



Pi Kappa Alpha hosts benefit tournament

Mark Ziegler reporter

On the evening of Thursday, March 5, the Pi Kappa Alpha fraternity hosted a volleyball tournament at the Student Recreation Center as part of their Pike Patty's Week celebrations, which was created as a week-long event to serve as a spring equivalent to their Fireman's Challenge in the fall.

"Something I have heard and noticed from around the Pittsburg community is that activities and events diminish in quantity and quality during the spring semester," explained Keaton Mallicoat, a freshman double majoring in management and psychology. "So, I took it upon myself, after my election into the External Vice President Position for my fraternity, to bring back a taste of Fall Semester while simultaneously giving back to the greater Pittsburg Community."

The tournament was open to all organizations, fraternities, and sororities on campus, and it had a \$5 buy-in for competitors. All of the proceeds from the buy-in were donated to firefighters, which is a cause that Pi Kappa Alpha, which has 225 chapters across the country, has actively supported since the 1950s, with a vintage fire truck owned by Pi Kappa Alpha being a common sight to see on the roads of Pittsburg. At the tournament, Pi Kappa Alpha had two separate teams being represented for them- one composed of their executive members, the other being of general members. Also present at the event were members of Alpha Sigma Alpha, Sigma Sigma Sigma, Alpha Gamma Delta, and the Student Government Association.

The evening began with two round robin-style sets of matchups to determine which teams would play in the championship and who would play in the third-place decider match. To win the preliminary matchups, the teams had to score at least 11 points to win, with a margin of at least two points to be considered the victors. The first pool was made up of Alpha Gamma Delta, Pi Kappa Alpha's executives, and Sigma Sigma Sigma. Alpha Gamma Delta won their first match against Sigma Sigma Sigma, 11-9, but fell to Pi Kappa Alpha's executive team 11-8. At the end of the

pool, Pi Kappa Alpha triumphed over Sigma Sigma Sigma, 11-5.

The second pool to be played was composed of the Student Government Association, Alpha Sigma Alpha, and Pi Kappa Alpha's general members. Alpha Sigma Alpha lost their initial match 11-9 against the Student Government Association but was able to run off with an 11-9 win over Pi Kappa Alpha's general members. To end the preliminary matches, the Student Government Association came through against Pi Kappa Alpha's general members 11-4.

With the preliminaries finished, it came time for the third-place decider in a rematch between Pi Kappa Alpha's member team and Alpha Sigma Alpha. The third-place decider behaved just like the preliminaries in terms of scoring, and it ended with Pi Kappa Alpha's members taking third place in an 11-7 win.

There was only one game remaining- the championship game, where Pi Kappa Alpha's executives played against the Student Government Association. This round behaved differently than previous rounds in scoring- the two-point margin was still in effect, but the minimum to win was now 15 points, and it was now a best of three sets instead of one. Pi Kappa Alpha's executives took the first set in a 15-7 landslide win, but the Student Government Association pulled through in a close 16-14 win in the second set, before winning the last set 15-9, earning the Student Government Association the title of Pike Patty's Week Volleyball champions.

Garon Wright, a member of the Student Government Association double majoring in geography and political science, was on the team.

"It was awesome to play in, especially because we were competitive at homecoming. But the win at Pike's event against ASA (Alpha Sigma Alpha) was the most fun and competitive, if not the Pike execs. Both were very even and fair matches that brought joy, I'd hope, to both teams." Wright also expressed his confidence in the Student Government Association in future competitions.

Pitt State signs contract with Nike

Caroline Kunshek copy editor

On March 2, Pittsburg State University Athletics announced that the university will be embarking on a 10-year partnership with Nike, the world's largest athletic gear supplier. This endeavor cancels the university's contract with Adidas.

Anthony Crespino, PSU Vice President of Athletics, discussed the reasoning behind the university's decision.

"The biggest part of everything that we're doing is just, what's the thing our student athletes want? What's going to help us in recruiting? Just looking at everything on a year-to-year, day-to-day basis, how can we elevate the Pitt State brand?" He added, "Going through that process, it just became apparent that we could get some more bang for our buck out of that."

This agreement entails Pitt State using BSN Sports for equipment purchases. Crespino explained that this change would have a positive impact on students.

"It's just going to allow us to do more for them in terms of just apparel, gear, being able to provide more equipment, just really continue to invest in them." He continued, "Then, there's some other things down the road, financially, that once you get a couple of things ironed out, there's going to be some additional things that are going to help drive some more revenue back to the student-athletes."

Changing contracts did not come from a place of malice towards Adidas.

Crespino explained, "The hardest part is just, Adidas was a good partner, and there wasn't any ill feelings or anything. It was a mutual decision, exit, however you want to call it."

Crespino added, "The hardest part is sometimes, that affects people locally, and we hate that. That's not something that you're looking to do. But at the end of the day, just with the rising costs of athletics and the changing landscape, we just got to be able to bring in as much revenue as we can and have to leverage our brand and the Pitt State brand as much as possible to be able to provide our student athletes the best student-athlete experience that they can get."

According to Crespino, this new deal will not prevent local apparel stores such as Jock's Nitch from selling Pitt State branded items. "So from a Nike standpoint, the Nike licensee that basically goes through Pitt as a university, Jock's Nitch will be able to continue to sell all the apparel stuff they're selling right now. Still ironing out all those details, but they'll still be able to use the split face logo for all the Pitt State marks."

Crespino concluded by saying that he's "just really excited about it." He continued, "I think our coaches are excited about it. Student athletes are excited about it. I think there's some additional things coming in the future that I think our alumni and fans will be excited about, and it'll be great."



Freshman elementary education major Abbie Numrich practices her serves before the Pike Patty's Day Volleyball tournament on Mar. 5. Her sorority, Alpha Gamma Delta, played in the first group in the preliminary rounds.

| Photo by Mark Ziegler

Students have face-to-face conversations with employers

Brianna Barnes chief editor

On March 13 at Pittsburg State the Plaster Center, over 145 companies and organizations came to campus to speak with students for the Spring Career Fair. Hosted by the Career and Development Office, the event gives students a place for in-person conversations with potential employers.

"I'd say the career fair is important because a lot of people don't know what they want to do," Cooper Williams, a freshman communication major, said. "They don't know what is out there. Having this career fair and having the opportunity to talk to people face to face is important, because personally, I do not enjoy speaking to people over the phone. It's easier in person conversation. I feel like this will give people an opportunity to really know what's out there and find out what they could be interested in."

The fair is also for students to be receptive of all the opportunities they may not have known about within a company. The conversations are a part of it.

"So far, conversations have been great," Sofia Orman with Northwest Health out of Northwest Arkansas said. "Students have been really engaged, even those that may not have heard of us have been open and receptive to hearing about the programs we have and how it could apply to their field of study."

For students, the fair builds knowledge and helps them branch out for the future.

"I was just interested in expanding my knowledge about the different careers that are here," Kyson Schultz, a sophomore majoring in construction management, said. "I just want to get to know different construction companies and hopefully web out and branch out for the future."

The fair gets students a step into the world outside of the classroom, helping them see what they possibly will do with their lives. Beyond that, it can build confidence in them for future interviews.

"I think it's important because I was once a student and was close to graduating and did not know what I wanted to do with my life," Orman said. "It's important to make that connection with potential employers to give them confidence when they go to an interview, so they can interview well and they are prepared for the real world."

With internships, the fair can keep students in the loop on dates, helping them get the internship they want.

"I'm going to walk out of here knowing what a couple of these companies are really looking for and when they are signing up for internships to come out," Williams said. "Some of these companies like Crossland fill up really quickly. So, knowing the date I can apply to be an intern there, it will help me a lot moving forward in the future."

As these students will be future professionals in the field, many employers are open to helping them now in training and education.

"We love students, so it's important to us because new graduate nurses become future nurses and so if we can get them in and train them, we are willing to go all the way with them," Orman said. "That is especially when it comes to education and training in development."



Freshman International relations student Saya Kito writes down information from an Airbus representative. The Pitt State career day event hosted dozens of companies on Tuesday for students to make connections to potential employers.

| Photo by Christopher Law

SGA passes inclement weather resolution

Caroline Kunshek copy editor

During the month of February, the Pittsburg State Student Government Association senate passed a resolution with the goal of improving inclement weather safety standards. This resolution specifically targets on-campus student employees who may have to travel to their on-campus jobs even when classes are cancelled.

“This resolution is designed for student employees and to protect their safety,” Charlie Judd, SGA’s Grants and Giving chair, said. Judd is a senior elementary education major and authored this resolution. “The way the system is set up, student campus workers have to come in to work during snow days, even though the university is closed for their safety. With the passage of this resolution, hopefully help change that and protect students so they don’t have to face this harsh weather.”

Specifically, the resolution states that “the Overman Student Center and Axe Library close building operations or have a late opening and early closing whenever inclement weather conditions warrant a university closure, and that students may not be penalized for absence.”

“This will affect students who work for the university and possibly affect campus hours for the library and student center,” Judd explained. “What inspired me was this past snow day when I was scheduled to work, I couldn’t come in because of the road conditions. Luckily, I have a great boss and team, and was able to help find someone to cover for me, since I couldn’t make it in. Not every person is going to have that supportive team behind them, so hopefully this resolution will help change that.”

Student Government Association values the opinions of students, and it was important that this resolution was discussed directly with the student employees who would be affected.

Judd said that student opinions were taken into consideration by him “talking to students about what impact this would have on them, specifically students who use the rec, and what we can do for those students. Also, talking to student employees who were affected by this, and coming to a middle ground on what is best for the students.”

Josh Lawrie, a sophomore exercise science major, is an employee at the student recreation center. Also an SGA senator, Lawrie explained, “I think when the resolution was brought up, people automatically thought about asking student employees. When we came back to talk about it, people asked the students they knew that had an on-campus job and got their feedback.”

Lawrie has also experienced working as an on-campus employee during inclement weather. “There have definitely been instances where employees have been unable to make it to work because of the dangerous conditions. But there have been zero accidents as long as I’ve worked there.”

He later added, “I think the resolution will definitely help the other areas of campus. At the Rec, we already do something similar to what the resolution is.”

This resolution has been passed by the SGA senate, but still has a few steps left before it come to fruition. It will be reviewed by the Faculty Senate, the inclement weather committee, and the president’s cabinet.

SGA is an active organization that aims to better the quality of student life, campus, and the community. Student opinions are a priority to SGA, and students are welcome to bring up issues directly to the senate.

Judd explains that “Students can make their voices heard by coming in for student opinion time during senate, which is in Russ 409 on Wednesdays at 6 p.m. If they are able to, they can come to the office or fill out the student feedback form on our Engage page, as well as contact anyone in SGA.”

Sigma Chi concert set to raise funds for cancer

Kaylee Dillow photo editor

Pittsburg State University students and community are invited to the Derby days Kick Off Concert hosted by Sigma Chi Fraternity on Friday, March 27, at Kansas Crossing Casino. Doors open at 5 p.m. for VIP tickets and 6 p.m. for general admission and students. The event will run until 9 p.m.

This event isn’t just about music, but the impact. All proceeds from the concert will benefit the Huntsman Cancer Institute, supporting cancer research, patient care, and life-saving treatments. Nashville artist Aidan Candfield will headline the evening.

For Noah Yeakey, interfraternity council and member of Sigma Chi, supporting cancer research is personal. “Supporting cancer research is part of who we are as Sigma Chi. Our fraternity has partnered with the Huntsman Cancer Institute for years, and it’s something every chapter across the country rallies behind. For us, it’s not just a philanthropy requirement. Almost everyone has been impacted by cancer in some way, whether it’s family, friends, or someone in our community. Supporting Huntsman means we’re contributing to research that can give families answers and hope,” Yeakey said.

Sigma Chi chapters nationwide have raised over \$31 million toward cancer research, and the fraternity recently pledged an additional \$31 million. “Moments like that remind me how important cancer research truly is,” Yeakey said.

“Fourteen years ago, my grandma was diagnosed with stage four mesothelioma, one of the deadliest forms of lung cancer. Doctors gave her just eight months to live. But through prayer, incredible doctors, and the research that made her treatment possible, she is still here today, and her cancer is in remission,” Yeakey shared. “Almost every person you meet has either been affected by cancer themselves or knows

someone who has. That is why I choose to fight to help end cancer.”

“Derby Days is really about bringing people together for something bigger than ourselves. Yes, there are events and competitions, but the purpose behind it is service. It’s a week where our chapter focuses entirely on raising awareness and funds for cancer research. It also creates a chance for our campus community to come together around a cause that truly matters,” Yeakey said.

The concert not only brings entertainment, but also provides a purpose. “It’s powerful because it allows people to have fun while still making a meaningful impact. A concert brings people together, creates energy, and builds community. When that same event is helping raise money for cancer research, it turns a night of entertainment into something that can truly make a difference. I hope they feel the sense of community and purpose behind it. Yes, it’s going to be a great night of music and fun, but I hope people also leave knowing they were part of something bigger and helped support a cause that affects millions of families,” Yeakey explained.

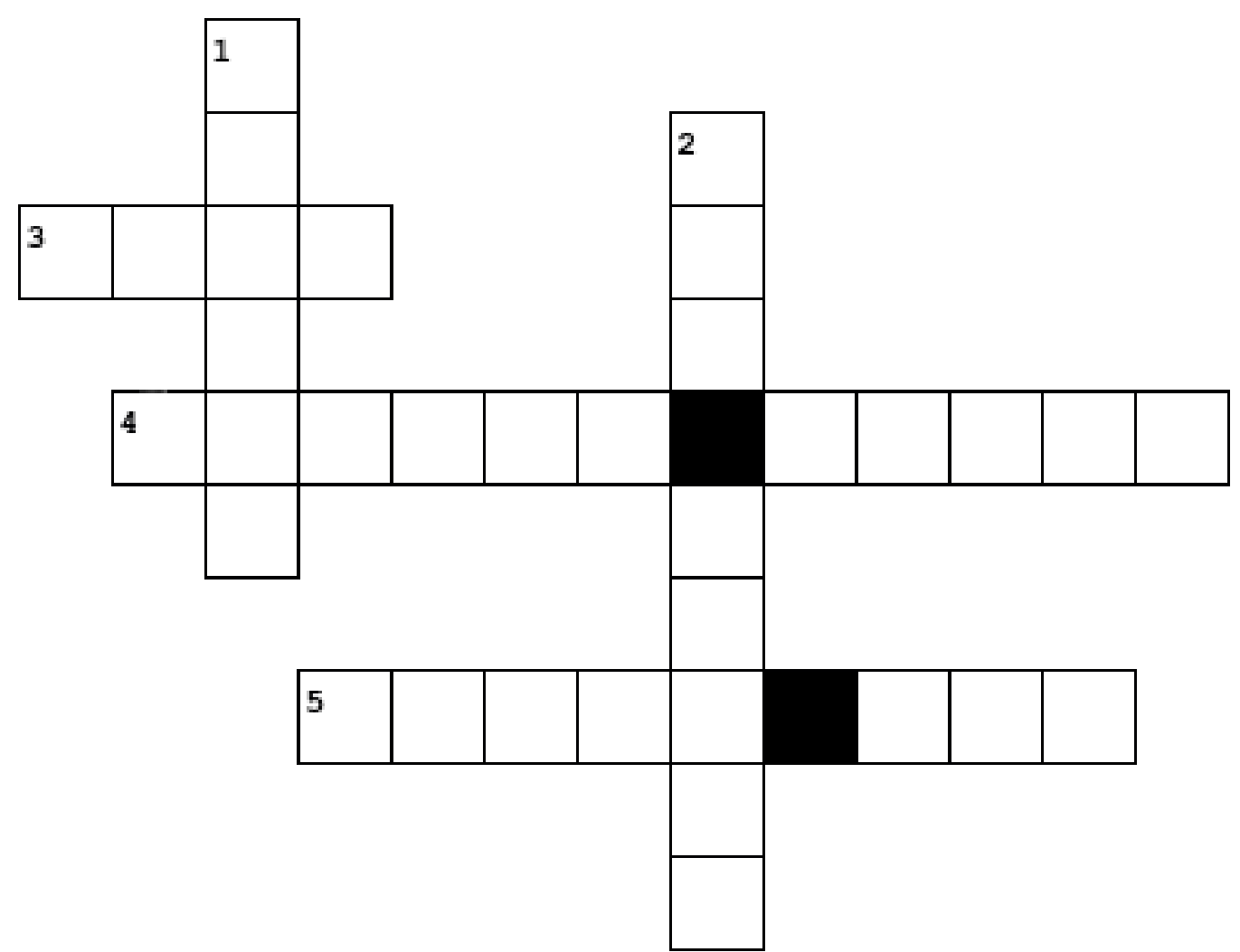
Tickets are \$15 dollars for students, and all ages are welcome to the event space. Those 21 and older may enter the casino floor and purchase alcohol. VIP tickets allow for early entry at 5 p.m.

Yeakey emphasized, “Every bit of support brings us closer to making a difference. One person can’t do it all, but when you have a community of support, we are able to do great things. The Pitt State community is also known for showing up and supporting each other. When those two things come together, it creates an environment where meaningful change can happen. Come out, enjoy a great night of music, and know that your ticket is helping support cancer research.”

Visit the events calendar on Pitt State’s website to purchase your tickets.

CROSSWORD: Spring into Pitt

Send a picture of your completed puzzle to @Collegio.PSU on Insatgram for a chance to win a prize! *Correct answers will be listed in the next edition



NOTE: Answers will omit the word “The”

Across

- 3. The men’s division of this chipper sport competes during the spring semester
- 4. Students look forward to this week-long pause from classes
- 5. This fruitful day commemorates Pitt State’s founding

Down

- 1. Pitt State’s favorite spring flower
- 2. Student Government Association hosts this large community service project every April

Last edition’s answers 03/06/2026

Across

- 3. 505
- 6. Guadalajara
- 7. Doggie Bag
- 8. Jock’s Nitch

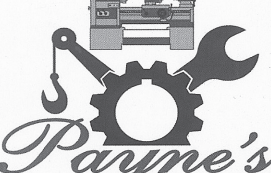
Down

- 1. Mall Deli
- 2. Balkan
- 3. 5th Street
- 4. TOAST
- 5. Blue Spoon



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Theater holds auditions for Peter Shaffer’s ‘Black Comedy’

Ky Boterf reporter

The theater held their first day of auditions for “Black Comedy” on March 4, at 7 p.m. in Grubbs Hall. This was the first of two days auditioning students. At these auditions, the students will read as different characters in the script, work through scenes, and interact on stage together. Later in the auditions, they do improv as a way to see how well the student synergies are together. “Black Comedy” will premiere on April 23 – 26.

Dr. Megan Westhoff, the director of theater, explains what she is looking for during auditions. “I usually get enough in auditions to say who’s workable, so to speak. Because I would rather work with somebody who may not necessarily be the most skilled, but they have the best attitude, rather than somebody who has really good skill and has a bad attitude.”

Auditions are not exclusive to theater majors; all students and community members are encouraged to get involved and try out for productions. They practice three times a week, with “Black Comedy” having five main characters and three smaller rolls near the end their practices will vary.

Aspen Williams, a community member auditioning, said, “I have not done theater here before, but I’m involved in Pittsburg Community Theater.”

He also described which character he would like to play in the production. “Right now, based off the lines that we’ve been doing, I wouldn’t be opposed to playing Brindsley.”

With eight total rolls open to play, it leaves a lot of room for many different kinds of people to audition.

Kendra Johnson, a junior majoring in vocal performance, talks about playing Carol, the Fiancé of Brindsley, “Black Comedy’s” male lead.

“Carol is very similar to Anne from ‘A Little Night Music’. She’s spoiled, a little bratty, but like, well-meaning. I’d like to do that type of character again.” She goes on to talk about Clea, Brindsley’s short fused secret girlfriend. “Clea is very different than anything I’ve ever done, and she would be very fun to just walk around and just pick on people.”

“Black Comedy” is a one act play about a struggling sculptor, Brindsley, and his fiancé, Carol. They are having a party to try and impress her father and a millionaire art critic. The couple steals furniture from their antique dealer neighbor when the main fuse in their apartment blows. They are left to stumble around in the dark as their apartment’s layout is now different. What the audience sees when the characters are in the dark is that the lights are on. When the characters have a light, those lights dim. This makes it so while the characters are unaware of what’s happening, we as the audience can see the context.

Dr. Westhoff talks about “Black Comedy” being the theater’s last production of the school year. “I’m excited, because we’ve just had a really a good year all around, and we’ve had great students who’ve really dedicated and worked hard and all the different productions. I’m just excited to close it out, and I think right now we need something, the world is heavy, and we need some lightness in our lives.”

She continues to speak about how we need to be able to laugh in hard times. “To realize that the best thing is to sit next to somebody in a theater, laugh, and not care about whatever is bothering you or troubles you have. But there’s nothing better than sitting in a dark and auditorium with other people who are sometimes complete strangers to you and just be able to laugh at something that you’re watching and forget about your troubles and escape for a minute.”



Students participating in an improvisational exercise before auditioning. These exercises typically take place in Grubbs Hall. | Photo courtesy of Pitt State Theater

So you like jazz?



Joe Lancaster, Jocelyn Goodwin, and Peyton Winnett sing their vocals during the songs at the Jazz Concert in the Bicknell Center. These students are members of the jazz-funk band, Little Green Men. | Photo by Jack Bruntz

PSU strengthens their ties with Paraguay

Bryce Bicknell reporter

Throughout the beginning of the year, Pittsburg State University welcomed two author teachers from Paraguay, Veronica Abente, and Natalia Burgstaller. They donated books to the local schools written by

Abente that reflect Paraguayan culture.

When speaking about the purpose of the visit, assistant professor for the Department of Teaching and Leadership Dr. Donna Zerr said, “The two teachers came from Asuncion, PY to learn more about American schools and improve their English language. They visited all the schools in Pittsburg USD 250 and also many sights around including libraries, Crystal Bridges, Kansas City, and Lawrence.” While visiting, they also became familiar with PSU with Zerr saying, “They connected with many people at PSU, the city of Pittsburg, and also many Paraguayans that are attending PSU and/or living in Pittsburg. They lived on campus, ate in the dining hall, and used the Gus bus.”

While visiting the teachers also took part in English programs. When talking to Spanish professor Dr. Grant Moss, he said, “I just reached out to them as a Spanish speaker, because they came here to be a part of the intensive English program, so they were here for six weeks,” later adding that “Their purpose was twofold: to learn about the United States education system and also to learn English.”

But it did not end there as Moss also said, “What happened was a couple of my students in our “Spanish in the Community” class are working on a project right now. They are creating a free library in Spanish. I thought, well, why don’t we put them into contact with each other so that Veronica, who’s the author, can donate her books to the free library?”

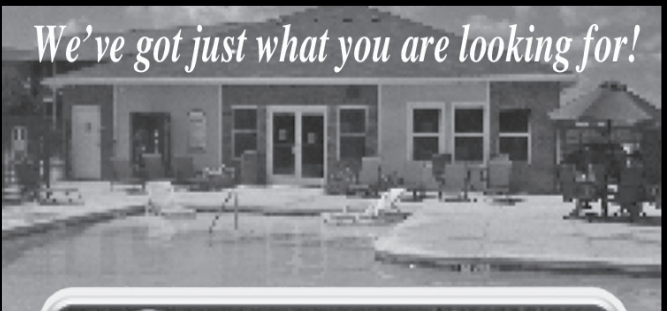
Joanna Rivera Ramos, a junior majoring in construction engineering with a double minor in business administration and Spanish is part of the project to build the library and said, “My role in this beautiful visit is a project that Olivia Tune and myself are planning for the community. Our goal is to build

a little outdoor library with Spanish and bilingual books at Meadowlark Elementary.” Later, she added, “As a Pittsburg resident, Olivia saw the need for more literature in Spanish, as Pittsburg has a large Spanish speaking population. For myself, I believe that it is important to build bridges of language and diverse cultures that connect us all.”

As a final note, she said, “Something else of note is that as the current President of Hispanics of Today, I am excited to announce that Hispanics of Today will continue our project now and the years to come with “book of the month” videos, housing various books, and donating books to the little library.” When asked about the importance of the visit, Moss said, “The reason why they were here was because they wanted to create some type of relationship with the college of education. They’re trying to figure a way to bring Paraguayan teachers over here as some type of exchange. We already have a Pittsburg State in Paraguay, and professors from here go down there and we teach down there, but it would be neat if we could figure out another type of exchange where we can have their teachers come up here.”

Moss is referring to PSU’s partnership with Comité Paraguay Kansas located in Asuncion, Paraguay, which offers undergraduate general education classes. The Kansas Paraguay Partners was created in 1968 in order to promote the exchange and partnership. PSU has offered courses in Paraguay since 2005 and students from both PSU are able to study at CPK and students from CPK are able to study at PSU. There are also plans to go down to Paraguay as Zerr said, “Dr. Gober and I are going to Asuncion in May to build and promote a relationship with teachers in Paraguay.”

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Gorilla softball bounces back after initial loss

Curtis Meyer reporter

It was a disappointing end to last weekend as the #22 Gorillas' record-making winning streak ended at 20 games with a loss to Winona State in the Top Gun Invite. Despite the 4-8 loss, the Gorillas weren't phased as they hosted Minnesota State – Moorhead this past weekend, winning both games and seeming unfazed by the recent loss.

Pitt State would make short work of the Dragons in game one, as they won 15-5. Pitt State would gain a 4-0 lead after the first, while the Dragons would respond with a single run in the second. Things would get out of hand immediately, as the Gorillas would score ten runs in just the second inning, blowing the game wide open. Pitt State would tack on an extra run for good measure, retiring the Dragons in just five innings.

Senior Heather Arnett finished the game going 3-of-3 with a pair of runs driven in and scoring twice herself. Graduate student Kady Trochim and senior Sailor Hall tied for the team lead with three RBI each as junior Taylor Lundien led the team with three runs scored. Sophomore Lexi Franklin picked up her fifth win of the season with 3.2 innings of work as redshirt sophomore Erica Schertz pitched the final 1.1 innings.

The second game would go just

as quickly as the first, with a 14-6 five inning win for the Gorillas. Pitt State would once again jump out to the races, scoring three runs in the first inning and nine runs in the second inning. Minnesota State – Moorhead would score some runs late to help close the gap, but not enough to prevent the mercy rule.

The Gorillas were led by senior Lexi Davis with a 4-of-4 performance for five RBI and two runs scored. Davis ended up being one of six Gorillas to score twice in the game. Hall capped off the day with her second home run in as many games, finishing with three runs driven in. Junior Emma Crabb was perfect through three innings and finished with 4.0 innings of work for the win. Freshman Amanda Gibilisco closed out the game in her season debut with a pair of strikeouts.

With the impressive pair of wins, the Gorillas have now moved to 22-1 on the season but have yet to play a MIAA Conference game so far this



Rachael Schlotter, a junior majoring in strategic communication, catches the softball as short stop. | Photo by Mat Dains

season. Arnett made history this weekend as she reached 313 career hits, surpassing the MIAA record previously set by the University of Central Oklahoma's Morgan Heard, who held the MIAA career hits record with 308.

Pitt State has one last non conference tournament next weekend, when they compete in the MIAA NSIC Challenge next weekend, at home. A week after, the Gorillas will travel to play Nebraska Kearney in the first MIAA series of the season.

Baseball winning streak ends

Curtis Meyer reporter

It took 18 games, but the Gorillas have finally seen the first loss of 2026. Pitt State hosted the #15 Emporia Hornets this past weekend, winning the series 2-1, as their record for longest winning streak to start a season now sits comfortably at 17.

The Gorillas began the triple header with a game on Friday, on the road at Emporia. This would be the first loss of the season, as they fell 2-14 to the Hornets. The Gorillas actually got on the board first, but Emporia would take the lead right in the bottom of the first inning, scoring at least two points in every inning of what was just a seven-inning contest.

The Gorillas got an RBI grounder from senior Dagen Brewer for an early 1-0 lead in the top of the first inning. Junior Eric Bacon also had a run scoring single in the third inning. Junior Jady McNealey went 3-for-3 at the plate and scored both of Pitt State's runs. Brewer saw his MIAA record 37-game hitting streak end in the contest. He went 0-for-2 with a walk in three plate appearances.

Saturday's game would see the Gorillas bounce back in a big way, as they would win 6-2 over the Hornets. Emporia would score in the second and third innings, creating a 2-0 lead, but the Gorillas would take the lead in the third with a three-run inning and not look back.

Graduate student starter Zach Voss remained unbeaten on the season by limiting ESU to a pair of runs and five hits. He issued two walks and fanned five batters. The high-powered Pitt State offense exploded for 13 hits. McNealey and junior Landon Bruce had three hits apiece, while senior Grant Nottlemann, junior Landin Midgett, and junior Seth Dandridge each had two hits. Senior Cooper Wesslund singled home Midgett with the go-ahead run in the fourth. Redshirt junior Cason Long worked two innings of relief behind Voss and senior Cooper Crouch needed just 12 pitches to retire the Hornets in order in the ninth to lock down the win.

The final game of the weekend came on Saturday, as the Gorillas would hold on for an 11-7 victory over Emporia. Pitt State broke open a 2-2 game with three runs in the fourth inning and four more runs in the sixth frame to take an early 9-2 lead, holding off the comeback attempt late.

Redshirt senior Issac Webb doubled, homered and drove in five runs to lead the Gorillas' 14-hit offensive attack. Bacon, Brewer and Wesslund each collected a pair of hits and scored twice. Redshirt junior Ty Blecha tossed 6.0 solid innings in his second start of the season. He limited the Hornets to two runs, and he registered five strikeouts. Crouch entered the game with the bases loaded and one out in a 9-5 game in the eighth inning. He exited the eighth frame with a 9-7 lead and retired the Hornets in the ninth to record his second save of the season.

Basketball ends on sad note

Curtis Meyer reporter

It was a bad weekend if you are a Pitt State basketball fan as both teams traveled north to Kansas City to compete in the MIAA Championship Tournament. The men's team scraped in as the second to last seed in the bracket and come out of the season with a four-game losing streak after the tournament. The women's team would start their season off hot, but found themselves on the wrong end of a six-game losing streak as their season ended earlier than hoped.

The men's team faced the Central Oklahoma Bronchos in the first round of the MIAA tournament, finding themselves bounced out after a 53-62 loss. The Gorillas never led in the contest, struggling to hit shots with just a 32.8 percent shooting percentage and only going 3-22 from the three-point line.

Pitt State's All-MIAA guard tandem of junior Connor Rogers and freshman Mason English paced the team in scoring. Rogers posted a team-leading 16 points, while English finished with 12. Redshirt junior Donald Coats added seven points and 11 rebounds in the contest. Freshman Ethan Sage and sophomore Alijah Curry also chipped in with seven points apiece. The Bronchos would go on to lose to eventual MIAA champions Washburn in the next round of the tournament.

On the women's side, they played Washburn in the second round of the tournament, losing 49-60. Pitt State would take an early lead in the contest, but the Ichabods would take the lead shortly after, and were able to run away with the game.

Sophomore Clara Swearingen paced the Gorillas with 15 points, while freshman Marin Adams added 12 points. Fellow freshman Kaycee McCumber added four points and a game-high 12 rebounds and outgoing senior Harper Schreiner chipped in with four points and 10 rebounds in her final game for Pitt State. The Gorillas shot 26.8 percent from the field in the game, making just 15 of 56 attempts. The Ichabods would go on to win the tournament, as both men's and women's team for Washburn would complete the tournament on top.

For the men's team, this year was a slight step back after an 18-12 record last season and making it to the second round of the MIAA tournament. The Gorillas had a 15-15 record this season, as they continue to

Golf starts off strong

Curtis Meyer reporter

Both men's and women's golf teams have been competing hard this Spring, as both teams have notched multiple tournaments on their belts to start the 2026 half of the golf season. The men's teams have managed a pair of top ten finishes, while the women's team has already competed in three different tournaments to start the year.

Starting with the men's team, the Gorillas began the spring semester with the Rattler Invite on Feb. 16 in San Antonio, Texas. The Gorillas placed tenth out of the 16 team field, finishing with a plus 35 team score, ahead of MIAA rival Missouri Southern. Midwestern State out of Texas would take the win.

Junior Keaton Thissen is the top individual at +8 for the tournament to finish 27th. Sophomore Tyler Hardtarfer (+9) and sophomore Jack Randall tied for 36th, while senior Mason White finished +11 to be 47th and redshirt junior Bradin Stahl (+31) completed the two-day tournament in 85th.

Pitt State would then compete next in the Shadow Valley Invite at Rogers, Arkansas. The Gorillas would tie for eighth place with the Missouri Western Griffons at a plus 40 team score. Harding University would take the tournament title.

Leading the charge as an individual was White (+5) who finished in 15th. Thissen (+10) finished 27th, Hardtarfer (+15) came in 47th, as Randall and sophomore Cooper Forth (+17) tied for 54th to round out the competitors for Pitt State.

Moving to the women's slate, they competed on Feb. 16 at the Southern Invite, down in Spring, Texas. The Gorillas would finish with a 15th overall placement, dead last in the competition field with a score of +109. Junior Kymbree Larance led the team at +19 over 54 holes, sophomore Kylee Hopper (+25) finished 61st, junior Genevieve Akers (+27) 66th, freshman Katherine Adkins (+32) 71st, junior Abby Ervin (+38) 74th and freshman Charlotte Kerbs (+52) came in at 78th.

The Gorillas then went to the Rattler Invitational the weekend after, finishing 15th in the seventeen-team field with a plus 113 team score. Dallas Baptist University would take home the top spot in the competition. Hopper led the Gorillas at +18 to finish 37th, Akers (+21) came in 50th, Larance (+30) finished 75th, Ervin (+44) 86th and Adkins (+51) 92nd.

Pitt State would most recently compete in the Diffie Ford Lincoln Invite in Edmond, Oklahoma, placing fourteenth out of seventeen teams with a score of plus 83, just eight points behind Missouri Southern. Southwest Oklahoma State took home the tournament title. Hopper (+17) was the leading individual with a 32nd place finish. Larance (+19) finished 44th, followed by Adkins (+22) in 53rd, Akers (+25) in 68th and Ervin (+32) in 84th.

develop younger talent and will go into the offseason looking for answers.

One the women's side, it was a disappointment for the Gorillas this season. Starting off with a 18-5 record, Pitt State would lose their last six games to fall to 18-11 in the season. Last year, the Gorillas won the MIAA tournament, followed by an appearance in the NCAA Division II Elite Eight. Whether it was the injuries, the flu, or just plain bad luck, the Gorillas simply couldn't keep the momentum going late into the season.

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Symphonic Ensemble at the Bicknell



Dr. Jobey Wilson is conducting a performance by the Symphonic Band held at the Bicknell on March 4th. He conducted 4 songs throughout the entirety of this event.
| Photo by Ava Kietzman
Mat Dains reporter

On Tuesday evening March 4, students, faculty, and local residents came together for a campus concert at the Bicknell Performing Arts Center. The ensemble showcased diversity and student achievement. The program featured the university’s wind symphonic ensemble as well as a classical Hispanic music group. They played modern pieces, folk music, and marches.

The evening began with a welcome from the ensemble’s director, Dr. Jobey Wilson, who spoke about the band’s dual role in performing and building community. Many members are music education majors who gain valuable stage and instrument experience through these events.

“One of the things I really love about this ensemble is that many of the students are future music educators. They have to learn to teach and play many different instruments, and this gives them the opportunity to gain that hands-on experience,” Wilson said.

As the program continued, students played pieces that showcased their technical skills and their ability to tell stories through music. Early in the event, they performed “Industrial Grooves,” a modern piece inspired by the sounds and rhythms of machines. Originally written for a community group in New Jersey, it reflects the experiences of workers from many industrial

backgrounds.

This piece begins with a simple mechanical rhythm. Quickly, more instruments layer in, imitating machines gradually powering up on a factory floor. By the finale, the ensemble creates a unified musical blend, demonstrating how many unique parts can together form a unique single, cohesive sound.

Adding further variety to the concert, the program also featured cultural music performed by a Hispanic ensemble, directed by piano professor Isaac Hernandez and created through a campus initiative. Made up of students, alumni, and community members, the group is part of a project to share Hispanic music traditions and introduce new works inspired by them.

One featured piece was “Amigo,” a modern work that highlighted the trumpet section. It mixed current musical styles with Latin influences. The trumpet solo stood out and was especially memorable for the audience. After the concert, Music education major Dallas Hall reflected on his experience in the ensemble.

Hall, who mainly plays jazz, said the wind ensemble showed its versatility during the concert. “I’m mainly a jazz musician, I play trumpet in various ensembles, including wind ensemble, orchestra, and recently as second

trumpet in the intercollegiate band. It’s great to perform in so many different settings.” Hall said.

When asked which piece made the biggest impression, Hall picked “Amigo.” “That one’s my favorite, It’s in a good key for me and lets me express myself. I love the trumpet tones in that piece,” Hall said.

To build on the evening’s musical connections, the audience was also invited to upcoming campus events, such as the university’s annual jazz festival, further supporting the community spirit fostered by the concert.

A lively march by the Symphonic Band brought the concert to a close. Before the finale, Wilson thanked the campus events staff and praised students for their dedication throughout the semester.

“It’s a strong band, Everyone here really cares about the music,” Wilson said.

The performance left a lasting impression, reminding everyone that campus concerts are vital for student growth and community connection. By uniting people through music, these events inspire both pride in student talent and appreciation for cultural diversity; a spirit carried forward beyond the concert hall.

How to count like an Egyptian

Masynn Acheson reporter

Dr. Cynthia Huffman of the Pittsburg State University Department of Mathematics and Physics traveled to Egypt and shared her experience with students, faculty, and community members on March 5 in Yates Hall.

Huffman teaches the History of Mathematics class at the university and has traveled to Egypt to learn more about how the Ancient Egyptians recorded and used numbers a few times now. Through her travels, she has amassed many photos from real Ancient Egyptian temples, pyramids, tombs, and other sites that all depict their ancient counting system.

With some help from several online groups and her own diligent research, she has even decoded some of the pieces to come to complete her research goal. Huffman says she “had a sabbatical to learn more.” After the trip, she read everything she could find about Egyptian history, and the more she read, the more she realized she did not know.

After that, she has taken advantage of her time to visit many museums around the world to collect photos for her classes, and has

begun writing a new paper detailing the examples she found on her recent 2025 trip and the uses she saw that numbers were used for in ancient Egypt. According to her research, she found numbers were used for basic counting, measurement, and calendar.

She explained the basics for everyone in attendance about the number system to make it easier to spot the numbers in the photos. There were not many numbers per say, but the amounts each symbol stood for went all the way up to one million. Like many ancient cultures, a dash stood for the number one, but the other numbers were represented by other symbols.

A cattle hobble, which looks like an arch, stood for the number ten. After that, the coil of rope stood for a hundred, a water lily meant one thousand, the bent finger was ten thousand, a tadpole meant one hundred thousand, and the form of the Egyptian god of eternity stood for one million.

Since there were no numbers between each power of ten, you group them to form the number you want to portray and could be written right-to-left, left-to-right, or vertically. When you are reading them, you arrange from the highest value to the lowest and read them in the direction towards the faces nearest to them or in order of value high-to-low if no faces are present.

Through her research, she found that they also had a form of fractions, but only unit fractions. Unit fractions are when you have a one in the numerator to show you have one part of a whole, that whole being the number in the denominator. These were written with what is known as Gardiner sign D21. It typically stands for mouth but is used to mean part when in the context of being written over a line with a number inscribed beneath it.

Not only were there fractions, but there is what could be interpreted as an ancient spreadsheet. Dr. Huffman went to this particular ruin and got pictures of her own. Through her research and some help from other avid translators she was able to devise that the grid was divided into rows and columns with column headers and a title as well. The first part of the title has been lost due to age and the rock of the wall crumbling with time, but from the second part of the title it seemed to be offerings to a member of royalty, a deity, or a royal ancestor.

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Kaylee’s Conspiracy Corner: Carrey on or carry on?

Kaylee Dillow photo editor

If you’ve opened social media over the past few weeks and thought you saw people questioning whether Hollywood had started replacing celebrities with clones, you were not imagining things. The internet has been circulating with different theories about whether the man seen on stage at the 2026 Cesar Awards was actually the real Jim Carrey or someone else entirely.

The controversy began when Carrey appeared at the 51 Cesar Awards in Paris on Feb. 26, where he received the Honorary Lifetime Achievement Cesar for his contributions to film. While the award itself was a big moment for Carrey and his fans, it also left many surprised simply by his appearance in public.

Carrey has mostly stayed out of the public domain these last few years as he’s taken a break from acting as a whole, even quoting in Access Hollywood that, “If angels bring down some sort of script that’s written in gold ink that is important for people to see,” then he would reconsider acting.

“I really like my quiet life, and I really like putting paint on canvases, and I really love my spiritual life,” said Carrey. “I feel like- and this is something you might never hear another celebrity say as long as time exists- I have enough.”

While fans were excited to see him make a reappearance, it wasn’t just his return that got people talking- It was his face.

Photos and videos from the ceremony quickly went viral, with many viewers protesting the 64-year-old actor’s appearance, stating that Carrey was “completely unrecognizable.” Others went further, stating that the person on stage wasn’t him at all.

Posts and comments varied from confusion to full-blown conspiracy theories, with some speculating that Carrey had undergone plastic surgery. Others believe this Carrey to be a body double, wearing a hyper-realistic mask, or even a clone replacing the real actor.

Not everyone is convinced of this. Some viewers completely disregard the entire notion of him being anyone but the real Jim Carrey, with some commenting, “I’m appalled by the stupidity I’m witnessing today,” or “Yes, it’s really Jim Carrey. You need mental help if you genuinely think he’s been replaced.”

Still, this hasn’t stopped the internet from continuing to dig deeper.

Some theories suggest that Carrey had experienced a mental health crisis and altered his appearance as a result. Others counteract that with the argument that Carrey has long been an advocate for mental health awareness, which makes this explanation unlikely.

Of course, Hollywood has also seen its share of tragic stories involving actors who openly discussed mental health struggles, like Robin Williams and Heath Ledger. For some, however, this history only adds to another layer of speculation.

Adding fuel to the fire are quotes circulating online that allegedly came from Carrey himself, such as, “If I ever come out of retirement, it’s not me,” or, “If I shave my beard, they got me.” While these quotes could act as strong evidence to contribute to speculations, I fail to find anywhere where he is seen quoting that directly. I did find him discussing a what-if in relation to shaving his beard, but that was not relevant to his disappearance in any way.

One clip that conspiracy theorist continuously reference comes from the 2014 segment of Jimmy Kimmel Live!, where Carrey openly discussed the conspiracy surrounding Hollywood and the illuminati.

Some believe his comments were meant to act as warnings to the public, while others believe he was openly mocking the whole idea of it. Watching the interview, I found it to be a stretch to say he was mocking and not informing in the name

of mockery.

The speculation only grew when well-known makeup artist and drag performer, Alexis Stone, posted images implying that they had attended the ceremony as Jim Carrey through the use of prosthetics and makeup.

For conspiracy theorists, that possibility suddenly made the idea of an impersonator seem much more realistic. If someone could replicate his appearance with enough makeup and prosthetics, then maybe the person accepting that award wasn’t Carrey after all.

That raises yet another question: If it wasn’t him, who hired the impersonator, and why?

Despite the mass amounts of viral rumors circulating, people involved with the event quickly shut down speculation. Carrey’s representative confirmed that the actor did attend the ceremony himself and personally accepted his award. Organizers of the Cesar Awards backed that statement up, saying that the appearance had been planned for months and that Carrey had even spent that time practicing his acceptance speak in French.

Of course, none of these statements have been confirmed by Carrey- The real one, at least.

So, was it a clone? A professional impersonator? Or just the reality that celebrities can always alter their appearance, even if we do not expect them to?

Whatever the truth may be, the rate at which rumors spread shows just how quickly the internet can completely transform one surprising appearance into a full-blown conspiracy.

Until Carrey himself weighs in, the debate will likely continue to grow; one screenshot, one video clip, and one theory at a time.

Maybe it’s nothing, or maybe it’s everything. Until next time.

Film Review: ‘Mickey 17’

Mat Daines reporter

Most people struggle with burnout or long hours at work. In “Mickey 17,” however, the main character faces a far greater risk: Repeatedly dying, horribly dying, every single time. Directed by Academy Award winner Bong Joon-ho, the film blends a science fiction topic, dark comedy, and meta-social satire to explore what human life is worth in a capitalistic-ruled world. With Robert Pattinson in the lead and Naomi Ackie, Steven Yeun, Mark Ruffalo, and Toni Collette supporting, the movie offers an unusual yet thought-provoking look at identity, survival, and worker exploitation in future space colonization.

The film, based on Edward Ashton’s novel “Mickey7,” follows Mickey Barnes as he accepts a risky job as an “Expendable” on a distant planet’s colonization mission. His role includes performing dangerous tasks, such as exploring hostile locations and testing high-risk equipment. Each time he dies, scientists 3-D print a new body for him and upload his memories from a brick, allowing him to return to work for his next assignment. The story begins with the seventeenth version, Mickey 17, who starts to question whether it is right for the system to treat him as disposable, as he is left for dead in a hole.

Robert Pattinson, as always, delivers yet another outstanding performance by making each version of Mickey distinct through changes in voice, body language, and emotions. This lets viewers see that, though they share memories, every Mickey is a little different. Naomi Ackie shines as a character who challenges injustice, while Steven Yeun adds depth as a fellow crew member struggling with the pressures of the mission. Mark Ruffalo and Toni Collette play the amoral leaders who view workers as replaceable slime, managing to be both charming, estranged, and unsettling.

Director Bong Joon-ho, known for “Snowpiercer,” “Okja,” and “Parasite” once again demonstrates his talent for blending genres and delivering relevant social commentary. He skillfully balances



“Mickey 17.” | Photo courtesy of IMDb

humor and tension, often pairing absurd moments with serious questions about life, ethics, and human and animal rights. The film looks striking and stark; the icy alien planet appears cold and dangerous, emphasizing the crew’s isolation and mankind’s obsession with ambition. The cloning labs and technology feature a gritty, realistic style rather than the shiny chrome-lined appearance typical of other sci-fi movies.

The writing explores complex themes. At its core, “Mickey 17” questions whether someone who is cloned again and again remains the same individual or becomes something new. The story also critiques broken and unfair economic systems that prioritize productivity and profit over human life. While these ideas are engaging, the film often loses momentum as it tries to balance philosophical exploration and world-setting flashbacks with a fast-paced sci-fi narrative.

Despite some slow moments, “Mickey 17” stands out as an original sci-fi movie. Its combination of dark humor, strong acting, and thoughtful ideas makes it memorable. Idea-driven science fiction will appreciate its bold story, while those seeking a fast-paced adventure may find it slower and more contemplative than expected.

Overall, “Mickey 17” is a bold, unique movie that continues Bong Joon-ho’s tradition of blending entertainment with awareness-raising about global social issues. Robert Pattinson’s stellar performance is a highlight of his range, and the film asks challenging questions about identity, mortality, and humanity.



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Economic concerns mount; Iran targets ships, Dubai airport and oil facilities

Jon Gambrell, Sam Mednick and David Rising Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Iran fired on commercial ships Wednesday and targeted Dubai International Airport, escalating a campaign of bottling up the oil-rich Persian Gulf as global energy concerns mounted and American and Israeli airstrikes pounded the Islamic Republic.

Iran’s response to the surprise Israeli and U.S. bombardment that started 12 days ago has upended trade routes, choked supplies of fuel and fertilizer coming out of the Gulf and threatened air traffic through one of the world’s most-traveled regions. Both sides have dug in, hoping to outlast the other.

An Israeli intelligence assessment, meanwhile, found Iran’s new supreme leader, Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei, was wounded at the start of the war — on the day when his father and predecessor, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, was killed in an Israeli airstrike.

An Israeli intelligence official and a reservist with knowledge of the assessment spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the matter with the media. They gave no details on the nature of the injuries.

The 56-year-old, whose wife was also killed in the Israeli strike, has not been seen since becoming supreme leader on Monday. Yousef Pezeshkian, the son of Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian, wrote on social media that he had heard Mojtaba was wounded but that friends said “he is healthy and there is no problem.”

New strikes in Tehran and across the Persian Gulf

In Tehran late Wednesday, witnesses said they heard loud airstrikes, explosions and heavy fire by anti-aircraft batteries. They could also hear the buzzing of drones overhead. A person driving to Tehran described overcast skies as smoke from bomb and missile blasts mingled in the air that smelled of burnt powder and gasoline. They spoke on condition of anonymity for fear of reprisal.

The fallout across the Middle East widened as Israel struck what it said were targets connected to Iran-backed Hezbollah militants in Lebanon. The U.N. refugee agency said at least 759,000 people have been internally displaced in Lebanon, while more than 92,000 others have crossed into neighboring Syria.

Elsewhere, two Iranian drones hit near the Dubai airport, home to the long-haul carrier Emirates and the world’s busiest for international travel. Four people were wounded but flights continued, the Dubai Media Office said.

UN body demands an end to Iranian attacks on neighbors

The U.N. Security Council voted Wednesday to approve a resolution demanding a halt to Iran’s “egregious attacks” on its Gulf neighbors.

“The international community is resolute in rejecting these Iranian attacks against sovereign countries that are threatening the stability of



| Photo courtesy of Associated Press

the peoples, especially in a region of strategic importance to global economy, energy, security, and security of global trade,” said Bahrain’s U.N. ambassador, Jamal Alrowaiei.

The 13-0 vote in the U.N.’s most powerful body reflects Iran’s isolated position as it has aggressively responded to Israeli and U.S. strikes. China and Russia — two Iranian allies — abstained from the vote.

Their ambassadors called the proposal “extremely unbalanced” in not mentioning the strikes against Tehran that began the war. Russia’s U.N. ambassador, Vassily Nebenzia, said it might leave the impression that Iran, “on its own volition and out of malice, conducted an unprovoked attack on Arab states.”

Iran has effectively stopped cargo traffic through the narrow Strait of Hormuz, through which a fifth of all traded oil passes. It has also targeted oil fields and refineries in Gulf Arab nations, aiming at generating enough global economic pain to pressure the United States and Israel to end their strikes.

At least 12 incidents have been confirmed involving vessels in and around the strait since the war began, according to two global trackers. The International Maritime Organization says at least seven mariners have been killed.

A projectile hit a Thai cargo ship off the coast of Oman in the Strait of Hormuz, setting it ablaze. Authorities are searching for three missing crew members from the Mayuree Naree after 20 were rescued by the Omani navy, according to Thailand’s Marine Department.

Iran appears to still be exporting oil through the strait

The United States has pledged to keep the strait open and has led intense airstrikes targeting Iran’s navy and the port city of Bandar Abbas. The U.S. military said Tuesday it destroyed 16 Iranian minelayers near the strait.

Some tankers, believed linked to Iran, continue to get through the strait, making so-called “dark” transits — meaning they aren’t turning on trackers that show where they are. Vessels carrying

sanctioned Iranian crude often turn off their trackers.

The commodity-tracking firm Kpler said Iran has restarted crude exports through its Jask oil terminal on the Gulf of Oman. A tanker loaded roughly 2 million barrels at Jask on March 7, it said.

Energy agency agrees to release some oil reserves

Oil prices remained well below Monday’s peaks but the price of Brent crude, the international standard, was still up some 20% Wednesday from when the war began. Consumers around the world are already feeling the pain at the pump.

The International Energy Agency agreed Wednesday to release the largest volume of emergency oil reserves in its history, in a bid to counter the war’s impact on energy markets.

The Paris-based organization said it will make 400 million barrels of oil available from its member countries’ emergency

reserves, more than twice the amount they released four years ago in response to Russia’s invasion of Ukraine.

That could replace supplies currently off the market for roughly three weeks, said Bruce Bullock, director of Maguire Energy Institute at Southern Methodist University.

Israel launches new strikes on Lebanon
Simultaneous blasts rocked Beirut’s southern suburbs Wednesday night, producing large fires and plumes of smoke.

The Israeli military said it was responding to dozens of Hezbollah rockets fired simultaneously across northern Israel. One rocket hit a house near the Israeli town of Karmiel, lightly injuring two people, according to Israeli rescue services.

At least 634 people have been killed in Lebanon since the latest fighting began, the Lebanese Health Ministry said Wednesday.

Iranian authorities say more than 1,300 people have been killed there, and Israel has reported 12 people dead. The U.S. has lost seven soldiers while another eight have suffered severe injuries.

Iran vows to target banks, threatens World Cup boycott

Iran’s joint military command said it would start targeting banks and financial institutions in the Middle East. That would put at risk particularly Dubai, in the United Arab Emirates, which is home to many international financial institutions, as well as Saudi Arabia and the island kingdom of Bahrain.

The threat came after a Tehran location of Bank Sepah, a state-owned financial institution sanctioned by the U.S. over funding Iranian armed forces, came under attack Wednesday, killing staffers there, according to the state-run IRNA news agency.

In a separate development, Iran’s sports minister, Ahmad Donyamali, told Iranian state TV that the country’s soccer team cannot take part in the upcoming World Cup in North America in June because of the “wicked acts” of the United States. He said Iranian players would not be safe in the U.S.

Leavenworth will allow prison to reopen and house immigrants

Heather Hollingsworth and John Hanna Associated Press

TOPEKA, Kan. (AP) — A Kansas town known for its prisons is allowing a shuttered private prison to reopen and house immigrants detained for living in the U.S. illegally after a nearly yearlong legal fight amid a massive national push for new detention centers.

The City Commission in Leavenworth on Tuesday approved a permit to private prison operator CoreCivic. Members voted 4-1 to approve a three-year permit with conditions that set minimum staffing levels, ban the housing of minors and provide for a city oversight committee.

“If they don’t follow those guidelines, we can pull the permit,” Mayor Nancy Bauder said before the vote.

The 1,104-bed Midwest Regional Reception Center is 10 miles (16 kilometers) west of the Kansas City International Airport. CoreCivic, one of the nation’s largest private prison operators, said the center will generate \$60 million annually once it’s fully open.

Leavenworth, Kansas, sued CoreCivic after it tried to reopen the shuttered prison without city officials signing off on the deal.

The legal battle played out in state and federal courts, with the Department of Justice siding with CoreCivic in legal filings. The department argued that the city was engaged in an “aggressive and unlawful effort” to “interfere with federal immigration enforcement.”

It appears to be the only such legal battle nationally to delay a private prison from opening amid President Donald Trump’s push for mass deportations. The city argued that requiring a permit would prevent future problems, while CoreCivic maintained that it didn’t need a permit and the process would take too long.

Leavenworth was an unlikely foe because the GOP-leaning city’s name alone evokes a shorthand for serving hard time. Prisons employ hundreds of workers locally at two military facilities, the nation’s first federal penitentiary, a Kansas

correctional facility and a county jail, all within 6 miles (10 kilometers) of city hall.

CoreCivic stopped housing pretrial detainees for the U.S. Marshals Service in its Leavenworth facility in 2021 after then-President Joe Biden called on the Justice Department to curb the use of private prisons. The American Civil Liberties Union and federal public defenders said inmates’ rights had been violated and there were stabbings, suicides and even one homicide.

The city’s lawsuit described detainees locked in showers as punishment and accused CoreCivic of impeding city police force investigations of sexual assaults and other violent crimes.

Almost four dozen people spoke in opposition to the permit before the commission’s vote. Bauder admonished the crowd several times for being too noisy, and police removed a protester who yelled vulgar comments.

“We, we the people of Leavenworth, are not fooled and we don’t care about their money,” David Benitez, a city resident, told the commission.

Some backers of the permit cited the potential boost to the local economy. Two CoreCivic employees argued for approval, and one of them, Charles Johnson, of Kansas City, Kansas, said his job gave him purpose and allowed his family to get off of state assistance.

“The people I work alongside are caring, professional and committed to doing things the right way,” he said, his comments drawing boos from critics outside the commission’s meeting room.

City Commissioner Holly Pittman said because the city “stood firm,” it could negotiate conditions on the permit. She said denying it would risk a potentially expensive lawsuit.

“I will not gamble the financial stability of this city,” she said before voting yes. “Let me be clear: Approval does not mean endorsement.”

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Volleyball for firefighters



A group of Sigma Sigma Sigma sisters group up for a photo at the Pike Patty's Day Volleyball tournament on Mar. 5. The team was recognizable with their royal purple shirts, which is an official color of the sorority. | Photo by Mark Ziegler



Members of Pi Kappa Alpha all pose for a photo at the Pike Patty's Day Volleyball tournament on Mar. 5. The fraternity had two teams playing- one of executives, and one of members. | Photo by Mark Ziegler



Freshman elementary education K-6 ununified major Wynter Davidson calls out to one of her teammates at the Pike Patty's Day Volleyball tournament on Mar. 5. Davidson represented Alpha Sigma Alpha, who placed 4th | Photo by Mark Ziegler



Representing Pi Kappa Alpha, senior marketing major Evan Blanchard spins the ball on his fingers at the Pike Patty's Day Volleyball tournament on Mar. 5. The tournament was just one event in the Patty's Week celebration. | Photo by Mark Ziegler



Members of Pi Kappa Alpha's members team coordinate to return the ball at the Pike Patty's Day Volleyball tournament on Mar. 5. The team would go on to the championship, where they lost to the Student Government Association. | Photo by Mark Ziegler