Held within its walls and spread out under the foreign trees dotting its landscape, the Hayfield House possesses a special allure that attracts each person who steps foot onto campus. Nearing the house, one comes to appreciate its style and grandeur more with each stride, but it is not until entering through the main doors and into the entrance hall that a person gets his first genuine perspective. Upon noticing the sheer opulence and brilliance of architecture, it becomes apparent that the house is unlike any other academic establishment that one has likely ever seen. While reflecting in those first moments, nobody comes through the door to disturb your musings. Looking around, one observes that the hardwood floors are scattered with empty chairs and the hallways are lined with unfilled shelves. The only noise is the rat-tat-tat of a distant keyboard and the muffled crumpling of paper that is retained by Hayfield’s thick walls. Naturally, the first question that comes to mind is “who’s in the house?” Interestingly enough, the answer to said question has changed more than a number of times.

In the early 1930’s, during the Great Depression, the house was built at an approximated value of one million dollars. Its purpose was to serve as the vacation home for Mr. and Mrs. John N. Conyngham, who obviously did not skimp on their leisure space (even the attic is built with hardwood floors). In fact, it seems as if there were separate places to indulge in each of life’s small pleasures. The main floor was built with such rooms as the “flower room”, the “sun room”, and there is even a specially designated room for eating breakfast. Also, the entire wing of that level was used as a kitchen, containing a refrigerator the size of an average bedroom, and many separate “pantries.” On the second floor, that same wing was used solely for maid’s quarters. In addition, there were a total of six guest bedrooms, a writing room, and the master chambers which were accompanied by two separate dressing rooms (one of which, Mrs. Conynghams, is modeled after that of Marie Antoinette.)

Meanwhile, classes at Penn State were being held at the Guthrie Building in Wilkes-Barre, from which time there are only three surviving teachers. One of those, Professor Ed Dreisbach (who still volunteers his time to teach a class here on campus), says that in 1961 the University decided that “every Penn State University Campus was to have its own land.” So the question became, what is available and where? Dreisbach, who was involved in the attempt to relocate campus facilities, named the Hayfield House and property on present-day Newberry estates to be the top prospects for such a move. In 1964 Mrs. Conyngham died at 106 years old, and a bidding war began. Dreisbach notes that since the inheritor of the house, Mr. Richard Robinson, “had bad memories of the place, he didn’t want to have anything to do with it” which meant that he would have no reservations at selling it off.

Since the space had been decided, it only remained a question of who was to get it. Dreisbach describes the “cloak and dagger” type proceedings that took place mainly between Penn State and Wilkes to procure the space, when eventually in 1968 Penn State reached a mile-

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Happy Halloween!

Check us out on the web:
http://wb.psu.edu/collegian.htm
My Fellow Collegians,

This year, there has been a “changing of the guard” in the Hayfield House where your campus newspaper has been created. For the last four years, the Collegian has had pretty much the same staff writing, editing, and designing the Penn State Wilkes-Barre news paper. Now, it is hard to tell just how many veterans we have left. Most of the unique articles you will read in this issue were written by fresh and very talented minds.

With the change of staff, you, the reader, might notice a different feel to the paper. The creative writing section, for example, is a lot bigger with a much more eclectic collection of poetry. It will be hard to see just how different our Collegian will be until we get a few issues under our belt, but with each, our talents will start to hone and a personality will start to appear.

For our freshmen out there who are not familiar with us, the Collegian isn’t your typical newspaper. We are not exclusively news oriented by any means. Our writers write what they want to write about. If a writer feels like writing about what’s going on around campus, by all means, write away, but if the writer chooses to review a certain song, or to write a satirical piece about allowing students to dorm in tents behind Hayfield House, they are more than welcome to do this. This is one of the reasons I feel our paper is unique. This is why I have been around so long. We, the Collegian, encourage creativity and uniqueness; students should be allowed to show the world what they can do.

Of course, the Collegian is not just paper, words, and writers. We wouldn’t be anything without you, the reader. We provide the students of Penn State Wilkes-Barre with information and entertainment free of charge. All of our funds go to you, except a small proportion that goes to a secret New York trip and a corn maze, but mostly to you. I thank you for picking up this thin packet of paper and reading what it has to say, because it is our words. All a writer wants is to be read. I speak for all of us in Hayfield 212 when I say that you have made our day.

I look ahead on the months to come before I graduate with a smile on my face. I have at least six issues in front of me, and I know that hard work and stress will go into each one. Am I afraid? I guess you can say I’m a little nervous; it’s not everyday you become the head of such strong willed group that all share the same goal. But I am confident. I know we will get our issues out, though not always on time. I know this because of the last few weeks I have spent with this wonderful group of people. I don’t see them as my club members; I see them as brilliant writers, and I am proud to stand by them. We might be an odd family, with Dr. Putzel as our adopted father, but we are anything but dysfunctional. I thank them with as much heart as I thank my readers and I hope that I can be the editor they expect me to be. If not, I’m sure they can come up with a reason as to why the traditions of Halloween were brought to America by Irish and Scottish immigrants of the 19th Century. In Ireland, Hallow E’en is translated to Hallow’s Ever, or the night before “All Hallows.” People were afraid of being possessed on Halloween. In an attempt to keep these harmful spirits away, many people would set fires to open properties in order to make them cold and vacant of unwanted spirits. Along with setting fires, families and children would also dress up in glamorous or horrifying costumes; and paint their faces in attempt to ward off the spirits. Trick-or-treating is thought to have originated with the 9th century European custom called “souling”. Trick-or-treating is still a current tradition today the many cultures still carry on. Penn State Wilkes-Barre has its own tradition which has been carried on since October 1998. Since then, Halloween at PSW-B has grown and a new tradition of our own has developed. October 15-17, 22-24, and 29-30. Be sure to request information or to place an ad, contact Dr. Steven Putzel at 570-675-9136 or SDP4@psu.edu.

Sarah Ferrier
Editor-In-Chief

Brieana Mitchell

As a state wide University, Penn State hosts over 92,000 students per year. This number is divided by the 20 campuses all over Pennsylvania, including the World Campus. With all of those names and faces belonging to the Penn State brand, one may find it hard to relate to someone from a different campus. On August 12th-14th, the mission of meeting fellow students as well as working towards a worthy cause became that much easier.

The annual Summer Leadership Conference was held at Penn State Berks in Reading, Pennsylvania and housed more than 250 students from the commonwealth campuses. The main focus around the conference was “The Five Practices and Ten Commitments of Exemplary Student Leadership”. Keynote speaker Nancy Hunter Denney encouraged the students to go back home and make a change in their communities and do extraordinary things in organizations. Included in the conference were different breakout sessions that helped students discover the beauty in difference as well as the ability to deal with confrontation and adversities.

Chosen from the Penn State Wilkes-Barre campus were Mark Calore, SGA President, Mike Calore, SGA representative, Shelby Murren, THON Committee chair, Jessica Wrieden, THON committee co-chair, Marika Merritt, Honor Society representative, Alison Walfutemey, freshman representative, and Brieana Mitchell, Campus Environment Team. Students were also required to do community service projects around the Reading area, including local hospital work as well as painting fences, cleaning up forests and serving food to the homeless. The experience was a truly enlightening one as students were able to learn more about their family as well as get to know themselves and what they can do to become a leader.

Halloween is a night of masked faces and laughs, when people of all ages enjoy the excitement and thrills of past traditions. Over the past 2,000 years, various groups have celebrated Halloween. Some traditions are still kept alive today, such as: trick-or-treating, bonfires, costume parties, attending haunted houses, corn mazes, and Jack-o-lanterns. The traditions of Halloween were brought to America by Irish and Scottish immigrants of the 19th Century. In Ireland, Hallow E’en is translated to Hallow’s Ever, or the night before “All Hallows.” People were afraid of being possessed on Halloween. In an attempt to keep these harmful spirits away, many people would set fires to open properties in order to make them cold and vacant of unwanted spirits. Along with setting fires, families and children would also dress up in glamorous or horrifying costumes; and paint their faces in attempt to ward off the spirits. Trick-or-treating is thought to have originated with the 9th century European custom called “souling”. Trick-or-treating is still a current tradition today the many cultures still carry on. Penn State Wilkes-Barre has its own tradition which has been carried on since October 1998. Since then, Halloween at PSW-B has grown and a new tradition of our own has developed.

“Halloween originated in the Catholic Church. The word ‘Halloween’ comes from All-Hallows Eve, which was practiced by Catholics over 2,000 years ago. November 1st “All Hallows Day” is Catholic day to honor saints who had passed away. On the night of October 31st, it was believed that the spirits of those who have died throughout the years would come back in search of a living body to possess for the following year. The Celts believed that the laws of space were suspended on this night which would allow the spirits to find and take over a living body for the following year.”

Caitlin Atkins

Halloween costumed parties, attending haunted houses, corn mazes, and Jack-o-lanterns. It will be hard to see just how different our Collegian will be until we get a few issues under our belt, but with each, our talents will start to hone and a personality will start to appear.

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Health Insurance Woes

Abby Bachman

Almost everyone I know avoids going to the doctor, but what do you do when some-thing major happens and you have no insur-ance? That’s the problem many people around the country are facing, especially college-age students.

Some students are covered under their parent’s insurance plans, but many who are not can’t afford the high cost of individual private insurance plans. Such is the case for one En-glish major, who has no insurance at all. Once asked by an insurance salesman if she had in- surance, the salesman offered to put her on a basic plan for about $385 a month. How many college students do you know who can afford that? With the price of tuition, books, and other expenses it’s just not realistic for students to pay such high prices.

Another student had insurance, but wasn’t happy at all. After having a basic pro-cedure, she got billed for a test that never hap-pened. Anyone taking private insurance has to learn to read the fine print so that they know what to expect in terms of co-pays and final costs. Unfortunately, when you’re in an emer-gency, costs and options are the last things you want to think about.

Another danger with private insurance is that the carrier will reward providers (doc-tors and hospitals) for keeping costs down.

This means that the medical professionals are reluctant to schedule tests that would be helpful in diagnosis but would cost the insurance com-pany.

Students then get frustrated and simply do nothing about health insurance. This means that when they do have a serious medical issue there is no coverage and costs can add up very quickly. One student I know has a bachelor’s degree and is now going on to earn her RN. Once she graduates the monthly payback for her student loans will be between $900 and $1,000 a month. That’s a good size mortgage!

This girl was in a car accident almost five years ago where she sustained major inju-ries. It was caused by a drunk driver without any insurance. Her initial medical expenses were covered because she was under her parents’ health care insurance. Now, at 24 she can no longer be under her parents’ insurance – she has to carry her own. Unfortunately she is considered high risk and many companies won’t consider carrying her. She did get partial insurance for $240 a month, but it didn’t cover doctor’s visits or basic tests. The only thing it provided that she could use on a regular basis was a discount on prescription drugs. She re-cently had to have an MRI and other tests total- ing about $8,060. Ultimately, unless the legal system can recover these costs from the drunk driver, she will also be responsible for these charges.

I think it’s a nice reminder for us as students and educators to be encouraged to do the best that we can while here and not give up. With one month of the semester behind us we may be feeling a little overwhelmed with all of the work we still need to accomplish, especially since we still have about two more months to go before Christmas break. If you’re anything like me, you’re totally over the whole school thing and ready to be done, but thinking back to the President’s speech, I’m reminded that we write our own destinies and the future is ours to make. We have the freedom in this country to do that. We can either say this is way too much, the hell with it all, and give up, or we can suck it up, and do what’s necessary in order to reach our goals.

So do yourself a favor and remind your-self why you’re here, what you wish to ac-complish while being here, and how the end result will make a positive difference towards enhancing your future. In the words of Rob Schneider, in just about every crazy Adam Sandler movie, “YOU CAN DO IT!!”
Continued from Page 1

Stone with the opening of permanent campus facilities at Hayfield House in Lehman. The Robinsons then held an auction where all of the homes furniture and paintings, including a rug in the grand hall which matched the carvings on the ceiling, were sold to the public. Finally, with the help of a capital funds drive, supplies were moved out of the Guthrie building and into their new home.

Now Hayfield House entered its golden age, a time where the building became a Mecca of student life and activity. The entire first and second floor, as well as the cellar, were converted into classrooms (except the chancellor’s office and conference room which are still held in Mrs. Coneygham’s dressing room and the master chambers respectively). A bookstore was located under the wing, and the house was stocked with simple amenities such as coffee and sandwich machines. The novelty of such a transition is clear in the little things, such as having an office in a bathroom, or retrieving engineering equipment from a safe in the basement that was once used to store all of Mrs. Coneygham’s jewelry and furs. The maid’s chambers were the only space that did not undergo a change, which are now used as teachers’ offices, a good modern day replacement. Needless to say, much better use of the space was being made.

Soon Hayfield’s heyday began its steady decline, as classes were slowly moved out of the house for its inability to accommodate the rising need for information technology. As professor Dreisbach put it, there is “no hope for growth if classes were kept in the Hayfield House. In a university setting, buildings have to be made from scratch for a specific purpose.” Evidently, the house could no longer be used as a center for learning. The library and a few classrooms went first into the Murphy Center, and all other non-engineering classes into the administration building. But the house was still to have some useful life, as many students were allowed to enter the new art exhibit room which held traditional Chinese art works. After the discussion, the idea of having an office in a bathroom, or retrieving engineering equipment from a safe in the basement that was once used to store all of Mrs. Coneygham’s jewelry and furs. The maid’s chambers were the only space that did not undergo a change, which are now used as teachers’ offices, a good modern day replacement. Needless to say, much better use of the space was being made.

Sarah Ferrier

Penn State Wilkes-Barre held its first annual Full Moon Festival on campus on Saturday, October third in the new Academic Commons auditorium. The night started with a brief history of the Chinese holiday, the second most important after the Chinese New Year, which held some insightful facts and beautiful pictures. After the history, guests enjoyed live cultural dancing and piano music; both of which were breathtakingly beautiful. Although the cultural aspect of the night was prevalent, there was a scientific aspect as well. The guests were presented with a history of the Friedman Observatory as well as being introduced to a few of the smaller telescopes, at least one made by students here on campus. After the discussion, the idea of astronomy classes being brought back to the campus was presented for future years, of course after this writer is long gone. The discussion was also paired with photos taken of different sections in our universe, such as the moon, Orion’s Belt, and Jupiter.

After the presentations, guests were treated to a delicious desert table consisting of cakes, cookies, fruit, and the traditional Chinese moon cake, which had a unique texture and taste to say the least. While guests ate, they were allowed to enter the new art exhibit room which held traditional Chinese art works. After the discussion, the idea of having an office in a bathroom, or retrieving engineering equipment from a safe in the basement that was once used to store all of Mrs. Coneygham’s jewelry and furs. The maid’s chambers were the only space that did not undergo a change, which are now used as teachers’ offices, a good modern day replacement. Needless to say, much better use of the space was being made.

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Chinese

Full Moon Festival

Sarah Ferrier

Although this writer’s eyes need a little work done, most guests commented on the clarity of the planet, even being able to see the circles of storms on its surface. Along with the dive into the traditions of one of the culturally richest countries in the world, to guests, that night will be a night to be remembered for years to come; a truly amazing experience!
Bloodshot eyes; t-shirt and faded Wranglers; and a dirty, old Nike baseball cap versus Versace shades; all-black, business suit; and a classy, hundred dollar Fedora cap: NFL (soon-to-be) Hall of Famer Brett Favre and cultural rap icon Jay-Z differ by miles in style and claim to fame. However, both of these men possess a few similarities with the path their careers have taken.

The likeness between these two men begins with the status they both have earned throughout their careers. Brett Favre is considered, by some, to be the greatest quarterback of all-time. Along the way of becoming the greatest, he has driven the writers of the NFL record books crazy with his continuous record breaking abilities. Jay-Z is a legendary rapper who has gained critical praise, while winning over the hearts of many who hear his music. He has broken few rap records, among them being “Most #1 Albums by a Rap Artist”. Jay-Z is already a man among the boys in the music business with his grand background in hip hop. Similarly, Brett is assured a spot in the Hall of Fame when he finally does retire.

Speaking of retirement, neither one of these stars know when to call it quits. Brett has already retired twice and clearly can’t leave the game alone. Brett is no longer top of the game, thus making it the largest cable audience of all-time. The two games when Brett and the Vikings will battle the Packers are guaranteed to be sold out, and rank among the highest-rated games of the year on television. Jay-Z is also a sold-out selling name to put on a concert bill. He has recently sold out the celebrated amphitheater in sports and entertainment, Madison Square Garden in New York City, and also performed his new single “Empire State of Mind” with R&B superstar Alicia Keys at the MTV VMA’s. This was arguably the best performance of the night.

The very next night Jay was back at it, performing his most popular single right now “Run This Town” (featuring Rihanna and Kanye West) on the series premiere of Jay Leno’s new show.

Both Jay and Brett are considerably older than their peers, and are generally loathed as well. In a day-in-age where the most popular rappers are around thirty years old or younger (Young Jeezy, Drake, Lil Wayne, Rick Ross), it is refreshing to have a voice among the highest-rated games of the year on television. Brett has won over the hearts of many of his rivals’ nerves. While Jay flaunts the fact that he’s great, which gets on many of his rivals’ nerves. While the two differ in career choice and style, both have been viewed as one of the greats within their industries, and both have tried retirement and failed at staying away.

The women’s team is entering their second year in the PSUAC. The group is looking to raise some eyebrows this year with their small, tight knit, talented team. Coach Jack Monick and Coach Scott Minor had this to say: “We’re optimistic about the upcoming season. We have an athletic group of recruits added to a solid group of returning underclassmen. Our main goal this year is to get better every time we step on the floor as a group”. October is the official start of practice for both basketball teams and the season lasts through February. It’s not too late to be a part of the teams: contact Coach Monick or Coach Minor if you’re interested.

The teams are asking fans to show support this season and help them put Penn State Wilkes-Barre Basketball on the radar. The days of being the underdog are over. Tee shirts will be sold for the basketball programs in the beginning of the season in an effort to gain support.
Writers' Corner

No Escape
Sarah Ferrier

Stop, did you hear that?
The sounds in the night;
The screams; the sobs; the silence.
It’s coming; it’s coming for you.

What will you do; will you run?
Go and try; he won’t stop hunting.
He has found many people before,
None of them saw it coming.

He has a million disguises to hide in:
Cancer, accidents, suicide, murder.
Ha, go ahead, pick your poison,
It won’t matter; he won’t listen.

Don’t look for him, he won’t be there;
His favorite thing about life is irony.
Don’t worry, my dear, he will come,
His jagged teeth behind a gruesome smile.

“Fifty Miles South”
Nicholas Turner

I’m breaking new ground,
I’m digging my own grave;
This saturated lawn left
Dew resting on the blade.

Suffering under the weight
Of my own mistakes,
And the rising emnity of your hate;
Your blood starts to boil from within.

It bleeds out in this paradox,
In which no one wins.
Bombard me with things you left unsaid,
In which not one wins.

“I don’t understand the feel of its rapid wings”
Sarah Ferrier

Thus one can tell if they are full or empty; I can’t tell you how many times my gas tank has lied to me and forced me to fill up when I didn’t need to.

Books that have like ten extra blank pages. They blame me for killing hundreds of trees by using too many paper towels; what makes a book so special?

Pants that force me to read what the back side says: trust me lady, I’m not checking you out, I just want to know what important message your butt is trying to tell me.

Hot Pockets.

Mystery meat. If I wanted to guess what I was eating, I would go to that shady Chinese place surrounded by all the stray cats.

Fast food restaurants that have signs that tell me to “have a good day”: I’m going to be suffering later due to their wrongly digested cheeseburger, maybe they should tell me to “Pack an extra roll of toilet paper today: It’s going to be one of those days”.

Reality Television

Expensive bottles of water. I like water, but I am not going to spend four dollars on a bottle with a fancy piece of paper on it; it tastes just like my regular dollar bottle, just prettier.

Commercial that tell me to call in the next 15 minutes and I’ll get my order doubled for free! I see your commercial thirty times a day; how many free things are you going to give me?

Platypus? Does anyone really know what that thing is? I think it might be a spy trying to dress up as all the animals at once.

“The Struggling Spirit”
Nicole Navocznyski

My fears are felt, one-by-one
Oversized soldiers that march around in my stomach
Tiny little knots of rope that choke my soul
Causes chaos and havoc.

To not know is to fear the worst
Afred of the skeletons that pile in my closet
Like guns meant to hunt with,
Tons of chalky bones and dead magic.

Don’t show the burns, the blood, the scars because then they’ll know who we are
Don’t show the doubt, the pain, the frown then they’ll know how to bring us down
Expose through thoughts, actions and clothes
Come to the land of our beautiful souls.
Smile, make them guess why we seem so perfect
Smile, make them never see our defects.

Michael Calore

Tonight, the air was more inviting than usual. The heavy clouds covered the dark skies like a safe blanket. I could hear the water dripping from the trees and broken gutters; ticking like a clock. The light from the street lamps exposed the pools of collected rain with a shimmer. The familiar fragrance of new life lingered there, somewhere between what has been and what will be... a reminder of the ebb and flow that is the true nature of life.

Only after death has taken its share, can life start new: From the cleansing fires of change is borne existence. Death followed by resurrection; it is the only way. From the beginning of time, Life has worked in this fashion; the gentle swing of a great pendulum.

When we resist this force, we try to stop life itself. Try as we may, we will eventually yield to its might. Once we embrace it, however, we can come to understand and appreciate its beauty. Through it, all that was wrong will be made right. Evil will crumble, and Righteousness will flourish. We cannot stop its growth, nor can we hasten it. Life knows correct moment in which to blossom.

Through us, as well, this life courses. We must be attentive to find the moment in which to thrive. We cannot hasten it, nor can we slow it. It will happen when it’s time.
**Libra** – (September 24 - October 23): Happy birthday Libra! This is a good month for you; you are seeing a whole new side of yourself. Nothing can stop you or get in your way as long as your attitude stays positive!

**Scorpio** – (October 24 - November 22): Try to do things differently today. Your good energy is perfect. Discover something new to do and maybe share it with others; after all, that's why your pals count on you.

**Sagittarius** – (November 23 - December 22): Lately you feel as though you've encountered nothing but problems, however, the day is slow and boring for you, it is very important to focus as much as possible on your school work before you fall behind.

**Capricorn** – (December 23 - January 20): This month expand your horizons. Do things you never thought you would do; join a club, make new friends, or help a stranger. Eventually, you'll start to see things in a whole new perspective.

**Aquarius** – (January 21 - February 19): Today you find yourself daydreaming. Even though the day is slow and boring for you, it is very important to focus as much as possible on your school work before you fall behind.

**Pisces** – (February 20 - March 20): Your determination motivates you to finish what you started, whether it involves a relationship or school work.

**Aries** – (March 21 - April 20): Have you ever heard this phrase “Don’t put off today what you can do tomorrow”? Make today a productive day and finish some work that you may have been putting aside. You’ll discover that life is much easier when you don’t wait until the last minute.

**Taurus** – (April 21 - May 21): Put some thought and work into what you want in your future whether it has to do with your career, personal goals, or relationships. Things should pick up for you this week so expect a lot of exciting communication, however, beware of gossip because someone may use what you say and turn it into their own words.

**Gemini** – (May 22 - June 21): Take a step back from challenging relationships in your life. If you’re having problems with a boyfriend or girlfriend then it is best to confront them and try to resolve whatever the issue may be.

**Cancer** – (June 22 - July 22): This month, square if you feel like it! You owe it to yourself; all your hard work and time you put into things has finally paid off. Give yourself a break and try to relax.

**Leo** – (July 23 -August 21): Dear Leo, change is in the air! If you can’t feel it, it’s probably because you haven’t let yourself. This month you will attain your goals. You just need to wait a bit longer and try a little harder. It doesn’t matter how long it took to get there, only that you arrived!

**Virgo** – (August 22 - September 23): Today is likely to be yet another busy day for you, dear Virgo. You will be busy with school work in the morning and then may get roped into doing errands for someone else in the afternoon. It will be a very hectic day, but being out and about will be energizing for you.

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**Nicole Navocznyski**

The car radio blasts to stay awake. It’s only morning talk though, conversation about the weather, the recent news, and of course, clever banter with contests and what people have to do to call in and win something. Radio hosts say the weirdest things that make sense to anyone who is half-awake and barely cop esoteric. The cars buzz in traffic as bees, their engines filled up with gasoline like honey; the variety of vehicles bob-and-weave as though there are cars dancing in the haze of the sunlight’s gleam.

I look over to the right and watch the Ocean Xterra next to me, a man in his late 40s with an actual coffee mug in hand instead of the usual cups you can get at your local convenient. It reads: “Leave me alone! I haven’t had my coffee yet!” I laugh within myself at the irony as he turns to look at me and spills some of the boiling hot caffeine into his lap. He mouches a curse, looks again at me and we both laugh. I think there’s something about human interaction that makes us all feel not so alone, especially in the morning!

I turn to the left and there is an old lady, her head barely above the tip of the steering wheel. She fashions boney-fingers with veins I could see that made me fess is up. She continues her attempt to stay alert and looks straight ahead at the merging traffic like ants that file and march, one-by-one out of their ant hills.

I continue on my journey by highway sign to highway sign, merger to merger, car to car, in and around the slow ones, slick-backed and behind the speed demons. I just want to get to class, well no, I know I have to get to class on time otherwise the professors will ring my neck like a chicken.

Seatbelt on and going over the speed limit a little bit (don’t tell mom). “I’ll get there on time. I’ll get there on time. I think to myself, barely awake as I drive like a zombie that drinks monster and coffee sometimes at the same time.

But then something strange happens, something never expected…

My car transforms into a bed, the steering wheel, my pillow, the alarm clock screams: “7:00am, TIME TO WAKE UP FOR COLLEGE!!!” Wow, it was all just a weird dream, well, hopefully I’ll make it to class on time in this commuter misery.

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**Zombieland**

The first rule of Zombieland is cardio; this is the first and most important of the rules to surviving Zombieland. Unfortunately for me, this is the one rule where I am lacking, though I’m pretty sure that I can handle the other such rules, such as double tap and enjoying the little things. Zombieland is a very funny and interesting twist to the zombie genre. The last non serious zombie movie I saw was Shaun of the dead, but this, I think, might have put Shaun in a bit of a shadow now.

The movie starts off with our hero, and the narrator of the story, Columbus Ohio surviving the harsh new zombieland and demonstrating the first few, and most important rules. Shortly after that he runs in to Tallahassee, a rough, kickass, yet funny man. They are both heading the same way so they team up. I really want to go into more detail and story but I don’t want to give anything away and spoil it.

Zombieland is a really interesting movie and fun to watch; it defiantly shows the lighter side of the zombie apocalypse. They go through many different funny situations and conversations with each other. There is even a special guest that even I didn’t expect. I give Zombieland 4 shotgun shells out of 5.

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**The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao**

Amanda Nolan

Juntin Diaz’s The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao is a truly unique work of modern fiction. The novel centers on the life and woes of the main character, Oscar, who is a genre-loving nerd and drastically overweight. Oscar dreams of being the Dominican Republic’s own J. R. R. Tolkien and finding true love. Unfortunately for Oscar, his family has had a strange Dominican “fuku”, or curse, placed on them. This curse never gives our hero a break in life or in love.

The Boston Globe calls it a “multigenerational story of familial tragedy”, which neatly sums up the entirety of the story. The story spans over a half a century of time between 1944 and 1995, and two geographical locations in the Dominican Republic and New Jersey. Diaz uses multiple narrating styles (rotating between 1st and 3rd person), and creates a novel that breaks all previously established categories. On top of having a fascinating fictitious main story, the novel also includes historical footnotes that explain Dominican Republic references in the work.

The narration bounces between the past and present in an interesting way that never leaves the reader bored. Delving into the family’s terrible past, the narration reveals small clues surrounding the circumstances that led to the family’s current curse. Despite our hero’s unfortunate luck and the novel’s seemingly omniscient title, the reader can’t help but to root for Oscar, we so desperately pine for him to find a reciprocated love. Will our hero become a ‘true Dominican male” before his untimely death, or will he die never having experienced love? Only time, and reading this novel, will tell.

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**The Commuter Misery**

The Penn State Wilkes-Barre Collegian
A Year of Goodbyes

Jennifer Shubilla

It seems this year has had us saying goodbye to a staggering number of intriguing, iconic, industrious, and just plain interesting public figures. More than any year in recent memory, 2009 provides quite the eclectic list of celebrities who have passed away. Inspired by the achievements and diversity of those we’ve lost, I invite you to join me on a walk down memory lane to take a look at a few of the compelling personalities that death has claimed this year.

There’s the spunky award winning actress Bea Arthur who paved a way for herself in the entertainment industry with her kick-butt attitude and had a long and prosperous career. She delivered lines with a certain wit and comedic timing that resonates with feisty females to this day.

We have Patrick Swayze who danced into our hearts in 1987 with his breakthrough role in Dirty Dancing. His comprehensive thirty year career endeared him to many devoted fans, but it was his brave battle with cancer that inspired people the most. His positivity and work ethic remained intact all throughout his struggle, and he was determined not to lose his special qualities that made him a star in the first place. On a recent cover of Entertainment Weekly, Patrick is honored and deemed “Dancer. Heartthrob. Tough Guy. Loving Husband. Icon. Fighter.”

Also on the list is the legendary news anchor Walter Cronkite. Walter’s voice belied on when Massachusetts Senator Edward Moore Kennedy, better known as Ted, died this summer. Ted Kennedy held his Senate seat for over four decades and is arguably the most accomplished senator our country has ever seen. He played a role in ensuring a variety of civil rights, lowering the voting age to 18, making health care more easily accessible, increasing the minimum wage, providing funding to the Meals on Wheels program, and increasing support for women’s athletics, among many other feats.

Another man whose name and face are recognizable to a wide range of American citizens is Ed McMahon. The personalizable television show host became known for his Tonight Show catch phrase “Heeeeere’s Johnny!” while he played sidekick to Johnny Carson. McMahon carved out a niche in American entertainment television by hosting “Star Search” and “TV Bloopers.” Passing away in 2009, McMahon will be remembered by his comical and outlandish personality that became a regular staple on television sets throughout the country.

Of the other public figures who died in 2009, we have 70s sex symbol Farrah Fawcett, 80s film director John Hughes, infomercial mogul Billy Mays! (So loud and endearingly obnoxious that his name feels incomplete without that exclamation point), club DJ Adam Goldstein, and just recently, folk singer Mary Travers, the Mary in singing group Peter, Paul and Mary We have an actor known mainly for his voice in Dom DeLuise and a woman known mainly for her family with Eunice Kennedy Shriver.

Then, there is the big daddy death of them all for 2009: the King of Pop, Michael Jackson. Late this June news of the legend’s passing shocked everyone worldwide. Chaos and questions ran wild. What happened? Why? How could it be? Will the world ever see a talent as great? Is there someone responsible for his death? What will happen to his children? Wasn’t he about to release an album? Tributes upon tributes aired on televisions and radios across the world. It seemed nearly impossible to go even an hour without hearing something about Michael Jackson. Documentaries, interviews, and concert footage emerged and played on nearly every station. His album sales increased dramatically, going on to eclipse both Elvis Presley and John Lennon in posthumous sales. It took only two and a half weeks after his death for Jackson’s album sales to reach an astonishing nine million.

Holding the title the King of Pop, arguably Jackson is the King of Controversy as well. Debates about Jackson’s talent and personal life arose everywhere following his death. It is a rare event that a person can inspire so much thought and passion beyond his living years, but there is no doubt that Michael Jackson, and to a lesser extent everyone else mentioned above, will continue to spark lively discussion and many memories. So we say goodbye to their life on earth, but their legacy will undoubtedly live on.

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