

THE

# NITTANY PRIDE

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**Believe Beyond Boundaries: THON Weekend 2016**

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**The UFC Returns to Pittsburgh... But Will They Be Back Soon?**

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# MEET THE STAFF

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**The Nittany Pride is a Student Newspaper of the Penn State New Kensington Campus**

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# CAMPUS LIFE

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## My Vote Matters Hosts Diplomatic Dinner

By Danielle Richardson

*Staff Writer & Reporter*

NEW KENSINGTON, Pa. — Students, staff, and local politicians gathered for a Diplomatic Dinner on Feb. 25 at Penn State New Kensington (PSNK) where they engaged in conversation regarding voting.

The event was organized by the student run organization, My Vote Matters and sponsored by the Student Activities Fee. The organization is a non-partisan group dedicated to educating students about the importance of voting and encouraging them to register to vote.

The evening began with a series of introductions, the first being a welcome speech by Millie Brassier a key asset to the group. “I just want to thank my team,” Brassier said. “I am so thankful for each and every one of you and I’m so proud of what we have done.”

Brassier proceeded to present a video on behalf of the organization. The video was a montage of staff and students holding up signs around campus as to why it is important to vote or why their vote matters.

The evening continued with Chancellor Snider’s introductions of the politicians. Among those in attendance were, State Representative Joseph Petrarca, State Representative Eli Evankovich, Erin McClelland, Lower Burrell Mayor Richard Callendar, and a staffer from the office of Keith Rothfus.

“These are people who have devoted a large portion of their lives to community service,” Snider said. Before McClelland had to leave to attend a campaign fundraiser, she made a statement about the importance of women in politics. “It’s so important for women to be involved,” McClelland said. “This is a great thing that you guys are doing.”



Chancellor Snider stands with Millie Brassier, a member of My Vote Matters, to introduce a number of guest speakers at the Diplomatic Dinner held at PSNK on Feb. 25 (Photo by Danielle Richardson).

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Another common theme of the night was the discussion surrounding the youth vote. In her introduction, Dr. Adolph, director of Academic Affairs, emphasized the importance of young people registering to vote. "I am amazed and inspired by what this group is doing," Dr. Adolph said. "The louder you are, the more you become a group to listen to."

Professor Abhinav Aima, a journalism professor at PSNK also spoke about the importance of voting. "Your direct connection to politics is at every level," Aima said. He stressed the importance of staying engaged in the political process, whether it is running for Student Government or being involved in city council meetings. "It's satisfying to see students engaged in politics on this campus."

Finally, Dr. Hammond, a history professor on campus, read a statement prepared by Keith Rothfus who was unable to attend.

After the dinner, the My Vote Matters introduced themselves and gave short speeches.

The members include: Millie Brassler, Broderick Gerano, Aaron Holness, Derrek Koblinsky, Jon McCabe, Sarah Steighner, Kyle Waraks, and Cecily Petrarca, Also in attendance was Campus Election Engagement Project's Regional Organizer, Courtney Cochran.

The final event of the evening was a Question and Answer session with the panel of visiting politicians. Dr. Hammond moderated the session and asked a series of pre-written questions to the politicians, who were each given an opportunity to respond.

The first question asked about their thoughts and experiences about voting. "When you get to vote you are becoming a part of the process," Representative Petrarca said. "There is a sense of empowerment in investing in your future."

The second question asked how the politicians could convince someone who wouldn't vote for them to vote. Callendar started his response by saying that everyone is entitled to their own opinion. "If I am elected and you oppose that, that is what democracy is about. The process starts with you," he stated.



The Diplomatic Dinner held on Feb. 25 drew in a large crowd of students to hear political representatives speak about the importance of voting (Photo by Danielle Richardson).

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Evankovich said that his favorite voters are those that disagree with him. “I learn a lot from people who disagree with me,” he said. He emphasized the opportunities of working with those that disagree with him. “We have opportunities to make alliances in places that we never thought we did,” he explained. “Communication is key.”

The final question of the night asked the politicians for a piece of advice. What would they tell young men and women who consider pursuing elected office? Petrarca responded by saying that individuals should start in their communities by joining school boards or town councils. “I am amazed that people have no idea what we do, which is a public service,” he explained. “If you do the job right, it’s really rewarding.”

Evankovich responded similarly. “Do it for the right reasons. You owe it to yourself and your fellow Pennsylvanians,” he explained. He also warned that anyone who is interested in the career path should be prepared to be uncomfortable, as they would surely face opposition. Callendar echoed Petrarca and Evankovich’s sentiments when he said that individuals should get involved for the right reasons. “Anybody can get elected to office,” he said. “We did it to better our families and their futures.”

“The event was a success and we had a great time,” Brassler said of the Diplomatic Dinner. “Our goal in My Vote Matters is to continue to make a difference for youth and the community. We hope to continue to register students before the election, so they can be active and make their voice heard.”



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## Believe Beyond Boundaries: THON Weekend 2016

By Paige Owens

*Co-Editor-in-Chief*

STATE PARK, Pa. -- No matter where you stood on the Bryce Jordan Center (BJC) floor or in the stands, Greek letters flashed crazy lights, colorful tee shirts flooded every corner of the room, and signs supported dancers and THON Weekend 2016. THON Weekend began Feb. 19 at 6 p.m. and welcomed 708 student and alumni dancers to the main BJC floor for the 46 hour dance marathon that ended on Feb. 21 at 4 p.m.



Penn State New Kensington THON dancers Ben Lesko and Wati Kumwenda enjoy their time on the floor with Dancer Relations Committee Member Dan Kaczowka (Photo by Sarah Steighner).

Every year since the founding of THON in 1973, students participating in various THON chapters, fraternities, sororities, and other Penn State organizations work year round to raise donations for the Four Diamonds Fund. Organizations and chapters hold campus events throughout the year as well as participate in multiple canning weekends in order to prepare for THON. THON is a nationally recognized organization and annual event that raises donations for children with pediatric cancer research for the Four Diamonds Fund at Penn State Hershey Children's Hospital. THON has raised over \$130 million since its creation and is the largest student-run philanthropy in the world.

After THON Weekend 2014's record breaking total of \$13.34 million, THON 2016 had a lot to live up to. However, this year the THON organization faced tragedy outside of pediatric cancer. A car accident claimed the life of a young Penn State student after driving back from participating in a THON canning weekend in Sept. 2015. Due to this tragic event, multiple canning weekends were cancelled throughout all Penn State campus' and THON chapters.

Despite THON's tragic beginning, it was announced Sunday at approximately 4:15 p.m. that THON Weekend 2016 was able to raise \$9,770,332.32 for the Four Diamonds Fund, with \$17,099.92 coming directly from Penn State New Kensington's (PSNK) THON chapter. Regardless of the drop, THON dancers and supporters recognized that every penny counts and it was still cause for celebration.

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This year, PSNK was represented by dancers Wati Kumwenda, a senior Biomedical Engineering Technology major, and Ben Lesko, a senior Information Sciences and Technology major. Kumwenda and Lesko were chosen after an interview process with a THON interview panel that included various members of PSNK. Lesko has worked with THON in the past as a committee member and has attended past THON Weekends to support dancers and students of Penn State. However, Kumwenda experienced THON for this first time this year as a dancer since she has never been involved with the organization before nor has she ever previously attended THON.

Despite only a few weeks between the dancer selection and THON Weekend 2016, Kumwenda and Lesko prepared endlessly for the 46 hour marathon. THON dancers must train in order to prepare their bodies for 46 hours of standing and dancing, while also maintaining enough energy to stay awake and enthusiastic.

“I've been getting advice from Nurse Elaine about how to take care of myself and from Kelsie Nury, a former PSNK dancer,” Kumwenda explained. “I'm working out a lot more frequently -- mostly cardio to build up my stamina as Nurse Elaine suggested. I need to be able to stand for 46 hours because we won't necessarily be dancing and thriving the whole time - it's a marathon not a sprint.”

Lesko also worked towards being able to maintain high stamina while at THON. He plays baseball for the PSNK campus and although they are in their offseason, he continued his daily workouts, lifting, and has increased his cardio workouts in preparation.

THON Weekend consists of various activities and games for dancers to participate in, along with getting a chance to sing, dance, and interact with the number of THON kids who come each year to celebrate and have fun. This year, THON had several bands and artists perform on the BJC stage, as well as holding a children's fashion show, a Greek life hour, and the annual pep rally that brings the BJC to full capacity.

“The best part of the weekend is the music and the performances because they're all so lively and they pump you up,” Kumwenda explained. “It's a mixture of students who are performers here or other professionals and their companies. It's such a variety and it's exciting.”

Each year, the student and alumni dancers are not alone in their journey leading up to and through THON. Each dancer is assigned a Dancer Relations Committee Member (DRCM) who is there through a majority of the THON experience to motivate and encourage the dancers through their exhaustion and struggles. This year, Kumwenda was blessed with having a three year experienced DRCM, Dan Kaczowka.



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“We get assigned to one dancer and we’re solely responsible for them, to make sure they’re stretching, making sure they’re active, and keeping them company essentially,” Kaczowka explained. “The hardest part of THON Weekend is doing everything in our power to not ever complain. We are on the floor for about six hours at a time and you’ll be exhausted, but you know they’re way more exhausted than you are. It’s all about trying to keep our spirits as alive as possible.”

Lesko and Kumwenda also relied on one another to keep their spirits high and to stay energized throughout the weekend. “The one thing that’s obviously motivating me is Wati,” Lesko explained. “I can’t leave Wati alone and I can’t let her or our campus down. We’re a team and we’re feeding off of each other’s energy.”

As THON Weekend came to an end, dancers on the floor and supportive students and families in the stands honored the children lost to pediatric cancer before THON 2016. A memorial video was shown and multiple families took to the main stage to speak of their loss and to honor the memories of their children. The family of the Penn State student lost in a car accident after a THON canning weekend was also honored as her family spoke proudly and lovingly of her.

Although many students and families that gathered together for THON Weekend have personally been affected by cancer or losing a loved one, some members and THON students have not been personally affected, but are here to support the cause.

“I feel like in life you take a lot of things for granted,” Lesko explained. “The little things that we have like going to the park or playing catch with your dad, that’s stuff that happens every day for us, but these kids don’t get that. Their lives are not as simple as ours and my pain for 46 hours just to let them have a little bit of fun and to forget about the cancer for just the smallest bit of time, I would always do that for them. That’s why I THON.”



Each year, THON gives kids the opportunity to have fun, run around, and enjoy live performances (Photo by Sarah Steighner).

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## Insight of the Psychology Department

By Sarah Steighner

*Co-Editor-in-Chief*

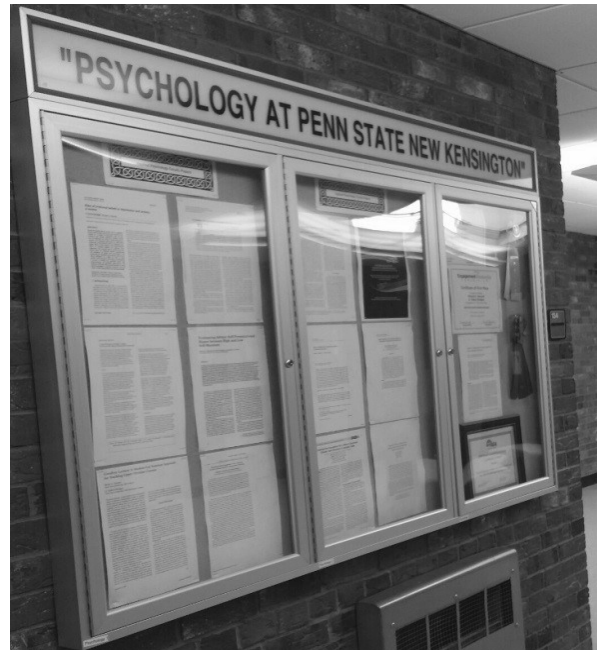
NEW KENSINGTON, Pa. – Along with the pride that being a branch campus of Penn State holds, Penn State New Kensington (PSNK) offers research opportunities provided by exemplary professors. Such research emphasis is held dear by the PSNK psychology department.

The PSNK Psychology department currently consists of approximately 40 students, and three professors, Dr. Kenneth Bridges, Dr. Richard Harnish and Dr. Jyotsna Kalavar.

One PSNK student currently pursuing a psychology degree is 26-year-old Megan Altmeyer who will be graduating this May.

Before attending PSNK, Altmeyer studied at Slippery Rock University. She mentioned the positive difference between transferring from a school with a large student enrollment to a smaller campus. “The amount of experience I have gained by building a one on one relationship with my professors has paid off, Altmeyer said.

While the PSNK psychology department does not require an outside internship to be completed before graduation, it is encouraged. Altmeyer currently has an internship with the Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) located in Greensburg which she started in January of this year. As an intern she helps CASA and their mission to serve as advocates for the abused and neglected children in the court system of Westmoreland County.



Penn State New Kensington’s psychology department prepares students for their future, while emphasizing academics and research (Photo by Sarah Steighner).

Psychology majors at PSNK are required to do research by means of taking PSYCH 301W, which is a course on Basic Research Methods in Psychology. Students must conduct their own research and then present it at the annual research exposition.

Altmeyer described her Basic Research Methods class as one of the most intense classes of her undergraduate career. Her personal research project focused on body satisfaction and advertisements. She formed focus groups who viewed photo shopped and non-photo shopped pictures of models, and then had them fill out body satisfaction questionnaires.

She attributed much of the help she received to Dr. Harnish, especially in terms of cultivating her interest regarding focus groups. Meanwhile, she credited the Basic Research Methods class for educating her on

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aspects pertaining to the field of research.

“I’m thankful for this class, because without it I probably would not have such a strong appreciation for research like I do today,” Altmeyer explained.

Students and professors alike both recognize the unique opportunities that PSNK offers including the academically superb roster of advisors that help guide student research. “Students have the chance to conduct research with tenured and nationally and internationally known faculty and present it at conferences and publish it in scientific journals,” Bridges said.

Bridges further described the dynamic within their psychology department as both friendly and demanding. “I think we do an exceptional job of preparing students,” Bridges stated. “We have a large number of former students who stay in touch. They all report that they felt better prepared than students who went to bigger schools without the personal touch.”

Bridges started working at PSNK after acquiring his B.A. in Psychology at Indiana University of Pennsylvania, an M.A. in Experimental Psychology from Temple University, and his Ph.D in Child Development from the University of Pittsburgh. He currently teaches Intro Psychology, Developmental Psychology, Positive Psychology Social and Personality Development, Psychology of Adjustment, and Independent Research.

Bridges said he is currently working on research pertaining to irrational thinking and cognitive development as it relates to everyday decision making.

Another experienced psychology professor on campus is Dr. Harnish who has been teaching at PSNK for approximately 13 years. Prior to beginning his teaching at PSNK, Harnish earned his bachelor’s degree at Penn State. He went on to obtain his master’s and doctoral degrees in social psychology from Michigan State where he also taught for a year. He teaches Intro to Psychology as a Science and Career, Social Psychology, Intro to Personality Psychology, Intro to Cognitive Psychology, Basic Research Methods, Principles of Measurement, and Applied Social Psychology.

“The department involves students in faculty research, often with students presenting findings at national and international conferences,” Harnish said. “Because of this, many of our students go onto to graduate programs.”

Dr. Kalavar is a professor of Human Development and Family Studies that completes the psychology department roster. A published researcher herself, she focuses on areas of transnational care, intergenerational relations, and the diverse experiences of aging.

She was awarded the John Romano Faculty/Staff Diversity Recognition Award from Penn State University in 2012, the Excellence in Teaching Award from Penn State New Kensington in 2013, and the Arlene E. Hall Service Award also from Penn State New Kensington in 2014. While the psychology department continues to thrive in their endeavors, students are already preparing their research projects to present in the upcoming weeks. The next upcoming Research and Creative Exposition will take place on April 12 in the PSNK Athletics Center.

# CAMPUS LIFE

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## Penn State Welcomes New Chef to Café 780

By Jay Wu

*Staff Writer & Reporter*

NEW KENSINGTON, Pa.- It was a sad day for Penn State New Kensington (PSNK) as Mike Tokarek, previous chef at PSNK, departed Café 780 in order to pursue another position. Now, the campus has welcomed a new chef named Javier Vazquez. Chef Javier's recent employment and willingness to work with the existing staff at PSNK provides potential opportunities of fresh changes, and a new atmosphere. Chef Javier is already tackling some obstacles as a recent water main break has quieted the usually lively café and temporarily shut it down since Feb. 15.

Previous to joining the staff at PSNK, Javier held numerous jobs in the culinary field. "I started at the Giant Eagle Market Districts in South Hills and then the big one in Robinson," Javier said. "(I) prepared foods and then doing the demo kitchen which does food networking style displays," Javier

said. He went on to state that he previously taught at a culinary school, went into the Pittsburgh Job Corps in order to teach culinary for under privileged youth, and also worked at Children's Hospital where he was the production manager. There he dealt with numerous aspects of food including involvement in the cafeteria where the patients go to eat.

Before starting work in the New Kensington area, he was previously from Puerto Rico when he was a child but eventually moved to the United States. "I lived in the South Hills area (Scott Township) and (have) lived here since I was 2," said Javier.

As education and work experience are normally a prerequisite in order to successfully seek future career paths in culinary positions, Javier is no exception. "I went to Le Cordon Bleu before they closed and got my Associate's Degree," Javier stated.

Having been previously from South Hills and employed in areas within Pittsburgh, New Kensington is quite a different area code for Javier. "I'm not very familiar with the New Kensington area," said Javier. "It's pretty far from my house and no one crosses any rivers in order to get here so this is crossing 3 rivers to get here."



Despite a water main break that left Café 780 out of commission, Chef Vazquez was welcomed to the campus with open arms (Photo by Jay Wu).

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He also went on to say that “a little bit of driving around has been nice, just seeing the rural aspect to it, and very more community aspect to it.”

A culinary job is no different than most other professions which require a high level of responsibility and willingness to work well with other employees. However, Javier already seems to be fitting into the PSNK campus atmosphere in a professional and friendly manner. “It’s been really good,” Javier said. “The staff is really good, very professional, and they get their jobs done. So, I’ve been very happy so far.” Additionally, he stated that he has appreciated the welcoming staff from Penn State Administrators and professors within the campus which has been a good start for him.

A new staff member on campus, usually raises questions of whether or not there will be many changes, whether small or big. Javier explained that he’s willing to test some new things, and consider the responses he receives. “(I’ll) probably start with the small ones (changes) and try to get some feedback from the students and faculty,” said Javier.

Since the water break that transpired on Feb. 15, it has closed Café 780 and some of the employees have had to move to work in the Junction. While the Junction is known for mainly serving coffee, specialty drinks, and light snacks they have provided some additional food options as a way to accommodate students still looking for a meal on campus.

Not only have the students faced a disadvantage with the café being closed, and less food served on campus, but this has also hindered the café staff as they have no place to cook. However, renovations are somewhat out of the hands of the café 780 staff and Chef Javier. “As far as I understand, we’re having an issue from UP (University Park) getting everything signed off on,” said Javier. “Once everything gets signed off, then the work can get completed but until that happens, we’re kind of in a standstill.”

While getting use to a new work environment and atmosphere can be rather challenging, Javier seems to be fitting in and enjoying things so far. Javier described the atmosphere as “very laid back and very friendly.” Lastly, he stated, “It has been great so far. I look forward to being here for a while and enjoying everything.”

Since previous PSNK chef Mike Tokarek has departed the Penn State New Kensington campus, the students, faculty, staff, and the employees will miss him dearly. He has always provided the campus with his very unique hospitality and generosity. However, with new chef, Javier, his respectful demeanor, initiative, willingness to work well with others, and previous knowledge in culinary will definitely help the campus fill in the gap that Café 780 has been looking for. Penn State New Kensington welcomes Javier, the newest chef in the café and newest addition to campus.

# CAMPUS SPORTS

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## Boys Baseball Becomes a Team

By Darren Myers

*Managing & Online Editor*

NEW KENSINGTON, Pa. - Starting next fall semester, baseball will be a new varsity sport at Penn State New Kensington.

The Baseball Club was started in 2015 by current seniors on campus, Dan Quast and Cody Shoemaker. What was originally a group of friends coming together to have fun and play a few games, will soon be a team which is funded and supported by the university.

It has been eight years since baseball has been offered as a sport at PSNK. Head coach Jim Perry will lead the team through the spring season where they will finish their final year as a club sport before making the leap to intercollegiate play. Once intercollegiate status is reached, the team will play in the Pennsylvania State University Athletic Conference, where they will play other Penn State campuses.

“It was definitely a struggle at first,” said Shoemaker. “The goal was to just play some games and have fun,” he said. Well, those fun and games have led PSNK to see the enthusiasm and the support behind baseball and because of the hard work of Quast, Shoemaker, and everyone else involved, baseball will be an intercollegiate sport this time next year.

Athletic Director Dave Murray, and Perry approached Chancellor Snider for the final approval. After seeing the consistent dedication from students and coaches, Snider approved the move. “He [Murray] was so supportive in the process,” said Perry.

Coach Perry brings with him 25 years of experience in the baseball world, as well as an understanding of the Alle-Kiski area. Perry was the head coach of the Valley High School boys baseball team prior to joining forces with PSNK.

Getting to this point wasn’t easy for members of the baseball club. Being a club sport, they were eligible for club-funding through the Student Government Association (SGA). However, a majority of club costs came out of the pockets of the players.

SGA funded the team with bats, helmets, and balls during their first season, but transportation to games and practices were done through their own personal finances. When baseball officially becomes a varsity sport, funding will be done by the university.

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According to Quast, the most difficult part of the baseball season is working with each player's school schedule. "Everyone has classes at different times, so getting practices in can be difficult," said Quast.

Prior to Perry receiving his necessary clearances to coach, Quast conducted the early practices. "[The practices] were mainly just [for] loosening up and getting kids used to throwing again," he said.

Perry has received his clearances and has been conducting practices since mid-March.

His goal for this year is to destroy what he called, the "club mentality." "It's much more than throwing balls and hitting," he said. "It's a full year thing."

As eager as he is to build a winning team, Perry knows what takes priority.

"It's so much more than baseball," he said. "Without this [the university], you don't have baseball."

To show his support for students and their schooling, Perry has offered early morning workouts. This way, the students can get their workouts in, but still have time for things like studying, and tutoring in their busy schedules.

Perry has wasted no time preparing for upcoming seasons. He has gone to local schools to recruit and to show kids that they have the option to not only get a quality education, but to also play a sport that they love competitively.

Perry's recruiting skills as well as the networking of Quast has given this team viable opportunities to win games this year, something that was so few and far between that Quast denied a comment when asked about his team's record from previous seasons.

Optimism surrounds this team and that's just how Perry wants it. Having both returning players and recruits will allow Perry to hold open tryouts, if the number of participants allows. Yet, there is one thing Perry promises: Any player who played a role in the development of the club will play a role in the team.

"Whether it's stats or playing, he'll have a job," Perry said.

A big opportunity in the eyes of Quast is being able to play home games. As a club sport, the team travelled to all of their games – providing their own transportation.

As an intercollegiate sport, the team will practice and play home games at Valley High School. The first game of the last season of the club sport will be played on March 25.

Following this season, Perry hopes to enroll the team into different summer and fall travel leagues.

# SPORTS

## The UFC Returns to Pittsburgh... But Will They Be Back Soon?

By Nico Regoli

*Staff Writer & Reporter*

PITTSBURGH, Pa. – It was an East Coast, Old West showdown, as the Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) returned to the Steel City for the first time in five years, with two real life cowboys battling in the main attraction. Following a failed Lightweight Championship opportunity in Dec., Donald “Cowboy” Cerrone returned to competition on Sunday, Feb. 21, moving up 15 pounds to make his Welterweight debut against Brazilian ex-bull rider, Alex “Cowboy” Oliveira. The action began quickly with Oliveira punishing Cerrone with strikes from the clinch, before the fight then found its way to the mat, where Cerrone securing the mount position and transitioned into a triangle choke to achieve victory within 2:33 of Round one. After the fight, in a display of mutual respect, Cerrone removed his prized feather from his own cowboy hat and placed it in Oliveira’s hat. It was a heart-warming moment to finish off an event that had been plagued with numerous incidents during its build up.

There were several instances leading up to the event in which fighters were removed from the card. Three of those vacancies occurring just a week shy of fight night due to injuries. Those injuries could have been a blessing in disguise, and possibly opened the door for the UFC to fill those vacancies with talent from the Pittsburgh area, and the state of Pennsylvania.

Sadly, the UFC chose differently. Rather than bringing in faces familiar to Pittsburgh’s Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) fan base, the UFC called up an Arizona-based Brazilian they signed in Jan., a Texas-born Ne-



The gutsy, 'Fight of the Night' war between Lauren Murphy and Kelly Faszholz inadvertently bloodies a nearby cameraman (Photo by Nico Regoli).

braskan who had fought once for the UFC back in 2013, and a Californian female up and comer.

The closest thing the event had to a hometown hero was Cody “No Love” Garbrandt. Although, his history fighting and training in Pittsburgh, was really more representing his native town Uhrichsville, Ohio, as evident by the widespread “922” area code chants heard throughout the CONSOL Energy Center during his fight.

Outside of the crowd’s frequent usage of professional wrestling legend Ric Flair’s trademark “WOO!”, a chant used regularly during Pittsburgh Pirates games, there was nothing truly Pittsburghese about this card. The event felt as if it was catered for an East Coast UFC audience more than it was the Pittsburgh MMA hardcore audience. This unfortunately left a significant number of seats unfilled.



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“I don’t know why the seats weren’t filled, I just know that they weren’t filled,” said 2004 Penn State alum, Kevin Doyle. “I’d like to see it [the UFC] come back more, because there’s a lot of big fight fans in Pittsburgh. There’s a good fight scene in Pittsburgh.”

Regulatory issues also plagued this card. First being brought to light on weigh-in day by retired UFC fighter turned broadcaster and Scranton native, Brian Stann. Stann took to Twitter to put the Pennsylvania State Athletic Commission and Commissioner Greg Sirb on blast after Sirb interfered with the fighters’ preparations, making them take their physicals in the middle of their weight cuts, and forcing them to wait for tardy doctors to arrive. After the weigh-ins, the four female fighters on the card were subjected to specific last-minute tests, delaying their post weigh-in dinner plans.

Andrew Adkins scored all three rounds for Evans-Smith, while Phil Rogers gave Evans-Smith Round 1, and Reneau Rounds 2 and 3. John Lapcevic scored each round for the rightful fighter, but added up the scores incorrectly, giving Evans-Smith the win by 29-27 when he actually meant to score it 29-28. The results were met with a plethora of boos.

“I’m not a judge, I’m a fighter, and I went in there and I fought my best. So, I only see it from my point of view,” said Evans-Smith.

A big problem of the night however was referee incompetence. During their individual bouts, a bloodied Kelly Faszholz and Roan Carneiro took a large, and arguably unnecessary number of unanswered strikes from the bottom position, before the

refs finally declared the fights over. In the main event, long-time referee Mario Yamasaki was so slow in noticing that Alex Oliveira was tapping out, that Donald Cerrone had to physically point it out to Yamasaki.

That’s not to say that the event had no happy moments. Derek Brunson, Cody Garbrandt, Chris Camozzi, and Sean Strickland, all won by vicious technical knock-outs (TKO’s), with Brunson dedicating his victory to Pittsburgh Steeler, Antonio Brown. Oluwale “Holy War Angel” Bamgbose drove a fast, left roundhouse kick into Daniel Sarafian’s head for a knockout win. Meanwhile, Lauren Murphy and Kelly Faszholz’s bloodied each other up in an inspiring battle of wills that won “Fight of the Night” honors, with Murphy leaving as the victor.

Sadly, those may be all the happy moments that Pittsburgh gets from the UFC for a while. “It probably will be another five years [before the UFC comes back to Pittsburgh],” said hardcore MMA fan Ed Hetrick, who’s a friend of local UFC Middleweight, Chris Dempsey. “Hopefully not, but I’ll be here, come sooner.”

As long as Pennsylvania’s commission is making fighters’ lives more difficult than necessary, appointing referees and judges that aren’t paying attention, and as long as Pittsburgh’s MMA fans fail to sell out the CONSOL, the UFC has little motivation to come back to Pittsburgh. And it’s very unlikely that they will anytime soon.

# COMMUNITY

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## Local Youth Group Participates in Annual “30 Hour Famine”

By Monica Fiore

*Staff Writer & Reporter*

LOWER BURRELL, Pa. - Imagine not being able to eat whenever you wanted to. Imagine living day after day struggling to find food and water. That’s what it’s like to be a starving child in certain areas of countries like Kenya, Africa, and Nigeria. Now imagine voluntarily not eating for 30 hours. Well that’s what it’s like to participate in an event called “30 Hour Famine” run through the Christian organization, World Vision.

For nine years, the Youth Fellowship of Grace Community Presbyterian Church of Lower Burrell, has been participating in this life changing event. After being notified online from World Vision, Terri Wilson, the director of the Youth Fellowship, brought the idea of the famine fundraiser to the Presbyterian Church. “Since we help people locally, I wanted the youth to get involved in something that was going to help people struggling internationally,” said Wilson. Wilson stated that while she and the youth fast, they stay active with games to keep their mind off of their hunger.

Ben Edwards, a member of the Youth Fellowship and junior at Burrell High School, provided insight regarding why these kids want to participate in a 30 hour fast. “After watching videos of kids walk miles to get medical help and go through poverty, it really inspired me,” said Edwards. “I wanted to experience what hunger felt like. It’s not the greatest feeling in the world, but the greatest feeling is knowing you’re doing it for the kids.” This will be Edwards’ sixth year participating in “30 Hour Famine.”

Participating members of the “30 Hour Famine” may either pay a flat donation fee or pay a fee by the hour. Participants ask for outside donations right up to the event as a form of fundraising.

The Christian organization World Vision raises money that goes to kids that don’t have food and clean water. Many children die from starvation and malnutrition. A 2013 statistic found on the “30 Hour Famine” website reported that “more than 17,000 children younger than five died every day,” mostly from starvation and malnutrition. That is one death every ten seconds. Another way the money that is raised is used is to provide the kids with clean water, and obtaining clean water sources. Many kids die every year from filthy and undrinkable water, something that most people take for granted.



30 Hour Famine Logo (Courtesy of World Vision) .

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World Vision's idea of raising money by doing "30 Hour Famine" is not just for supplying starving children with food and clean water, but to additionally help with farming techniques as well. They teach families how to ration the food they are provided with over time and they also teach practices of better hygiene. Even though it's for a special cause, you still might be thinking it's crazy to fast for 30 hours. Why would you fast when you can just donate money? Well, the whole point of it is to be a learning experience.

Some people don't fast for the famine, but still play a big part in organizing it. Bill Ludwig, who helps at Youth Fellowship on Sundays, is of big help the weekend of the famine. He cooks for the "break-fast" the next morning, prepares entertainment to help pass the time, and helps with the cleanup. Ludwig is not only a helper, but a proud parent of two of the youth who participated in the famine. "They've been doing it for a while and it's nice that they come do it." Ludwig has a son, Luke, who is in high school, and a daughter, Katie, who plans to come home from college to participate. "It's nice that she might come home because she doesn't have to."

The Youth Fellowship planned to participate in "30 Hour Famine" on the weekend of Feb. 27 and 28. However, due to unexpected circumstances, the famine event was postponed. They have rescheduled for the weekend of April 9 and 10. They plan to pass the time with games, cross building, and sleeping over at the church. After the 30 hours is up, the youth will gather together in the church and nourish their hunger with a big feast, or as they call it, a "break-fast", to celebrate their hard work. "I'm just very blessed to be with a group of people who share the same values," said Edwards.

Though there is no specific fundraising goal, the youth set their own personal goals. In the pamphlet given to the youth students, a page shows that \$35 feeds and cares for a child for one month. Meanwhile, \$425 feeds and cares for a child for over a year and \$840 feeds and cares for two children for over a year. Wilson revealed in a Sunday night Youth Fellowship meeting on Feb. 21 that over the course of the nine years that the youth group has engaged in the famine experience, they have raised over \$31,000. The final amount raised by the youth group for this year's famine will be announced to the youth group within a few weeks.

