

# The Advance-Titan

INDEPENDENT STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN OSHKOSH CAMPUSES

VOL. 128, No. 13

DEC. 3, 2020

ADVANCETITAN.COM

## 'We may see very high mortality rates in prisons'

### Correctional facilities in WI struggle to contain COVID-19

By Joseph Schulz  
schulj78@uwosh.edu

The Oshkosh Correctional Institution (OSCI) recently passed a grim milestone, becoming the Wisconsin prison with the most COVID-19 cases since March, as criminal justice reform advocates plead with the state to change procedures.

The prison had 957 total confirmed cases of coronavirus with 16 active cases as of Tuesday, according to the Wisconsin Department of Corrections (DOC). On Nov. 20, however, the DOC dashboard showed OSCI having 248 active COVID-19 cases.

But the recent outbreak at OSCI was not the prison's first, according to the Wisconsin State Journal.

In fact, the prison had an outbreak of 341 active cases on Oct. 5, dipped below 100 cases and then rose to 288 active cases by Oct. 19. By the end of October, OSCI only had 39 active COVID-19 cases, according to the State Journal.

Beyond OSCI, six other prisons reported more than 100 active coronavirus cases on Nov. 20, including Columbia Correctional, Dodge Correctional, Fox Lake Correctional, Racine Correctional, Robert Ellsworth Correctional and Taycheedah Correctional.

In a Nov. 25 Facebook post, the Winnebago County Sheriff's Office said it found four COVID-19 cases among inmates on Nov. 13, and follow-up testing that day had revealed 27 additional cases.

Since March, the sheriff's office says it has been isolating all new arrivals by requiring them to quarantine for two-weeks, while also enforcing masks for inmates and staff, restricting access to the facility and stockpiling supplies.

"Similar to the community at large, most affected inmates are either asymptomatic or experiencing mild COVID-19 symptoms," the sheriff's office said. "All positive inmates remain housed within the Winnebago County Jail, and we are monitoring their welfare. Subsequent testing has already been coordinated."

However, if correctional facilities do not work to reduce populations to increase space for social distancing, advocates fear that for many inmates, their time in prison could turn into a life sentence due to the pandemic.

Frankly, we may see very high mortality rates in prisons," said William Van Lopik, a community organizer for Esther-Fox Valley, a faith-based advocacy group that supports criminal justice reform. "Out in society, you're encouraged to call your



Photos courtesy of Esther - Fox Valley

Protesters gathered outside the Governor's mansion call for prison reform in Wisconsin. OSCI had 957 cases as of Nov. 25.

doctor or go and get tested, but in prison that doesn't happen; you may have to be in a really bad situation to be hospitalized."

Van Lopik attributed the outbreaks in Wisconsin prisons to over-capacity, meaning there is no room to practice social distancing. Because prisons have limited in-person visitations, he says the outbreaks must be originating with the guards.

In fact, the DOC COVID-19 dashboard states that as of Tuesday a total of 111 employees at OSCI have tested positive since the pandemic began.

His organization advocates for the "compassionate release" of inmates, which would allow prisoners nearing the end of their sentence or those with underlying health conditions to be released early to increase their ability to social distance.

OSCI's design capacity is about 1,494 inmates, but the prison's population was roughly 1,970 in June, according to OSCI's 2020 annual report. Of those inmates, 22% have less than a year left of their sentence and 18% have only one year left, per an OSCI fact sheet.

"We're not talking about releas-

ing everyone, but the terminally ill, those who are almost at the end of their sentence and people in on technical violations," Van Lopik said. "It would be a tragedy if someone dies, who's months away from being released."

Esther organizers spent the last five weeks holding sit-ins at the governor's mansion in Madison, advocating Gov. Tony Evers to take action to address Wisconsin prisons' COVID-19 situation.

"We've been sitting out there for the last five weeks and he knows we're there, but we haven't heard a word," Van Lopik said. "We're going to keep sitting there until there's some sort of acknowledgement that there's a problem in our prison system with COVID."

Even after the pandemic, Van Lopik says the overcrowding problem in Wisconsin's prisons will not go away until the system of mass incarceration is reformed. Many people filling Wisconsin's prisons and jails "are not hardened criminals" — they are doing time for non-violent offenses, Van Lopik said.

"We have to come up with more creative ways of dealing with those



issues than putting people in jail, because it fractures the family structure," he said. "It especially harms people with a lack of resources."

Winnebago County has a drug court program and is establishing a mental health diversion program, but Van Lopik believes more action is needed to ensure justice is doled out fairly.

"There's a huge racial discrepancy in Wisconsin prisons too," he

said. "We are one of the worst in the country as far as the racial discrepancy of our prison population as compared to our general population."

At the end of the day, Van Lopik says Esther will continue assembling outside of the governor's mansion until it sees some kind of change.

FEATURE



COVID IN PRISONS

PAGE 2



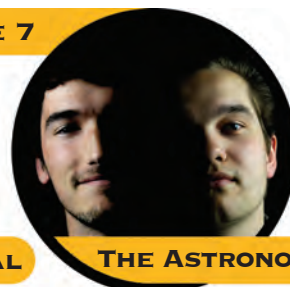
LUNCH LADIES

PAGE 6



THANKSGIVING MEAL

PAGE 7



THE ASTRONOMERS TALK UPCOMING EP



Advance-Titan

**Phone:** 920-424-3048  
**Email:** atitan@uwosh.edu  
**Website:**  
www.advancetitan.com

**Editor in Chief** Carter Uslabar  
uslab78@uwosh.edu

**Ad Manager** Collin Tuchalski  
tuchac30@uwosh.edu  
262-391-8452

**Managing Editor**  
**Joseph Schulz**  
schulj78@uwosh.edu

**News Editor**  
**Amber Brockman**  
brocka24@uwosh.edu

**Asst. News Editor**  
**Sophia Voight**  
voighs33@uwosh.edu

**Sports Editor** Cory Sparks  
sparkc21@uwosh.edu

**Opinion Editor** Owen Peterson  
petero84@uwosh.edu

**Copy Desk Chief**  
**Kaitlyn Scoville**  
scovik21@uwosh.edu

**Graphic Designer**  
**Amanda Hollander**  
hollaa43@uwosh.edu

**Photo Editor** April Lee  
leep39@uwosh.edu

**Web Editor** Grant Hunter  
hunteg39@uwosh.edu

**Asst. Web Editor** Olivia Oz-baki  
ozbako81@uwosh.edu

**Copy Desk Editors:** Heidi Docter, Kira Moericke, Lexi Wojcik-Kretchmer, Michaela Branagan

**Staff Writers:** Andrew Hansen, Lexi Langendorf, Nolan Fullington, Lexi Wojcik-Kretchmer

**Faculty Adviser** Barb Benish  
benish@uwosh.edu

**About the Newspaper**  
The Advance-Titan is an independent student newspaper published on campus since 1894. The paper is written and edited by students at UW Oshkosh who are solely responsible for content and editorial policy. Any UW Oshkosh student from all three campuses is welcome to work on the newspaper staff. The Advance-Titan is published on Thursday during the academic year.

**Correction Policy:**  
The Advance-Titan is committed to correcting errors of fact that appear in print or online. Messages regarding errors can be emailed to atitan@uwosh.edu.

**Latest Awards:**  
First Place Best of Show Newspaper, Associated Collegiate Press (ACP), 2020  
Third Place Best of Show Website, ACP, 2020  
Fifth Place Best of Show Special Edition, ACP, 2020

# Consulting firm hired to evaluate courses

By Sophia Voight  
voighs33@uwosh.edu

UW Oshkosh is partnering with the consulting and analytics firm Gray Associates to assist with their ongoing academic structure exploration that involves consideration of restructuring the current college system and revising academic programs.

Gray Associates is a consulting firm that focuses on evaluating universities’ academic catalogs and creating program strategies that adapt to student demand and employment opportunities.

UWO has been engaged in an academic structure exploration over the last year to consider restructuring the current four-college system and assess its degree programs.

The process of reviewing the academic program array is something that the university typically does every five to seven years, Provost John Koker said.

Koker initially charged the Academic Structure Exploration Team, or ASET, in the spring 2019 semester to develop proposals for reorganizing the current four-college system, which has an uneven faculty and student representation among the colleges, especially within the College of Letters and Science.

ASET submitted six potential restructuring plans back in September 2019, which were meant as a conversation starter for the ongoing academic planning process.

The provost then charged the Provost Advisory Committee on University-wide Academic Structure, or PACUAS, in fall 2019 to generate feedback on the planning process and make a recommendation to the provost regarding the college structure.

Koker announced in his opening day remarks this semester that UWO hired the consulting firm to assist in the ongoing academic planning process.

Koker said Gray Associates was hired to provide data on employment and student demand that could help guide the university’s academic planning process.

The work being done by Gray Associates is a separate initiative from ASET and PACUAS but is all simultaneously being done for the current academic structure exploration process.

The consulting firm is providing the university with program portfolio strategies that reflect the current degree demands of students and employment opportunities in the area.



Courtesy of UW Oshkosh Flickr

UW Oshkosh is partnering with a consulting and analytics to assist in the consideration of restructuring academic programs.

This includes presenting data on potential programs for the university to invest in, update or shut down.

Koker said in a facultywide email that the firm is merely presenting suggestions for the growth of the university and will not make any final decisions on what programs should be added or cut from UWO.

“Gray Associates does not and will not make decisions for us,” Koker said. “UW Oshkosh faculty, staff and leadership will make the judgments and the decisions.”

Koker said the university is not currently suggesting cutting any academic programs.

Associate Dean of the College of Business Jakob Iversen, who was a part of both academic structure committees, said the data being used from Gray Associates is not being used to consider closing or diminishing any programs. “It’s really about how to grow and create programs that are going to be attractive for students in the future,” Iversen said.

Gray Associates held a workshop for faculty and staff back in October to present their data on student demand and market research that UWO can use to develop their academic program plan.

The firm presented its Program Evaluation System (PES), which evaluates how academic programs can be fixed to tailor to career demands and what programs to potentially cut or startup.

Iversen said PES looked at job outcomes of specific majors, where students’ interests lie and competing degrees in the region. “The tool pulled together a large number of data points and presented that to help us evaluate which UWO programs might be good candidates to evaluate,” he said.

Based on the regional data presented by Gray Associates, participants of the workshop looked at good programs to potentially add to UWO, such as cybersecurity and renewable energy degrees. Koker said in a facultywide email that the data

presented by Gray Associates will help inform the academic planning process, but not drive it.

While academic planning is an annual occurrence, in his charge of PACUAS, Koker said now is an opportune time to spearhead new academic plans because it will lead to more effective marketing and better budgeting for the future of UWO.

The consideration of restructuring the college system is also intended to “position our University to grow and succeed over the next generation,” according to the ASET report. PACUAS and ASET were formed to address the uneven balance between the College of Letters and Science and the remaining three colleges.

“It was created to balance out the size of the colleges and also to provide more visibility to some of the programs inside the letters and science,” Iversen said.

UWO has four academic colleges: College of Business, College of Education and Human Services, College of Nursing and College of Letters and Science. “While our four-college structure once provided a logical arrangement for grouping departments and programs, it is no longer clear that this structure best reflects all that UW Oshkosh has to offer,” the ASET report said.

For example, the history department is in the division of social sciences despite the fact that it is traditionally in humanities departments. Likewise, the journalism department is in the humanities division when it is rarely categorized as such at other colleges.

COLS currently houses nearly half of all majors and minors offered at UWO. This gives COLS greater governance representation on university committees and creates significant administrative overlap.

The report noted that due to COLS’s large size, smaller departments are not as known and are overshadowed by larger departments in the college.

ASET proposed six restructuring

plans, which involve changing the names of colleges and move departments and programs to colleges that are more closely aligned with each other.

Restructuring plan No. 1 would be to maintain the current four-college system.

Restructuring plan No. 2 would be to maintain the current four-college system but realign departments and programs.

Restructuring plan No. 3 would be a five-college system with STEM: colleges would be, Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM); Business and Media; Arts and Humanities; Nursing and Health Sciences; Public Leadership.

Restructuring plan No. 4 would be a five-college system with stand-alone Fine and Performing Arts: colleges would be FAPA; Humanities and Interdisciplinary Studies; Business, Technology and Media Innovation; Nursing and Science; Education and Public Leadership.

Restructuring plan No. 5 would be a five-college system with global studies: colleges would be, Global Studies and Humanities; Business and Technology; Performing Arts and Media Innovation; Nursing and Science; Education and Public Leadership.

Restructuring plan No. 6 would be a four-college system with STEAM and Health and Education: colleges would be, Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math; Health and Education; Business and Media; Liberal Arts and Society.

The ASET report does not include a ranking of the structures or a recommendation.

PACUAS was then charged with gathering university-wide feedback on any potential academic restructuring, not just the ones proposed in ASET. PACUAS is now responsible for creating an official report on the university’s feedback of the restructuring and make a recommendation to the provost on UWO’s college structure.

Journalism department chair Sara Steffes Hansen, who is a part of the committee, said PACUAS’s intention is to facilitate communication and a collaboration of ideas on UWO’s current academic planning process. The Gray Associates workshop, ASET and PACUAS are all separate initiatives to help the university improve its academic structure, she added.

“I see a lot of deep communication and discussion,” Hansen said. “We’re all kind of going through a big process.”

# Campus food service workers adapt to new precautions

Andrew Hansen  
hansea31@uwosh.edu

The COVID-19 pandemic has taken its toll on UW Oshkosh food services workers still adjusting to the new regulations.

“There’s a lot more rules with masks, glove-changing and cleaning,” Blackhawk Xpress employee David Zeh said. “We’ve always done a decent bit of cleaning as a part of the job, but it’s a lot more intense than it has been in previous years.”

The cafeteria workers have to ensure that everyone who enters the building is properly wearing their masks.

Zeh said that he has not had any backlash yet from students for enforcing the rule. In addition to this,

the cafeteria staff have been holding an increased number of meetings related to health and safety to ensure proper practices are maintained.

“It’s about making sure you’re changing your gloves constantly and not touching your mask and staying as far away from the students as possible,” said Lorie Winkler, who works at the Sub Stand in Reeve Memorial Union.

Winkler says that she and her co-worker Lynn Bender still have not fully adapted to the more stringent precautions.

They said that the toughest part of the stricter guidelines is the loss of connection to students. “We’re used to giving the kids hugs when they’re having a bad day, but we can’t do that anymore,” Winkler said.

Meanwhile, Bender said, “I’m



Andrew Hansen/Advance-Titan

Lorie Winkler and Lynn Bender are food service workers at UWO.

still getting used to smiling with my eyes, which is weird.”

Given the circumstances, the two are still doing what they can to brighten students’ days.

“We’ve been writing nice little messages on the GrubHub bags, just something to make their days,”

Bender said. “We’ve got a lot of compliments so far.”

The pair said they are doing their best to ensure student safety.

“You never know who may have an underlying condition,” Winkler said. “So everybody’s just gotta be careful.”



# Rural-urban divide in Winnebago County

By Sophia Voight  
voighs33@uwosh.edu

On an election map of Winnebago County, Oshkosh typically stands out like a blue island in a sea of red.

Like many urban areas in the country, the city of Oshkosh tends to lean heavily democratic in presidential and local elections, while the surrounding rural areas remain securely republican.

“Across the state, the big divide is between the metropolitan areas and small towns in rural Wisconsin,” UW Oshkosh political science professor James Simmons said.

Oshkosh’s classification as an urban area with a university and a white-collar dominated workforce gives it a democratic edge against the Republican stronghold in the more rural areas of the county.

In this year’s general election, President Donald Trump and Republicans performed well in rural small towns, especially among white men, Simmons said.

Biden and Democrats, on the other hand, carried the city of Oshkosh fairly easily.

Oshkosh residents leaned democratic in every red/blue race on their ballot, according to official election results.

But if you zoom out to the county, Republicans were able to win by substantial margins in many voting districts, often winning by over 40% of the total vote, according to official election results.

This deep rural red helped Republicans score wins in every state

and local election on this year’s ballot and offsetting the high democratic vote in urban areas like Oshkosh and Neenah.

Due to the rural, urban divide between Oshkosh and Winnebago County, Republicans have been able to maintain a stronghold in every county-wide elections.

Rural parts of the county are so overwhelmingly Republican and make up a substantial amount of the county vote that Democrats usually won’t even run candidates in county elections because they know they won’t win, Simmons said.

The Winnebago County clerk, treasurer and district attorney all ran unopposed this election, and all were Republicans.

Rural areas are primarily composed of white people and blue-collar workers who tend to vote Republican, but in the city of Oshkosh, Democrats have the advantage due to ties to the university and the more white-collar professionals in the city.

Simmons said the city hasn’t always been this way though. Oshkosh used to be far more Republican but has slowly become deep blue over the past few decades.

Oshkosh has lost a lot of its manufacturing employers which tended to attract Republican voters and the industries that have stayed unionized whose members tend to vote democratic, according to Simmons.

Simmons said with the loss of manufacturing industries that once heavily employed large portions of Oshkosh residents, the city has lost

much of its republican base.

“It has become a postindustrial city and become more white-collar, more professional,” he said.

Simmons said the increase of racial minorities in Oshkosh has also contributed to the shift in our voting patterns.

While Winnebago County remains predominantly white giving them a republican edge, Oshkosh’s minority populations tend to be more favorable to Democratic candidates.

“[Oshkosh] is still overwhelmingly white but we’re becoming somewhat more diverse and that’s more favorable to the Democrats,” he said.

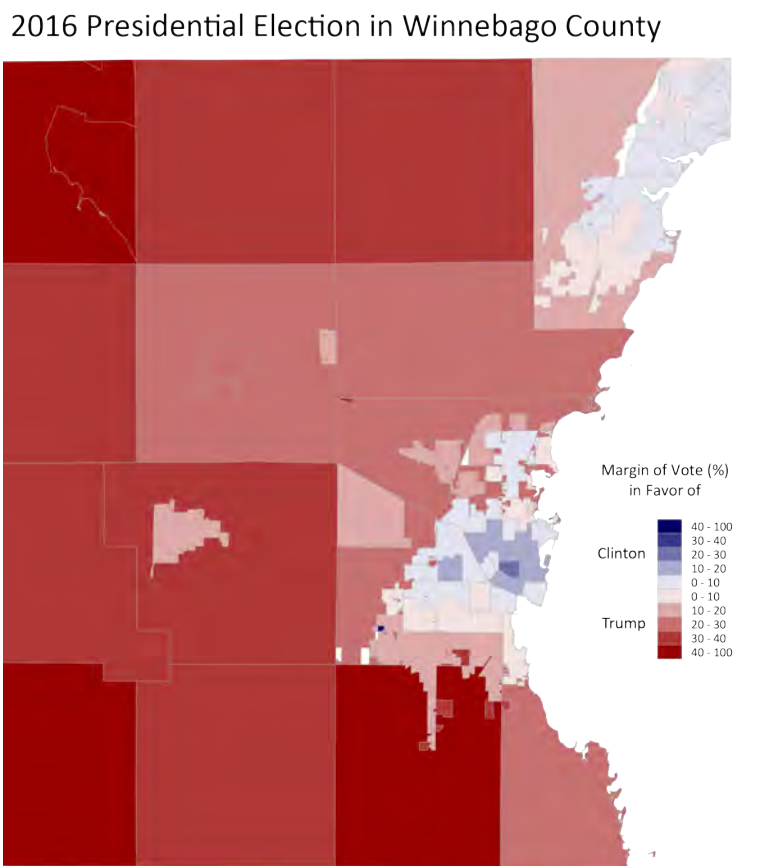
Simmons said UW Oshkosh plays a large role in the way Oshkosh residents vote as the third-largest employer in the city.

“The university is one of the major employers in the city,” he said. “So, the city is much less manufacturing and more professional.”

White-collar workers often lean blue in national and local elections as Democratic candidates are typically more supportive of higher education, Simmons said.

A number of the Democratic candidates in this election had direct ties to the university. U.S. congressional candidate Jessica King graduated from UWO and state senate candidate Aaron Wojciechowski is a recent political science and economics graduate of UWO.

College students also tend to vote more democratic, Simmons said. Some of the heaviest blue voting districts in the city were the ones surrounding the college campus.



Courtesy of James Simmons

Winnebago County voting patterns in the 2016 presidential election show the rural-urban divide between Oshkosh and the rest of the county.

pus.

Simmons said Biden won the presidential vote among students by a substantial margin of roughly 58% of the vote while Trump only got 39% of the student vote.

This is opposed to the total city vote where the margins were slightly smaller, allocating 52% of the vote to Biden and 44% to Trump, according to official election results.

Democratic candidate Hillary

Clinton wasn’t able to score as large of a margin for the Democrats in 2016 among UWO students as Biden was able to do this year.

Clinton won roughly 47% of the student vote while Trump got 41%, according to Simmons.

“One of the most democratic sections of Oshkosh in presidential election years is in the student districts,” Simmons said.



Joseph Schulz / Advance-Titan

Volunteers collect food donations for Father Carr’s Place.

## Food drive for Father Carr’s

Joseph Schulz  
schulj78@uwosh.edu

Volunteers assembled in the parking lot of the Oshkosh Convention Center on Nov. 21 to collect non-perishable food donations for Father Carr’s Place 2B.

Father Carr’s Place 2B is a life enrichment center in Oshkosh, ministering to the poor and providing family and community activities.

Wisconsin Solidarity, a non-political community organization focused on helping struggling families based in Oshkosh, organized the food drive, collecting unexpired goods and nonperishable food items.

The event aimed to help families struggling with how to celebrate the upcoming Thanksgiving holiday, the organization’s co-founder, Brittany Stieg said.

“We want to bring the community together by any means necessary,” she said. “If that means standing here in the cold, so be it.”

The food drive was successful — the group received plenty of food donations, which will be used either in the food pantry at Father

Carr’s or in the facility’s kitchen, Stieg said.

Wisconsin Solidarity formed this year, after Stieg’s husband, Cody, made an album with 10 artists from across the state. It features covers of 1960s Civil Rights protest songs to raise community awareness by shedding light on the issue.

Brittany explained that Cody had distributed the album digitally for free. Cody and she then brainstormed other ways their organization could benefit the community, leading to Saturday’s food drive.

The food drive was Wisconsin Solidarity’s first hosting event, but they are planning other activities to help those in need as well, Brittany said.

One example, she said, is the toy drive they are planning next month before Christmas.

Brittany and Cody seem to aim toward uniting as a community, instead of dividing. Brittany said Wisconsin Solidarity does not view the community as “red or blue, black or white.”

“We’re all in this together, after all,” Brittany said. “We are committed to expanding knowledge and accessibility of resources.”

## What is the register of deeds?

By Sophia Voight  
voighs33@uwosh.edu

Every four years, voters across the state have the opportunity to elect their respective county register of deeds.

As a smaller, locally-elected position, the register of deeds office doesn’t attract the same attention in general elections as the more glamorous presidential and congressional campaigns.

Because of this, you likely mulled over the ROD position without putting much thought into it when filling out this year’s ballot. Maybe you stuck with your party preference to help with the decision or maybe you noticed the “Reid for Deeds” signs in the area and were compelled to vote for the independent candidate.

Despite the lack of attention to the position in an election year, the register of deeds plays an important role in local government.

“The register of deeds office provides a crucial service for Winnebago County residents given that we record and keep real estate-related documents as well as issue birth, death and marriage certificates,” Winnebago County register of deeds Natalie Strohmeyer said.

The ROD office is the official repository of real estate and vital records for the county and is in charge of archiving the records and providing public access to them.

Strohmeyer said she enjoys this organizational aspect of the role, and that it was one of the

main things that attracted her to the position.

“The register of deeds offices houses hundreds of thousands of records,” she said. “How easily you can access that information depends on the organization.”

The office is responsible for filing and recording all land ownership and transfer of any property in the county. They essentially provide the who, what and when of all properties, playing a crucial role in the historical and economic records of the county.

Having an elected official in charge of real estate records is especially important considering property taxes are based on the records held by the ROD.

The ROD’s other primary function is filing all vital records, which consists of all marriages, births and deaths that occur in the county.

Strohmeyer said she really enjoys the historical aspect of her job, being that she is able to look back at the family genealogy and historical records of the people who lived in the county over the years.

The Wisconsin Register of Deeds Association (WRDA) describes the duties of the register of deeds as “a way of putting the world on notice that something important has happened or will happen.”

ROD plays a critical cog in the wheel of county government by issuing these important records and archiving them online for easy access.

Strohmeyer said on a typical

day, she and her staff are dealing with daily document recordings and vital records requests.

“My main responsibility is ensuring that the duties of the office are carried out accurately, efficiently and in accordance with state statutes,” she said.

As the county register of deeds, Strohmeyer also serves as the liaison between the ROD office and the county board of supervisors to approve any county ordinances that would benefit the ROD office and for budget approval.

She’s also a part of WRDA, where she serves on the vitals committee as well as vice-chair of the Winnebago County Land Information Council, and a member of the Electronic E-Recording Council of Wisconsin.

This year Strohmeyer won her second term as Winnebago County ROD against political newcomer Seth Reid in a near landslide victory.

Of all the county-level elections in Winnebago County, the register of deeds was the only contested race.

Strohmeyer was elected to the Winnebago County register of deeds office back in 2016 after serving in the register of deeds office in Outagamie County for over three decades.

Strohmeyer took over the office after the previous ROD Julie Pagel retired in January 2016. Pagel had served as Winnebago County register of deeds for 11 years and had worked for the county for over three decades.



# Sports

## New year, new Milwaukee Bucks roster

By Lexi Langendorf  
langel29@uwosh.edu

This season, the Bucks will acquire nine new players, including Jaylen Adams, Mamadi Diakite, D.J. Augustin, Torrey Craig, Bryn Forbes, Jrue Holiday, Sam Merrill, Jordan Nwora, and Bobby Portis.

6’4 Pelicans guard Holiday and 6’5 guard Merrill will join the team as part of a four-team deal including the Oklahoma City Thunder and the Denver Nuggets.

The Bucks will send guard Eric Bledsoe, two first-round draft picks (2025, 2027) and the right to swap first-round draft picks (New Orleans’ for Milwaukee’s) in 2024 and 2026.

Milwaukee also loses guard George Hill to the Thunder and draft rights to 2020 first round pick and point guard R.J. Hampton to Denver in the trade.

Holiday, entering his 12th season in the NBA, is a two-time All-NBA Defensive Team honoree (2017-18, 2018-19) and 2013 NBA All-Star who has appeared in more than 700 career games with New Orleans and Philadelphia.

Holiday started all 61 games for New Orleans during the 2019-20 season, overall holding career averages of 15.9 points, 6.4 assists, 3.9 rebounds and 1.5 steals in 713 career games. He is a career 45.3% shooter from the field, 35.4% from three and 77.7% from the free-throw line, leaving as the franchise’s all-time leader in career three-pointers made with a total of 628.

Holiday was additionally named

the 2019-20 Twyman-Stokes Teammate of the Year last season.

“Jrue is an incredibly high character person and one of the premier guards in the NBA,” said Bucks General Manager Jon Horst. “He will make us better on both ends of the floor, as he’s an elite defender and a proven playmaker on offense with the ability to score, shoot and facilitate.”

Sam Merrill, in his four seasons at Utah State, knocked down 42.0% of his 3-point attempts, 47.0% of his shots overall and 89.1% of his free-throw attempts, while averaging 16.8 points, 3.6 rebounds and 3.6 assists over 131 games.

“Sam is someone we’ve had our eye on over his last couple seasons at Utah State,” Horst said. “He has demonstrated the ability to shoot at a high percentage and we like his size and overall feel for the game. We’re excited to get him into camp and watch him compete at this level.”

Bledsoe appeared in 210 games with the Bucks over the last three seasons and averaged 16.3 points, 5.3 assists, 4.4 rebounds and 1.5 steals per game.

Hill played in 106 games with the Bucks and averaged 8.2 points, 2.8 rebounds and 2.6 assists per game while shooting 47.9% from the field and 38.5% from three.

“Eric and George were major contributors to our winning culture in Milwaukee,” Horst added. “They are talented players but even better people.”

The Milwaukee Bucks have also signed forward Torrey Craig, guard Bryn Forbes, forward Bobby Portis and guard D.J. Augustin.

Craig, a 6’7 forward, played the last three seasons with the Denver Nuggets, holding career averages of 5.3 points and 3.4 rebounds per game while shooting 45.1% from the field.

Forbes, a 6’2 guard, played the last four seasons with the San Antonio Spurs, holding career averages of 8.0 points, 1.9 rebounds and 1.5 assists in 21.7 minutes per game. He’s a career 43.1% shooter from the field and has knocked down 40.0% of his 3-point attempts throughout his career.

Portis, a 6’10 forward, spent the 2019-20 season with the New York Knicks and holds career averages of 10.2 points, 5.9 rebounds and 1.2 assists per game while shooting 45.6% from the field and 36.0% from three.

Augustin played in 57 games last season with the Magic, holding career averages of 9.9 points, 4.0 assists and 1.9 rebounds per game while shooting 41.2% from the field, 37.9% from three and 86.5% from the free-throw line.

Jrue is an incredibly high character person and one of the premier guards in the NBA.

- Jon Horst, Bucks General Manager

“D.J. brings a wealth of experience to our backcourt and will provide us with depth at guard,” said Bucks General Manager Jon Horst. “D.J.’s proven to be a prolific shooter and an excellent ball-handler throughout his career and we’re thrilled to have him in Milwaukee.”

Milwaukee additionally gained second-round draft pick Jordan Nwora in exchange for two future second round draft choices in a draft day trade with the Orlando Magic.

Nwora, a 6’7 forward, was a Third Team All-American and First Team All-ACC selection last season as a junior after averaging 18.0 points, 7.7 rebounds and 1.3 assists per game while shooting 44.0% from the field and 40.2% from three. Nwora was also the runner up for ACC Player of the Year last season.

Pat Connaughton, a guard for the Bucks, has resigned, and guard Adams and forward Diakite have also been signed to Two-Way contracts, which essentially stipulate that these players will spend most of their time with the G League.

Adams, a 6’2 guard, spent the majority of the 2019-20 season with the Bucks’ G League affiliate, the Wisconsin Herd, where he was the NBA G League MVP

runner up and an All-NBA G League First Team selection after averaging 21.5 points, 5.7 assists, 5.1 rebounds and 1.8 steals over 33 games.

He knocked down 48.6% of his shots, including 40.7% of his 3-point attempts, last season with the Herd.

Diakite, a 6’9 forward, averaged a team-high 13.7 points with 6.8 rebounds and 1.3 blocks per game as a senior last season with the Cavaliers. Diakite also shot 47.8% from the field and 35.7% from three last season and was a semifinalist for the Naismith Defensive Player of the Year award.

The Milwaukee Bucks will play a three-game 2020 pre-season schedule, with the first game set for Saturday, Dec. 12 at Fiserv Forum, as announced by the NBA on Nov. 27.

The Bucks will play back-to-back games against the Dallas Mavericks on Saturday, Dec. 12 and Monday, Dec. 14, before finishing the preseason schedule with a matchup against the Pelicans in New Orleans on Friday, Dec. 18. Each game will tip-off at 7 p.m. CT.

Milwaukee Bucks will also debut new “great lakes blue city edition” uniforms for the 2020-21 season, launching on Dec. 3.



Courtesy of Bucks News  
The Bucks lost to the Miami Heat in the Eastern Conference semifinals four games to one.

## NFL stumbles through season, combats COVID

By Cory Sparks  
sparkc21@uwosh.edu

As the NFL makes its way through the 12th week of its regular season, it is not filled with the reassurance that was in the air in mid-September at the beginning of the football season. As December, the last full month before the playoffs, nears, there are numerous unique circumstances going on thanks to the spread of COVID-19.

For starters, the game between the Baltimore Ravens and the undefeated Pittsburgh Steelers was moved from Thursday, Nov. 26, to Wednesday, Dec. 2 due to the Ravens having more than 20 players who tested positive at one point, according to BaltimoreRavens.com.

Some of the Ravens players who have been put on the team’s COVID list in the last two weeks are starting quarterback Lamar Jackson, running backs Mark Ingram II and J.K. Dobbins, starting tight end Mark Andrews, starting defensive tackle Calais Campbell, and many more of the team’s key players.

Numerous Steelers players, including linebackers Avery Williamson and Alex Highsmith, defensive tackle Cameron Heyward and tight end Eric Ebron disapprove of the NFL’s decision to continuously postpone the divisional matchup for what will be at

least three times in a row. Upon hearing the news that the game would be postponed, Ebron tweeted, “The only time we look forward to some rest was after one of the biggest PRIMETIME games we no longer have. We keep getting screwed this year.”

Steelers star wide receiver and offensive rookie of the year candidate Chase Claypool also tweeted, “What a joke” in response to the game being moved.

One team that did not have enough positive COVID cases to get their game canceled was the Denver Broncos, and unfortunately for them, their entire quarterback room was not able to play in the game that proceeded. Backup quarterback Jeff Driskel supposedly tested positive for the virus, according to ESPN Senior Writer Jeff Legwold.

As a result of Driskel’s positive test, Broncos quarterbacks Drew Lock (the starter), Brett Rypien and Blake Bortles were all listed as close contacts and were deemed ineligible for the team’s game against the New Orleans Saints last Sunday.

This cause of events resulted in one of the oddest quarterback predicaments to date; the Broncos ended up giving practice squad wide receiver Kendall Hinton the call to come in and serve as the team’s temporary quarterback for the week 12 matchup.

Hinton was a backup quarterback at Wake Forest College, where he completed 133 out of 251 passes for eight touchdowns and seven interceptions over four years of eligibility. Hinton did not attempt a single in-game pass during his senior season in 2019. The 23-year-old suited up for NFL starting QB debut, and it wasn’t pretty.

Hinton completed one of nine pass attempts for 13 yards while throwing two interceptions. The Broncos lost the matchup 31-3, but the team had nothing but praise for their last-minute quarterback. According to the NFL’s instagram, Hinton was working sales as recently as a month ago before his unexpected NFL start. The Broncos’ players must be tested numerous times before the team’s next game against the defending Super Bowl champions, the Kansas City Chiefs.

Another odd situation that has recently come to surface thanks to the rapid uptick in COVID cases is the change of scenery for the San Francisco 49ers in the coming weeks.

According to NFL writer Nick Shook, Santa Clara County, the county the 49ers play in, announced new COVID regulations that do not allow the 49ers to play in their home of Levi Stadium for the next couple of weeks.

The team will play their next



Graphic by Cory Sparks  
Shortly after numerous Pittsburgh Steelers players complained about the abundance of Ravens players having COVID and the game being postponed, starting Steelers running back James Conner also tested positive for the virus.

two games against the Buffalo Bills on Dec. 7, and the Washington Football Team on Dec. 13 in State Farm Stadium, the Arizona Cardinals’ home stadium.

Multiple players and even head coach Kyle Shanahan expressed a great amount of disappointment when they first heard the news.

Starting running back Raheem Mostert got emotional in a post-game interview when talking about how he hasn’t seen his family all season in order to keep them safe during the pandemic.

“It’s really tough, I miss them so much,” Mostert said. “It’s a fight every day, you’re fighting for your life.”

There are an abundance of de-

cisions to be made by the NFL if a football season is to go through to the Super Bowl in February, and the league is doing all that it can to preserve the likelihood of that happening.

There have been murmurs of a 16-team NFL playoff bracket if some teams who have already had a bye week, like the Steelers, have to miss an additional week due to an uptick in the team’s number of positively tested players.

As the league flounders to finish what is continuing to be a season full of struggles to stay healthy, fans will have no choice but to sit and hope that the amount of leaguewide positive cases drops to a containable amount.

Opinion

How Oshkosh mishandled the pandemic

By Joseph Schulz  
schulj78@uwosh.edu

Oshkosh’s economy is strained because of the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. Iconic events have been canceled, employees laid off and both small and large businesses face financial shortcomings.

Wisconsin coronavirus cases continue to increase since March, further straining businesses. Business owners are bracing for further economic struggles as of last month, according to UW Oshkosh’s COVID-19 business survey.

Some business leaders had a hand in creating this environment, though.

Here is a timeline of the events and their impacts on our community caused by the pandemic on local businesses, and how the actions of some individuals’ undermined the community’s response:

March

March marks the month when many people first became aware of COVID-19 and its devastating health and economic impacts.

UWO sent residential students home and moved classes online halfway through the month.

Wisconsin Gov. Tony Evers closed bars and restaurants for dine-in service mid-month as well, and employers began laying off workers while community groups rallied to support Oshkosh.

Evers issued a statewide “Safer at Home” order, closing nonessential businesses by the end of March.

April

The Wisconsin Supreme Court blocked Evers’ attempt to move the state’s primary elec-

tion, signaling the conservative court’s initial objections to the governor’s executive authority to manage the pandemic in early April.

While nonessential businesses closed, essential workers braved the pandemic, keeping the city running, and corporations doled out temporary raises as a public relations stunt.

Many of those laid off during the lockdown struggled to get unemployment benefits, although some of the state’s lowest paid employees received wage increases.

Evers eventually extended the Safer at Home order, causing protests throughout Wisconsin, demanding an end to the restriction.

The Oshkosh Chamber of Commerce signaled an opposition to government restrictions aimed at combating the pandemic around the same time. The Tavern League of Wisconsin was a vocal opponent of the order.

May

Restrictions on non-essential businesses began to ease, and Oshkosh businesses worked toward reopening.

The Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce lobbying group pushed a reopening plan, publicly opposing the Safer at Home order. State GOP leaders embraced it.

The Wisconsin Supreme Court struck down Evers’ Safer-at-Home order weeks before non-essential businesses were initially supposed to reopen.

Almost immediately, Oshkosh bars were flooded with customers. They were quickly forced to close, however, as Winnebago County issued its own Safer at Home order. Although, it was quickly rescinded.

The EAA announced its signature AirVenture event, bringing 600,000 people to Oshkosh each year, would be canceled in 2020.

June

Rock USA and Country USA music festivals, traditionally held in June and July, were canceled due to COVID-19, too.

The New York Times and USA Today warned Oshkosh was primed for a major COVID-19 outbreak spike.

As Winnebago County worked to give the health officer more power to issue restrictions to limit the spread of COVID-19, it faced significant pushback from the community.

July

Much of that pushback, however, was the result of misinformation from local officials. Specifically, state Rep. Michael Schraa, R-Oshkosh and owner of Leon’s Frozen Custard. The Oshkosh Chamber of Commerce also fed into the misinformation frenzy.

The community felt the weight of losing AirVenture, as businesses did not see the annual revenue boost the event usually brings, as unemployment began returning to pre-pandemic levels.

Schraa claimed masks are ineffective and publicly pushed back on efforts to create a local mask mandate.

August

City officials hosted a budget planning workshop, revealing the city was projected to face a \$500,000 revenue shortfall and even larger cuts to expenses as a result of the pandemic.

September

The Winnebago County Health Department (WCHD)

described COVID-19 activity in the county as “significant” and “uncontrolled,” while Oshkosh moved onto the New York Times top 10 list of cities where COVID-19 was spreading the fastest.

The Outlet Mall went into foreclosure as a result of the pandemic in September, too.

October

City and county officials met with local leaders to begin brainstorming a unified approach to battling COVID-19. Still, the Oshkosh Chamber of Commerce and the local Tavern League affiliate remained defiant, saying people need to regulate their own behavior.

Evers issued an executive order limiting capacity on bars and restaurants to 25%, which the Tavern League has fought tooth and nail.

Fox Valley hospitals near capacity and health officials warn the situation could get even worse if the community does not change its behavior.

The Winnebago County Board of Supervisors postponed a vote on giving the health officer power to enforce COVID-19 restrictions.

November

Wisconsin remains a COVID-19 hotspot. Some businesses have recovered, while others are still struggling.

To date, the state has not passed any bill aimed at limiting the spread of COVID-19 since the Safer at Home order expired. Its embrace of the WMC plan was a smokescreen.

The whole pandemic did not have to be this horrendous. If Republican lawmakers had not undermined Evers at every turn, and if certain business groups had not undermined local officials, Wisconsin may

have had a local COVID-19 ordinance in June.

If we had an ordinance months ago, and if our leaders gave us a unified message supporting the facts — trusting science — our hospitals wouldn’t have been pushed to the brink and lives could have been saved.

“Pretty much every health leader has said that there needs to be a unified public message on this issue and they’re not seeing that,” Milwaukee Journal Sentinel Politics and State Government Reporter, Molly Beck, said at a Nov. 12 virtual event. “From their view, they think it would go a long way, if the leaders of both parties got together on the same page on a message, not necessarily on policy, but just on a message.”

Moreover, businesses wouldn’t be facing possible closure or staffing shortages due to employees contracting COVID-19 if we had kept our positive case rate down.

“For businesses, it’s a double-edged sword because you can say, ‘Keep this open because they’re struggling, they really need those customers;’ [but] whether they’re forced to close or not, the market — or coronavirus cases — will keep their business down dramatically,” Greater Oshkosh Economic Development Corp. CEO Jason White said. “That’s the Catch-22, there’s really no other way around that.”

Unfortunately, party politics and misinformation seeped into the Oshkosh community, preventing a timely and effective response to the pandemic.

While Oshkosh leaders have come together for the “Love Oshkosh” campaign, it may be too little too late.

Letters to the Editor

Changes coming for Black Friday

By Jackie Korth  
korthj68@uwosh.edu

It’s one day of the year when people go crazy over unbelievable prices; this day is known as Black Friday. Black Friday always happens the day after Thanksgiving, but most stores open Thanksgiving evening.

This event has been going on for many years, but this year may be different due to the COVID-19 pandemic. With being a yearly Black Friday shopper, I noticed that over the past couple of years, the number of people going out has decreased, even before the COVID-19 outbreak.

This is most likely due to people having more access to the internet and online shopping; it’s more convenient for people to sit in their beds or

wherever and buy gifts from their homes, especially with the pandemic going on.

This year hasn’t been a very memorable or good year since the start. With that, a lot of things have changed and had to be adjusted.

One of these things was the stores participating in the Black Friday sales. The different stores had to come up with a new way to keep their customers and employees safe from the spread of the virus.

Most of the stores started their sales early so the stores wouldn’t be so crowded during Black Friday; some stores started their sales a whole seven days before Black Friday, and some did the Fridays leading up to Black Friday starting at the beginning of November.

With stores doing this, when

Black Friday came, the inside of the stores was not as packed as the previous years. People had space to walk around with their carts without it being so crowded and people didn’t have to wait in the checkout lines that wrapped around the store.

Also, the stores most likely had more shoppers come out during the week worth of sales since they didn’t have to come out for only one day and stand in the long lines waiting.

Like I’ve mentioned before, Black Friday usually starts the evening of Thanksgiving; but this year, most stores didn’t open until Black Friday. This gives the employees time to spend with their families before they have to go deal with the rush of the people. Most stores didn’t need to open so

early anyway, since their sales have been going on for a while.

On the other hand, it’s the one day a year you’ll be able to shop throughout the night into the next day; so why stop the tradition? I know people who would go Black Friday shopping just for the experience; they like to get up early, sit in the long lines and see everyone go crazy over the deals. But this year was different, it wasn’t like the past years.

With the changes of Black Friday this year due to the Covid-19 virus, how will the future Black Friday’s be run? Will they go back to how it used to be? Or will it be similar to this year since it seemed to work out well? I guess we will have to wait and find out next year!

The best coverage in the city

By Dan Rylance  
bulgariadb@yahoo.com

This is a response to Sophia Voight’s article “How did Oshkosh vote in the election?”

It was published in the Nov. 19, 2020 of The Advance-Titan.

I liked the article. No. I really liked the article.

It was the best reporting of the recent state wide election in Oshkosh.

It was better than both the coverage in the Oshkosh Northwestern and the Oshkosh Herald.

Whoever did the graphics deserve a compliment as well. It was well done.



# UWO Thanksgiving meal was a box o’ boring

By Kaitlyn Scoville  
scovik21@uwosh.edu

Thanksgiving this year looked severely different for those who chose to remain safe from the coronavirus, or avoid putting those they love at risk.

This year, UW Oshkosh offered a complimentary Thanksgiving meal with all of the stereotypical fixins: turkey, ham, stuffing, mashed potatoes and gravy, mashed sweet potatoes, green bean casserole, rolls, salad and the illustrious pumpkin pie.

“Thanksgiving is a time of family, and nothing has disrupted ‘family’ more than COVID-19 in the last nine months,” Chancellor Andrew Leavitt said in a Nov. 17 email. “But the actions we take today will help preserve our families and help us move toward a time where we can be together again.”

Pickup was located in Blackhawk Commons between 1 and 3 p.m. on Thanksgiving Day. Leavitt and Associate Director of Student Involvement Missy Burgess greeted each student, wishing them all a happy holiday.

Burgess handed over a reusable green container, and off I went through the Thanksgiving buffet.

Of course, being the glutton that I am, I had to ask for everything: especially the rolls and mashed potatoes.

However, I didn’t want to hoard everything; I was one of the first people to pick up, and I didn’t know how many more were going to come in the following couple hours.

The kind server offered generous half-spoonfuls of everything scoopable, and one slice of both ham and



Kaitlyn Scoville / Advance-Titan

UWO offered students a complimentary meal on Thanksgiving Day.

turkey. With the roll on top, I could hardly shut the container. The salad and pie were provided in two separate plastic containers.

Since I had already eaten breakfast with my mom and planned dinner with my dad, my girlfriend Hailey Vadnais and I decided to tackle the school’s meal that evening. So I’ll admit, it wasn’t as “fresh” as it could have been, but it sufficed.

I hadn’t thought of the presentation when I first got the food from Blackhawk, but when Hailey opened the container, she said it was a zero. However, I can let the presentation pass as I had them fit so much food in such a small container.

First up was the salad. I mentioned before that I was a glutton, but salad is the bane of my existence. Hailey dressed it all with ranch, closed the container and shook it up.

After having a few bites, she said, “It’s very salad, 10 out of 10. Actually, it would be better with cheese.”

We continued watching TV, and a few bites later, she redacted her statement. “Nobody wants to eat a quarter of a tomato,” she said, holding one up on her fork.

After that, we moved on to the main portion of the meal. I went for the ham, Hailey went for the turkey.

When I picked up the food, the ham was served with a pineapple

chunk, so I knew it was going to be on the sweeter side. However, when I tried a bite, I couldn’t taste that sweetness at all. But I love ham, so I let that slide too.

Hailey took a bite of the turkey and noted that it didn’t really taste like anything special.

“I don’t know what to say other than it tastes like turkey,” she said.

However, the mashed potatoes saved the show by being the best thing on the plate. The skin was still on, and there was a strong taste of garlic, which was a plus to both Hailey and I.

The mashed sweet potatoes tasted as you would expect — like sweet potatoes. Nothing special again.

“They taste about average for sweet potatoes,” Hailey added.

However, the dunce of the meal was the green bean casserole. It was dry and didn’t taste like much at all.

“It’s a no from me,” Hailey said.

The stuffing gained some points back for the meal, though. It was delicious. Hailey rated it a 7 out of 10.

Now, what I was looking forward to the most: the roll. I picked that sucker up and thought I could bounce it. However, the inside was soft. It’s the kind of dinner roll you would get at a cheap family restaurant. As a bread connoisseur, it was great on taste.

Last but not least, the pumpkin pie. The dessert everybody looks forward to at the end of the meal; the dish that everybody saves room in their stomach for.

Hailey and I both took a bite and agreed that it was very strong on the cinnamon. So much so that it kind of left a bitter taste on our palates.

“You taste more cinnamon than pumpkin,” Hailey said.

The crust left something to be desired; it didn’t taste like anything. At least that isn’t the star of the dish.

Overall, it was a stereotypical Thanksgiving meal. The presentation was below average, and everything tasted as one would expect it to. Nobody should complain about the fact that it was free and even an option from UWO.

That’s what I’m thankful for this year — UWO taking time to provide a good meal for students who perhaps could not have or chose not to otherwise spend their breaks with the ones they love.

# ‘Mulan’ is just another soulless Disney rehash

By Nolan Fullington  
fullin38@uwosh.edu

“Mulan (2020)” is another product from Disney that you’re meant to consume, then praise this corporation for representation in a film that was already perfect and diverse 22 ago. Except this time, most of it was filmed in a room-temperature sound stage in front of a green screen.

However, I did not forfeit any money to Disney to see this film, but rather waited for a fortuitous opportunity where I could watch it for free.

“Mulan (2020)” is about Mulan doing the exact same thing we already saw her do twenty-two years ago, except this time it’s more boring, blunt and overt.

This film and “Captain Marvel” have the exact same problem, and I don’t know what it is with Disney, but they have no idea how to write strong female characters anymore.

They’re characters who inherit a magic power that makes them do anything and everything while men specifically attempt to suppress that power. Each film is about the female protagonist unleashing that power to become overly powerful halfway through the film and be that way for the next hour.

So “Mulan (2020),” Rey from “Star Wars” and “Captain Marvel” are not about working hard or staying dedicated to achieve your goals, like “Mulan (1998)” did. It’s instead about relying on a magic power you luckily possess to do all the work for you because you’re a woman and in order to be a strong woman, you need a magic power that’s com-



pletely unattainable in real life to do anything worthwhile.

This “Mulan” remake just took all of the subtext from the original film and made it text, in case you didn’t understand the original film’s intentions for some reason. There are so many scenes where someone says, “But Mulan, you’re a woman. You can’t be a warrior because you’re not a man. Go be a good wife.” That was the literal dialogue at times.

One other major issue I had with the film was this magical force power called the Chi. It’s essentially the Force and it allows you to do everything, including the kind of floaty action that ‘Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon’ features, which completely destroys the sense of grounding that this live action remake is trying to achieve.

The animated “Mulan” film had more realism to it than this remake. Characters are snatching arrows out of mid-air, running up walls and do-

ing Jedi backflips that it ruined the sense of realism this film needed to really distinguish itself from its predecessor.

“Mulan (2020)” is standing on the shoulders of giants in the martial arts genre to self-proclaim itself as this “bold,” new re-imagining of “Mulan” when the film’s action is not inventive.

For the average audience member, yes, the action is something they may have never seen before, but if you’re at all familiar with even base-level martial arts films, you’ll find that “Mulan (2020)” is just taking whatever elements it wants from other great films and using it without acknowledging those great films it took from. It is reminiscent of the “Jungle Cruise” movie Disney is releasing soon and will probably not acknowledge how they are blatantly stealing from “The African Queen.”

Still, having taken from “Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon,” “Mulan (2020)” still was still an awful action film. It’s not just that the drama and everything else didn’t work, but it’s edited with a weed wacker. It’s that kind of quick-cutty, CGI nonsense that nobody likes, but then someone occasionally runs on a wall and stabs someone without a single drop of blood being spilled because this is a Disney film.

One other thing that completely bothered me from the start was that everyone spoke English. In the original “Mulan,” it’s a cartoon and from the 90s; it gets a pass. But in this world of progressive thinking and increased representation in film, then also having this be a live-action remake, it’s bothersome that all of

these characters are not speaking their native languages.

Especially if the point of this film was to ground the narrative in realism. Having these characters speak English versus any other language is Disney acknowledging that they understand what will make more money, so they decided to go the “marketable” route. (Disney thinks you’re stupid).

This is also another one of those Disney films where everything looks perfect and feels so calculated. All of the edges are sanded off, everyone’s clothing looks shiny and washed, their hair is always perfect, green screens are incredibly obvious to spot as well.

I just utterly hate those kinds of movies because they don’t have character. It doesn’t feel like someone’s vision is on the screen. It feels like a bunch of suits were behind the camera with clipboards checking off boxes and looking at the market research.

The actress who played Mulan here is also so boring. There is nothing to her character when the 1998 version of that character had a pinch of whimsicalness. And because that version of the character worked hard to achieve her goals, there is a great deal of care for her. Mulan in this remake feels like a stand-in. As “Mr. Smith Goes to Washington” would put it, “just filling a seat.”

In fact, halfway through the film, Mulan learns to unleash her power. So not even an hour into this film, she is already super powerful and can do everything, which makes for such a boring character.

You need that emotional element

to her character that gets paid off during the end climax or her discovering to unleash that power during the climax. Instead, there is nothing and characters just wack swords at each other for a climax.

Cri-Kee from “Mulan (1998)” is a human being in this remake and they do absolutely nothing with that character. Take him out of the film and nothing changes. Literally nothing. Cricket (Cri-Kee) is only there in another desperate attempt to make you care about what’s happening on screen.

Donnie Yen was also tricked into another Disney production. I’m sure he just didn’t care anymore and took the paycheck. Good for him and Jet Li though who are legitimate martial artists, but the film made no attempt at highlighting their abilities.

The villain, Bori Khan, is also boring. He is an evil man who wants to take over the kingdom because he wants revenge and he dies in the most hilarious way. It’s like a subpar “Game of Thrones.”

This film just got more and more pathetic as it went along to the point where I was laughing at what was happening and this \$200 million production turned into schlock.

In six months, everyone will forget this film exists and just go back to talking about how wonderful the 1998 film is. Nothing about this remake is impressive and it has no redeeming elements. It’s the illusion of grandeur, but it’s really a ploy to get people to spend thirty dollars to watch it on a streaming service you already have to pay monthly for.



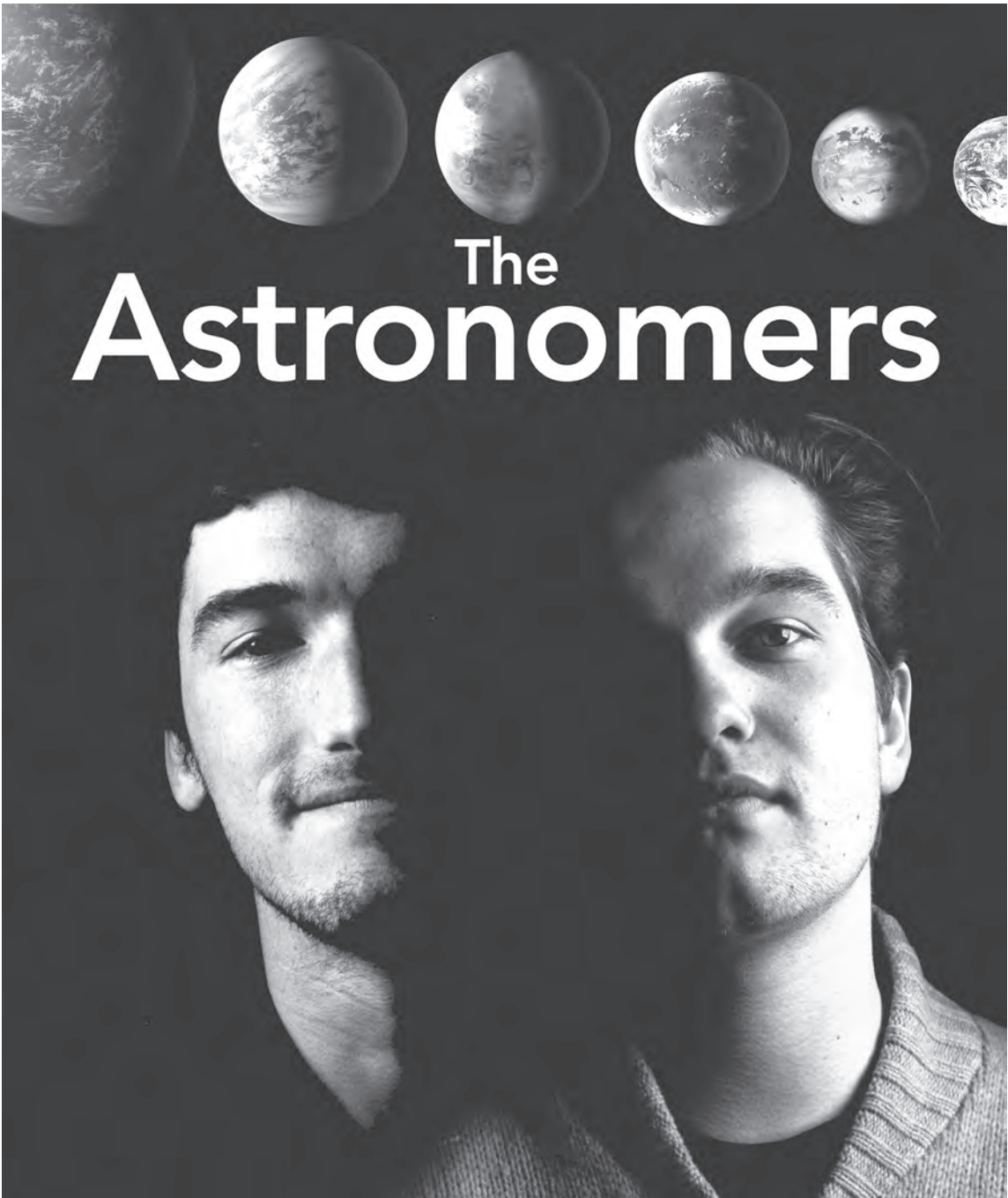


Photo illustration by Carter Uslabar / Advance-Titan  
UWO juniors Ben Baker (left) and Michael Stensland (right) make up the pop duo, The Astronomers.

‘The 2000s:’  
The Astronomers’ next odyssey

By Carter Uslabar  
uslabe78@uwosh.edu

The Astronomers, a pop-duo comprised of UWO students Ben Baker and Michael Stensland, talked to The Advance-Titan about their new song which has been picked up by local radio stations, their upcoming EP release and production during the pandemic.

“We dropped our debut EP back in July, and that was like our first sound that we were going for, so all the songs up until then had a kind of distinct, different sound to them,” Stensland said of “Sinking Ships and Story Tales.” “But since then, we’ve been evolving into what we want to sound like; we like this indie, jazzy, funky kind of sound, and it’s definitely the sound we want to go for.”

This rings true for their recent release, “Overthinking,” which has racked up over 100,000 plays on Spotify since its release. “Overthinking” is dominated by an energetic piano track and head-nod-inducing drums.

Another noticeable difference in “Overthinking” is the quality of the vocal production. Prior to the pandemic, Baker and Stensland had outsourced their vocal mastering to various artists with more expertise.

“Every song [on “Sinking Ships and Story Tales”] kind of sounded stylistically different,” Baker said. “With COVID, we’ve really been able to sit down and figure out our kind of production chain for vo-

cal.”

As a result, they’ve been able to hone a more unique, consistent style for their vocals, which they think will lead to a more authentic sound in their upcoming EP.

“Overthinking’s” success isn’t limited to Spotify or the internet, though. It’s been picked up by 101.01 WIXX-FM in Appleton and 97.7 WFDL-FM in Fond du Lac, as well as UWO’s student-run radio station, 90.3 WRST-FM.

“I knew they had this ‘Ya er No’ segment where people could tweet or go on Facebook or whatever and say whether or not they liked it, and it’s kind of like a one-time thing,” Baker said. “So I found the email for [WIXX disc jockey] Otis Day, and a few weeks later I got an email saying they were going to add it to their station.”

Baker said “Overthinking” is still in a ‘spike category,’ so it’s not in WIXX’s full rotation yet, but is in a sort of trial phase where it’s played about 15-20 times a week.

The success they’ve seen locally on the airwaves and on the internet is a good omen for The Astronomers as they continue working on their next EP, “The 2000s,” slated to be released in late February or early March 2021.

Baker and Stensland said they’re aiming for an overarching theme of nostalgia in “The 2000s,” hoping to capture a bit of both the universal and the specific in each song.

“The production is really going to catch people off guard,”

Stensland said. “There’s a lot of cool stuff people aren’t going to be expecting, but if they’ve heard ‘Overthinking’ or ‘Drinking on a Tuesday,’ they can kind of start to see we’re changing some stuff up.”

The EP will showcase their overhaul of their production style. Not only have Baker and Stensland distilled their vocal productions, their entire songwriting process has flipped.

“For most of the songs on our last EP, I’d make a cool production, and he’d be like ‘Oh, I’ll write on that,’” Baker said. “But basically for this whole EP it’s been like ‘Check out this song I wrote,’ and I’ll get really inspired and be like, ‘That’s sick, let’s make this right now.’”

The pair’s growing experience producing music has also given them a better understanding of one another’s musical styles.

“Because I know where Ben wants to go with production, I’ve been kind of tailoring my style — whether it’s lyrics, rhythms or melodies — to what I’m assuming he’s going to produce to it,” Stensland said. “We’re writing more interesting topics, and it goes better with an interesting production.”

For now, The Astronomers are pushing full-steam ahead on “The 2000s.”

“It’s gonna be kind of like a surprise attack,” Stensland said. “It’s gonna be like, ‘bang: single,’ ‘bang: EP;’ we’re not going to be waiting two months to drop something.”

The best of Tiny Desk

NPR has been filming and recording their famous “Tiny Desk Concerts” for over a decade. The concerts, typically performed before the desk of “All Songs Considered” host Bob Boilen, span a vast range of artists, as you’ll see showcased here.

Billie Eilish’s performance reveals her incredible, raw talent as a musician, her vocals clean and haunting with no help from technology.

The Blue Man Group’s set showcases their musical creativity and unmatched performative skill.

Car Seat Headrest’s set is un-

polished, leaving the emotion conveyed unconstrained by stress or perfectionism.

Erykah Badu’s jazzy set is dominated by her stunning vocal quality, and her accompanying band breathes as one.

The Mountain Goats’ set spans decades of recordings, some loud, some quiet and timid, but all punctuated by powerful emotions.

T-Pain’s set is... something else. Despite being known for his liberal use of autotune, T-Pain’s voice is rich and a marvelous juxtaposition to his lyrics about strippers and clubbing.

Billie Eilish

Aug. 26, 2020  
Two-song set list



Blue Man Group

Oct. 3, 2016  
Three-song set list



Car Seat Headrest

Feb. 8, 2016  
Three-song set list



Erykah Badu

Aug 22, 2018  
Two-song set list

The Mountain Goats

Jan. 3, 2010  
Four-song set list



T-Pain

Oct. 29, 2014  
Three-song set list



# Farmers market continues indoors

By Joe Schulz  
schulj78@uwosh.edu

The Oshkosh Convention Center Ballroom fills with vendors selling fresh fruit, baked goods, crafts and a host of other wares every Saturday morning through Dec. 19.

The Oshkosh Winter Farmers Market continues to provide vendors from all over the region a space to make a living, despite the COVID-19 pandemic.

The pandemic has forced the market to make some adjustments in order to keep both shoppers and sellers safe, Market Manager Michelle Schmid-Schultz said.

This includes requiring attendees to wear masks, limiting capacity to 50% and enforcing other social distancing procedures provided by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS).

The market is also “regulating people at the door” and placing hand sanitizer dispensers at each booth in efforts to “control social distancing and make it as safe as possible,” Schmid-Schultz said.

Although the market continues

doing business, it is not the same experience for vendors and shoppers as before the pandemic.

“I don’t think there’s going to be a normal for a while,” she said. “I won’t even say it’s normal, but it’s just nice to have someplace else to go.”

There were several reasons for keeping the market open — the main one being supporting the market’s many vendors, who are all small business owners in their own right, Schmid-Schultz said.

Many of the vendors are proponents of sustainable agricultural practices, and the market provides a “needed place to sell their goods,” she said.

“A lot of the vendors are doing this not because it’s fun, but because they depend on the income,” the market manager said.

One of those vendors is Mike Stadler, who has been selling jelly at the Oshkosh Farmers Market for about a year.

He had a simple answer as to why he decided to continue selling at the market amid a pandemic.

“I gotta eat,” Stadler said.

The farmers market “is a ne-

cessity” for him; it is where he finds most of his customers and helps build word-of-mouth for his Creekside Farms brand. He believes farmers markets play an important role in building fledgling businesses.

“I’ve been going to different markets and selling my products for about 20 years; I’ve built a pretty good customer base,” he said.

Aside from serving the vendors, the market helps provide a sense of normalcy for the community, Schmid-Schultz said.

“People are just grateful that we’re here, and that’s why you see the positive vibe,” she said. “The vendors are happy to have a place to sell, and the people coming here are happy to be able to connect with their favorite vendors.”

Even so, the market has seen an estimated 50% dip in both vendors and attendees, which Schmid-Schultz attributed to both the restrictions designed to limit the spread of coronavirus and the general uncertainty of being out in public.

“We’re not the Oshkosh Farm-

ers Market we were last year,” she said. “I’m grateful that we’re still open, but it does sadden me that we aren’t what we were last year.”

For vendors like Terry Schmoldt of Fremont, who has been selling produce and baked goods at the market for the last decade, just having the market open at all has been a blessing.

The market provides “a good place for people to get fresh, local produce,” Schmoldt said.

He grows all of his own tomatoes, pumpkins, peppers, pickles and cucumbers. While Schmoldt hesitates to call his produce “true organic,” he describes it as “sustainably grown.”

“We treat the soil like a living organism,” Schmoldt said.

When many area farmers markets were temporarily closed due to COVID-19 in March, Schmoldt was able to donate much of his produce, avoiding waste. This generous act unfortunately caused a financial hit.

“It impacts the bottom line,” he said. “The summer market was a help, but I was really surprised by the amount of people

not taking [the pandemic] seriously.”

Attendees have been forced to take the pandemic seriously when strolling the convention center, because of the winter market’s mask mandate and other social distancing guidelines.

With the guidelines in place, Schmoldt feels safe interacting with customers and educating them about sustainability, which is his favorite part.

“People have distracted themselves so much from the farm and where their food comes from, so it’s fun talking to them about how it’s grown,” he said.

At the end of the day, keeping the market open and giving the vendors a place to sell their products — amid a time of great uncertainty — is enough incentive to continue persevering throughout the pandemic, Schmid-Schultz said.

“I love the market, so I’m just elated that we can be here and that we aren’t shut down,” she said. “The people that come here do welcome us because they see what we offer the community.”

## UWO theatre, radio-TV-film departments adapt to COVID

The UW Oshkosh theatre department has teamed up with the radio/TV/film department to bring shows to the campus and community at large through online distribution during the COVID era.

Despite live performances being out of the picture, the stage at the UWO Theatre Arts Center hasn’t been empty. Students performed and recorded productions of two plays, both of which are available to be streamed online for one price until Dec. 6.

Acclaimed playwright, director and UWO professor Richard Kalinoski directed a production of Tennessee Williams’ famous work, “The Glass Menagerie,” and theatre department chair Merlaine

Angwall directed the Christopher Durang play “Vanya and Masha and Sonya and Spike.”

By utilizing a pay-to-view feature on the theatre department’s YouTube channel, both shows are available to be viewed at any moment.

The theatre department’s online video adaptations of these shows is just one more example of programs throughout the university rising to meet the unrelenting circumstances brought about by the coronavirus.

Tickets are \$2 for UWO students, faculty and alumni, and \$8.50 for non-UWO-affiliated community members.



Join the Advance-Titan!

- Make meaningful connections
- Build your portfolio
- Gain valuable experience

Email atitan@uwosh.edu, or stop by  
Reeve 19 on Thursdays to get  
involved!

BUY TICKETS NOW!

2020-2021 Season:  
*Love, Guilt and Other Family Values*