

The Advance-Titan

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Photos courtesy of Polk Library

Above and below: As staff were getting ready to host Titan Nights in Polk Library in February 2022, the heating and air conditioning vent sprung a leak, spewing steaming hot water across the carpet and setting off the fire alarm. Water was even pouring out of the building.

By Josh Lehner
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UW Oshkosh Chancellor Andrew Leavitt revealed long-term plans to replace boilers and renovate or entirely rebuild Polk Library during a recent town hall meeting.

Currently, both the library and boiler projects sit in the planning and feasibility phase, which will be ongoing for the next two years. This phase will determine what to replace the boilers with and whether Polk will be renovated or demolished and rebuilt.

“Polk turns 60 this year and is in dire need of repairs or an upgrade,” Leavitt said in a recent blog post. “A study will help us assess whether the best plan is to renovate the space to meet the needs of the 21st-century student or if we need to start from scratch.”

Polk Library Director Sarah Neises said that, while the library has suffered water damage in many areas, most of it has been cleaned and remediated. Still, she said that rotting pipes and ceiling leaks may cause future damage.

“The pipes are rotting,” she said. “You can pick up a pipe and it just crumbles underneath your fingers.”

Neises said that some of the most critical leaks were caused by pipes running above the library’s archives, which store documents

that don’t exist anywhere else.

“The most catastrophic leak we had happened in May 2022, when a pipe leaked over the archives,” she said. “We barely were able to save artifacts such as an early 20th-century marching band outfit.”

In February 2022, Polk hosted Titan Nights. However, Neises said that on the afternoon before the event, a floor-level heating and air conditioning unit sprung a leak.

“Steaming, hot water poured onto the carpet,” she said. “Our librarians and staff grabbed mops and tried to soak up the water before facilities could come and shut off the unit.”

Neises said that the library archive hasn’t completely lost anything to water damage and that it has been moved to a different location. However, she also said that the library has thrown out entire sections of books due to damage.

The UW System requested more than \$21 million in building trust funds to provide studies and project planning to replace facilities between 2025 and 2027, the project request document stated.

Of that \$21 million, more than \$5.3 million has been requested for studies and planning in the Polk Library renovation or reconstruction. The report places the total Polk project budget estimate at more than \$111 million.



Leavitt said that the \$5.3 million requested for studies and planning will help determine ways to update the library.

“The study will address space needs aligned with how libraries of today are used,” he said. “This would include collaborative spaces, quiet spaces and technology-enabled spaces, enhancing the library’s role as a neutral space that welcomes students from every academic discipline and walk of life.”

In a report to the Board of Regents, Neises stated the need to improve the quality and scope of the library.

“A new or renovated library would greatly encourage students

to use the library,” she said. “A new building would require improved lighting, furniture, flooring and reconfigurable spaces to inspire concentration and collaboration.”

During the town hall, Leavitt also said that the boilers, some of which are 75 years old, no longer meet the campus’s heating capacity.

“They are not reliable and they are certainly not efficient,” he said. “Simply, the Oshkosh campus is at risk of not having enough steam during peak usage to heat our buildings.”

Leavitt said his administration is looking at different technologies and called the opportunity a

once in a several-generation project.

“We need to figure out a different way if we are going to be carbon neutral by 2030,” he said.

Central Heating/Chiller Plant Superintendent Daniel Biese said that Leavitt has created an Energy Study Committee and Sustainability Study on options to replace a 50-year-old boiler.

Commenting on both the boiler and Polk projects during the town hall, Leavitt said that he expects to hear from Gov. Tony Evers soon.

“I’ll be spending a lot of time in the Capitol in March and April,” he said, adding that the state budget will be decided sometime in June.

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

Dining rates stable despite rising food costs

By Kelly Hueckman
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UW Oshkosh Dining plans to keep meal plan rates the same through the next academic year despite a national increase in food prices, Assistant Director for Dining Operations Brian Warzynski said.

“University dining has no plans to make cuts to service,” Warzynski said. “We also are planning to keep meal plan rates for students the same next year, while most schools will need to increase rates.”

The price of food has gone up 10.1% in the past 12 months, a significant increase compared to historical price changes, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

To adapt to the rise in food prices, colleges nationwide have had to change students’ dining plans or costs. A few schools that have done this include Ripon College, George Washington University and Buffalo State University.

Warzynski said he has never dealt with such a spike in overall food costs.

“I have never seen anything like this before,” he said. “I have seen one or two items increase for a while ... This, on the other hand, has been almost every product that we purchase, and all the staples: eggs, flour, sugar, proteins.”

However, UWO’s food contractor, Aladdin Dining Services, has been able to keep the cost of meal plans down while still providing the same services as before, Warzynski said.

One way the university is combating rising food costs is minimizing food waste, he said.

“Aladdin will continue to



Anya Kelley / Advance-Titan

Despite rising food prices due to inflation, UWO plans to keep meal plan rates stagnant.



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

The inflation increase percentage for food (blue) has surpassed the overall inflation rate (red).

watch their waste,” Warzynski said. “The most expensive food is the one in the garbage can.”

Aladdin strives to reduce food waste through a method called batch cooking, which involves preparing meals for multiple days and storing them, said Aladdin dietitian Carese Walczyk.

“I do know that [cooks] do batch cooking, so they’ll cook bits at a time as they go,” she said.

After that, the leftover food is composted in UWO’s biodigester,

which uses the food’s methane gas to heat campus buildings.

“Leftover food we put in green bins,” Walczyk said. “We use the biodigesters so that we can use that to generate energy for the campus.”

Another way to keep dining rates down is to stabilize or increase student enrollment, Warzynski said.

The university announced budget cuts partially due to the 8% decrease in enrollment instead

of the 5% decrease that was budgeted for, a bleak feat after the 40-year low retention rate in Fall 2021.

“We are hopeful enrollment will stabilize and eventually increase, which will give us significant relief budgetarily,” Warzynski said.

The overall retention rates have already started to climb back up, increasing from 81% to 87% from last year, according to UWO Provost John Koker.

While Aladdin will continue to reduce food waste and the university works to increase enrollment, Warzynski said University Dining aims to minimize financial burden on students while providing adequate services.

“We rely on our communication and partnership with Aladdin to ensure we continue to offer consistent service for our students,” he said. “Our goal is to minimize the impact on students, with the hope any adjustments will be unnoticed.”

Senior Max Rinn said he hasn’t noticed any change in his university dining experience, but would be financially burdened if meal plan costs were to rise.

“I would think ‘What am I going to do? How am I going to pay for this?’” he said. “No college student should ever worry about what they’re going to eat.”

Similarly, sophomore Tessa Clausen said an increase in meal plan costs could deter students from enrolling or staying at UWO.

“Moral of the story, college is already super expensive,” she said. “Increasing the meal plan cost would just cause more people to be pushed away from attending college because they can’t afford it.”

UWO unveils emergency alert system

By Josh Lehner
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A new emergency communication system broadcasts alerts on UW Oshkosh computers by taking over the screen until the user acknowledges the message.

The alert appears on all UWO-owned computers used in classrooms, labs and workplaces, but it won’t affect students’ personal computers.

Acting Police Chief Chris Tarmann said that the new alert feature functions as an extension of the Titan Alert system, which sends notifications via email and text message.

“I’ve heard from professors over the years that some students are not allowed to have their phones out in the classroom, so a text notification or a push notification wouldn’t reach those students,” he said. “We also moved away from the digital clock boards being utilized as an emergency communication method, so this style of communication is a great way to keep strong communications across the three campuses.”

Unlike Titan Alerts, the desktop emergency system will be



Chris Tarmann

reserved for high-level risks, including severe weather warnings, building fires, active shooter incidents, gas leaks and other imminent threats.

UWO Police Lt. Greg Weitz said that the new system uses student-provided information to bolster Titan Alert, email and social media notifications.

“Anyone using a UWO-owned computer has the ability to connect to the police department through the UWO Mobile icon and provide real-time incident information,” he said. “Similar to a Titan Alert, desktop notifications are a message generated from the police department that displays on UWO computers.”

This addition to UWO’s emergency system comes on the heels of the Michigan State University mass shooting, which left three students dead and five injured.

Weitz said that one of the best prevention methods is attempting to identify people who may pose a risk.

“Members of leadership in various departments on campus constantly work together to exchange information on potential threats, assess the information and determine the necessary follow-up steps in an effort to keep these tragic incidents from happening in the first place,” he said.

UWO already provides Active Threat Preparedness training, the requests for which Weitz said typically increase on the heels of an event like the MSU shooting.

“Active Threat Preparedness training basically involves providing trainees with information on active threat statistics, the importance of sharing information, strategies for increasing awareness and strategies for staying safe in order to improve your chances of surviving an event like this,” he said. “The more community members that have these skills, the better chance we have

of identifying potential threats before they become an active threat incident.”

Weitz said that more university departments and groups are starting to acknowledge the training, including the community service officers — a partnership between the UWO police department and the Department of Resident Life, which manages the campus residence halls.

“At the start of the last two or three semesters, at the request of the Department of Residence Life, many of the newly hired community advisers (who work security stations in all residence halls) received training,” he said. “We are also looking at making this a mandatory training each fall for our community service officers.”

Active Threat Preparedness training sessions focusing on emergency practices, awareness and steps for staying safe will be held in the coming days for faculty and students: one on Feb. 24 from 9:30-11 a.m. and another on Feb. 28 from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Both sessions will be held in Sage Hall room 1214. Check your school email to sign up.

Evers addresses PFAS in budget plan

By WisPolitics.com

Gov. Tony Evers' biennial budget includes about \$11 million more in newly announced proposals to address PFAS and other hazardous contaminants in the state, but it's unclear whether the measures will garner enough support in the Republican-led Legislature.

The proposals are part of the more than \$116 million overall Evers has recommended in his budget to address PFAS — including \$100 million for a municipal grant program to help local governments respond to PFAS contamination that he announced in his State of the State address. The new measures aim to provide funds for the state's Well Compensation Grant Program, provide grants to address hazardous substances and environmental pollution and implement emergency measures related to PFAS contamination.

Some Republicans have said they are open to Evers' plans. But GOP Joint Finance Committee (JFC) Chairs Sen. Howard Marklein, R-Spring Green, and Rep. Mark Born, R-Beaver Dam, said they will work off current spending levels to build their own version of the biennial budget.

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, or "forever chemicals," are a series of chemicals found in industrial and everyday products, including firefighting foam and non-stick cookware. They do not break down easily in the environment and are linked to several diseases and cancers in humans. PFAS have been discovered in areas across Wisconsin, including in Dane, Marinette, Marathon and La Crosse counties, and more recently in the town of Stella in Oneida County.

Evers predicted there will be some sort of compromise.

"There has to be. There's no reason why we shouldn't be expecting municipalities to foot that bill," Evers said. "And frankly, there's no reason why those companies that make PFAS and put those PFAS in the water should be

able to get away with it."

The new measures include:

- \$8.2 million in segregated revenue to remove waste materials at abandoned properties, and to fund a permanent position to provide grants and services to address hazardous substances and environmental pollution under the Revitalize Wisconsin Initiative. Evers proposed to absorb the Dry Cleaner Environmental Response Fund, a reimbursement program to help dry cleaners pay to investigate and clean up dry cleaning facilities, into the initiative.
- \$1.8 million in segregated revenue for emergency measures related to PFAS contamination.
- \$1 million for financial assistance under the state's well compensation program. The governor also recommended putting the program's contamination criteria in line with federal water quality standards and expanding the financial requirements to apply to more Wisconsinites.

In addition to the new proposals and the \$100 million for the grant program, other PFAS-related proposals in the budget include:

- \$3.9 million in segregated revenue for PFAS sampling and research, including for 11 full-time positions, 10 of which would be permanent.
- \$1 million in segregated revenue to collect and dispose of PFAS-containing firefighting foam. The measure recommends allowing the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to help fire departments purchase firefighting foam that doesn't contain PFAS.
- \$200,000 for awareness and outreach related to PFAS.

Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce Executive Vice President of Government Relations Scott Manley said the business association is open to the idea of providing grants to local governments for PFAS remediation.

He said it will be up to the Legislature to determine an appropriate

amount of money to provide.

Manley said other PFAS-related measures Evers included should be introduced as separate bills.

"The other items are policy-related, and we do not think that the budget process is the appropriate place to do PFAS policy," Manley said. "Those policies should be debated on their own, outside of the budget process."

At a hearing last month, Sen. Robert Cowles indicated lawmakers would move to address PFAS contamination in the state. He noted the big challenge would be whether to provide more funding and how much.

Cowles said while he may not agree with every detail in the governor's proposal, he wants to act to improve water quality.

Cowles said he has spoken with fellow Republicans on the Natural Resources and Energy Committee, and they were in the process of looking for support for the more than

\$100 million proposal Evers previously announced in the budget for municipal grants to address PFAS contamination.

He noted the Legislature had successfully passed measures related to PFAS in the past, including to hire a contractor to clean up and dispose of firefighting foam for the DNR and ban training with PFAS-containing firefighting foam.

Cowles argued families don't want the chemicals in their drinking water even if it has tested for less than the 70 parts per trillion (ppt) limit approved by the state Natural Resources Board (NRB).

"So you've got that political pressure and, you know, it could be dangerous even at a lower level. So that's something we've got to wrestle with: at what level are those monies made available?"



The standards the NRB approved last year were lower than the Department of Health Services recommendation of 20,000 ppt or 20 ng/L. The board, which had a majority of appointees by former GOP Gov. Scott Walker at the time, rejected the proposal in favor of the less restrictive Environmental Protection Agency standard.

Sen. Dianne Hesselbein, D-Middleton, who is also on the Senate Natural Resources and Energy Committee, said she was pleased to hear Cowles at the recent informational hearing mention a bipartisan effort to address PFAS. She said she is hopeful Republicans will support Evers' budget proposal.

"I think one thing that the hearing showed everybody is that PFAS is everywhere. It's not just in one corner of the state, and it really affects all of us," Hesselbein said. "And when it comes to the health and the welfare of Wisconsinites, I would hope that we could all be on board to do as much as we can with what we have to make our water clean."

Hesselbein said she believes Republicans are open to looking at PFAS mitigation because it's affecting the communities they represent.

Republicans Sen. Mary Felzkowski and Rep. Rob Swearingen said they support Evers' proposal to include \$100 million for a municipal grant program in the state budget to address PFAS contamination. Both Felzkowski and Swearingen's districts house the town of Stella, where the DNR last month found levels of PFAS contamination above health guidelines in 24 of 38 private wells sampled.

The agency issued health ad-

visories for those wells, making the homeowners eligible to apply for the state's Well Compensation Grant Program. The program provides funding up to \$16,000 per grant to help Wisconsinites pay to replace, rebuild or treat contaminated wells. There is an income limit of \$100,000.

Felzkowski said, "We may need to look at how the Well Compensation Fund is structured to ensure that we can utilize those dollars in the correct way, but I'm hopeful we can work together to get something accomplished."

Felzkowski said the challenge for the town of Stella is that the source of contamination is still unknown.

"The state responded swiftly by providing everyone with clean drinking water, but this is only a short-term solution to a long-term problem," she said.

Swearingen said he will actively work with JFC members to support the funding. He said clean drinking water isn't a partisan issue, so the discussion could come down to how much to spend addressing PFAS.

"I think everybody agrees that you should be able to go to your kitchen sink and turn the tap on and the water should be potable," Swearingen said. "My guess is if there's any argument, it'll be how much one side wants to spend versus the other."

The Capitol Report is written by the editorial staff at WisPolitics.com, a nonpartisan, Madison-based news service that specializes in coverage of government and politics and is distributed for publication by members of the Wisconsin Newspaper Association.

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3. Type in your email and click SUBSCRIBE

Protasiewicz, Kelly advance

Janet Protasiewicz and Daniel Kelly will advance to the Wisconsin Supreme Court general election in April.

The two earned the most votes in Tuesday's statewide primary. With 86% of the votes counted, the race was called with Protasiewicz having 402,848 votes, or 46.4% of votes cast and Daniel Kelly having 211,866 votes, or 24.4%.

The other two candidates — Jennifer Dorrow, a Waukesha County Circuit Court judge, and Everett Mitchell, a Dane County Circuit Court judge — had 190,213 votes and 64,067 votes respectively, or 21.9% and 7.4% of total votes cast.

Protasiewicz, known as a left-wing candidate, is a family division judge on the Milwaukee County Circuit Court. Kelly, known as a right-wing candidate, is a former Wisconsin Supreme Court Justice who was appointed by then-Gov. Scott Walker.

Sports



Scoreboard

Thursday, Feb. 16

Gymnastics

UWO - 190.775

Winona State University - 183.95

Saturday, Feb. 18

Swimming and Diving

Men's - 5/5, 228

Women's - 5/5 - 556

Track and Field

Men's - 1/10, 226

Women's - 1/13, 150

Tuesday, Feb. 21

Women's Basketball

UWO - 57

UW-La Crosse - 54

Upcoming Events

Friday, Feb. 24

Wrestling

at NCAA Division III Upper Midwest Regional

Gymnastics

vs. UW-Eau Claire 5 p.m.

Track and Field

at WIAC Indoor Championships at UW-Stout

Men's Basketball

vs. UW-Eau Claire in WIAC Tournament 7 p.m.

Women's Basketball

at UW-Whitewater in WIAC Tournament 7 p.m.

Baseball

vs. Huntington College at Rhodes College 10:30 a.m.

Saturday, Feb. 25

Wrestling

at NCAA Division III Upper Midwest Regional

Track and Field

at WIAC Indoor Championships at UW-Stout

Baseball

at Rhodes College 10:30 a.m.

Softball

vs. Lakeland University 11 a.m. & 1 p.m.

Sunday, Feb. 26

Baseball

vs. North Park University at Rhodes College 10:30 a.m.

Women's Basketball

at TBA vs WIAC Tournament at 7 p.m.

Mens's Basketball

at TBA vs WIAC Tournament 7 p.m.

A-Trivia

When was the last time the UWO women's basketball team won the WIAC tournament?

Answer: The last time the UWO women's basketball team won the WIAC tournament was in 2021.

Women's basketball advances in WIAC

By Jacob Link
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The UW Oshkosh women's basketball team advanced to the semifinals of the Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletics Conference (WIAC) tournament after taking down the UW-La Crosse Eagles 57-54 at the Kolf Sports Center Feb. 21.

UWO's Kayce Vaile scored a game-high 19 points and grabbed eight rebounds while Jenna Jorgensen added 14 points and six rebounds for the Titans. Guard Kate Huml scored 11 points and Sarah Hardwick finished with seven points. Oshkosh finished the night shooting just 36.7% from the floor but outshot UWL from the foul line 89.5% to 77.8%.

For the Eagles, Alana Gilles led the team with 12 points and six rebounds while Paige Schumann added nine points. The La Crosse bench outscored UWO's bench 13-0 and the Eagles shot just 20% from behind the arc.

Vaile hit a 3-pointer to start the first quarter and the Titans began the game on a 7-3 run. The teams traded baskets for most of the opening period until Huml converted on a layup, which kickstarted a 6-0 run that saw Oshkosh take a 17-10 lead. A string of UWL baskets brought the Eagles to within one point, but UWO's Ava Douglas made two free throws and the Titans ended the first quarter leading 19-16.

After Jorgensen hit a 3-pointer



Jacob Link / Advance-Titan

UWO's Ava Douglas looks to pass the ball in Oshkosh's 57-54 win over UWL in the WIAC tournament.

with seven minutes to go in the second quarter, UWL made three-straight baskets to take a two-point lead. Oshkosh would tie the game at 24, but with 36 seconds left in the half, UWL's Grace Cote nailed a 3-pointer and the Eagles went into the locker room up 29-24.

La Crosse opened the scoring in the third quarter with a Gilles layup to increase the UWL lead to seven points. Oshkosh responded with a 13-2 run and took a 37-33 lead with just under six minutes to go in the quarter. The teams traded baskets for the next four minutes be-

fore Schumann nailed a jumper to tie the game at 39. Both teams hit free throws in the final 20 seconds and the third quarter finished with both teams tied at 41.

La Crosse's Kyah Steiner put the Eagles ahead by one point with a free throw early in the fourth quarter, but the lead didn't last long and Jorgensen put Oshkosh back ahead with a layup. The final period was back-and-forth, but UWO took the lead for good after a Vaile free throw with six minutes remaining in the game. The Eagles kept the game to within three points, but

Oshkosh grinded out the victory in the final minutes to advance to the WIAC semifinals.

"I think this win definitely helps us in the tournament because we got one under our belt and we were a little nervous going into the game because it's the playoffs," Jorgensen said. "Now that we have that win, I think we're going to be a dangerous team."

The Titans will take on UW-Whitewater in the semi-finals of the WIAC tournament Feb. 24 at the Williams Center at 7 p.m.

Titans break five records at WIAC championships

By Doug Newhouse
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The UW Oshkosh swimming and diving team placed fifth and broke five records in the Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (WIAC) Championships Feb. 15-18.

For the women's team on the opening day of the championship, Cadence Showalter, Francesca Schiro, Brianna Smith and Brianna Wesenberg swam the 800-yard freestyle relay with a time of 7:48.01, breaking a UW Oshkosh record.

For the men's team, the 200-yard medley relay team composed of CJ Willert, Cade Millam, Andrew Copeland and Drew Davis, finished with a combined time of 1:39.46.

In the 800 freestyle relay, the team made up of Damen Seremet, Drew Davis, Chase Millam and Ben Knoek finished with a time of 7:15.70.

Senior Hayden Freeman said he was proud of his team's performance, and that it's heading in the right direction.

"I was very happy with the performance of the team this season," he said. "It was better than last season and I think I am leaving the team in a good spot. I'm excited to see what they are able to do."

On the second day for the women's team, Showalter broke the school record for the 200-yard individual medley with a time of



Courtesy of UWO athletics

C.J. Willert swims in the 200-yard medley relay at the WIAC Championships in Brown Deer Feb 16.

2:12.40, breaking a record set in 1997.

On the men's team for the second day, Damen Seremet made it in the top ten in the 50-yard free with a time of 21.38 and Ethan Almstadt won the 500-yard freestyle clocking in at 5:07.28.

On the third day, another record was broken by Schiro in both the prelims and finals in the 200 freestyle with times of 1:53.68 and 1:53.44, breaking a record set in 2020 and winning the event.

Showalter also broke a record that day in the 100-yard butterfly with a time of 57.71, breaking a record set in 2020.

Willert broke the school record

from 2019 on the fourth day in the 200-yard backstroke with a time of 1:58.25, securing him a top-ten spot in the event.

On the final day of the WIAC meet, Schiro broke her own prelim record in the finals clocking in at 51.31 getting runner-up and qualifying for NCAA III B 100 yard free event.

In the 400 yard freestyle Showalter, Schiro, Smith and Wesenberg broke a 25-year-old record from 1998, with a combined time of 3:36.73.

"I think I am leaving the team in good hands," senior Chase Millam said, "There is a really big recruiting class coming in."

He has high hopes for the team as the new recruiting class coming will nearly double the size of the team.

Diving into the competition representing the women is Abbi Priestley. She earned second place in the 3-meter dive with a score of 416.80 and won the 1-meter with a score of 426.85. She qualified for NCAA Zone Diving and won the WIAC Diver of the Meet.

Check the UWO athletics website to see if UW Oshkosh swimming and diving qualified for the NCAA Division III National Championships.

2023 Senior Spotlight

Two Titans who have dominated the mat and the court

By Nolan Swenson
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At the end of every season, numerous UW Oshkosh senior athletes hang up their title and advance into their future. Here, we'll feature two Titans: wrestling's Eli Mondrella and women's basketball's Jenna Jorgensen.

Mondrella has participated in UWO's wrestling program since 2019, but he fell in love with the sport long before then. He said that since being introduced to wrestling, the sport has been a family thing for him.

"I started in fifth grade," Mondrella said. "My dad was a wrestler who introduced me to the sport. I fell in love with it right away."

He continued to wrestle and eventually attended Minooka Community High School in Illinois, a school he said prepared him for the collegiate level of wrestling.

"I had professional exposure from my high school wrestling program," he said. "I came up here while I was looking at one other school, but then I decided to come here and I've enjoyed my five years here."

When he joined the UWO wrestling team his freshman year, he said that he immediately found fun and camaraderie in the program.

"My freshman year was pretty good," he said. "Half the team was freshman, so ... it was a really good team environment. [But] all of my years, the team has been close and looked out for each other."

During 2021 when wrestling adjustments were being made for COVID-19 so that the season could go on, Mondrella suffered an injury after butting his knee with an opponent. The incident was enough to tear his ACL.

After his injury, he struggled to choose between healing and being an active teammate. But eventually, with the support of staff, Mondrella was able to start the healing process.

"It was hard because CO-

VID-19 made getting surgery really difficult," he said. "The trainers were a massive help, though, because I was able to do all of my physical therapy through the school."

Throughout the healing process during the COVID-19 season, Mondrella said that he continued to show up to team practices.

"I was hurt, but I kept coming," he said. "COVID was a challenge; there were a lot of ground rules that were set during school. Masks, consistent testing, only having one partner to work with, but our guys made the best of those challenging circumstances."

Despite his injury in the previous season, Mondrella returned to the team to help hone his teammates skills; however, he didn't expect an opportunity to wrestle to present itself.

"I hadn't planned on competing this year, but this summer the previous coach resigned two months before the season, and a lot of people bailed out on the team," he said.

Because of that, he said he felt the team was stronger on an emotional level due to everyone's commitment to the team when coach Aaron Konitzer took over.

"This year has been very different with such a small team," he said. "The team dynamics are new ... but the guys have done well adapting to [Konitzer]."

Mondrella said that this year showed the drive and commitment in the wrestling program due to the thinness of the crowd.

"Every day this year we had 15-20 guys in the room," he said. "What I took away is that it showed a different level of commitment from the guys that were there. People there were there to be a part of the program."

Beyond the athletes, Mondrella said staff also allowed the team to excel through difficulties, making the team closer and stronger together.

"This is one of the closest teams I've ever been a part of," Mondrella said. "It felt more like a family than any other



Courtesy of UWO Athletics

UWO's Jenna Jorgensen takes a 3-pointer against Ripon. During that game she went 2/2 on 3-pointers.

team I've been on in my 13-year career."

He said that his cumulative experiences at UWO have made him the person he is and intends to be.

"I'm really grateful for my experiences here and not just wrestling," he said. "My program teachers did a lot for me over the past few years and my coaches Aaron Konitzer and Matt Rikeoff did a lot for me and helped me grow as a person; they made me a man."

Mondrella said that despite falling hopes for the season, it allowed the remaining wrestlers' perseverance to show.

"Last year we beat UW-La Crosse so we had high expectations, but those expectations dropped and a lot of people left. I think that says something about the guys who stayed. They didn't expect to win, but they still stuck through and battled their asses off. They put their heart into their matches and never cut themselves short."

As for the women's basketball

team, senior Jenna Jorgensen has served as the team's point guard for the past four years.

Jorgensen said that she started playing basketball at a young age and grew up alongside the sport.

"My parents signed me up in third grade and I started playing in 3-3 leagues," she said. "Someone my dad knew made a team, I joined and I went from there. I grew up loving the sport and friends that I played with."

When it came to choosing a college, Jorgensen said she was late to commit and unsure of what she wanted to do in college.

"I committed a while after my senior basketball season," she said. "I committed in March, and I didn't know if and what I wanted to play in college; I could've gone for golf or even to other universities."

Jorgensen said that what made her ultimately choose UWO was family ties and awareness of UWO's sports reputation.

"I chose Oshkosh basketball because it was close to home and I knew that Oshkosh was a winning program," she said. "I also wanted to come because my dad and uncle are in the baseball Hall of Fame and I wanted to make a name for myself here."

Jorgensen joined the basketball program in the 2019-20 season and started small, but she showed promise and moved forward in the team.

"I knew coming in not a lot of freshmen played right away, so I realized that it would take time," she said. "My freshman year, I got a couple minutes here or there, but sophomore year I got a bit more time and I took advantage of it."

She made use of her playing time during her sophomore year, averaging 18.5 minutes a game and 10.1 points per game.

After that display of force, she said she began to get a lot more playtime per game.

"Junior [year] I got around 20-25 minutes of playtime and senior [year] I got 25-30 minutes of playtime," she said.

She said that something that has helped her develop is the trust that her coaches put in her, with head coach Brad Fischer relying on her when other teammates suffered injuries.

"Sophomore year, Fischer and I had talked about me playing because other teammates were out with injuries," she said. "He's helped by trusting me in any sort of game situation."

After the Titans finish the postseason, Jorgensen will be done with UWO basketball, but she said the experience is something that she'll carry with her for the rest of her life.

"It's been a great four years and I've created lifelong friendships," she said. "Coming into college, you're nervous, but having a team helps you create friendships right away. The payoff of the difficulties of making it to championships is amazing; it's something that I'll look back on in a decade with friends. It was worth my while and I'm happy I got to experience it."

Jorgensen plans to graduate with a bachelor's degree in elementary education and hopes to teach at the second- or third-grade level. She will be a student teacher in the Green Bay area, where she would like to stay local.

Mondrella intends to student-teach this summer, and then attend graduate school at UW-La Crosse to receive his master's in adapted physical education. He plans to stay in the Midwest and teach at the kindergarten through fifth-grade level.



Courtesy of Eli Mondrella

Eli Mondrella takes the top position against a UW-Whitewater wrestler. Over the season, he had 10 wins.

Sports

NBA All-Star Weekend features Herd players

By Jacob Link
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While the Wisconsin Herd were on a 10-day break for the 2023 NBA All-Star Weekend, the Herd's Sandro Mamukelashvili and Alex Antetokounmpo showcased their skills in the G League Next Up Game and NBA Kia Skills Challenge, respectively.

Another Oshkosh connection to the NBA's All-Star weekend was Oshkosh North High School Alumnus Tyreese Haliburton, who played in the 2023 NBA All-Star Game and participated in the Starry 3-Point Contest.

Mamukelashvili was a late addition to the G League Next Up Game, filling in for Austin Spurs center Charles Bassey who signed a 4-year deal with the San Antonio Spurs just days before the event.

Mamukelashvili, who was averaging 23.3 points and 13 rebounds a game before the All-Star break, started for Team Garza in the Next Up Game where he scored eight points and grabbed 12 boards, helping the team defeat Team Scoot 178-162.

The two team captains, Iowa's Luka Garza and the Ignite's Scoot Henderson, drafted 12 players each from the 24-man roster featuring G League players selected from a fan vote.

Antetokounmpo participated in the Kia Skills Challenge alongside his older brothers Giannis, who was later replaced by Jrue Holiday due to his wrist injury, and Thanasis.

The skills challenge is a three-round competition where teams of three players try to score the most "challenge points" by winning each round.

In the first round of the competition, the Antetokounmpo brothers finished in second place in the team relay, which required players to make a 35-foot outlet pass, dribble through three moving pylons and attempt three different shots.

Team Antetokounmpo took second place once again in the second round, being defeated by Team Jazz 88-84 in the team passing competition. The team passing competition featured the three teams trying to make various passes, a 35-foot outlet pass, a 20-foot bounce pass and a 25-foot chest pass, through moving targets in 30 seconds.

In the final round, Team Antetokounmpo was bested by Team Jazz in the shooting competition which had players take turns shooting from five different spots that had values of anywhere from one point to five points.

Even though the Antetokounmpo brothers finished second in every competition, they found themselves in last place at the end of the Skills Challenge, behind Team Jazz and Team Rooks.

Haliburton, named to his first-all star game this season, scored 18 points in 14 minutes for Team LeBron in the 2023 All-Star Game in Salt Lake City. Haliburton, the ninth Wisconsinite to ever play in an All-Star Game, is averaging



Jacob Link / Advance-Titan

The Herd's Sandro Mamukelashvili drives on College Park's Chris Silva at the Oshkosh Arena Jan. 6.

19.9 points and 10.1 assists per game in 48 games with the Indiana Pacers this season.

Similar to the G League Next Up Game, the two team captains, LeBron James and Giannis Antetokounmpo drafted 12 players each out of a 24-man roster. Team Giannis went on to defeat Team LeBron 184-175 Feb. 19 at the Vivint Arena.

In the 3-point competition, Haliburton blew out his opponents in the first round, scoring 31 points and tying a contest-record for most points scored in a round. He easily advanced to the final round, but cooled off fast and finished with 17 points, good for third place behind Damian Lillard and

fellow Pacer Buddy Hield.

Haliburton, who vowed he would return for next year's 3-point competition, was thrilled to be a part of the NBA All-Star Weekend.

"Just being around the guys, getting to know everybody more, getting to have conversations about the NBA life, it's been awesome," Haliburton told Pacers.com. "It's unfortunate that I choked in the first round, but things happen and I'll be back next year."

Just before the All-Star break, the Herd lost one of their top scorers in Joe Wieskamp, who signed a multi-year deal with the Toronto Raptors. Wieskamp, who averaged 17 points per game and

shot over 50% from the floor in 11 games with the Herd, had two stints with the Raptors this season under 10-day contracts. Financial details of the deal were not made public due to team policy.

With Wieskamp on the move, the Herd signed guard Jaire Gray from the NBA G League player pool. Grayer, who played college basketball at TCU, most recently played with the Lakeland Magic during the 2020-21 G League season where he averaged 7.8 points and 5.1 rebounds per game in 24 games.

The Wisconsin Herd (6-14) will take on the Texas Legends (6-12) Feb. 24 at the Comerica Center in Frisco, Texas, at 7:30 p.m.

UWO prepares for WIAC tournament

By Jacob Link
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The UW Oshkosh men's basketball team, Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (WIAC) regular-season champions, will look to repeat as conference tournament champs when they take on the UW-Eau Claire Blugolds in the second round of the WIAC tournament.

The Titans, the number one overall seed in the tournament for the second straight year, secured a first-round bye in the WIAC tournament after defeating UW-La Crosse Feb. 11, automatically advancing UWO to the semifinals of the tournament.

Oshkosh will once again have home court-advantage throughout the tournament and will face off against the Blugolds at the Kolf Sports Center Feb. 24 at 7 p.m. The game was moved from Feb. 22 due to the winter storm hitting Oshkosh that day.

UWO's only conference loss came at the hands of UWEC earlier this season, with the Titans falling to the Blugolds 51-48 Jan. 4 at the W.L. Zorn Arena in a game which saw the visitors shoot just 37% from the floor. Oshkosh, who is undefeated at the Kolf Sports Center, got its revenge at home Feb. 1, when UWO easily defeated Eau Claire 74-63 behind a career-high 33 points from guard Hunter Plamann.

The Titans enter the WIAC tournament as the top-ranked defense in the conference, allowing just



Morgan Feltz / Advance-Titan Quinn Steckbauer dribbles.

62.2 points per game and holding opponents to 42.3% shooting. Oshkosh, who scores an average of 72.5 points per game, is led by senior forward Levi Borchert who leads the conference in rebounds, averaging 10.6 per game, and is averaging a team-high 15.2 points per game.

In their last game, UWO scored a season-high 96 points in a 96-76 rout of UW-Stevens Point Feb. 15 at the Quandt Fieldhouse.

The Titans, who secured a 20-win season for the fifth year in a row, fell behind in the first seconds of the game, but stormed back on a 16-4 scoring run and never looked back en route to the victory. Midway through the first half, a Plamann jumper kickstarted a 19-0 scoring run and UWO opened up a 37-10 lead. Oshkosh, who shot

60% from the field in the first half, had a 9-0 scoring run at the end of the period and the Titans went into the break with a 29-point lead.

For much of the second half, the two teams traded baskets until the Pointers went on a 9-0 run after UWO emptied its bench. Oshkosh maintained at least a 20-point lead for the entire second half to cruise to their ninth straight victory against UWSP.

UWO's Quinn Steckbauer scored a game-high 22 points in the win while Borchert scored 16 points and grabbed six rebounds.

The Blugolds entered the semifinals of the WIAC tournament on a four-game winning streak and defeated UW-Platteville 72-70 in the first round of the tournament Feb. 20. After halftime, Eau Claire went on a 9-2 run and never looked back, holding off a late push from the Pioneers to secure the victory.

UWEC is led by senior forward Brock Voigt, who is third in the WIAC in scoring, averaging 17.6 points and 7.7 rebounds per game. The Blugolds have both the third ranked offense and defense in the conference, holding opponents to 67.1 points per game and scoring 74.6 points per game.

If they win, the Titans will take on either UW-La Crosse or UW-Whitewater in the WIAC tournament championship at the Kolf Sports Center Feb. 26 at 7 p.m. Check the UWO athletics website for more information about the semifinals and finals of the WIAC tournament.

Sports roundup

Gymnastics

UW Oshkosh gymnastics swept all events last Thursday against Winona State University, earning the Titans a win.

The win was the highest scoring meet so far for the gymnasts with the Titans scoring 190.775 to Winona's 183.950. The meet was also the team's fourth win in dual meets, making them four for five.

Adana Amor competed in the parallel-bars event, earning a 9.475 and taking second below Emily Buffington, who scored 9.650.

Amor said that this meet was not about beating the opponents, but demonstrating that they can improve themselves.

Looking forward, UWO faces off against UW-Eau Claire and Amor feels ready for this future competition.

"Eau-Claire isn't an extreme competition, so we will be focusing on competing against ourselves and making ourselves the best," She said.

Two weeks after the Titans take on the Bluegolds, the Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference Championships will begin.

On Feb. 24, UWO will face UWEC at home for senior night at 5 p.m.

Track & Field

Both the UW Oshkosh men's and women's track and field teams took first at the UW Oshkosh Titan Challenge on Feb. 18. The meet

was spearheaded by a string of personal bests and a few new program records as well.

The men and women both won the meet with 226 and 150 points respectively.

The men's victory in the field events was led by senior Eli Tranel who broke a 16-year-old record in pole vaulting and is now number one in the country for D-III pole vaulting. He broke the said record at the 5.07-meter mark that was followed by UWO freshman Zach Zirgibel, who finished second in the event. Having broken such a long standing record, Tranel reflected upon it.

Notably, both senior Jonathan Wilburn and sophomore AK Toheeb-Lawal also set program history in their respective events. Wilburn landed at the second best distance in program history for the triple jump with a team season best of 15.38 meters. Toheeb-Lawal got the sixth longest distance in program history and a team season best on high jump with 7.16 meters.

Moving to the track, the women saw significant success there as well. Sophomore Amelia Lehman made a huge impact with a season, running the 3,000 meter race in 10:02.23, the eighth fastest time in program history.

On the track, the men saw a lot of success as well being led by Elijah Pena who got the fastest time in program history for the 60-meter hurdles with a time of 8.21 seconds, making his mark in Titan history.

Tattoo or Taboo?

College students change the tattoo stigma

By Aubrie Selsmeyer
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College is a new taste of freedom for everyone, whether that freedom is exercised by eating Kraft Mac & Cheese cups at 2 in the morning or getting a tattoo. Tattoos have always been a way to express yourself, but the stigma is changing. In earlier generations, tattoos were associated with drugs, sex and crime, but now it seems they're becoming appreciated for what they truly are – art.

This isn't to say that everyone has hopped on the bandwagon. There will always be sticklers with strong opinions of what people choose to have inked on their skin, but for the most part, tattoos are becoming universal. It has become normal to see people walk around flaunting their arms decorated with ink.

Tattoos are no longer linked with deviance, and many workplaces don't taboo their employees having tattoos as much as they once did. A lot of the progress surrounding the de-stigmatization of tattoos can be accredited to the media.

The media fosters an environment more accepting of people with tattoos thanks to celebrities and influencers who break down these barriers for others to follow.

In a study reported by YPulse, "nearly half (46%) of young people older than 18 have tattoos."

Not only have tattoos become



Aubrie Selsmeyer / Advance-Titan

Aubrie Selsmeyer gets a tattoo of heart-shaped balloons by artist Raesha Nordwig, owner of Blush LLC tattoo and piercing shop.

more accepted among young people, but different styles of tattoos have also emerged that don't follow the traditional image of crazy, colorful ink that many associate tattoos with. Fine line tattoos, or "micro tattoos," are extremely popular and "as inconsequential as dyeing hair,"

according to YPulse. Fine line tattoos are often created using a single needle, allowing the artist to tattoo smaller, more intricate designs than what a normal tattoo gun is capable of.

These fine line tattoos are often associated with what is called a "patchwork sleeve." A patch-

work sleeve is when the tattoos appear to be puzzle-pieced on in a random, yet orderly fashion. One of the best examples of a patchwork sleeve is Emma Chamberlain, a social media influencer who started on YouTube and has expanded beyond just that singular platform.

I think that I may be biased seeing as I have a handful of tattoos of my own, but it has become clear to me since attending college that tattoos are breaking the mold they've been in for years. Tattoos are no longer frowned upon; they're trendy and they're art.

Letters to the Editor

Icy sidewalks risk student health

By Audrey Rich
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As a student at UW Oshkosh, I consider this place and the people in it my community. It is important that you are aware and eager to help the place you call home for four to five years.

I have been a student here for three years, which means I have survived three cold and snowy winters.

There hasn't been one winter where I haven't had a friend or a peer fall and really hurt themselves as they were walking around campus.

It goes without saying that this is a huge problem.

It is also really hard to figure out where the blame falls. Is it the city of Oshkosh or the campus's due diligence to make sure sidewalks are clear so students can walk safely to and from class?

According to ABC10, approximately 1 million Americans are injured each year from falling on the ice or snow.

Of that 1 million, around 17,000 people die annually. These are extreme numbers that shouldn't be overlooked. It is important that people look out for the people in their community.

I encourage people to take the time out of their day to shovel and scrape the snow and ice around their properties, ensuring that students and faculty can walk safely to class or to work.

Going beyond that, the community also includes kids and elderly people. People walking their animals or kids walking home from bus stops are also at risk for falling on the sidewalks.

By clearing the sidewalks, we can be confident that the number of people injured or killed from falls will decrease.



Yik Yak must not be regulated, banned

By Ethan Welch
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I am a student here at UW Oshkosh and I would like to respond to the Yik Yak article written by Liam Beran.

To start with I believe the article highlights too much of the negative aspects of the app.

Beran lists and quotes sources that say, due to the vulgarity of the participants of the app, that it should be taken down or regulated until it is no longer a safe

place for ideas.

While I abhor the idea of bigotry and cyberbullying, there is an argument that any idea should be able to be publicized.

I say this because any idea worth the words spoken to promote it will survive on its own merits or will be ridiculed to obscurity.

This is how our republic has functioned for its entirety and how I hope we will continue to thrive.

Letter guidelines

The Advance-Titan welcomes and reads all letters. Timely, well-written, provocative opinions on topics of interest at UW Oshkosh are given first preference.

All letters are subject to editing; not all letters can be published. Letters exceeding 300 words may be edited at the discretion of the Advance-Titan staff. Name, position, address and daytime phone number are required, although only name and email will be published along with the article.

The Advance-Titan does not publish anonymous or open letters and letters printed elsewhere.

If your letter is chosen for publication, we may attempt to contact you for verification via email or phone. To submit your letter, email atitan@uwosh.edu.

Arts & Entertainment

Club Spotlight: Marketing and Sales

By Mattie Beck
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The Marketing and Sales Club, one of the 180-plus clubs on the UW Oshkosh campuses, helps to create professional development opportunities for students.

The club promotes networking with alumni, faculty, other students and businesses through different events and speakers. It also strives to help students gain a deeper understanding of marketing practices and principles, along with providing recommendations for students in the College of Business.

While the main focus is educating, the club wants to create a fun environment for students to enjoy learning about marketing and sales while getting professional experience.

Ashlynn Amundson, a junior at UWO and co-president of the club, joined for that exact reason.

“I wanted to get more involved on campus and network with marketing professionals,” she said.

Amundson was inspired to take on the presidency due to wanting to help the club grow after a decline during COVID-19.

“The club had a lot of room for growth and expansion, and I quickly became intrigued by the opportunity for a leadership position,” she said. “I enjoyed being a part of the club and wanted to contribute to its growth.”

Along with professional development, there are more opportunities at the personal level when connecting with other students interested in the field.

“As a member, you will be invited to exclusive networking events and group trips,” Amundson said. “In addition, having Marketing and Sales Club on your resume will show



The Marketing and Sales Club provides members with professional opportunities such as networking, special events and more. Courtesy of Elyssa Belling

your dedication to growth and knowledge to employers.”

The club also provides roles for students within it, according to Amundson.

“We also have plenty of opportunities for leadership roles which displays that you take initiative and have the ability to mentor others,” she said. “Meetings are casual, and they are a great environment to ask questions and make friendships.”

The friendship aspect is a favorite part for Amundson, along with the professional skills gained by joining.

“My favorite part of the club is creating connections with professionals and marketing students. I also enjoy event planning,” she said.

Junior Elyssa Belling, the other co-president, said she was motivated to take on the leadership role because she wanted to help students within the club.

“I wanted to take on co-presidency with my best friend Ashlynn because we both have a passion for marketing,” she said. “[We] wanted to help other students on campus network and explore the various areas of

marketing.”

Belling joined the club after transferring to the UWO campus from the Fond du Lac campus.

“I joined the Marketing and Sales Club when I transferred to the Oshkosh campus because I wanted to make friends, get involved and make a difference,” Belling said.

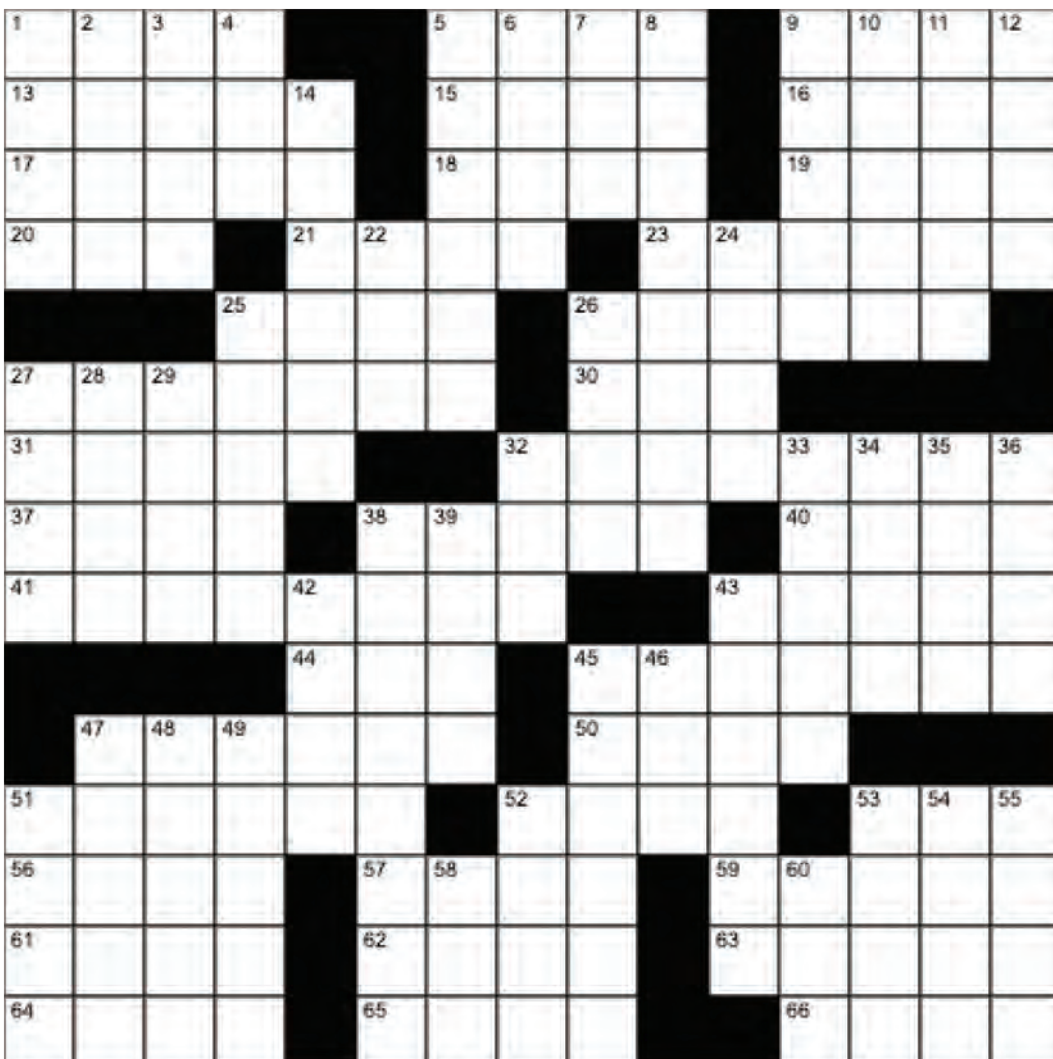
“This semester we have expanded from just meetings to more formal events such as an American Marketing Association meeting and alumni night,” she said. “These events are only available to members, and they

get a shirt, too!”

One of her favorite parts of the club is the professional experience she gains as a member.

“I love talking to professionals about their career,” Belling said. “It is always interesting to hear what advice they have for us. I’m excited for all the fun events we get to put on.”

The club meets every Thursday from 5:30-6:30 p.m. in Sage 2232. Contact Belling at bellie38@uwosh.edu with questions.



Across

- 1- Thick slice
- 5- Winter pear
- 9- From Temple’s hair
- 13- Like Shirley Temple’s hair
- 15-Comic Rudner
- 16- Accent
- 17- Use a soapbox
- 18- Like Nash’s lama
- 19-Experts
- 20- ___ Aviv
- 21- Hog-wild
- 23- Operatic soprano
- 25- Prissy
- 26- Slice of meat
- 27- Soft plain-weave fabric
- 30- Greek goddess of rashness and divine punishment
- 31- Settle a loan
- 32- Wingless
- 37- Nev. Neighbor
- 38- Maytag brand
- 40- Della’s creator
- 41- One of the 12 tribes of Israel
- 43-Roomy dress cut
- 44- Olympics chant
- 45- Krypton, for one
- 47- Pollen producer
- 50-Commedia dell’ ___
- 51-Shorthand pros
- 52- In your dreams!

Down

- 3- Asian sea
- 4- Sandwich initials
- 5- Sweeping implements
- 6- Hog sound
- 7- ___-Foy, Quebec
- 8- Capital of West Bengal
- 9- Whatsoever
- 10- Plinth;
- 11- ___ a time (singly)
- 12- Own (up)
- 14- On an annual basis
- 22- DI doubled
- 24- To ___ (perfectly)
- 25- Public square
- 26- ___ Crunch
- 27- Burn the

- 53- Neither Rep. nor Dem.
- 56- Unit of language
- 57- Liquid food
- 59-Absolute
- 61- Church section
- 62-Shoppe sign word
- 63- Wary
- 64-Driving aids
- 65- Incursion
- 66-Old Testament book
- midnight oil, studying
- 28- Jealous wife of myth
- 29- Neat as ___
- 32- Satisfied sound
- 33- Noted Civil War biography
- 34- Not a dup.
- 35- Radius neighbor
- 36- Gets the picture
- 38- Estimator
- 39- Intend
- 42- Kind of wrestling
- 43-Tricky
- 45- Uttered gratingly
- 46- Onassis, to pals
- 47- Mine excavation
- 48- Concise
- 49-Aconcagua’s range
- 51- Attack a fly
- 52- Autobahn auto
- 53- News bit
- 54- Roman emperor
- 55- Prohibitionists
- 58-Pay stub?
- 60-Green or black, e.g.

Answers will be posted on Instagram @theadvancetitan on Fridays.