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Global Fest brings the world to Lindburg Plaza

Lauryn Gilfillan reporter

One night every year, Lindburg Plaza transforms into a bustling marketplace of flavors, sights, and sounds from around the globe. Global Fest, hosted by the International Student Association, drew hundreds of students, staff, and community members Friday night to celebrate food, cultural exchange, and music.

From 6-9 p.m. on Sept. 26, Lindburg plaza scurried with people as long lines formed at the tables representing more than 20 different countries. Each food stand had their colorful flags and displays, some even highlighting cultural traditions.

Connor Stone, a freshman with an undeclared major, weaved through

groups of students and sampled dishes. “It is so busy,” Stone said. “There are so many different smells here.”

Organizers said the goal of the annual event is to bring people together and showcase the rich diversity that international students bring to Pittsburg State, and Pittsburg itself.

It was not only about community but also learning while being able to enjoy international food, traditions and music while supporting the students who were sharing their culture.

Visitors had a choice of paying with their own money or purchasing red tickets at the entrances, which were valued at \$1 each. Attendees could use them to pay for food, refreshments, or desserts at the tables. At each table, a sign showed the country’s flag, and the distance in miles and kilometers from Pittsburg to the nation.

Students and organizations cooked and served their recipes from back home, which ranged from savory curries at the India booth, to dumplings from China and crepes in France.

Well-known favorites like tamales from Mexico and hotdogs from the United States were also choices, along with more unfamiliar options for adventurous eaters like Tyne Ellis, a freshman majoring in social work.

“It’s cool to try new things,” Ellis said. “There are lots of foods I’d never heard of before there.”

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Pittsburg resident Alexia Jimenez stands by the campus compass surrounded by cultural stands during Global Fest on Sept. 26, at Pittsburg State University. | Photo by Bryan Gonzalez



Isabella Huskey, a junior studying art education, and Remington Rice pose for a photo while enjoying foods from different countries during Global Fest on Sept. 26, at Pittsburg State University. | Photo by Bryan Gonzalez

Lego building for win, brick by brick



Ziyi Zhao and Charlee Shrader enjoy building with Legos during Lego Night, hosted by the Gorillas Activity Board at the U-Club on Monday, Sept. 29. | Photo by Kaylee Dillow

Lauryn Gilfillan reporter

Pittsburg State students packed into the Overman Student Center U-Club on Monday evening for Lego Night, a building competition hosted by the Gorillas Activity Board. What started as a modest event quickly drew a crowd that spilled out from the basement level, as students lined up to show their creativity and have a shot at winning prizes. By the time the final winners were announced, tables across the U-Club displayed a sea of colorful creations. The Lego structures reflected both teamwork and individual imagination.

Although the event had not received many RSVPs ahead of time, enthusiasm was not missing once the doors opened. The unexpected turnout proved the event’s intrigue, drawing students from all majors and years to participate or simply watch the contest. Tyne Ellis, a freshman majoring in social work, was surprised by how many people showed up.

“It’s so busy here,” Ellis said. “The line is out of the basement.” The contest challenged participants to take a simple cup of Lego bricks and transform them into something original within a set amount of time. The night included one team round and one individual round, with the top three designs winning Lego-themed prizes. Teams also competed for Einstein Bros. Bagels gift cards, adding an extra layer of motivation for builders who worked side by side while having fun.

The competition began with a 25-minute team round that encouraged everyone to collaborate and be creative. Afterward, students shifted into the longer 45-minute individual round, which gave them more time to plan and construct their more detailed builds. With no rules over themes, the creations could range from detailed to much simpler designs. For some, it was an opportunity to take the competition seriously, carefully considering their structures and designs. For others, it was simply a lighthearted way to relax, laugh with friends, and share ideas in a fun way.

Emilio Cereceres, a sophomore nursing major and public health minor, helped lead planning for the event through GAB. He said the idea behind Lego Night was to offer something fresh on campus, an event that encouraged imagination while also giving students a break from the pressures of classes and college overall.

“Something different, to find a way to use their imagination for fun,” Cereceres said. “It’s a small event, but also an innovative one.”

Cereceres noted that Lego Night was far simpler to organize compared to larger-scale campus traditions, with setup taking only 15 minutes. Still, the easy atmosphere seemed to work in its favor. By the time the rounds had begun, the U-Club was packed with students crowding around tables to sift through their Lego cups, piecing together towers, animals, bridges, and other creative designs.

The winners were selected through a QR code voting system that allowed both participants and spectators to weigh in on their favorite builds. This interactive piece gave the participants the ability to cheer for friends, reward the most skilled design, and become a bigger part of the competition.

At the end of the evening, the prizes were awarded. The winning team received Einstein gift cards, while individual winners had their choice of Lego sets. First place took home a Super Mario Piranha Plant, second place chose between a Bonsai Tree or a Paris, France set, and third place received the remaining option.

For Cereceres, the success of the night was not just measured in numbers, but in how engaged students were with the activity, whether it be in winning or having fun.

“It was fun planning this event,” he said. “We wanted people to compete, but also just to build whatever they wanted.”

Gorillas smash Hornets’ hive, extend winning streak to three

Curtis Meyer sports editor

The Gorillas are back in the win column, having defeated the Emporia Hornets on the road, 43-29. The Gorillas led at halftime and did not look back, outscoring the Hornets 21-13 in the second half. The Gorillas rattled off a combined 395 rushing yards, as they wore down the Hornets’ defense.

Pitt State set the tone early, receiving the ball to start the game. Senior running back Cleo Chandler Jr. struck first, rattling off a 68-yard rushing touchdown on just the third play of the game. The Gorillas’ defense was able to stop the Hornets on their next drive, quickly forcing a punt. The Gorillas would methodically drive down the field, after starting on their own 16, and finish off a 12-play, 84-yard drive with junior quarterback Jake Wolff throwing a four-yard touchdown to junior wide receiver Greyson Holbert.

Up 14-0, the Gorillas jumped out to a strong start. Emporia State then kicked a field goal to end

the quarter. Emporia’s offense would finally wake up in the second quarter, as they scored a pair of back-to-back touchdowns to take a 16-14 lead. Freshman defensive lineman Osahon Ogbvoen would block an extra point to make it just a two-point lead.

Things looked dire for the Gorillas after another missed field goal attempt, but the defense held firm long enough for the offense to get back on their feet. A 51-yard rush by Chandler set up a ten-yard touchdown pass from senior quarterback Jackson Berry to grad student receiver Jaelon Travis, as the Gorillas took a 21-16 lead into the half. Pitt State would not trail again.

Emporia attempted to surprise the Gorillas with an onside kick to start the third, but it backfired, as the Gorillas recovered the kick and Chandler rushed in for his second touchdown of the day from seven yards out.

A failed fourth down attempt by the Hornets gave the ball right back to the Gorillas, who

created another long drive that bled into the fourth quarter. Junior running back Zahmari Gary-Palode would rush it in from 16 yards out in the first play of the fourth quarter. Emporia would find their offense again on their next drive, scoring a touchdown to make it 35-23.

The Gorillas would be in danger again after a blocked punt gave the Hornets excellent field position, but another fourth down stop would give the ball back to the Gorillas. Gary-Palode would put the nail in the coffin for the Hornets, after he made a 74-yard touchdown run, the final points for the Gorillas. The Hornets would score once more before the end of the quarter, but the Gorillas were able to end the game by kneeling.

The Gorillas will prepare to host Nebraska Kearney at home this Saturday. The Lopers are coming off a 31-24 win over Washburn last weekend, as they hold a 4-1 overall record and a 2-1 conference record.

‘The Man in My Basement’ complicated, thought provoking

Bryce Bicknell reporter

When looking at the trailers for “The Man in My Basement,” one might assume they are getting into a horror movie of sorts. If there is one thing you take from this review, take this: it is not scary, it will not live up to the trailer, but it is still worth a watch if you find the trailer interesting. It is a complicated movie that is nonetheless watchable.

“The Man in My Basement” directed by Nadia Latif and based on the book by the same name written by Walter Mosley is, yes, about a man living in another man’s basement. Charles Blakey played by Corey Hawkins is a jobless African American man living in Sag Harbor, New York, which is a historically Black community. Just when Charles finds himself at a point where his house might be taken away, Anniston Bennet, played by William Dafoe, knocks on his door wanting to rent his basement.

Meanwhile, Narciss Gully, played by Anna Diop, is brought over to look at Charles’s family heirlooms, as his mom recently passed away. She discovers ancient West African masks, which have belonged in his family for generations and play a role in the plot. Charles eventually finds out he is getting foreclosed on, leading him to call Mr. Bennet, who offers him \$65,000 to rent the basement. And of course, as you could guess Charles accepts this deal.

What follows is a series of events so strange and loosely connected that if I wrote them out, I would ruin the next hour or so left of the movie. It is best to come into this movie blind with only the bits of

information I have shared with you so far.

Regarding the characters, Dafoe and Hawkins’s performances truly are the pillars holding this movie up. The two men are clearly meant to be parallels of each other, a point that the movie essentially spells out for you. The atmosphere is very enjoyable with shots of the beach and the small town being particularly nice to look at. The movie explores themes of isolation, with both men keeping others away from them and largely keeping to themselves. Other ideas explored, such as race and heritage, play important roles, especially with the setting.

Some ideas, though, do not work. The masks which I mentioned earlier feel very disconnected from the main plot, almost like they were stapled on rather than being woven in. The attempt to juggle these multiple ideas and themes largely fails.

Dafoe is clearly the main draw for most people going to see this movie and partly why I chose it. As always, he delivers a brilliant performance, which is deep and thought provoking. Largely, the film is about ideas and questions. That is almost the entire point of it, which I enjoyed. But not all questions should be answered, as Dafoe says at the end of the film.

Overall, I was disappointed by “The Man in My Basement” mainly because I wanted a horror film and got a drama with some thriller elements. I hope that you do watch this movie on Hulu and if you are not expecting a horror movie, you might like it better. I would give it a 6.7/10.



| Photo courtesy of IMDb

An amalgamation of a magnum opus

Emily Ford design chief

At the beginning of September, the band AJR released a new EP, by the name of “What No One’s Thinking,” and that EP is probably one of

the most clever pieces they have ever created.

On the surface after just one listen, you would think it is just a bit of a catchy tune with interesting background audio. The more times you listen to it, however, you start to notice the little details, until you realize that this is a collage of all their music into one song. Similar to what they did for “The Maybe Man,” but on a much larger scale.

I was first tipped off on this when I thought a bit more on the first line of the song, “I wrote a song about being weak,” which is a very obvious reference to their song “Weak” from their album “The Click.” But it was not until I noticed their reference to “The Good Part” later on in the same verse that I realized just how big this song was.

I really appreciate the thought process that goes into their music as a whole, but with this song, it goes to a whole new level. A few years ago, I went to a concert of theirs, and one of the segments was Ryan, the “R” in “AJR” talking about how they came up with the audio for their song “Way Less Sad” where they took an audio of their neighbor’s kid and made it into a whole background segment. Or in their song “Bang!” where they took the audio of a subway announcement PA system and used that for the transitions into the chorus and pre-chorus of the song.

I really appreciated the multiple layers of this song, and the different meanings that a listener can get from it, but ultimately, it is a reflection on the duality of the success they faced in the career they have.

I really could not find anything that I did not like in this song. It truly is one of their best pieces from the EP, and one of my favorites through their continuously growing list of songs.

It was earlier confirmed that this was meant to be the “Thirteenth Track” in their album “The Maybe Man,” but were unable to write it due to their mindset at the time and the need for an uplifting piece. I give this song a 5/5.



| Photo courtesy of Amazon

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Opportunities open at the Tech Center

Emily Ford design chief

From Tuesday, Sept. 23 through Wednesday, Sept. 24, the Crossland College of Technology held its annual Company Days event where students had the opportunity to communicate with representatives in their industry field and find potential employers.

The College of Technology hosted between 150 and 200 different employers across the various technological fields taught there.

Andrea Kent, a graphic communication professor and organizer for the event, reminds students that it is not just a career fair, but a networking event that can add value to a student’s professional career.

“The Company Days event at the College of Technology is a two-day event that will have anywhere from 150 to 200 different employers across all technological fields that will come to our building and specifically network with our students,” Kent said. “It’s not necessarily a career fair, but a networking event. When you’re in industry, you understand how much building that professional network really is of value to your professional career and building that longevity.”

Laney Covey, a senior studying graphic communication, said this event was more of an opportunity for students to gain practice for the real professional world than getting jobs, even though some of them had those opportunities available. Students could also have their resumes and other professional documents critiqued throughout the event.

“Company Day is when businesses from all over the Four States come to the Tech Center at Pitt State and they talk to students,” Covey, said. “A lot of them have jobs, but mostly it is just practice for the future when you’re looking for a job or when you would like to get a resume reviewed or you’re just trying to talk to businesses and kind of get a feel for the industry.”

Kent and the other organizers of the event want students to not only be looking for internships or full-time jobs, but they also want them to be able to communicate with the employers at the event about what they need to know in their field.

“We want students to not just be looking for the internships or the full-time jobs,” Kent said, “but communicating with these employers about what they need to know for the rest of the time they’re in college and then what they need to know zero to five years out in the industry and how to kind of build their professional career. There’s a lot of conversation and



Senior graphic design major, Laney Covey, discusses internship opportunities with two representatives from Walsworth printing. | Photo by Christopher Law

collaboration that happens between students and employers and employers with other companies across the building.”

For students like Covey, who are looking for a job, this is among the first steps into the industry.

“For me this year, I am currently looking for a job,” Covey said, “so this is a good opportunity to start and kind of look at what’s out there and figure out what I really want to do. I have several companies that I would really like to work for that are here today, so I’m excited to meet with them.”

On the first day of the event, companies for construction, graphic communications, and engineering were available to talk with students, and on the second day, automotive companies were available to talk to students.

Passion, mentorship, impact at Pitt State

Chance Fields reporter

Pittsburg State has nominated four employees for recognition from the Kansas Board of Regents. The faculty nominees are nursing professor, Dr. Karen Johnson; communication professor, Dr. Megan Westhoff; chemistry instructor, Dr. Kristopher Mijares; and the staff nominee is Jamie Rink director of Student Financial Assistance.

When Johnson opened the email telling her she had been named Faculty of the Year by the Kansas Board of Regents, she could not believe it.

“I was beyond shocked,” Johnson said. “For the first couple of weeks, I thought it was a mistake. It felt like an out-of-body experience. I knew I had been nominated, but I just couldn’t believe it.”

For Johnson, the recognition is rewarding both personally and professionally.

“Personally, it’s rewarding because I spend a lot of time and effort in my job, and I don’t feel like it’s a job,” Johnson said. “It’s part of my passion and purpose. Professionally, it’s something I can include in my promotion and tenure application. Being nominated by my colleagues is quite the honor.”

Johnson’s mentorship is central to her work in every class and clinical experience.

“It’s rewarding to see students grow, not just in skills but in confidence,” Johnson said. “Sometimes we don’t talk about our own accomplishments, so it’s nice to know others see the work we put in. Helping students navigate challenges and discover their strengths is the most fulfilling part of my job.”

Westhoff had a similar mix of shock and excitement when she found

out about her recognition. Westhoff said the path to teaching was unexpected.

“I thought I’d never teach in front of people,” Westhoff said. “I like to perform as a character, but being myself? Heck no. But I fell in love with it in one week.”

Westhoff’s teaching philosophy focuses on passion, diversity, and creativity.

“I want my students to go out and make the world a better place,” Westhoff said. “To find their place but also give back. Theater teaches empathy. You step into characters you’d never meet otherwise, and that changes how you see the world.”

Westhoff’s mentorship goes beyond the classroom and the stage.

“Getting to know students one-on-one is the best part,” Westhoff said. “During rehearsals and workdays, you see what drives them and help them find their voice.”

The 10th anniversary season at the Bicknell Family Center for the Arts highlighted Westhoff’s approach, mixing alumni participation with student productions.

“It was exciting for students to see the paths others have taken,” Westhoff said. “A degree doesn’t limit you to one career.”

Westhoff also experiments with AI in theater, exploring new ways to create stage experiences while keeping ethics in mind.

“We don’t want to replace artists or take someone’s work,” Westhoff said. “It’s about opening possibilities in a responsible way.”

Westhoff shared advice for students about the “magic” of opportunity.

“Try everything. Don’t turn down opportunities,” Westhoff said. “You never know the people you’ll meet or the doors that will open. It’s always kind of magical that way.”

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Andean music comes to McCray Hall

Lauryn Gilfillan reporter

The sounds of South American folk music filled McCray Hall on Sept. 24, as part of the University’s month-long Hispanic Music Festival. The concert featured folkloric music from Peru and Bolivia performed by Ayllu, a four-man ensemble. The event drew a turnout from students and the community who came to experience the traditional music of South America.

“Ayllu,” the Quechua word for “family,” was a reoccurring theme throughout the evening, as performers highlighted the importance of family in Latin American culture and music.

Wednesday’s performance had music from the Andes Mountains, with the songs representing Paraguay, Peru, Bolivia, Chile, Ecuador, Colombia, Venezuela, and Argentina. The musicians displayed their skills, often being able to play two instruments at once to make a layered soundscape. They combined

traditional instruments with their arrangement of 12 songs which drew applause.

Following the ensemble, Canción Hermana closed the night out with energy and enthusiasm, dancing and twirling on the stage. The women’s dancing group grew out of shared love for Latin folk music.

The Hispanic Music Festival, now in its second year, is directed by Frida Herrera and her husband, Isaac Hernandez. Herrera is an international student from Mexico City and is pursuing a master’s degree in school counseling psychology while also working on campus in career development. Hernandez, also from Mexico City, is a piano adjunct professor in the music department. Together they have expanded the festival from six on-campus events in the first year, to nine concerts spread across Pittsburg this fall.

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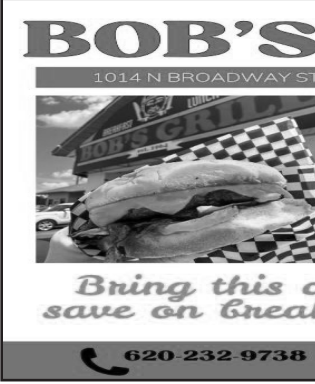
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Pitt State soccer on road ‘we dominated pretty hard core’

David Sheets sports reporter

Pitt State women’s soccer team started its stretch of MIAA play with back-to-back road matches, drawing 1-1 at Nebraska-Kearney on Friday and earning a 1-0 victory at Fort Hays State on Sunday. The results extended a strong defensive stretch for the Gorillas, who have now held their opponents to fewer than ten combined shots in three consecutive weekends.

Friday’s opener against the Lopers saw Pitt State in control of most of the match. After starting down 0-1, freshman forward Annie Payne tied the Gorillas in the 28th minute when she scored her second goal of the season. Despite Pitt State’s dominance in possession and a 23-5 edge in total shots, the Lopers were able to keep the score tied with five saves from their goalkeeper.

“I know the score doesn’t indicate it, but we dominated pretty hard core,” head coach Wes Branstetter said. “At the end of the day, you’ve got to score more than they score. We just had to be better finding ways to put the ball in the back of the net. But pressing wise, defensively, and in possession, I thought we were absolutely excellent, especially on one of the

hardest road trips in the NCAA.”

The Gorillas followed with an even stronger effort on Sunday in Hays. Pitt State not only prevented the Tigers from scoring but also held them without a single shot across 90 minutes. Meanwhile, the Gorillas created steady pressure on the other end, outshooting Fort Hays 17-0. Midway through the second half, junior Abby Hoffman found the net in the 69th minute off a pass from freshman Ella Cazzavillain.

Branstetter credited the shutout to the entire lineup, not just the defense.

“The backline is doing a phenomenal job of reading the game and keeping everything in front of them, but the biggest thing is that we’re defending all the way from the front,” Branstetter said. “A lot of the time we don’t even give them a chance to cross half. We win the ball back immediately and then go attack again. It’s just been a complete effort and a relentless mentality not to let the other team get near our goal.”

The weekend also marked an important step for the young athletic program. According to Branstetter, this

was the first time Pitt State has earned results in both matches in a week with two road matches.

“We’re very proud that we got four points,” Branstetter said. “It’s the first weekend in my time here where we picked up points in both games on this trip, so that was awesome. We just have to keep improving and keep getting better each and every day.”

While pleased with the results, coach Branstetter pointed out that the Gorillas still need to turn more of their scoring chances into goals. Across the two matches, Pitt State finished only two of its 40 attempts.

“We’ve got to be a little more clinical,” Branstetter said. “If we score earlier, I think the game will open up a little bit more, which will help us. Scoring a goal is the hardest thing to do in soccer, but we’ve got to keep working at it.”

The Pitt State women’s soccer team will stay at home to take on the Rogers State Hillcats on Friday, Oct. 3, at 2 p.m. and the Northeastern State Riverhawks on Sunday, Oct. 5, at 1 p.m.

Conference play starts for volleyball

David Sheets sports reporter

Pitt State’s volleyball team wrapped up a challenging weekend with a hard-fought win followed by a setback against one of the top teams in the nation. The Gorillas first defended their home court with a 3-1 victory over Arkansas-Fort Smith before dropping a 0-3 loss to second overall ranked Central Oklahoma. Pitt State will face both teams again in early November on the road.

On Friday night, Pitt State’s performance carried them to a four-set win over the Lions. After a rough outing in the first set, the Gorillas regrouped and closed out the match with three straight set wins to seal the victory. Junior Vix Vilott led the charge with an all-around performance with 11 kills, 19 digs, 2 service aces, and 3 blocks. Fellow junior Maliyah Johnson added a strong showing at the net, registering 11 kills and 3 blocks to match Vilott’s offensive production. Senior Don’Yah Cosie put down another 10 kills and 6 blocks, along with an ace to the team’s total. Redshirt sophomore Maddi LaPointe chipped in with 9 kills and 2 blocks, while the setting duties were shared effectively between junior Jesa Wallace with 30 and redshirt freshman Abby Carr with 20. Wallace provided an additional 9 digs outside of setting.



Don’Yah Cosie, senior, middle blocker/right side hitter, tips the ball to UCO. Pitt State lost to the University of Central Oklahoma, 0-3. | Photo by Emma Forst



Anna Dean spiking the ball, breaking through the defenses of Central Oklahoma’s team, allowing Pitt state to score. | Photo by Ky Boterf

Defensively, senior Josie McCroskey anchored the back row with 24 digs with junior Kassidy Nixon providing 11 more as Pitt State controlled the pace of play throughout most of the match.

Saturday presented a different challenge as Pitt State squared off against the No. 2 nationally ranked Central Oklahoma. The Bronchos came into the match with momentum and demonstrated why they are considered among the nation’s elite. The Bronchos swept the Gorillas in straight sets, handing Pitt State a 3-0 loss despite a competitive stretch from the Gorillas in the final set. Even in defeat, Pitt State had bright spots. Vix Vilott led the offense with 9 kills and added 9 digs and a block to her line. Maliyah Johnson followed with 7 kills and 3 blocks, while Maddi LaPointe contributed 5 kills and 4 blocks to give the Gorillas some presence at the net. Kassidy Nixon provided a spark on both offense and defense, recording 5 kills, 2 aces, 1 block, and 10 digs. Jesa Wallace and Abby Carr continued to split the setting duties, finishing with 16 and 10 assists respectively, while Josie McCroskey kept the backcourt steady with a team high 17 digs. Despite their efforts, the Gorillas struggled to find consistency against a Central Oklahoma team that appeared to capitalize on nearly every opportunity. Pitt State now stands at an overall season record of 7-5 as they start their conference record with a 1-1 split.

The Pitt State volleyball team will remain at home for their next matches against the Washburn Ichabods on Thursday, Oct. 2, and the Emporia State Hornets the following day, both matches starting at 6 p.m. on their respective days.

Gorillas to host whatever a ‘Loper’ is

Curtis Meyer sports editor

Pitt State is riding high off three straight wins, and they will look to keep that momentum going this weekend when they host the Nebraska Kearney Lopers. The Lopers are currently 4-1, having just come off a 34-21 win over the Washburn University Ichabods.

Pitt State has overcome some early season troubles. Having sat at 0-2 throughout the first two weeks, they are now back in the win column. Last week, the Gorillas offense took off as the ground game exploded for a whopping total ground yardage of 395 yards, with 353 of those yards coming from senior running back Cleo Chandler Jr. and junior running back Zahmari Palode-Gary.

The defense came up huge as well with three different fourth down stops, holding the Emporia Hornets to 29 points. Redshirt freshman defensive lineman Osahon Ogbevoen had himself a blocked extra point, which was his second blocked kick of the season.

Nebraska Kearney has had a strong start to the season, but they have not been able to break into the top 25 yet this year. A lack of strong teams has led to the Lopers having not faced a ranked opponent yet. This means that the upcoming game against the Gorillas will likely be the best and possibly only chance for them to prove they are worthy of being ranked, so they will be amped up to play the Gorillas.

The Lopers offense has made the ground game their bread and butter, as they consistently pound the opposing defenses. Pitt State has been weak defending the ground games at times, so they will need to execute with the stronger run stopping in mind. As a rush first offense, the passing attack has been somewhat limited for the Lopers, as they are

unable to push the ball downfield consistently. If the Gorillas can score quickly, they can force the Lopers into a passing game that will put them at a disadvantage.

Nebraska Kearney has a strong defense, one that is very good at forcing turnovers. Having recovered five different fumbles and seven interceptions in their first five games, the defense will look to force the Gorillas into some simple mistakes, which the Gorillas will have to guard against.

If the Gorillas can run up the score early and force the Lopers into a passing game, they will have the edge, forcing them to play one dimensionally. The Gorillas will have to look to prevent simple and avoidable mistakes, as it will not take much of a lead before Nebraska Kearney tries to run the game out.

Kickoff will be at 2 p.m., as the Gorillas look to keep on with their winning ways.

According to University of Nebraska at Kearney cross-country head coach, Brady Bonsall in a 2011 interview, “The pronghorn antelope is an animal that is indigenous to the great plains of the United States. Over the years that antelope nickname just became the Lopers.”



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Drag takes center stage at U-Club

Chance Fields reporter

Sept. 25, the U-Club at Pittsburg State University was stage lit as students gathered for the University’s annual drag show, hosted by the Gender and Sexuality Alliance. The event served as a fundraiser for Pittsburg Pride Fest, which will be held Saturday, Oct. 4, at Lincoln Park. Students packed the room to see a lineup of bold and colorful performances that blended creativity, style, and personality.

Performers included Jackie Knoph, president of Pitt Kansas Pride, who performed a rendition of “Not Ready to Make Nice,” by The Chicks; Smir LeQueer, who engaged the crowd with “Poker Face,” by Lady Gaga; and Electric Bill, who delivered a performance of “If the World Was Ending,” by Bruno Mars. Each act brought its own mix of artistry and self-expression, leaving the room with “energy.”

For a number of students, the show was more than entertainment. Tate Thompson, a first-year master’s student in clinical psychology, returned after attending last year.

“I came to the drag show because I went last year and loved Jackie Knoph, so I had to see her again,” Thompson said. “The energy is very fun and artistic, and I love the symbolism in their outfits.



Drag Performer, Smir LeQueer, dances and lipsyncs to Lady Gaga’s “Poker Face” at a drag show in the U-Club. | Photo by Emily Ford

Drag being a concentrated performance of gender expression is really fun, and it’s a good reminder to not take things too seriously.”

Thompson said the performance of “Not Ready to Make Nice” was especially powerful.

“It (the performance of “Not Ready to Make Nice”) resonated in a way that only someone who grew up queer in the Midwest could understand,” Thompson said.

Organizers hoped the show would bring students together and introduce more people to GSA events. Marlee Mikel, a senior music education major, said the show’s goal was both fundraising and community building.

“Drag shows are a great way to bring people that usually don’t go to GSA events to come, because they’re awesome,” Mikel said. “I hope students get a better glimpse at the LGBTQ community and all the joy involved in it.”

Knoph, one of the performers, described drag as both art and activism.

“Drag is an art expression, a gender expression, and it’s also about activism. It’s about trying to fight societal norms and fight for people’s rights that are not yours,” Knoph said.

Knoph also spoke about the challenges of performing in a smaller Midwestern community.

“We’ve had all kinds of protesters,” Knoph said. “You just kind of have to not really care. You fight against them, but you also realize they’re fighting their own demons. It’s not going to affect me.”

Kennedy Cooper, assistant director for Campus and Community Resources, emphasized the importance of representation.

“Drag provides an important source of representation,” Cooper said. “Being able to see yourself or someone you can identify with on a stage is important.” She encouraged students to attend GSA meetings on Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. and highlighted other events like Pride Prom in April.

With Pittsburg Pride Fest just around the corner,



Jackie Knoph, president of the Pitt Kansas Pride, dances and lipsyncs to “Popular” from the musical “Wicked” on Thursday, Sept. 25. The event was held by the Gender and Sexuality Alliance on campus. | Photo by Emily Ford

GSA hopes the energy from the drag show carries forward, inspiring students to engage, participate, and celebrate their authentic selves. Thompson described this as important to the human experience.

“It’s important to have more public performance events because artistic expression is an important part about being human,” Thompson said. “We get a lot of value from the connection to the community and our shared experiences.”

Area art, jazz outside Fox Theatre for Hispanic Music Festival

Chance Fields reporter

Art, music, and food came together Saturday evening in downtown Pittsburg as the Crossroads Jazz Band performed a set as part of the Hispanic Music Festival.

The event was held Sept. 27, from 7-9 p.m. in the small lot next to the Colonial Fox Theatre, mixing jazz with cultural showcases and community spirit. Isaac Hernandez, an adjunct professor, and Frida Herrera, who works in the Career Development Office at Pitt State, worked together to bring the musicians, international students, and business together for a night made to highlight Hispanic culture while welcoming everyone from the Pittsburg community.

The 18-member Crossroads Jazz Band, made up of both Pittsburg State University students and community musicians, filled the open space with sounds that blended blues and bop. Those who attended responded with enthusiasm.

Carlos Aguilar, a sophomore majoring in construction management with a minor in business, said that the performance impressed him.

“Yeah, they’re killer,” Aguilar said. “The pianist is great too.”

The band anchored the event while tables spread across the lot giving visitors a chance to engage with art and food representing area and international traditions. Each table was dressed in festive cloth, adding to the color of the gathering.

One of the displays came from a Paraguayan international student, Gabi Alvarez, who is a pursuing a master’s degree in graphic design and graphic management. Alvarez makes paintings that combine elements from South America and

Pittsburg. Using actual leaves collected from around town to create her canvas’ backgrounds, she then paints traditional South American birds over it to fuse her home culture with the one she has come to know in Kansas.

Tia Vero’s Kitchen, a dessert food truck, stopped by. Run by a Pittsburg family, this was their first event since opening, as well as their first outing. Herrera said it was important to provide that kind of opportunity.

“We want to support every aspect of the community,” Herrera said.

Alongside the food truck, the community, and students with Hispanics of Today sold tamales, while TOAST collaborated with Hernandez and Herrera to add traditional dishes to its menu in support of the festival.

Herrera said the goal of both on, and off campus events was to bring people together.

“It involves a lot of community collaboration and dedication,” Herrera said. “The goal for both the on and off campus concerts is to bring everyone together.”

For Hernandez and Herrera, who have been the key figures in organizing the monthlong Hispanic Music Festival, the evening was a colorful night of art and culture. The energy of the music and assortment of foods reflected the mission of the culture while fostering its connections to Pittsburg.

Attendees drifted between tables of artwork and food while jazz played in the back. For two hours, the empty lot beside the Colonial Fox Theatre became a hub of sound, color, and conversation.



Raemon Wilson added energy on the congas as the Crossroad Jazz Band played during HOT’s jazz event outside of the Colonial Fox Theatre on Sept. 27. | Photo by Bryan Gonzalez



Outside of the Colonial Fox Theatre, Hispanics of Today hosted a jazz night filled with music, food, and drinks, featuring the Crossroad Jazz Band performing together on stage. | Photo by Bryan Gonzalez

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When you take all the information gathered, the forced sterilizations, the global health campaigns, the rise in endocrine-disrupting chemicals, and the cultural differences in how pregnancy and abortion are defined, it can be easy to see why people may be skeptical. History has shown that governments have interfered with reproduction in the name of public health. Are these vaccinations, chemicals, and birth-control measures an intentional population-control plan, or simply the byproduct of negligence? One thing is for certain: when trust is broken, conspiracy theories are not only inevitable, they're practically invited.

Afternoon of music and food held in downtown Pittsburg

Brianna Barnes managing editor

Hispanic Route was held Sept. 27, in downtown Pittsburg. As a part of the Hispanic Music Festival, this two-part event was held in collaboration with the City of Pittsburg. The first part was in the afternoon at Prichett Pavilion and included artists with Hispanic related art, musicians, a block party, and the first High School Hispanic Banda. Frida Herrera, a graduate assistant working for the Career Development Office, spoke on the involvement of young people in the event.

“The High School Banda Camp group opened the event, featuring students from Pittsburg, Frontenac, and Chanute, conducted by Mr. Cooper Neil,” Herrera said. “They rehearsed together on Wednesday from 3:30-6 p.m. and then had the opportunity to showcase what they learned about the banda style with the audience on Saturday afternoon. After that, a group of local kids performed two songs, Danza de los Viejitos and Cerro de la Silla. One of them, Juan José Robles, also sang Viva México.”

The event included many vendors and a food truck, Tía Vero’s Kitchen, as well as a student art exhibition. The treats and music made for a festive afternoon at the pavilion.

“This event is especially important because it allows local artists and vendors to participate and share their talents and businesses,” Herrera said. “We had local vendors such as Smittle House Ice Cream, the PSU



Graduate Student Frida Herrera stands at the mic, introducing the Pittsburg High School band to kick off the start of the event. | Photo by Christopher Law



Pittsburg Highschool band director Cooper Neil steps up to the mic. Hyping up the crowd for the last song “I love you baby” performed by the band. | Photo by Christopher Law

Intensive English Program where I learned English myself, L&N-ade with refreshing drinks, a bracelet stand run by two local girls, tostilocos business, aguas frescas, and cookie monsters from A Creative. We also had an art exhibition by Gabriela Alvarez, a PSU student, and a food truck, Tía Vero’s Kitchen, which just opened and made this their very first event. We feel so honored that a local family trusted our festival as the place to launch their business and connect with the community.”

This event brought in many community members who were not Pitt State students, as it was in collaboration with the City of Pittsburg. Bringing the event off campus was a goal of Herrera.

“The idea behind this event was to bring people together in these two wonderful community spaces and unite everyone as one big community,” Herrera said. “This is our second year hosting the Hispanic Music Festival, and part of its growth has been through collaborations with the City of Pittsburg and the Colonial Fox Theatre. Sarah Runyon has been an incredible partner. Our goal is to bring music both on and off campus this year and strengthen the connection between the university and the community.”

The Hispanic Music Festival is important for Hispanics of Today and the Pitt State music program. It connects them to the community more and is a way to share Hispanic heritage and music with the community.

“The festival is a way to share what different cultures sound like,” Herrera said. “We have such a rich heritage, and we want people to experience it through music, food, and dance. Pittsburg is a special place for us, and this is our way of giving back to the community that has given us so much.”

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Lauryn Gilfillan reporter

“It’s just a way for us to give back to the community and try to give everyone a taste of different Latin American music and food,” Herrera said. She added that the festival is not only about celebrating music but also trying to connect the community to resources and opportunities. Before each concert, tables are set up by groups like the Hispanics of Today, the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, and the university admissions office.

Hernandez emphasized that community support makes the festival possible. “This concert wouldn’t be here without the support of all of you and the support of the university,” Hernandez said prior to the concert. Both Herrera and Hernandez view the festival as a way to thank sponsors, the Pittsburg community, and the music department for helping them bring Latin American culture up front.

The evening was entertaining and meaningful. It was not only a chance to enjoy music, but also to experience cultures that may otherwise be a distance from Southeast Kansas. Herrera said this was exactly their goal in creating the festival.

“We want to do this every year, so we hope the number of events grows too,” Herrera said.

Admission to these concerts is free to the community, except for the orchestra event, which is only free to Pittsburg students. With the turnout, Herrera explained that she hopes the festival continues to expand in the number of performances, and the impact it makes on each attendee.

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Lauryn Gilfillan reporter

Global Fest was not only about food however; a DJ played tracks from different cultures around the world, turning the market into a lively dance floor later in the evening. Clusters of students gathered to join in impromptu dancing and clapping along.

Several campus organizations also joined in on the festival as well. Hispanics of Today, a student organization, showed up with refreshments, food, and a Chanchla-throwing game that made some participants smile as they tried to win.

The sense of community stood out as one of the night’s biggest successes. The community swapped stories about culture and traditions while celebrating the diversity of the event. ISA Organizers like Brenda Hawkins, the immigration and advising coordinator, emphasized how pleased they were with the turnout and hope the event continues to grow.

“It’s about celebrating the diversity we see here at Pitt State,” Hawkins said. “When people come together over all this food and music, it’s so easy to see the differences that make us stronger.”

Countries included in the event were India, Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana, Brazil, Pakistan, Japan, Taiwan, South Korea, the United States, Mexico, Togo, Finland, South Africa, China, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, the Marshall Islands, Norway, France, Palau, Kazakhstan, and Micronesia.

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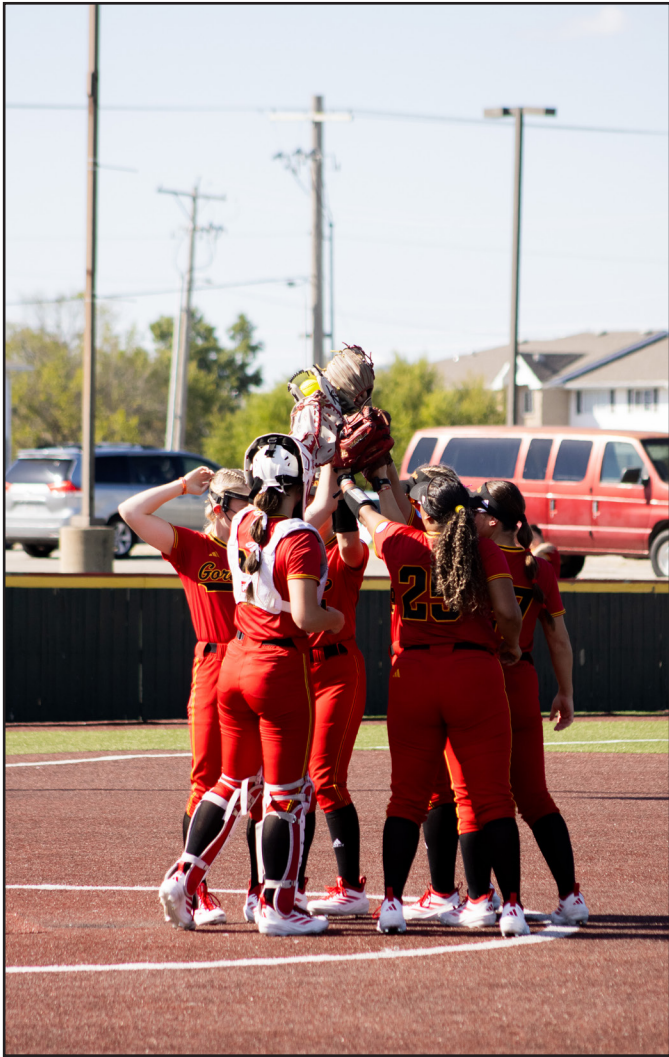
Drag Queen, Smir LeQueer dances and lipsyncs to Lady Gaga’s “Poker Face” on Thursday, Sept. 25, in the U-Club. | Photo by Emily Ford



Drag Performer, Electricck Bill, sings a cover of Jesse J’s “Mama Knows Best” at a drag show on Thursday, Sept. 25. The event happened at the U-Club. | Photo by Emily Ford



Lexi Davis, senior, catcher, returns the ball. Pitt Statev Gorilla Softball played Butler Community College on Sept 26. | Photo by Emma Forst



Pittsburg State University Gorilla Softball played Butler Community College on Sept. 27 during the fall of their 2026 season. | Photo by Emma Forst



Bringing the sounds of the Andes to campus, Amado Espinoza of AylluKC performed on the charango during the Hispanics of Today event at PSU on Sept. 24, at McCray Music Hall. | Photo by Bryan Gonzalez



A player from a visiting team subs into a player on the Women’s Rilla Rugby team passes the ball. Rilla Rugby went 1-1 in the tournament. | Photo by Emma Forst



Madelyn Proper fights through a tackle and dishes the ball to a teammate to keep Pitt State’s attack alive against Benedictine College. | Photo by Bryan Gonzalez