoming overwhelmed and drowning as they try and discover the best time management strategies, and more often than not, are afraid to ask for help out of fear and discomfort from being in a new environment.

When junior psychology major Daniele Burnell transferred to

Blackburn from Danville Community College in Danville, Illinois, she not only had to readjust to being at a new school and surrounded by new people, she also picked up a second sport - basketball (in addition to softball) a work program school. “It’s definitely harder to maintain school. Practices are longer, I am playing two sports instead of one, and we travel more than we did at Danville. I usually stay up until 2 a.m. doing homework.” To make matters worse, as the stress of

the semester and season builds, Burnell also finds herself down on work hours as an assistant for head softball coach Kerry Crum, with little time to make them up. She is not alone.

Time becomes limited and many have found that they are behind on their required work hours. Many have received emails requesting to set up a new contract to make up for lost time.

Despite the difficulties and constant load, there are athletes on campus who have been able to figure out a successful

way to manage school, sports and work and actually find themselves up on hours. Sophomore elementary education major Gariel Pierce is a member of the women’s basketball and tennis teams and assistant manager at the Lumpkin Learning Commons. She has already met her required hours for the semester and offers advice to those struggling. “I have a planner and I plan out each day. If you want to get up on hours, talk to your supervisors and ask them if you can come it at times if you aren’t doing anything and you feel like you have extra energy from your practice or game or you have any free time so you can go in and clock into work. If you miss a shift, you need to know that the next week you need to pick up another one and be flexible.” Another option, depending on your department, is to ask your supervisor about banking up on hours prior to when your sports season begins, avoid procrastination and take advantage of any free time.

“*I usually stay up until 2 a.m. doing homework,*”
Daniele Burnell