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Duq honors six soon-to-be holy saints

EMBER DUKE
staff writer

Six Black Americans are in the process of becoming saints through canonization, and The Catholic Studies Department is holding a special exhibit to bring awareness for Black history month.

In the bustle of changing classes, students stopped on the 4th floor of College Hall to interact with an informational exhibit called "A Tremendous Light, The Lives of Black Catholic Saints."

Catholic Studies Program Coordinator Ren Witter conducted the research for the exhibit in hope to bring light to the deep history of Black Catholics that she feels is often overlooked.

"Black Catholics, not just in America, but from the outside throughout the diaspora are a major part of Catholic history," she said. "There are Black Catholics, they're an immensely important part of this community, and not just in America, but all over the world."

There are no officially recognized Black American saints and through the process of canonization these individuals will become recognized as an official saint by the church.

see SAINT — page 2

THE DUQUESNE DUKE

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It's official: Phil says early spring!



ALEXANDRA JAVORSKY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Thousands of people traveled from far and wide to see Punxsutawney Phil, the "Seer of seers" make his annual spring prediction.

NAOMI GIRON
staff writer

PUNXSUTAWNEY, PA.— An alarm set for 1 a.m., an hour and a half in the car then a two-mile walk. That is the dedication a Pittsburgh citizen needs to have to make it to Gobbler's Knob on Feb. 2 to catch a glimpse of Punxsutawney Phil, the groundhog with a prognostication for how soon spring will come.

The Knob was full of people stoked to see this groundhog and by 3 a.m. music was blaring and Phil's supporters named "Phans" formed lines for souve-

nirs and hot chocolate. Roughly 40 minutes before Phil's big appearance, the fireworks started. The lights all over the Knob turned off and cinematic music started.

Just after 7 a.m. the speech started. The sea of humanity started to chant for the mammal of the hour.

Phil's inner circle, a group of local dignitaries responsible for carrying on tradition and taking care of Phil, brought the "weather predictor extraordinaire" out of the stump he was waiting in all morning.

A.J. Dereume, Phil's handler, raised the furry forecaster high to the sky for all of the thou-

sands of people to see. A hush fell over the Knob.

"But what this weather did not provide is a shadow or reason to hide."

Phil did not see his shadow; spring was officially on its way.

According to the Punxsutawney Groundhog Club website, the celebration of Groundhog Day began with Pennsylvania's earliest settlers. In German lore, if the wood-chuck saw his shadow on Candlemas Day, the festival of light on Feb. 2, there would be six more weeks of bad weather.

The first time Groundhog Day was featured in a local newspaper was in 1886. The next

year started the first official gathering at Gobbler's Knob.

Lisa Hankinson, a local, said she never lived much further than 15 miles from Punxsutawney. To Hankinson, Phil and Groundhog Day are what makes the town.

"The whole town is sort of Phil-related," Hankinson said. "It's really good for the town and all the businesses."

This year was Hankinson's first year volunteering at Gobblers Knob. She finds that Groundhog Day breaks up the winter for her, giving something to look forward to after the holidays.

see PHIL — page 2



COURTESY OF MATTHEW DUDLEY

The Red Masquers give us a love story on stage with "Medea," starring the Greek mythological figures Medea Susan Betten and Jason Julian Cermenary. See page 3 for more.

Modernizing Greek tragedies

EMMA POLEN
editor-in-chief

Those unsure how to portray the complex, tortured character of Medea may look to Red Masquers' Susan Betten, starring this week in the Greek tale of the priestess wife of the ancient hero Jason in Duquesne's own Genesis Theater Feb. 8-18.

Medea, in Greek mythology, is the granddaughter of the sun god Helios, and the theatrical performance of "Medea" focuses on her powers of poison, premonitions and persuasion. She is a woman misunderstood by the world and vengeful of those who have outcast her.

The play opens as Betten appears into the spotlight wearing white, reminiscent

of a wedding gown as she clings to the prior passion of her relationship with her husband Jason before his betrayal dooms her to a life of exile. The shawl, belted around her waist with a gothic black corset, overlays a shaggy black dress, laying in ripped layers at her knees. Betten's costume portrays the difficult inner struggles of the character — having to appear collected on behalf of her family while inside she faces the dark weight of her husband's adultery, the shunning of an entire kingdom and the hate of her own family, who she left to be with Jason.

Replacing the ancient circlets of gold around Greek women's wrists and neck, this punk modern version wears spiked

see GREEK — page 3

POLICE BRIEFS

Thursday, Feb. 1-

A student accidentally broke the window in the door to room G1 in Canevin Hall.

Friday, Feb. 2-

DUPO was dispatched to Duquesne Towers for an intoxicated male.

Friday, Feb. 2-

Man was reported for backing into the side of the College of Medicine building. Driver was operating an unregistered vehicle and was issued two citations.

Friday, Feb. 2-

Resident Assistant smelled a strong odor of marijuana coming from a resident's room in St. Martin Hall. The Resident Director confiscated marijuana, paraphernalia and alcohol.

Friday, Feb. 2-

Three students were observed smoking on the city steps. All three admitted that they were smoking marijuana.

Saturday, Feb. 3-

DUPO was dispatched to Duquesne Towers for a report of a female resident's Door Dash order stolen.

Saturday, Feb. 3-

Duquesne student reported a concern about her roommate and requested a welfare check. The roommate was at a boyfriend's house. DUPO contacted Pennsylvania State Police. They reported the roommate was fine.

Sunday, Feb. 4-

DUPO responded to a call of an intoxicated student outside Towers. The student was transported to UPMC Mercy Hospital.

Sunday, Feb. 4-

DUPO was dispatched to St. Ann Hall for an intoxicated student.

EMAIL TIPS

The Duke's news section would love to hear from you about stories that you want to see in print. Know a talented professor or accomplished student? See something on campus that just doesn't make sense? You can send your tips and story ideas to Editor-in-Chief Emma Polen

Catholic Studies Department honors upcoming Black saints with exhibit

from SAINT — page 1

Bridging a gap between communities and creating room for Black stories in secular spaces is the drive for her research and the purpose of the exhibit. The display is interactive with audio elements and take home informational prayer cards for those interested in doing more independent research.

"I also think it's really important for non Black Catholics, and people who aren't Catholic at all, to fall in love with the stories of people from a community that they are not a part of, because how often does that happen," she said. "You know, the best way to overcome racism, bigotry, fear of the other is to learn to love them, that's going to overcome all of those things much more than trying to like, force yourself, like fall in love with someone who isn't like you, and then all of a sudden those things just start falling away."

There are roughly three million Black Catholics in America and 200 million in the world, Witter said.

Adjunct Catholic studies professor, Greta Tucker, helped Witter to focus the research.

"She [Tucker] said, If you put everything on the table people will think that's all there is," Witter said. "By focusing, by telling one story, because all these six people are part of one story, which is the pursuit of a Black Catholic American saint, you say 'there is so much more to be told.'"

Addressing these six figures was a way to get people interested and an opportunity to expand the conversation on black history, Tucker said.

"My only suggestion was, maybe you want to start with them since there's a lot in the media about the

six. And then from these specs, you can talk about a whole gamut of other issues and things about the church and a historical period," Tucker said.

Canonization in many cases takes hundreds of years as there are currently two criteria for sainthood. Acclimation, an approval by the Pope that the person has lived a heroic and virtuous life is the most common. Otherwise, an irrefutable miracle, often a healing, must be proven through a rigorous scientific investigation.

Currently, there are 11 recognized American saints. Of six of the people highlighted in the exhibit, two are classified as servants of God, the first step toward official sainthood, and the other four are venerable, which is the next level.

The exhibit focuses on the historical figures Venerables Pierre Toussaint, Henriette Delille, Augustus Tolton, Mother Mary Lange, and Servants of God Thea Bowman and Julia Greeley.

Excited to check out the display for herself, Tucker said she felt many Catholics don't know the role of Black ministry in the church.

"I hope they come away with a sense of the vastness of the Catholic Church. That the Catholic Church is so diverse in terms of its people, its language, its cultures, its races, spirituality, and how much people of African descent have given to the church," Tucker said.

Physics and Mechanical Engineering major Samiya Henry gave a presentation on the importance of Black Catholicism for independent study, based on content from the National Black Catholic Congress convention. It helped to get the ball rolling for the research exhibit.

"All the information that she



BRENTARO YAMANE | MULTIMEDIA EDITOR

Freshman CJ Pitcher checks out table displaying pamphlets of the exhibit.

found gives you just enough to discover which one you connect to the most, and if you connect there's enough there that you can walk away learning something, but there's enough that's not there that intrigues you to learn more," Henry said.

"Beautiful" is how she described the accessibility and content of the exhibit. Excited by the uplifting of largely overlooked historical figures, Henry felt the reach of the exhibit will engage students and hopefully inspire love for these stories.

"Just to recognize that while people may look different than you, there are so many similarities," Henry said. "I think it's very pivotal in Duquesne's celebration of Black history month," Henry said.

Witter said at its core, the church condemned bigotry, but this ideal has not always been practiced. She felt it crucial to include historical context into her research to engage with the

audience in a meaningful way.

"I think when you're telling the story of Black Catholics in America, you're going to have to tell the story of slavery and racism," Witter said.

"So you have this bizarre, terrible situation that should have never happened, which is Catholic families, enslaving Catholic families... So that side panel is really all about that. And then a lot of the major documents from the church that are explicitly condemning racism of slavery, and then moving into modern day, where we have both Catholic churches and institutions condemning racism, and then a lot of documents from the Black Catholic bishops in America, speaking about it as well."

Witter is excited for students to engage and said some classes are using it as an extra credit opportunity. The display will remain up through the end of February in College Hall on the fourth floor.

Phil the fuzzy weatherman has spoken

from SAINT — page 1

This was the first early spring Phil predicted since 2020. According to *The Tennessean*, Phil predicts a longer winter 84 percent of the time.

When not predicting the weather, Phil lives a manmade zoo connected with Barclay Square and the Punxsutawney Memorial Library. Phil is over 135 years old. According to the Punxsutawney Groundhog Club website, Phil drinks a secret magic "elixir of life," that keeps him young. His wife, Philysse however does not receive the elixir. Phil enjoys reading the daily newspaper and eating vegetables.

Many of the people who found themselves on the Knob in the dark early morning saw this event as a bucket list item that could not be passed up.

Cheryl DeWalt and her two sons, Ben and Nate from Mansfield, Pennsylvania, were finally seeing Phil in action after 15 years of planning.

"We're from PA and this is a Pennsylvania thing," Ben said. Nate

predicted an early spring, but Ben said he wasn't feeling so optimistic.

A huge bonfire burns for the entirety of the early morning, trying to offer a bit of warmth on the 35 degrees Fahrenheit day. No one seems to mind the weather though, as people stood in line to receive a fuzzy Samuel Adams groundhog hat.

Hankinson recalls seeing the same out-of-towners at different phil-related events dressed in fun costumes.

One such man in costume was Chris Andrese, or as he introduced himself, "The Storm Lord."

Andrese was dressed in a whimsical, flamboyant shiny purple and blue wizard costume, complete with a wig, hat and home-made staff.

Originally from New Jersey, Andrese now makes the trip from St. Louis to attend Groundhog Day. Dressing-up is a way to connect with people who rotate through the groundhog festivities.

"I can't think of anything I don't like about it," Andrese said. "Connecting modern entertainment with ancient customs of yesteryear."



ALEXANDRA JAVORSKY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Diehard Phil supporters, or "Phans," lined up for hats to celebrate the event.

Basketball player Lauren Wasylyson overcomes life threatening scare to get back on the court

MARY GENRICH
staff writer

Women's basketball player Lauren Wasylyson fights blood clots with daily self-injections to stay on the court.

Wasylyson was pulled out of a Duquesne women's basketball conditioning session on Sept. 1 by athletic trainer Travis Moyer after her teammate Ayanne "Yanni" Townsend noticed Wasylyson struggling.

"She looked at me and said, 'Are you okay?'" Wasylyson said. "And I said 'no I can't breathe,' and as stubborn as I was, I did not want to get out of the drill. I wanted to finish."

A few days later, Wasylyson could no longer put pressure on her calf. She called her dad crying because she could no longer walk.

"They did a scan on my calf, and they initially found a blood clot in my calf, and then they said that they are going to do a scan on my chest to make sure nothing had traveled," Wasylyson said. "Then they found two big blood clots in my chest as well as my lungs."

Despite the scare, Wasylyson has managed to make it back on court for senior year and the entirety of the conference schedule.

"If I would have finished that conditioning drill that day, I would not be here today," Wasylyson said.

At the time Wasylyson was taking medication that increased the risk of blood clots. Serious cases of blood clots are known to cause heart attacks, strokes, organ damage and even death, according to the American Heart Association.

Wasylyson went on a family vacation to Costa Rica.

During their travels Wasylyson spent six hours unable to move around while on the plane, which increased her risk and caused clots to form.

Wasylyson returned with her family and was getting back into the swing of things. She was lifting and felt pain in her shoulder blade. Thinking not much of it other than just "overdoing it."

After receiving her diagnosis last fall, Wasylyson was told the chances of her playing basketball again were very slim and that playing would be dangerous.

For Wasylyson, the only option for continuing to play basketball was Enoxaparin sodium self-injections in her stomach twice a day. With her love for basketball and determination to get back on the court, she had no doubts about doing the injections.

"It does not feel good," Wasylyson said. "But I told them I would do anything possible in order to come back and play my last season."

She especially wanted to make this comeback, not only because of everything she had been through with her ACL injury in 2021 and other past injuries, but also because this is her last year, and she wants to make the most of it.

"Right now, I still have a blood clot," Wasylyson said. "Because of that I do need to stay on blood thinners."

She credits Townsend for saving her life. "I am happy Yanni pulled me out of the drill when she did."

"I think just her knowing how I respond to things and how I react to things she knew I was off that day," Wasylyson said.



MARY GENRICH | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Duquesne women's basketball player Lauren Wasylyson battles blood clots.

Since then Wasylyson has been shooting plenty of her 3-pointers. She is excited about how skilled her team is and the potential they have of making a huge run in the Atlantic-10 Championship in just under two months from now.

She is looking forward to the women's basketball senior night on March 2 where her fam-

ily will join her on the court during recognition.

"I mean it feels amazing just being able to step back on the court again. Being my last season I am so grateful for all of my doctors, Travis of course, my family, my coaches and teammates just having the trust in me to come back and make the impact," Wasylyson said.

Red Masquers put a modern spin on Greek tragedies

from GREEK — page 1

bracelets and a long silver clasp around her neck and earrings to match.

The supporting cast, made up of her waiting women, children, Jason and the couple's respective servants, wear contemporary clothes that speak to the historical significance of "Medea" while playing with a modern feminist identity.

The muses, listed as the "Greek Chorus" in the Red Masquers' play program, wear loose, beige outfits and act mainly as Medea's background dancers and voices of reason. Their lack of extravagant accessories emphasizes Medea's use of the eclectic.



COURTESY OF MATTHEW DUDLEY

Susan Betten, starring as the title character in "Medea," offers a range of facial expressions to portray the character's complicated

The two narrators of the play, Medea's nurse and Jason's messenger, are clothed in blood red tops and brown trousers, foreshadowing the violence to follow.

Jason, played by Julian Cerminara, wears attire suitable for a successful businessman, in a red shirt under a blue suit coat. Around Jason's neck is a gold chain, a reminder of the Golden Fleece Medea helped him steal that protects him from his enemies.

Medea's presence looms over all of the other characters in the play, even in the beginning of Act 1 when the audience cannot see her but can hear her. While this limits the amount of interpretation Betten is able to add to her lines, there is no lack of emotion in her words. She is desperate and angry. But when she appears back on stage, her body language is restrained, as well as the emotional tone of her voice, portraying a barely-controlled rage under the surface of her cool facade.

Medea's waiting women are supposed to be her support during these difficult times, but the way they lean away when Medea approaches makes it obvious they are scared of the priestess. However, they respect her. Medea's supporting women also guide the audience's view toward, Jason. They're not afraid of him, even when he raises his voice to Medea feet away from them. Medea's presence emboldens them with a pride that nearly matches the male Greek hero's ego.

While there is plenty to make Medea out as scary throughout the play, she is never the antagonist. She is exiled, her husband leaves her, and she has to decide whether to leave her children behind. Jason is ungrateful for all of her help during his quests, saying to her, "I gave more than you."

Medea plots and brainstorms the best ways to hurt her ex-lover. She approaches



COURTESY OF MATTHEW DUDLEY

Medea speaks to a table of Greek muses as she plots her next step in her vengeance. The puzzle pieces strewn on the table are thrown about, calling to the way Medea does not fit in to the world around her.

vengeance with a "no compromise" mindset and accepts what she needs to do, whether it hurts her too in the process.

The "Medea" cast maneuvers old English lines that are not inherently clear, similar to a Julius Caesar monologue, but the important plot points get through to the audience, mainly through emotional tone of voice, sometimes reaching the audience's ears at a screaming volume.

This higher level of volume makes it difficult to make out the cast's lines sometimes, especially post-scream when music or lowered voices offer a challenge for audience ears to interpret. The dance numbers, using slow, modern tunes in the genre of alternative rock grunge, use both melody and movement to tell an interluding story between dialogue.

The play ends in a final confrontation between Medea and Jason. Taken from the original Euripides version of the story, this moment is supposed to provide a final understanding of how likable these mythological figures should remain in the eye of the viewer. Thankfully, Betten's powerful use of minute facial expressions and costume design gives the audience a clue to these big questions by the closing curtain.

Once the show is over, and you're left feeling more than a little depressed, I would suggest heading back to your room and watching a Disney movie to cleanse the palette.

EDITOR'S NOTES: Emma Polen and Susan Betten have worked on previous production together.

Women batter Rams and Ramblers

MICHAEL O’GRADY AND ROWAN DUBOIS
staff writers

Megan McConnell and Naele Bernard both reached the 1000-point mark as Duquesne women’s basketball stayed hot with a pair of Atlantic-10 Conference wins. They knocked off Rhode Island 70-61 on Saturday, and UMass 79-62 on Wednesday. The Dukes have now won six of their last seven games, and are up to fifth place in the conference.

Despite it being the closer of the two, Head Coach Dan Burt was particularly happy with his team after Saturday’s game.



BRENTARO YAMANE | MULTIMEDIA EDITOR
Megan McConnell narrowly missed a pair of triple-doubles, but did surpass the 1,000 point threshold.

“I think it was our most complete game of the season in terms of executing our gameplan both offensively and defensively,” Burt said.

The Dukes thoroughly outworked a Rams team ranked 16th in the country in opponent points-per-game by controlling the tempo. Duquesne’s defense was relentless, especially in the first half when they gave up a total of 21 points including just 6 in the second quarter. On the offensive end, it was another good shooting day for the Dukes, going 43% on field goals and

eight-for-19 from three.

McConnell nearly had a triple-double with 13 points, nine rebounds and nine assists, even adding three steals and two blocks. Nae Bernard went a perfect three-for-three from deep. The catalyst behind the win, however, was undoubtedly Precious Johnson. Playing 33 minutes off the bench, her 13 points was a small contribution compared to her work on defense, where her 6-foot 4-inch frame took away the size advantage of the Rhode Island starters. Up in the grandstands, she was being cheered on by a particularly special fan.

“Her dad’s here from Sweden,” Burt said, “I joke about that, but she really extended her minutes today and was simply outstanding in every facet of the game. Sometimes really good players might need something little, for her, it just might be her dad being here.”

Johnson started the game on the bench; she has not started a game yet this season. But just past two minutes in, she was the first sub on in place of Ayanna Townsend, who had already logged two fouls. A 7-0 URI run to start and two ferocious blocks from Rhode Island’s Mayé Touré and Sophie Phillips may have also been factors in Burt’s selection of Johnson, who is the tallest player of Burt’s rotation. It was clear Duquesne needed size to have a chance.

“Her size really helps, there’s no question about it,” Burt said. “Rhode Island rolls into the gym with all these stallions, and she met all that physicality for 34 minutes. She’s legitimately 6’4” and very physically imposing, so when she puts it to use like she does today, we’re tough to beat.”

Johnson’s entrance into the game made an instant impact, as the Dukes recovered from their early deficit and held the Rams to no field goals for nearly four minutes. Johnson did not come off the court in the first half after she was subbed in.

“We had a good defensive gameplan against them,” McConnell said. “Our defense helps us win a lot of games, and today we played it to a T.”

The game opened up in the third quarter, and even when Johnson returned for Townsend about halfway in the play kept its quick pace. Bernard had the play of the game when she sank

a three at the buzzer to put Duquesne ahead 52-44, even after 10 minutes where Rhode Island had outscored their entire first half’s output.

However, it wasn’t smooth sailing from there. Once again, the game became defensive, yet only URI was scoring points. Duquesne didn’t score for nearly six minutes, and a late hard-fought possession with two offensive rebounds ended in Dee Dee Davis draining a three to cut the lead to 3 with just 48 seconds left. Duquesne finally answered when Johnson scored off the ensuing timeout, and that was as close as URI would get.

“We’re a super-experienced team at this point,” Hamilton said. “I think it showed today because we were able to stay calm and stay together when that got a lot closer than we wanted it to.”

On Wednesday, Duquesne didn’t let the game become as dramatic.

The first quarter consisted of scoring spurts and perimeter shooting. Early on, UMass jumped out to a 10-4 lead as Duquesne struggled to make shots in the paint. The Dukes eventually got hot though, knocking down four field-goals in succession. It was a collection of Duquesne turnovers however, that allowed UMass to keep the game close towards the end of the quarter.

McConnell got her moment on the last possession of the first quarter, as she drilled a 3-pointer to go past 1,000 points in her Duquesne career, and even up the score at the

end of the quarter, 21-21.

Duquesne was able to open a gap in the second quarter by forcing eight turnovers and holding UMass to just one point in the first five minutes of the quarter. Much of the heavy lifting on offense was done by Naele Bernard, who amassed 10 first-half points. Gabby Grantham-Medley aided the second-quarter effort as well, making two jump shots in the final minute to extend the Duke’s lead as they finished the half on top, 39-28.

Early in the third quarter, it was Bernard’s turn to reach a milestone, as she hit a 3 to reach her 1,000th point in her college career. Two possessions later, a Bernard layup would extend the Duke’s lead to 17. Despite that, UMass were able to stay within reach via good 3-point shooting, cutting the Duke’s lead down to 10 halfway through the third quarter. The Dukes eventually found their rhythm though, and Lauren Wasylyson hit a 3 while time expired in the quarter to give Duquesne their largest lead of the game, 62-43.

It was more of the same for Duquesne in the fourth, as Wasylyson tacked on two more 3s early, and the Dukes stayed strong defensively, fending off any chance of a UMass comeback. Duquesne took home the win 79-62. McConnell finished with 14 points, nine rebounds and seven assists. Bernard was the team’s high scorer with 15.

The Dukes hit the hardwood again on Saturday, when they host La Salle at 2.



BRENTARO YAMANE | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Naele Bernard crossed the four-digit milestone on Wednesday, in her fourth season of college ball.

A-10 MBB Standings

Rank	Team (AP National Poll)	A-10	Overall	NET (national ranking)
1.	Dayton (18)	9-1	19-3	16
2.	Richmond	8-1	16-6	74
3.	Loyola Chicago	8-2	16-7	115
4.	VCU	7-3	15-8	80
5.	Saint Joseph's	5-5	15-8	92
6.	St. Bonaventure	5-5	14-8	67
7.	UMass	5-5	14-8	90
8.	Rhode Island	5-5	11-12	182
9.	George Mason	4-6	15-8	89
10.	Fordham	4-6	10-13	184
11.	George Washington	3-6	14-8	178
12.	Davidson	3-6	13-9	128
13.	Duquesne	3-6	13-9	98
14.	La Salle	2-8	11-12	208
15.	Saint Louis	2-8	9-14	256

A-10 WBB Standings

Rank	Team	A-10	Overall	NET
1.	Saint Joseph's	10-1	21-2	55
2.	Richmond	10-1	20-4	58
3.	George Mason	9-1	18-3	54
4.	VCU	9-2	20-3	75
5.	Duquesne	9-3	14-9	131
6.	Rhode Island	7-5	15-10	79
7.	Davidson	6-5	16-6	76
8.	Loyola Chicago	5-6	11-11	180
9.	La Salle	4-6	7-14	279
10.	Saint Louis	4-7	9-15	162
11.	Dayton	4-8	10-13	237
12.	Fordham	3-9	8-15	213
13.	George Washington	2-9	9-14	209
14.	St. Bonaventure	1-10	3-18	285
15.	UMass	1-11	3-21	286

Wildcats snap Dukes' winning streak

MATTHEW THEODROS
staff writer

The Duquesne men's basketball team's four-game winning streak came to an end in their 72-59 loss against Davidson on Wednesday night at Cooper Fieldhouse.

Wednesday's victory gives Davidson a commanding 12-1 record against Duquesne dating back to their arrival in the Atlantic-10 Conference prior to the 2015-16 season.

Following one of their best wins of the year at Rhode Island on Saturday, the Dukes looked sluggish, especially on defense and did not build off their momentum when the offense helped them chase

an early deficit.

Shooting a below average 32% from the field and 14% from three, Duquesne's first half offensive inefficiencies dug them in a hole they were unable to come back from. Jake DiMichele and David Dixon led the Dukes in first half scoring, combining for 19 of the team's 25 points. Their aggressive attack in the paint provided a necessary scoring punch for a team whose offense stagnated.

They finished with a season low in first half assists with a single assist coming from sophomore, Kareem Rozier. Davidson's aggressive defense especially on drive and kicks prevented any attempt for a perimeter based attack that helped Duquesne

beat Rhode Island on Saturday.

Davidson took a 35-25 lead heading into the break.

Head Coach Keith Dambrot praised Davidson's grit and integrity which played a big role in their road win.

"Their style is unique," Dambrot said. "If you don't have good discipline defensively they will slice you up."

Fousseyni Drame's effort in the second half helped cut Davidson's lead of 15 down to just 4. He was 3-of-5 from 3-point range, including a 4-point play, and brought Duquesne down 53-49 with just over six minutes to go.

Despite an impressive comeback, Davidson capitalized on the swing plays, grabbing vital offensive rebounds and outworking Duquesne on the fast break. Casual mistakes prevented the Dukes from getting over the hump.

Drame and DiMichele led the Dukes in scoring, each adding 15 points. Dixon was the only other double-digit scorer for Duquesne with 10.

"Once you're down 13 or 14 your margin of error gets smaller and you have to make every play," Dambrot said. "We got it to four then we didn't make every play. It looked like we blew up every two minutes."

It was a frustrating night for the guard tandem of Clark and Grant who combined for an abysmal 3-of-16 on field goals. Their struggles on both ends forced Dambrot to utilize other rotations without the star guards.

"They just had a bad night," Dambrot

said. "It's not just them, it was the entire group. I have complete faith in those guys, they just didn't have it tonight."

Dambrot found success in running bigger lineups, ditching the traditional guard based rotation. The five-man lineup of Rozier, DiMichele, Drame, Jakub Necas and Dixon provided a needed defensive edge.

"When Jimmy and Dae Dae were off we were better," Dambrot said. "It's just one of those nights. Jimmy was minus-22. You are not going to win many games when Jimmy goes minus-22."

In the final seconds of the game, Davidson's Grant Huffman drove to the rim, where Clark met him with a hard foul that sent the Wildcats' leading scorer to the ground in pain. Clark was ejected from the game for the foul.

The frustration was evident from the players heading into the locker room. Coach Dambrot emphasized what is needed from the team considering their lackluster performance, especially on the defensive end.

"A difficult game requires tremendous discipline defensively," Dambrot said. "Clearly, we didn't have very good discipline defensively except for one group. We went back to the beginning where we didn't share the ball very well. We didn't guard, and so that was the problem. They grinded us out. They made us guard the whole possession and we had a hard time with it."

The Dukes head back on the road, Saturday to face St. Bonaventure.



BRENTARO YAMANE | MULTIMEDIA EDITOR

Jake DiMichele was one of Duquesne's only bright spots in Duquesne's backcourt, scoring 15.

The Duke's ultimate Super Bowl preview

AIDAN WEISS
staff writer

It will be a battle between a current dynasty versus a rising one when the defending champion Kansas City Chiefs take on the San Francisco 49ers Sunday evening in Super Bowl LVIII.

The Chiefs are back, and they are led by a familiar face in superstar quarterback Patrick Mahomes. However, the quarterback dipped this year to a 27-14 touchdown--interception ratio, by far the worst of his career.

The reason for Mahomes's struggles can easily be attributed to his receivers. Forty-four of Mahomes's 597 throws were dropped, the most in the league. However, second-round rookie Rashee Rice has emerged in an otherwise bare-bones receiver room to give Mahomes a weapon out wide.

The Chiefs' leading pass catcher, as it has been for the past decade, is superstar tight end Travis Kelce. Kelce also had a down season but still finished with 984 yards and constantly finds space for himself. That is the only notable Kelce storyline this NFL season.

Meanwhile, in a reversal of formula, the Chiefs defense has led the way this season. Led by defensive tackle Chris Jones and cornerbacks L'Jarius Sneed and Trent McDuffie, the Chiefs finished second in the league in points and yards allowed. They also commit very few penalties, forcing opponents to drive the field without help.

However, the San Francisco 49ers are rising, as they finished with the first seed in the NFC. After getting injured in last season's conference championship loss, quarterback Brock Purdy came back with a vengeance, finishing among the league leaders in passing yards, touchdowns, completion percentage and yards per attempt.

Purdy's impressive numbers have opened the door for superstar running back Christian McCaffrey, finishing with over 2,000 yards from scrimmage and 21 total touchdowns. Both Purdy and McCaffrey were named MVP finalists for their impressive seasons.

Purdy has plenty of weapons in the receiving game as well. Wide receivers Brandon Aiyuk and Deebo Samuel along with tight end George Kittle form an elite trio for Purdy to throw to.

Defensively, the 49ers also stack up well. They are among the league leaders in turnovers, yards allowed and points allowed. The unit is keyed by star pass rusher Nick Bosa and their elite linebacker duo of Fred Warner and Dre Greenlaw.

Kansas City's Three Keys to Victory:
Catch the ball:

This has been a problem for the Chiefs from the opening game. After a brutal regular season, things were cleaned up, with only one drop in the postseason outside of their brutally cold Wild Card game against Miami. However, more drop issues could lead to a blowout against a San Francisco team that could run away if Kansas City cannot

score consistently.

Rushing attack:

If there is one thing to nitpick about San Francisco's defense, they have been middling against the run. Isiah Pacheco is the perfect option with his ferocious running style. The only question is whether the Chiefs will be able to play from ahead to utilize Pacheco's abilities to the maximum potential since the 49ers have been so strong early in games this season.

Pass Rush:

The key to the Chiefs' defense all year has been generating pressure, leading them to 57 sacks in the regular season. The key to the 49er offense has been getting the ball out quickly to paint over their offensive line struggles. Things got harder this past week for Kansas City when it lost starter defensive end Charles Omenihu to a torn ACL. Simply put, the Chiefs need to make Purdy uncomfortable to stop his potent offense and stay in the game.

San Francisco's Three Keys to Victory:

Special Teams:

After letting veteran Robbie Gould walk and drafting Jake Moody in the third round, the 49ers were making a sound decision looking toward the future at kicker. However, the present has not been so kind. After a shaky regular season, Moody had a 48-yard-attempt blocked against Green Bay and then pushed another 48-yarder wide right against Detroit. It is difficult to trust the rookie in a clutch situation at this point,

but San Francisco may not have a choice.

Secondary Depth:

Besides Charvarius Ward, the cornerback depth gets dicey for the 49ers. Currently, Ambry Thomas has the spot opposite Ward, but he has struggled this season. Deomodore Lenoir has been solid in the slot but struggled on the outside in 2022. The matchup is beneficial, but it would not be surprising to see Mahomes and the Chiefs constantly attacking whoever gets the nod as the second cornerback.

Brock Purdy's Clutch Factor:

Critics have been calling Brock Purdy a game manager all year. The quarterback is often only asked to find the open guy and play from ahead. However, it is tough to imagine that a proven winner like Kansas City will allow that to happen. While Purdy has come from behind in both postseason games this season, it remains to be seen if he can step up on the biggest stage. Purdy showing up in the clutch will likely be the difference between a San Francisco triumph or another loss at the hands of Kansas City.

Aidan's Prediction:

It is tough to bet against Patrick Mahomes in the postseason when he is not playing the greatest player of all-time, as he only has two losses ever. However, the 2024 San Francisco 49ers are probably the best overall team Mahomes has ever faced. San Francisco will pull off a 28-17 win, and draw even with the Steelers' six Super Bowls.

Staff's Prediction:

Kansas City 30, San Francisco 22

Artist embodies love, longing through sculpture

MEGAN TROTTER
news editor

Korean artist Seuil Chung debuted his third solo exhibition, titled “I Love You,” on Dec. 9 at Concept Art Gallery in Braddock.

The exhibit, recently extended from Feb. 24 to March 16, is a ceramic line of 13 pieces which explore the meaning of innocence and love.

Chung said his inspiration for the theme of the collection came from questioning how to let someone into his life when he was younger.

“I think [love] has shaped me a lot. I think it’s one of the most impactful events in my life,” Chung told The Duke. “It was very natural to people but for some reason it didn’t feel as natural for me to connect with someone.”

Based in Chicago, Chung received a Bachelor of Fine Arts at Studio Art at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2019, and a Master of Fine Art in Ceramics at Cranbrook Academy of Art in 2021.

While teaching in the Ceramics Department at University of Akron in Ohio in 2022, Chung’s art was shown in FRONT International Triennial, where he was discovered by Concept Art Gallery Director, Alison Oehler.

“His work has a humorous quality that I think is really attractive. But it also has sort of a strange kind of otherworldly quality that really draws you in,” Oehler said. “I love his glazes. I think that his color choices are really interesting.”

On opening night, around 60

people visited the gallery to view Chung’s exhibition. Oehler allowed selected potential buyers to preview the show prior to the event, and since opening night almost half of Chung’s ceramic pieces have sold to collectors.

His creative process for “I Love You” began by looking back at sketches from a few years earlier. Chung said he then began to think about form and how they would translate into his theme of love and innocence.

“Overall, I was picturing the show in my head, being like ‘I want these forms to be as diverse as possible,’” Chung said. “I think it was more of an organic process.”

Chung describes his creative approach by doing intuitive drawing and then thinking about the theme later. He felt it was important to have distance between the form and the title or theme.

“I think it can read too literally,” Chung said. “When something becomes too predictable, I think that’s when it’s a little less fun.”

“Narcissist” was built to reflect the form of the Japanese Pokémon character Charmander. Chung said while it does not necessarily have to do with love, he was inspired by the character and tries to keep things loose.

“Stalker” was inspired by a news story in Korea where a stalker was recording the sounds of his neighbor through her front door. According to Seuil Chung’s website, learning of this incident caused him to question the difference between his own personal love and



COURTESY OF ZACH BROWN | ZACH BROWN ART

Chung’s collection, comprised of 13 unique pieces, is available to be purchased by private collectors before the end of the exhibit.

the love of the stalker.

“I think also the media, or the culture really shapes how we think about love, and I don’t know how correct it is and how pure it is,” Chung said.

When entering the Concept Art Gallery, attendees searching for the “I Love You” exhibition must go to the second floor. Each piece is displayed in a blank room on a white stand with a small name tag listing the title, materials, assembly year and price.

While curating the space to reflect Chung’s artistic narrative, Oehler said he requested the room have no didactic explanation.

“We really feel strongly that people should sort of come to their

own conclusions about their own reaction,” she said.

To make it differ from previous projects, “I Love You” was the first time Chung began using automotive paint to glaze his ceramics.

“I think for me I just kind of try to stick to ceramics and not incorporate too many materials is a way for me to confine myself in a sense,” Chung said. “Sometimes you get more creative, and you challenge yourself more with the material when you’re limiting yourself with it.”

Unlike any other piece in the exhibit, “I Wish You Were Dead,” features pink sand in the center of the ceramic square.

Chung said that he was about to give up on this piece but made a last-minute decision to help add texture a few days before delivering the collection to Concept Art Gallery.

Growing up, Chung’s parents encouraged his art and took him to art lessons outside of school. Chung said that after the “I Love You” exhibition closes, he hopes to travel more and meet people to promote his work and continue his career.

With the exhibition’s extension until March 16, Concept Art Gallery and Chung plan to host a Zoom talk where Chung will speak about his creative process. Until then, “I Love You” is free to view.



COURTESY OF SEUIL CHUNG BROWN | SEUIL CHUNG ART

“Narcissist” (left) and “Stalker” (right) were inspired by beloved pieces of pop culture and second-hand experiences.

Aquarius♊

Mournful neighing

Pisces♓

I girlbossed too close to the sun.

Aries♈

Not to victim blame, but why did you bring a needle into a haystack in the first place?

Taurus♉

She's been through a lot. Strawberry daiquiri and biphobia, yes.

Gemini♊

I was ready to throw hands with Courtney Cox Arquette.

Cancer♋

I'm eating this. See y'all at the hospital.

Leo♌

Time to make this (zucchini) bread.

Virgo♍

Sorry I'm late. That troll that blocks my driveway had harder riddles than usual today.

Libra♎

I did not feel comfortable burping at this angle.

Scorpio♏

All diarrhea, no money.

Sagittarius♐

That would kill me like a Dorito would kill Gwyneth Paltrow.

Capricorn♑

This is sludge in the best way possible.

CAMPUS EVENTS

- Asian Student Association:
Lunar New Year
Feb. 8 @ 6 p.m.

Celebrate the Year of the Dragon in the Union Ballroom. Enjoy a special performance, games, prizes and free food.
- LAMBDA GSA Movie Night
Feb. 9 @ 8:30 p.m.

Enjoy food, good vibes and watch the movie Moonlight in Towers MPR.
- Valentine's Day Open Formal
Feb. 10 @ 9 p.m.

Sigma Nu is hosting an open dance in the Union Ballroom. Tickets are \$10 on CashNet.
- Super Bowl Pregame Snacks
Feb. 11 @ 4 p.m.

Head to the NiteSpot for pregame snacks before Super Bowl LVIII!
- Mardi Gras Cultural Dinner
Feb. 13 @ 6 p.m.

Join the Honors College in Towers MPR for an evening of Mardi Gras fun!

EMILY'S EPIPHANIES

Vulnerable to Love

"May your heart remain breakable, but never by the same hand twice."

~ "Why She Disappeared," a poem by Taylor Swift

Love hurts.

It is an unfortunate fact of engaging in matters of the heart. People change, people drift and people pass. But to love and be loved can be one of the best parts of the world that we live in.

We are creatures of community. We crave connection and intimacy. We long to be seen and understood.

Despite our predisposition to having our hearts broken by friends, family and partners, love is still worth having. Sometimes the hurt that we suffer is the greatest proof that our feelings were so deep.

Rebuild with delicateness, handle others with care, and be open to giving your love away. For every ounce you share, your heart will heal.

— Emily Fritz

Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra showcases young talent

HANNAH PETERS
staff writer

Valentine's Day is just around the corner and this year, the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra is celebrating it the best way they know how: through love songs.

With a love story that is as infamous as love itself, Prokofiev's "Romeo and Juliet" is set to take the stage this weekend at Heinz Hall.

First composed in 1935 as a ballet by Russian conductor Sergei Prokofiev, this production of "Romeo and Juliet" will feature Prokofiev's orchestration accompanied by two actors playing the star-crossed lovers, performing their scenes in between the musical scores and allowing audience members to enjoy the orchestration and dramaturgy in tandem.

Unusual to Heinz Hall productions, the actors will also be performing from a box that's typically reserved for seating, giving the 80 plus person orchestra full rein of the stage.

These are not just any actors either. Amerik Cirola, playing Romeo, and Alexis Shepherd with the part of Juliet, are in high school and had just one week to learn their parts.

Cirola and Shepherd, both students of performing arts school Westinghouse Arts Academy, were notified of the opportunity just last Thursday

after the original actors from CMU dropped out of the performance.

"They have less than a week to learn all the material [and] to perform it at a professional level with the prestigious symphony orchestra so it's kind of a 42nd street experience for the kids. They are just getting discovered



seph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat."

Cirola, who first made his musical theater debut in the summer of 2022, was nominated for best actor for the Gene Kelly Award for Excellence in High School Musical Theater for his role as Joseph in the production.



COURTESY OF ALEX BOYD | WESTINGHOUSE ARTS ACADEMY

Amerik Cirola (left) and Alexis Shepherd (right) were notified of their casting with one week to prepare for the interdisciplinary performance.

in this moment," said Westinghouse Operations Specialist & Production Manager Alex Boyd.

Both Cirola and Shepherd maintain an impressive musical resume, being a part of award-winning productions like Westinghouse's "Jo-

Meanwhile, Shepherd, who is a student at both the Pittsburgh CLO's Academy of Musical Theatre and Westinghouse Arts Academy, has been a part of musical theater since the 4th grade and has performed with Cirola a number of times.

"It's been such an amazing experience being able to work with such an incredible and talented human being. Watching him grow ever since Joseph, and even now it's been such a true pleasure to watch," Shepherd said.

It's clear that the pair share a deep respect for one another as Cirola had equally encouraging thoughts about his counterpart.

"It's incredible how far every person comes in the time that you spend with them," Cirola said. "She has definitely done such an incredible job as a member of the community at Westinghouse and as a performer. It is such a pleasure being able to work with her on any project."

Performing Arts Department Chair and Head of the Musical Theatre Program at Westinghouse, Nick Lenz, also spoke highly of the two students, claiming that they are more than up to the challenge of a one-week turnaround performance.

"Not only are they emergency puts for this, but of all things to do Shakespeare – these two students have been absolute professionals," Lenz said.

The young perspective these actors bring to the stage also lends to the original story by Shakespeare who cast Romeo as 16 years old and Juliet 13 years old. The Pittsburgh Sympho-

ny Orchestra is also doing their part in bringing this story to life by including several Romeo and Juliet themed enhancements to the show.

In the Grand Lobby, audience members can enjoy Shakespeare-inspired props, costumes and scripts and will have the chance to pledge their allegiance to House Montague or House Capulet. Themed cocktails will be available and on the Regency Level, Point Park University's theater department will provide stage combat and sword-fighting demos.

Premiering on Friday, Feb. 9, the Romeo and Juliet production will have three performances, lasting until Sunday, Feb. 11. Tickets range from \$25 to \$109 and can be purchased via the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra website.

With music full of drama and rich with emotion, the production in store will no doubt be an experience of a lifetime, not only for the audience but for those who are telling the story as well.

"It's been a fun experience being able to interpret such a well renowned piece of literature and theater into a perspective for the symphony," Cirola said.

"It's been such a pleasure and I'm truly grateful to be part of this experience," Shepherd said. "I'm so excited."

Galentine's Market: Local vendors celebrate non-romantic love

EMILY FRITZ
a&e editor

Pink balloons and pop music greeted guests as they entered Opya Studios in the Southside Flats on Sunday.

Twelve vendors, featuring a variety of products from handmade soy candles, body butters and wax melts, to lash extensions, botox and flash tattoos, gathered to celebrate what 'Galentine's Day' means to them.

"It's about community and friendship," said Cafe Botanica co-owner Anna Heasley. "It's about loving yourself instead of waiting for someone else to love you; it gives you the opportunity to do that."

Starting her business in summer 2023 with cousin Rachel Kinross, the duo operates their mobile cafe by-event. Several of the menu items at the Galentine's Market were inspired by the holiday, including the "Love Potion," the "Cherry Kiss" mocktail and dulce de leche and coconut cream cold brews.

"Coffee is a way to commune with your friends and people you care about ... We decided to go more pink with the desserts we were offering," added Kinross. "[The menu] was event-specific but they will definitely make a comeback in the cycle of drinks."

Kandice Lee, creator of KanBe Essentials, began her line of body butters and wax melts in response to her role as a healthcare professional.

"I came up with KanBe Essentials because I felt like I can be anything I want to be. I started with wax melts and then turned it into lotions and body butters. I'm planning on doing hand soaps as well, because I can be anything I want to be" Lee said.

Like many vendors, being able to share her products in a brick and mortar setting has helped Lee expose her brand to new audiences.

Jasano Brooks, owner of Opya Studio, originally wanted to put on the market to bring new customers to pre-existing businesses in Pittsburgh.

In the intersection of each vendor's typical clientele, he was hoping to give larger exposure to his venue and to the small businesses and boutiques offering their goods and services.

"The goal is to bring a wide variety of events together that will bring a different [slew] of people to the space," Brooks said. "[But this market] is about love, being around people that make you feel wanted, that make you feel safe and make you feel happy."

The season of love didn't resonate unanimously with everyone

in attendance. Erin Smrekar, owner of Storehouse Neutral emphasized the importance of quality time and year-round love, especially in the wake of hustle culture.

"Being able to be with your family and actually spend that time together is huge," she said.

Smrekar was determined to bring the community into her space as well. "[This market] is intimate and more community involved ... I can see those people come back to my shop and get to know them."

Meanwhile, several booths set up in the room showcased products to sample and take home. "Self care" was a strong theme among several businesses, like LashLoft PGH and fillir which specialize in beauty services like lash extensions, spray tanning and botox.

Other vendors leaned into memory building services like Keli Marie Photography, owned and operated by Keli Szalinski.

"Getting hour photos taken is empowering," Szalinski said, who boasted a beautiful Valentine's themed photo opportunity and offered free shoots. "A lot of people come up a little bit more shy and reserved; by the end of the photoshoot they feel overall more confident and empowered about who they are."

Similarly, Trick or Treat Ink offered a dose of confidence to clients who chose to be tattooed by owner and artist Ashley Miner. Using a "flash sheet" of predetermined designs, Miner gave a sneak peak of Valentine's designs that will be available at her shop during the week of the holiday.

"Self love through tattooing you can appreciate yourself and make your body a sticker sheet," she said.

The market succeeded in offering unique products and services, promotions and discounts for

consumers and quality time for those looking to slow down and enjoy the event with loved ones.

"We've had a lot of moms and daughters come in to get something [together]," said Jenni Gerhold, owner of Jenni G Jewelry, which specializes in handmade, curated and permanent jewelry.

"Permanent jewelry builds connections with people...it's being connected onto you physically but also you're doing it with your family or friends. It's something that you're going to remember that you're going to have on forever."



BRENTARO YAMANE | MULTIMEDIA EDITOR

Many of the vendors in attendance, including Kandice Lee (pictured), had mobile or digital presence, so the market provided opportunity to find new audiences.

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“Spread love everywhere
you go. Let no one ever
come to you without leav-
ing happier.”

Mother Teresa

You just read | Now tweet
our thoughts. | us yours.

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COURTESY OF WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Elon Musk (center) meeting with former Brazilian president Jair Bolsonaro (left).

Musk's X will and needs to die

ELIYAHU GASSON
opinions editor

X, the company formerly known as Twitter, needs to die. As it stands, the platform is a cesspool of unregulated political extremists actively working to undo any social or political progress society has achieved in the last 100-or-so years. The site has also become the outlet of choice for foreign oligarchs to spread their propaganda in the United States.

Since purchasing the site in 2022, Elon Musk has transformed X from a semi-respectable microblogging platform to a punchline. From the infamous “let that sink in” video in which he carried a porcelain sink into Twitter’s office to the rebranding process which involved the installation to an obnoxiously bright “X” sign blasting white light into the adjacent apartment building.

Musk has posted his intentions for the platform online. He aims to turn what is ostensibly a microblogging and video sharing website into an app that does everything from restaurant reservations to online payments.

But Musk has undermined himself with his laissez-faire moderation. Along with firing more than half of Twitter’s staff upon his acquisition of the company, Musk reinstated numerous accounts previously banned for spreading hateful and destructive content.

Examples include Alex Jones, who spread false information about the Sandy Hook shooting resulting in mass harassment of parents and victims, Kanye West, who had posted multiple antisemitic statements including the infamous “going def con 3 on Jewish people” and Donald Trump, who incited a riot at the U.S. capitol on Jan. 6.

X account Libs of TikTok, run by Chia Raichik, is one instance of Musk’s libertine speech policies run amok in the real world.

“Elon Musk has transformed X from a semi-respectable microblogging platform to a punchline.”

Raichik’s account has been blamed by law enforcement in multiple cities for bomb threats made to schools, hospitals and businesses according to *NBC News*.

There is no hard evidence that Raichik called for the bomb threats nor is it entirely clear if the people who made the threats were directly inspired by Libs of TikTok. However, the timing of the threats heavily correlates to when Raichik features targets on her page.

NBC News said they have identified 33 incidents since 2020 in which people or institutions were singled out by Raichik. The threats targeted schools, libraries, hospitals, small businesses and elected officials in 16 states, Washington, D.C., and Ontario.

For its part, X has done nothing to limit Libs of TikTok’s reach or soften its impact. Rather, the company has given refuge to equally influential and malicious actors.

Tucker Carlson, former journalist and talk show host, was booted from *Fox News* last year for spreading lies about voting machines that got his employer in legal trouble.

Carlson quickly relaunched his show on Twitter where he has been welcomed enthusiastically by Musk.

Carlson posted a video on X on Tuesday from Russia announcing his interview with Russian president Vladimir Putin, who ordered the invasion of Ukraine nearly two years ago.

Carlson is the first American media personality to be granted the privilege since before Russia’s invasion began, probably because he has a track record of supporting similar right wing autocrats like Brazil’s Jair Bolsonaro who had incited a riot in his country’s capital Brasilia and Hungary’s Viktor Orbán who has unabashedly transformed his country into an “illiberal state.”

The return and safe harboring of so many unfashionable and conspiratorial influencers combined with Musk’s own brand of right-wing politics has led to an exodus of prominent advertisers.

Ads for Walmart, Disney and Sony, among other prominent brands have disappeared. Notable advertisers continue to jump ship, not wanting to be seen financially supporting platforms which provide a soapbox for hate speech and misinformation.

Less advertising revenue forced X to shift to a subscription model. Since Musk’s acquisition, account verification, once used to indicate the validity of an account, has been turned into a pay-to-play game. Reputable sources are drowned out by any user with money to spend on an X Premium subscription.

X is now worth 55% less than when Musk bought it according to their own reports. Such a precipitous decline in value is indicative of the best case scenario, the death of X.

STAFF EDITORIAL

Tech literacy critical in media landscape

In the old days, when us Gen Z folks used ink and paper to gather information and communicate, it was expected that people would know how to read. It was, and still is, the first thing that children are taught in school. In the most primitive sense, words are how we generate information and pass it to one another, so we need to learn how to process those words. Now that information is passed through computers and platforms that were unimaginable when we were born, informational literacy is just as important as it was when we actually had to crack open an encyclopedia. It’s just a bit more complicated now. And there’s Google.

People everywhere, including Duquesne, are trying to catch up their tech literacy to the world that is shaping us. The Hacking-4Humanity event is just one example of the ways that Duquesne and other institutions of higher learning are trying to educate and foster growth in their students. However, it’s not just an ability to code that makes you technologically competent. Not very many people can do that. What’s important is the ability to grasp the context of information online and understand the people who are behind it. Tech literacy is media literacy.

Duquesne is beginning to understand this, and it’s why there’s a course called “Media Literacy required for all students looking to enter the world of digital media i.e., journalism students. However, they aren’t the only ones who are entering this world. Everyone is.

On Twitter, one of the world’s largest information-sharing platforms, blue checkmarks once meant that information an account was posting was coming from a source that was either reputable, or at least held accountable for their words. However, new management has ensured that this feature cheapened, and that genius tool for accountability is now available to anyone willing to fork over an hour of their minimum wage paycheck. This has clouded up the information we get on that app for the sake of profit.

It does mean that people need to be even more tuned in to the people and motivations behind the stuff they read. That applies especially to journalism students, but also to everyone who ever plans on consuming media online. You learned how to read when you were five, but classes like media literacy and media ethics are crucial to teach you how to understand what you read. You can make whatever you want of Tucker Carlson’s upcoming interview with Vladimir Putin, but a better education means you’ll understand the layers of it before you form an opinion.

Taylor Swift is a huge draw to Super Bowl

BRENTARO YAMANE
Multimedia Editor

The Kansas City Chiefs are playing in the Super Bowl for the fourth time in five years, a feat overshadowed by the fact that Taylor Swift is dating the team's star tight end Travis Kelce. Now the question is not "will the Chiefs win?" it's "will Taylor's man take it home?"

Swift's boyfriend making it to the Super Bowl might be the best thing to happen to the NFL and the Chiefs. According to online company Not Common, Swift is ranked the 15th most popular celebrity on Instagram with 280 million followers, more than the NFL's 29.4 million. Any content she posts about the Chiefs serves as free advertising for the team and their upcoming game.



COURTESY OF WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Taylor Swift has gone platinum 11 times and won 14 Grammy Awards.

If the Chiefs did not make the Super Bowl, the event would not be as entertaining to non-fans. There are people that do not like Swift because of her beliefs, her music or because of how much positive press she receives. So, the idea that more people are going to watch the game in hopes to see her team lose is probably going to happen.

Now the question is not "will the Chiefs win?" it's "will Taylor's man take it home?"

Since NFL regular season games started to be tracked in 1995, this year's regular season averaged 17.9 million viewers, which was the second most ever recorded, according to *Fortune*, and thanks to Swift getting more women and her fans to watch football, it isn't that surprising.

In a regular season game between the Chiefs and the New York Jets, 22 million viewers watched that Sunday night football game as 2 million more female viewers between the ages of 18-24 and over 35 tuned in according to *NBC*. The Chiefs - Jets game was played during Week 4 and that game was up 22% over the Week 4 Sunday night game played in 2022.

Back in October, the NFL saw more than 200 million video views related to Kelce, Swift and NFL content. All those views were based on regular season games. With the biggest game of the year about to be played, all those views and the amount of content is bound to increase.

During the NFL Divisional round, the Chiefs game against the Buffalo Bills was the most-watched game out of all four games played in that round with 50.39 million viewers and that game was played on a Sunday night, in which most people settle down and get ready to go to work or school the next day compared to the second most-watched game during that round was the Green Bay Packers and San Francisco 49ers game that was played on Saturday with only 37.54 million viewers.

Last year, the Super Bowl between the Chiefs and the Philadelphia Eagles had 112.7 million viewers, which was the third-most watched Super Bowl game in history. The most-watched Super Bowl ever was XLIX when 114.4 million viewers tuned in, according to *ShowBuzzDaily*.

Out of the 60 musical performances that Swift held between 2022 and 2023, an average of 72,000 people attended each one. If she attends the Super Bowl, many people may watch just to see her, provided she attends.

This year's Super Bowl has the potential to be the most-watched game in NFL history. Along with the Swift fac-

tor, the Chiefs are also trying to build a dynasty looking to win their fourth championship while the 49ers are trying to win their first Super Bowl since 1995 and under quarterback Brock Purdy, who was selected as the last pick in the 2022 Draft.



COURTESY OF WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Travis Kelce is going to compete in his fourth Super Bowl.

There are too many professional sports

SPENCER THOMAS
sports editor

Nobody loves sports more than me. But I recognize that the market for sports is completely oversaturated, and it's only getting worse.

Why do you think that Europeans and South Americans are known for their wild soccer crowds that put any American game to shame? It's not like they are just born with some gene that makes them more passionate. It's because that is all they have.

Somewhere in Philadelphia, there is an 8-year-old with just as much passion for football as a kid in Manchester. But the Philly kid also has one wall orange and black for the Flyers, one red and powder blue for the Phillies, one green and black for the Eagles and one red, white and blue for the Sixers.

In Manchester, the kid has four walls blood-red and black to support his favorite soccer team. He wakes up every day thinking about Manchester United, counting down the minutes until their next match. He screams his heart out from the grandstands because that team's performance is going to determine his mood for the next week.

In Philly, the kid doesn't even bother watching his Phillies that afternoon because the Eagles are on. They lose, but he's not worried about it because the Flyers have a big game tomorrow. He's scattered. The American markets are oversaturated, whereas international fanbases are more engaged, because every beat of their heart is dedicated to one team.

More may seem like it's better, until you sit in the stands of an NBA game that

feels like an AARP convention. Elsewhere, fans are going to war, waving flags, shooting flares and mouthing off with chants whose intensity shakes the foundation of the stadium.

"In Manchester, the kid has four walls blood-red and black to support his favorite soccer team. He wakes up every day thinking about Manchester United, counting down the minutes until their next match."

Even within individual sports, too much of a good thing is becoming a problem. In the NFL, big wigs with bigger pockets decided to expand the playoffs from 12 to 14 teams, and regular season games from 16 to 17. Mathematically, both of these changes make every regular season game mean less.

More games mean more room for error. A loss is no longer the end of the world for teams that now have one extra game to make up for it. More teams in the playoffs mean more security for the league's best teams. They can just go on autopilot after Thanksgiving because their postseason spot is all but guaranteed.

The counterargument to this is that the postseason is wide open, meaning teams lower in the standings are playing more meaningful

football. But ask yourself this: The big games went from featuring Josh Allen to Mason Rudolph. Is that tradeoff worth it? We had to watch Allen manhandle Rudolph wildcard weekend anyway.

Even March Madness, the biggest and most electric playoff in sports, comes with a price. The college basketball regular season means next to nothing. Big teams are just playing for seeding, which, as we see in March, doesn't mean a thing.

The NCAA Tournament is like a sugar high. It gets you going for a short stretch of time but is ultimately meaningless and hurts your attachment to the everyday existence of things that you love.

All this means any given game has lower stakes, less drama and fewer fans living and dying by every snap of the ball. Isn't that what we loved about sports in the first place?

The nostalgia that fans feel toward the golden age of baseball isn't because baseball was better back then. In the 50s, when fans packed Forbes Field for a Sunday afternoon game, it was because that was all they had. A 1-0 game between the bottom-feeding Reds and the Pirates is just as miserable now as it was back then. The difference is, the market is so oversaturated now we can dismiss that game, rejecting the things we used to hold dear.



COURTESY OF BRENTARO YAMANE

Christian Yelich (left) and Quintin Berry (right) walking off field at end of inning.

Pittsburgh native gains fame from the 50

BRENTARO YAMANE
multimedia editor

It's early February, and Ben Tenuta, a senior at Point Park University, is sitting in his classes counting down the days until he graduates later in the spring.

While he thinks of himself as an every-day student, the content that Tenuta provides on social media is getting much more attention than he could ever imagine, turning him into a public figure.

Many people in the Western Pennsylvania area know Tenuta as a sports videographer, photographer, graphic designer and content creator. While he has made a name for himself covering sports in the high school area, he has had experience shooting collegiate and professional sports as well.

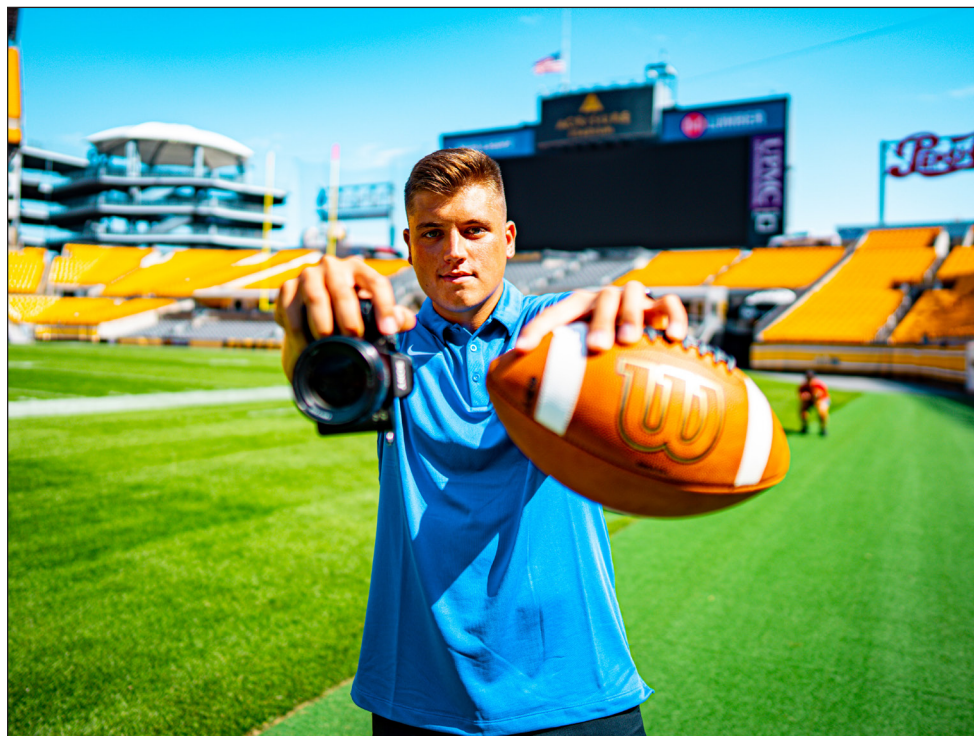
"It was my freshman year of college. And I would create video content, I had this Instagram page that I didn't really use at all and I started to see some other accounts like SWNGMN, Prospect Media, Dream Shots and 2020 Productions, creating content in sports," Tenuta said.

"And 2020 was one of the first guys I ever saw and thought his videos were pretty sick and then I saw SWNGMN and Prospect. So, I was like, 'You know, I think I could really do something like this.'

The amount of hard work that he put in on his social media pages did not go unnoticed, giving him an experience that would change his life.

Dan Zangrilli, a radio broadcaster for KDKA Radio, messaged Tenuta on Instagram in 2021 after seeing his work and gave him an opportunity to show off his skills in photography and videography and cover high school football and basketball for them.

"And when I first saw that [DM from Dan Zangrilli], I honestly thought it was fake," Tenuta said. "Because it was so random, and I was only shooting sports for a while, probably since the spring of that year be-



PHOTOS COURTESY OF BEN TENUTA

Senior at Point Park University Ben Tenuta has experience shooting videos and photographs for collegiate and professional sports.

fore but coming into that football season, I only shot two football games ever."

The two football games that Tenuta shot previously were Damar Hamlin's all-star game during the summer and Sto-Rox's first football game of that season when they played against Bishop Sycamore, which was known as a non-existent Ohio school.

It was that game against Bishop Sycamore, where Tenuta made a video edit for the game, that got Zangrilli to reach out and offer Tenuta an opportunity.

"They wanted to see if I was interested in it and potentially after I graduate, I can maybe have a job. And I shot both seasons (football and basketball) for free and everything on my own. And it was a great experience," Tenuta said.

Tenuta's opportunity, an internship, turned into a job as multimedia production coordinator in his own office at the Audacy Pittsburgh station in Greentree. Here he was able to learn new things and improve his skills.

To say that Tenuta has shot for the stars isn't an understatement. His Instagram page has over 117,00 followers and his TikTok has over 212,000 followers. Other social media outlets such as MaxPreps, SportsCenterNext and Overtime have posted his videos on their pages as well.

The number of messages he gets from athletes asking him to shoot their games and people coming up to him asking him for pictures and autographs might be overwhelming for some, but he is grateful

for it all. He has made a name for himself in the Western Pennsylvania area and has earned that recognition.

"I've never met someone as creative as Ben," said Cale Berger, one of Ben's co-workers. "He's always looking for ideas. He's always saving reels on Instagram or finding stuff on TikTok. So, it's the creativity, he never ceases to amaze me of the stuff that he comes up with and the different things that he tries."

Tenuta said inspiration for his work comes from all around him, including other high school and college aged videographers taking up sports media. On Instagram alone Tenuta has connected with more than 90 Pittsburgh sports photographers. He is inspiring younger people whether he realizes it or not.

"He's a very personable guy," said Chris Barrish, Waynesburg University men's basketball player and KDKA Radio intern. "First he's kind of shy, I'd say, but you get to know him he's real funny, and he's a real stand-up guy, but he is probably one of the hardest workers I have ever met."

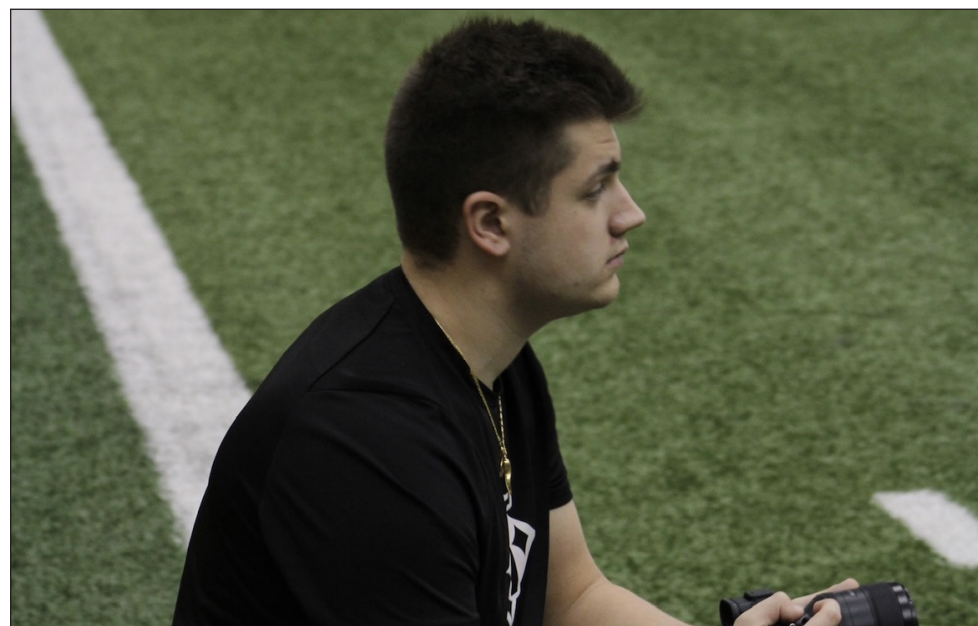
Tenuta works to bring more exposure to student athletes, giving them a platform to give them the recognition and credit that they deserve. As a former football player at Belle Vernon Area High School, he knows what it is like to be in their shoes and provide an outlet that they can look back on one day to cherish the memories that they had in sports.

From a young age, he was always getting involved in the media, whether it would be working for his high school's television station or making morning announcements. But still, he puts more time working on his photography and videography skills.

"There's so much I can improve. I wouldn't even say I'm even the best. Like, I just try to get better," Tenuta said. "I just always try to expand my creativity really, and I try to acknowledge everything I see, no matter what it is in all aspects."



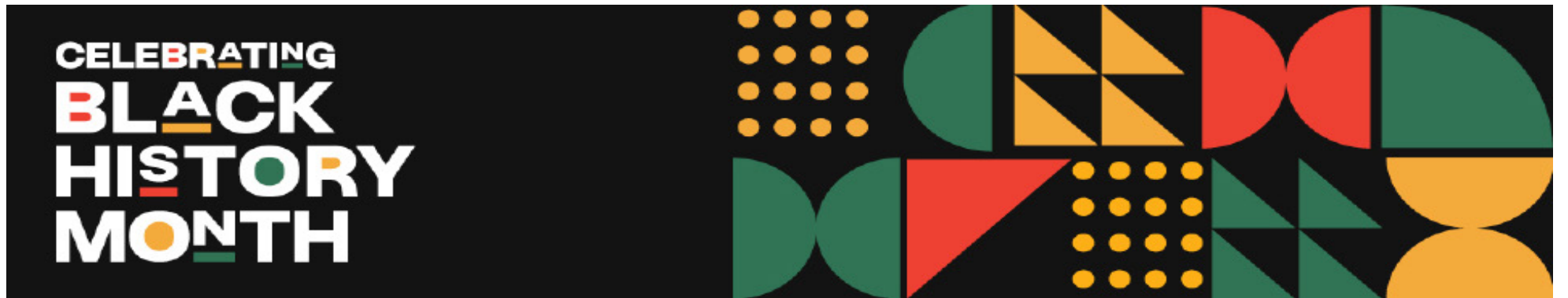
Ben Tenuta has been involved in the media since a young age. He enjoys giving student athletes a platform for recognizing their achievements beginning in their high school career.



Ben Tenuta is seen here taking photos at a game. Even though he's good at what he does, he says he is his own worst critic, and he is always looking for ways to improve.

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Valentine's Day Grams

Dearest Hannah, I just wanted you to know how loved and cherished you are! I hope you have a wonderful Valentine's Day. "I swear I couldn't love you more than I do right now, and yet I know I will tomorrow." - Leo Christopher
-Vanessa Peters aka "Mom"

To: Encore Show Choir :)
I love you all and very thankful for you <3 Happy Valentine's Day!
- Sofia Schwaab

My Dear Ollie,
Happy Valentine's Day to the best man I know! In chaos and in calm, sharing life with you is a true joy. Here's to many more years of food and cheer and song!
Love,
Your Michael

Emily, you know I cannot express how much I admire and adore you. The best part of my day is simply coming home to you! Yappuchinos tomorrow?
- Lucy

Ryan Brotien, you are the sexiest Sam Sulek doppelgänger. Keep cheating on those rows baby girl ;)
- Gym Crush

Your chili makes my stomach hurt, but you make my whole week
- Big country

James, you are one of the best musicians I've ever met and heard. I hope you root for the Chiefs in the Super Bowl. And have a good Valentines Day!
xoxoxoxoxoxo
- Luke & Will

Emma, please don't look at this message before you print it, Ms. Head Honcho. And don't steal my money. Happy Valentines Day! Please come home for another video. This message will self-destruct in five seconds.
-Agents Kiok & TooMuchDog

Dear Doug at the Press,
We appreciate all the work you do and your patience with our (sometimes late) submission times! Happy Valentine's Day
- The grateful Duke Staff

Happy Galentines Day,
Maddie, Alaina, and Emma!
-Ava

Dear Duke staff, may you finish before 2am once this semester to make last call!

MATTHEW
KERLIK!!

"For love: a poet. For romance: a Journalist" W.W. Auden.
- Zach

"When the world turns cold and there does not seem to be a redeeming light in the qualities of men, I find myself turning to my first and only love - Fixing pages on InDesign," E from the newsroom

Luce, Happy valentines day! I love you!
- Em

We heart the duke!



- The Writing Witches

Happy Valentine's Day from the Duke!