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## The Cauldron, 2015, Issue 14

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# THE CAULDRON

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## WINTER BREAK THE CHECKLIST



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Basketball takes on The Q

P14

OP: Planned Parenthood shooting



# What's brewing this week



## Senior design projects

Groups of senior Engineering students presented proposals for their capstone design projects Friday, Dec. 4. P3



## Browns commentary

The NFL regular season has four weeks left, but with an abysmal record and a shattered roster, the Browns are basically finished. P8



## Holiday performances

Holiday-themed performances this year at PlayHouse include "A Christmas Story" and "The Santaland Diaries." P10

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### Dec. 8 to Dec. 14

### >> Weekly Calendar

#### Tues >> Dec. 8

Stress Busters at the Library, RT 100, All Day  
Feast of the Immaculate Conception, FT 102, 3 p.m.  
Poetry Reading, MC 122, 6 p.m.

#### Wed >> Dec. 9

Stress Busters at the Library, RT 100, All Day  
Alumni Holiday Open House, 3 p.m. MM 101

#### Thurs >> Dec. 10

Stress Busters at the Library, RT 100, All Day  
Retirement Readiness, PH 104, 12 p.m.  
Law Holiday Reception, LB, 3 p.m.

#### Fri >> Dec. 11

Stress Busters at the Library, RT 100, All Day  
CISP Coat Drive, MC 411, All Day

#### Sat >> Dec. 12

Wrestling CSU Open, Woodling Gym, 9 a.m.  
Men's Basketball vs. Ohio, Wolstein Center, 1 p.m.

#### Sun >> Dec. 13

Fall Commencement, Wolstein Center, 1 p.m.

#### Mon >> Dec. 14

Levin Lasagna Lunch, UR Atrium, 12 p.m.

Want your event featured on our calendar? Send the event name, date, time and location to [cauldroneditors@gmail.com](mailto:cauldroneditors@gmail.com). Submission deadline is every Saturday prior to the event by 5 p.m.

# Engineers present senior design proposals



Photo by Elissa Tennant

Senior Electrical Engineering majors Kevin Candow, David Pendleton, Taylor Barto and Evan Dispenza present their project on Dec. 4 in the Foxes' Den.

By Elissa Tennant

Engineering senior design is a longstanding tradition at Cleveland State University. On paper, it's simply two academic courses required for graduation as an Engineering student. But to the students who are completing their senior design projects, it's much more.

Every year, senior undergraduate Engineering students are divided into groups to complete a project meant to give them real-life experience in their field. According to the College of Engineering website, senior design is "the culmination of students' engineering education."

**"It's a capstone course that all of our senior students have to do before they graduate."**

Paul Pawlaczyk, director of external affairs and communications for the College of Engineering, manages the

senior design program and oversees operations.

"It's a capstone course that all of our senior students have to do before they graduate," he said. "And essentially we go out to [organizations] and we ask them to provide a real-world problem that needs to be solved."

The projects can be sponsored and suggested by companies or completely spearheaded by students, but sponsorships are preferred. Pawlaczyk spends much of his time securing project sponsors, a feat he said is not as difficult as it may seem.

"We market it as a win-win," he said. "It's a win for the students — they get this real-world opportunity, they get exposed to a company, they may get hired by that company — and then on the company's side they get access to this talent that's at a premium and they hear new ideas from students about things they may never have thought of."

The senior Engineering students presented their fall proposals Friday, Dec. 4.

Because the course is divided into two semesters, these proposal presentations are meant to act as a culmination of the fall semester and the final presentations held in May are a culmination of the spring semester.

Some students presented in the

Fenn Tower Ballroom while others displayed their projects in the Foxes' Den on the first floor of the Washkewicz College of Engineering. Students were allotted ten minutes to present and five minutes to answer questions from the crowd of engineering faculty and advisors who observed each presentation.

The four-person team of senior Electrical Engineering majors Taylor Barto, Kevin Candow, Evan Dispenza and David Pendleton presented second-to-last in the Foxes' Den.

Their project involves monitoring and tracking people through cameras — a project they have dubbed Helios — which can recognize and identify certain people and determine their movements.

They are not being sponsored by an outside company and have spearheaded their own project.

**"Senior design really personifies engaged learning."**

Pendleton explained the reasoning behind their project choice.

"We want to make something that can be used by a multitude of different industries and customers so it's not just tailored to one specific industry," he said. "Let's say there's a marketing firm that wants to figure out where their customers go besides their store within a mall. Our device is able to track [and] monitor the flow of those people."

Besides marketing and data mining applications, Barto said the project has practical application for many industries, including live entertainment.

"You can pull up your cell phone if you're in a baseball stadium and you want to get nachos but you don't want to wait in line," he said. "[Helios]

is going to have eyes and see how many people are in line and how long they've been waiting and can tell people, "The average wait for pizza is five minutes.""

After their presentation, faculty and advisors in the crowd made comment and asked questions meant to improve and expand upon the project, suggesting the team create a network of cameras or hook the devices up to the Internet so they become part of a central system.

Now that the project proposal is presented and approved, the Helios team will begin work on the project timeline they developed, which will culminate in a senior design final presentation in May.

Each year after the final presentations, a panel of alumni and local engineer judges determines the top three projects, which receive a cash prize and are honored at a Senior Design Symposium and Awards Dinner.

But aside from monetary incentives, the Helios team agreed the best thing to come out of senior design is the practical experience in engineering, teamwork and project management.

Pendleton said he has already spoken with professionals in the engineering industry who encouraged him to continue learning all he can about his senior design topic to advance his career and expand his opportunities.

"They told me that if I can learn more about image processing to keep doing it because it's a form of technology that keeps popping up in all these different industries that you would never think would use a camera to monitor everything," he said.

Pawlaczyk agreed, stressing the importance of senior design as a way to gain practical experience in the real world.

"Senior design really personifies engaged learning," he said. "Our students are going out into the community and they're solving real-world problems that companies are dealing with and they may not have the time or the resources to solve them, but they see this as an opportunity to engage with our students."

# MSA holds fundraiser for Syrian refugees

By Dan McCarthy

A sold-out fundraiser, sponsored by Cleveland State University's Muslim Student Association (MSA) raised more than \$90,000 for Syrian refugees Saturday, Dec. 5. The dinner and fundraiser took place in the third floor Student Center Ballroom and benefitted Helping Hand for Relief & Development charity.

Over 150 attendees donated \$25 ahead to attend the dinner. Attendees were also asked to donate \$15 at the door.

Sarah Mohammad, a junior Biology major and vice president of MSA was happy with how the event turned out and the special guest that they were able to have attend.

"We had the pleasure of hosting Sheikh Musa," she said. "He is an educated Muslim within the community and always enlightens us with information regarding Islam."

Based in Detroit, Helping Hand provides educational services to children affected by the Syrian civil war.

Dozens of MSA volunteers took

shifts setting up, signing in and seating over 150 attendees. Dinner tables set for 10 people were full. Members of MSA collected pledges in baskets, canvassing the crowd for donations.

Individuals made pledges starting at \$900 a month to support the education of 15 refugee children at \$2 per day. Incrementally, others also made pledges at smaller amounts.

According to Helping Hand, hundreds of thousands of children are lacking education due to the intense size of the crisis in Syria.

Today, over one million Syrians live in refugee camps in its neighbor Jordan alone. In Jordan, camps like the Zataari refugee camp are more than full with over 79,000 refugees, according to the U.N.

Families, often split up, have languished in the camp since 2012. Lacking transportation to schools and public schools being overtaxed by the situation give priority to locals' children, according to Helping Hand.

The crowd, mostly Muslim, offered blessings for the generous donations

each time a gift was made, saying "Amen/Amin" together after each donation.

Beginning in the spring of 2011, revolutions and insurrections swept North Africa and the Middle East. Revolution in Tunisia sparked popular protests that sprang up across the Arabic-speaking world. Newspapers began calling the period "the Arab Spring."

Insurrections in Libya overthrew the regime of Moamar Ghaddafi. Bombing raids executed by NATO pummeled the country. Ghaddafi was ultimately stabbed to death after rebels captured the dictator hiding in a sewer pipe.

Protests in Syria confronted the regime of Bashaar Al-Assad. As the conflict escalated, armed resistance and government forces clashed. The Assad regime lost control of large swathes of territory.

In the ensuing four and a half years, the hostile civil war grew bloodier and more chaotic. The conflict descended into a war involving multisided,

multinational foreign intervention.

American airstrikes, Russian airstrikes and French airstrikes currently bomb Syrian cities.

Beginning in the spring of 2013, Syrian territory was seized through brute force by ISIS. Under the delusion that their group was creating a caliphate for all Muslim people, the group, known as Daesh in the Middle East (Islamic State or ISIS in English parlance), seized cities in a brutal power play, forcing millions to flee.

Though prohibited in Islam, Daesh indiscriminately executes innocent Muslims and minority Christians and Jews — not customary treatment for People of the Book according to the Qu'ran. Muslims accused of apostasy and religious minorities including Yazidis face intense persecution and death from Daesh.

According to Helping Hand, more than four million refugees have fled since the war's start.

# Students voice concerns to President Berkman

By Abby Burton

Cleveland State University's President Ronald Berkman held a meeting with students Friday, Nov. 4 in Parker Hannifin Hall.

Members of student organizations — including the Democratic Student Association, the Student Socialist Society and the Student Feminist Coalition — and a handful of students of miscellaneous status, including Anthropology students, transfer students, first-year students and seniors attended the meeting.

Berkman used this time to let students voice their concerns and questions about the university.

Briana Emerson, one of the students who organized the meeting, voiced her concerns about students having regular communication with the president.

She then introduced Jack Slater, a senior Anthropology major who was

a part of the Million Student March that took place last week where a group of students marched across CSU protesting for national change on campuses. Slater reminded everyone in attendance exactly what members of the march were working for.

"The list of demands for the whole nationwide [march] included forgiveness of student debt, free public education on the college level and \$15 minimum wage for on-campus jobs," he said.

Berkman defended administration saying not many people have been attending the town hall meetings held to let students speak about their concerns with the university.

"We've tried offering takeaways and raffles to get more students to come [to the town hall meetings] because you are the voice of the university," he said. "I am really open

to any ideas that you have to help us enlarge the dialogue."

Overall, the attendees' main concern was student debt. Many asked Berkman to help attempt to erase student debt as much as possible.

Berkman responded saying CSU had already taken measures to decrease debt by decreasing cost of attendance.

"There was a plan from the Senate in the state of Ohio which asked all universities to provide mechanisms to decrease the cost of attendance by five percent," Berkman said. "We [CSU] had a plan that actually allowed students to decrease cost of attendance by 13 percent."

Students also raised concerns about on-campus jobs and the wages that students receive from them. They argued that students are not able to pay off student loans with \$8 per hour

jobs when they have living expenses to take care of as well.

Berkman, deflecting the question, said he would like to increase the number of on-campus jobs because it is healthy for students to spend time on campus and contribute to university life.

Anthropology students — who are losing their building, the Chester Building — also raised concerns. As of now, the Anthropology students have no new building to relocate to. Instead, their department will be transferred to a single floor in Rhodes Tower.

Students are planning to call another meeting with President Berkman in Spring 2016 to discuss more issues.



# President hosts annual holiday reception

## Staff and students gather to eat, discuss and celebrate



Photo by Dan McCarthy

A table set up at the President's Holiday Reception on Dec. 3 in the Student Center Ballroom.

By Dan McCarthy

The Student Center Ballroom was full Thursday afternoon Dec. 3 for the President's Holiday Reception.

Though Cleveland has avoided substantial winter weather so far, the ballroom was decorated for the party as though it were a winter wonderland.

Between 3 p.m. to 5 p.m., Cleveland State University staff migrated to and from the third floor of the Student Center. Colleagues were seen chatting

and walking together in groups, carrying goodies from the party between paper plates.

Administrators, faculty and students mingled over a buffet surrounding an ice sculpture of a nutcracker. Guests socialized around high-top tables, eating shrimp cocktails that uniformed waiters swept around the ballroom on trays. An ice-blue cake — made by two workers in campus dining — stood

as a centerpiece between large, toy stuffed penguins and polar bears.

According to Andrea Hooks, a second year graduate student specializing in adult learning development, "Frozen" was chosen for the reception's theme.

Hooks helped to organize the reception in her graduate assistant position with Barbara E. Smith, the director of special events in the President's Office.

In her capacity, Smith annually organizes the reception in order to say thank you and to acknowledge all the hard work done on campus.

Meanwhile, a table in the hallway outside the reception filled up with donated, unwrapped toys brought by attendees to benefit the U.S. Marine Corps "Toys for Tots" program.

Marine Corps Sgt. Shawn Kitson has been involved in hosting the program for the past three years at CSU, though he is not a student. According to Kitson, toys collected on Thursday go to "underprivileged children in Cuyahoga County."

As finals week bears down for students, winter break waits just around the corner. However, during the recess, university operations, carry on with or without students. And faculty are still expected to come

in to work.

But in his comments, President Berkman was pleased to point to a light at the end of the tunnel for administrators, too. Between Dec. 25 and Jan. 1 the university will be closed and CSU employees will not come into work.

Excluded from this holiday, however, are essential staff including campus police officers who will still be patrolling campus. New this year, Police Chief Gary Lewis was among the guests at the reception in addition to fellow CSU police department officers.

Jonetha Jackson, a graduate student in Public Administration, was also in attendance and has been at the the president's reception every year. A longtime worker in Treasury Services, Jackson said that she always enjoys the receptions.

Attendees had the opportunity to fill up on the buffet and listen to students in CSU's chorus sing Christmas carols.

Students do not resume classes until Jan. 19, officially beginning Spring semester. No Monday classes are scheduled that first week due to no school in observance of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

## November Crime Watch

By Abby Burton

### *It's (un)fourtunately lit*

On Nov. 17 at 7:07 p.m., Cleveland State University Police officer Mark Daniels responded to a smoking complaint in front of the Business building (1860 East 18th Street).

No arrest was made, but a complaint was filed.

This was the seventh smoking complaint that CSU police have responded to in total.

CSU became a smoke-free campus in Fall of 2013.

### *Arrested development*

CSU Police arrested a female, non-CSU affiliate for contempt of court on Nov. 16. at the Langston apartment building (1850 East 23 Street).

While there, officer Rebenock completed a variety of reports including assault, menacing and cruelty to animals.

These reports were filed by a male CSU student against the suspect.

### *Thanksgiving theft*

On Nov. 20, CSU police officer Scott responded to a theft in the Student Center Ballroom (2121 Euclid Ave).

A gold iPhone 6, valued at \$600, and wallet, not of value but containing credit cards, were stolen from a female CSU student — neither have been recovered.

### *Menacing at Euclid Commons*

CSU officer Armstead responded to a menacing incident at Euclid Commons (2502 Euclid Ave) on Nov. 19.

A female CSU student reported menacing charges, which is when a person uses words or actions in such a way that intentionally places another person in fear of imminent serious physical harm.

No one has been charged.

# CSU starts new era at Quicken Loans

## Women's team prevails 69-48, men's team falls 66-62



Photos by Gregory Kula

**Left:** CSU fans were able to watch their team compete on the revamped Q scoreboards that brought an NBA feel to both the women's and men's games.

**Right:** Vikings guard Daniel Levitt (left), forward Vinny Zollo (center) and forward Demonte Flannigan (33) gain position on a free throw by Kent State's Kellon Thomas.

By Gregory Kula

A new era of Cleveland State University basketball began on Saturday, Dec. 5 at Quicken Loans Arena (The Q).

The women's team took on Bowling Green State University followed by the men's team playing Kent State University.

Fans and students from all three schools sprinkled the lower bowl of the Q to see the area teams compete.

CSU President Ronald Berkman had some inspiring words before the men's game to show how much the partnership means to the school and city.

"When Cleveland State University is successful, Cleveland will be successful," he said. "I'm grateful. Go Vikes!"

The CSU women's team put on a show for all those in attendance. Redshirt sophomore guard Khayla Livingston was the force behind the Vikings in the first half.

Coming in averaging 12.6 points per game, she went above and beyond to help build a giant lead with 19 points in the first half. She finished the

game with 21 points along with seven rebounds.

The Vikings got the lead up 43-13 with 1:00 left in the first half on a three-pointer by Livingston.

Livingston then tacked on two free throws and another basket to make it 47-13 at halftime.

The Vikings came out for the third quarter with a little less fire and the Falcons took advantage with a few quick baskets.

CSU came roaring back and the lead stayed around 30 the entire quarter.

Despite this lead, the Falcons outscored the Vikings 18-15 in the quarter. The third came to a close with the Vikings leading 62-31.

BG made the fourth quarter a little more interesting than the rest of the game and cut the lead to 21. Livingston was actually put back in the game to help the Vikings maintain their lead.

The Vikings held on for a 69-48 victory.

The CSU men's team was ready for the KSU team but KSU proved to be too tough.

Playing under the Q's bright lights, the Vikings got off to a quick 6-0 start but Kent quickly tied it up.

CSU junior guard Andre Yates made it 9-6 with a smooth three.

The teams went on to match each other point for point the rest of the first half.

Freshman guard Rob Edwards put the Vikings up by four with a gutsy three-pointer at about a minute left in the half, but KSU scored the next five points to go into the locker room up 28-27.

At half, the Vikings high scorer was Yates with nine, all on threes.

Both teams came out for the second half playing tough on defense. The Golden Fishes and Vikings traded baskets for the first five minutes of the half.

After a Kent air ball, Yates hit his fourth three to put the Vikings up 36-33.

Kent responded by tying the game 39-39 within the next few minutes. Yates finished the game with 14 points.

With 8:55 left in the game, KSU hit

a three to go up 50-45 forcing CSU to call a timeout.

KSU came out of the timeout pressuring the ball more than the Vikings could handle. They built their lead to eight before the Vikings made a run to cut it to three.

The offensive foul on Edwards with 28 seconds left in the game was the nail in the coffin.

Kent finished strong and won by a final score of 66-62.

Senior forward Vinny Zollo was all over the court for his double-double. He finished with a team-high eleven rebounds to go with his ten points and four assists.

The CSU women's team will play at the Q again in February, while the men's team has four more games scheduled at the venue.

CSU students gain free entry by showing their Viking ID.

The next men's game at the Q is Saturday, Dec. 12 against Ohio University at 1 p.m.

The women's win moved them to 2-4 on the season while the men fell to 2-6 with their loss.



# This Browns season is over already



Photo courtesy bleacherreport.com

Fans at the Browns vs. Ravens game give up on the season and move right into winter basketball and the NBA with hopes for a Cleveland championship.

By Matthew Johns

Another year, another disappointing season for the Cleveland Browns. Much like years past, the Browns season was filled with disappointing players, poor decisions and uncertainty as to what the future holds.

Nobody expected the Browns to be playoff contenders this year, but

I don't think many predicted the horrible display of football the team put forward either.

To sum things up, the Browns invested a guaranteed 12 million dollars combined to wide receivers Dwayne Bowe and Brian Hartline and drafted Danny Shelton and Cam Irving in the first round of the 2015 NFL

Draft (all of whom have been highly ineffective). We also watched Johnny Manziel's immaturity get the best of him shortly after securing the starting quarterback job.

This is all on top of the numerous injuries to stars like Joe Haden and Tashaun Gipson.

The past two seasons have been nothing but disastrous for the Browns, which leads many to think this offseason will bring yet another changing of the guards in the Browns front office and coaching staff.

Ray Farmer's time as the general manager of the Browns has been filled with poor draft picks, bad free agent moves and the "text-gate" scandal.

After a promising start to the 2014 season, head coach Mike Pettine's Browns quickly fell back to obscurity. Pettine, too, will likely be gone by the middle of January.

The Browns will again have to look for new leaders within the organization who can hopefully correct a two-decade long disaster.

To stay consistent with "the Browns' way," a new quarterback will

likely be on the shopping list.

When things were finally looking up for Manziel, he was demoted to third string after being videoed at a party during the Browns' bye-week. Josh McCown, who is 36 years old, has been serviceable as QB, but is clearly not the long-term answer. He is under contract through the next two seasons, but it remains to be seen if he will still be on the team.

On the positive side, the Browns are almost guaranteed a top five pick in the 2016 Draft and may even have the number one pick. That could result in another decent quarterback, or any other position, because the Browns need just about everything right now.

In short, as this year has shown, the Browns are still years away from being taken seriously in the NFL. New coaches, personnel and executives are most likely on the way.

It looks like the age-old statement will hold true yet again, at least for the Browns.

Maybe next year.

# Upcoming Rule 5 Draft may hurt Tribe

By Gregory Kula

As the Indians continue to make moves in the offseason, including the signing of pitcher Joba Chamberlain, one of the next big days for the team is the Rule 5 Draft.

The Rule 5 Draft takes place every year during the winter general managers' meetings. The draft takes players from one team's minor leagues and transfers them to another's major league roster. As this date closes in on the Indians, some of their minor leaguers are at risk of being taken away.

This draft has become more successful over the years, and last season saw the best class ever. Because of the great picking in the last few seasons, many expect the number of players picked to go up, which exposes some top Indians prospects.

The draft requires these picks to be placed directly on the team's 40-man roster. Many teams do not want to

chance a major league roster spot on a minor leaguer, but many teams need these young players.

To be eligible, a player must have been drafted five years previously if drafted at 18 or four years if drafted at 19.

The Indians protected outfielder Tyler Naquin, outfielder James Ramsey, pitcher Dylan Baker and pitcher Shawn Morimando, but they still left many prospects open to other teams.

Three main prospects were named in Baseball America's Rule 5 Draft article on Nov. 24.

Infielder Ronny Rodriguez is one of the main prospects who could be taken. Rodriguez had an impressive .807 On-Base-Plus-Slugging (OPS) last season with AA Akron Rubberducks.

He has also been voted "Best Infield Arm" in the organization multiple times in his minor league career. A guy

who can play every infield position when needed, Rodriguez is young, athletic and a perfect fit for plenty of teams.

Infielder Eric Stamets is also at risk of being drafted, which would not go over well with fans. Stamets is from the Los Angeles Angels and was traded to Cleveland last season in exchange for outfielder David Murphy.

If Stamets is drafted, then Murphy was traded away for no actual player.

Stamets is a great fielding shortstop, but his hitting was below .200 last season after being traded and is not likely to change. He would do well as a major league shortstop who bats eighth or ninth, but he will never be a true star in the MLB.

The last prospect named from the Indians in the article was pitcher Luis Lugo. In the Indians organization since he was 17, Lugo is 6'5" and has some dazzling stuff.

He didn't have a great last season — a 4.15 ERA — but he has shown many signs of becoming a dominant left-hander for the Indians.

Lugo will most likely stay put because he has only made it to High A and going to the majors would be too large of a jump for teams to trust.

The Indians protected their star prospect centerfielder Naquin, but these three prospects may come back to haunt them, just like Hector Rondon. This Cubs reliever was picked up in 2012 from the Indians and has turned into a great asset for the Cubs with a 1.67 ERA last year.

This instance was just bad luck, as Rondon had been injury ridden, but if any of the three named prospects are taken, the Indians may be in trouble.

Minor leaguers are the future, and the Indians need as many options as possible to compete in the American League Central Division.



# Winter break: the checklist

## Essential and necessary holiday season fun

By Editorial Staff

'Tis the season! We have five weeks off school and — let's face it — after all those finals, you deserve to have a good time.

We, the editorial staff, have compiled your essential holiday season checklist, helpfully divided into six categories. Trust us, it's not really the holiday season until you've indulged in food, movies, music, gifts and activities.

No matter how you celebrate, be sure to take time to kick back, relax and spend time with family and friends this holiday season.

### Food checklist

No matter how you celebrate the season, there's probably a lot of delicious food involved.

Certain cultures also have traditions specific to the winter holiday, and for some, it's the busiest time of the year. Here are a few easy tips to use and tasty items to eat over winter break while spending time with your loved ones.

It's not truly the holidays unless you're eating some type of dessert — and trust me, it's OK to nibble and taste test before the main course.

Pinterest is a great go-to site for simple recipes to create the perfect dish. Who doesn't enjoy digging into a pumpkin pie?

Instead of the traditional, try a cheesecake pumpkin pie. The only thing that's different — for the most part — is a few extra ingredients. And a pile of whipped cream is a perfect addition any way you make it.

Most of the easiest dessert recipes are no-bake, which will require little

effort. For the baking and cooking part of a memorable holiday meal, I suggest a honey-baked ham with glaze. Yum!

No matter how you celebrate the season, there's probably a lot of delicious food involved.

Cranberries are a great addition to any holiday meal. You can use them simply as a sauce, but it's always good to include that perfect side dish, too.

Try to make a festive-looking dish to dazzle the dinner table, and your guests. Add green beans and almond slices to your cranberries.

Whatever you eat during your holiday get-togethers, I'm sure it'll be filling. And remember, it's totally normal to go into a food coma, don't worry — you aren't dying, you're celebrating.

### Cleveland events checklist

Cleveland is full of holiday events throughout December and picking the best one is extremely difficult.

Any winter break should begin with some bright lights. General Electric is

celebrating their 91st year of their lighting display at their headquarters in Nela Park at 1975 Noble Road in East Cleveland.

The display this year features lights highlighting everything Cleveland from the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame to PlayhouseSquare. It will remain up until Jan. 4.

You can also take a trip back to your childhood by playing a life-sized game of Candyland at the Penitentiary Glen Reservation in Kirtland, which offers the game with a nature theme. They also offer plenty of hiking activities for the winter. The game is open noon to 5 p.m. daily.

Don't forget about ice skating — it's the perfect date or hang-out. The Outdoor Ice Rink at Falls River Square in Cuyahoga Falls is a beautiful ice skating venue. And at only \$3 for admission and \$3 for skate rentals, the cost won't break the bank.

If you don't feel like skating but still want to glide on some ice, the

Metroparks' Chalet in Strongsville is a great alternative. For only \$12 you can go down the 1,000 foot drop as many times as you want. Plus, the chalet offers plenty of holiday deals with \$1 soda and hot dog days.

Finally, it isn't the holidays until you take a trip to Downtown Cleveland to visit the PlayhouseSquare chandelier and lights and the tree and decorations down at Tower City Center.

### Movie checklist

The holidays aren't complete without wonderful, touching movies you've probably watched at least 100 times. Don't be discouraged by ABC Family's horrid attempt to foster cheer by playing the same damn thing over and over eons before Christmas actually happens. Branch out!

"Christmas with the Kranks" is definitely underrated. It follows two parents who decide not to celebrate the holiday with their daughter



Photo courtesy popcurious.com

out of town, but have to throw something together quickly when she unexpectedly decides to return home.

"Love Actually" follows the love lives of several very different people during the holiday months. Every holiday deserves at least one romantic comedy, and this is definitely one of the better ones.

The holidays aren't complete without wonderful, touching movies you've probably watched at least 100 times.

"Rare Exports: A Christmas Tale" is a holiday-themed horror film following a group of reindeer herders who discover an evil Santa-like creature and try to sell it. Everyone should watch this film at least once. It will probably give you nightmares, but it'll be worth it.

If you're into older movies, the original "Frosty the Snowman" from 1969 is adorable and filled with the laughter of strangely animated children.

For Ebenezer Scrooge fans out there, you have plenty of adaptations of "A Christmas Carol" to choose from. Any movie is good — whether you're alone or watching with family members — as long as you have a good time and feel merry.

Just — for your sake and mine — don't watch "Elf." Just don't.

#### Music checklist

First off, let's all be real — the number one most essential holiday track of all time is "All I Want For Christmas Is You" by Mariah Carey, and if you think otherwise you're

lying to yourself.

That being said, unless you're a holiday bundle of joy 24/7 in December, Christmas carols can get annoying.

The key is to find the right ones and listen in moderation. Take a break. Cycle between "Deck the Halls" and "Hotline Bling." And once you find your favorite Christmas songs, find the best version.

Relient K does a smooth version of "Sleigh Ride." You can cry along with Bright Eyes during their take on "Blue Christmas." And nothing tops Destiny's Child's version of "Carol of the Bells" (a surefire way to make an insufferable song into an incredible one is to add Beyoncé).

In terms of morally dubious carols, don't forget "Do They Know It's Christmas" by Band Aid and enjoy screaming "Tonight thank God it's them instead of you!" out your window at the homeless.

For live music, obviously, catch Trans-Siberian Orchestra (TSO) at the Q Wednesday, Dec. 30 at 3:30 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. Tickets can get pricy, so if you can't come in person, tune in to 98.5 WNCX on Christmas Eve from 8 p.m. to midnight and Christmas morning 8 a.m. to noon for full renditions of TSO's best albums.

And — this might go without saying — but it's not Christmas until you listen to the entire "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer" soundtrack — the Claymation version, of course.

#### Giving back checklist

Throwing some change into that red Salvation Army bucket isn't the only way to give back this holiday season. Of course, national organizations like the Salvation Army, United Way and Feeding America are always happy to take your money.

But donating to local charities can do just as much good — and keep the money close to home.

Donate to the Greater Cleveland Food Bank to help make sure no one in the Cleveland area has to go hungry this December — or any other month. The group happily accepts donations of time, money or food.

Help put someone in a home this holiday season by donating

Photo courtesy [foodservice.elicheescake.com](http://foodservice.elicheescake.com)



to the Greater Cleveland Habitat for Humanity. The group has been rehabbing and building housing for Cleveland-area poor people for more than 25 years. They accept cash donations, tools, appliances, furniture and volunteering.

#### Gift giving checklist

This time of year is full of stress for college students. Final exams, final projects, packing up to head home, the eerie unknown of what next semester will bring and on top of it all — buying gifts.

But where there's a will, there's a way. And believe it or not, it's possible to make gift giving easy — and cheap.

Let's start with the main people, mom and dad. Parents actually can be the easiest to buy for because literally anything will make them happy as long as it is from you.

Run to the store and grab your mom some flowers and her favorite candy, then head over to your dad's favorite section and buy something small.

If he likes sports, buy him a new shirt for his favorite team. If he likes cars, buy him a cleaning set for his ride. All of these things can be around \$5-\$10, so no worries there!

For friends, guys are simple. Have your guy friends over and order a pizza and watch a game or play your favorite video game.

For girls, the \$5 movie bin has never failed. Grab a chick-flick or two, each of your friends' favorite candies and some of the \$1 fingernail polishes and head over for a girls night in.

Above all, don't think so much into gift-giving during the holidays. Your presence is almost always enough to give the people who love and support you. ■

Donate to the Greater Cleveland Area Food Bank to help make sure no one in the Cleveland area has to go hungry this December.

For something a little more niche, make a cash donate to Hattie Larlham to help support the 1,500 people with developmental disabilities that they provide medical, residential, recreational and work training services to.

Or consider donating to the Cleveland Animal Protective League, to ensure that absolutely no animal gets forgotten about this holiday season.



# Must-see holiday performances

Classic, comedy and contemporary productions at Playhouse in December



Photos courtesy cptonline.org

**Left:** "A Christmas Story" follows Ralphie, who desperately wants a Red Ryder BB gun for Christmas. In this scene, he's made to wear a bunny suit made by one of his family members.  
**Right:** Starring Ray Caspio, "The Santaland Diaries" follows the journey of an out-of-work actor who takes a job as Crumpet, a holiday elf at Macy's.

By Morgan Elswick

## "The Santaland Diaries"

Outcalt Theatre  
Tickets: \$30

Running now through Dec. 20, "The Santaland Diaries" is based off a semi-autobiographical essay by David Sedaris in which an actor takes a job as Crumpet, a holiday elf at Macy's when he can't find any other work in his field.

It is a one-man, one-act play recounting trials Sedaris faced during his time as an elf at Macy's.

Starring Ray Caspio, this show is not recommended for children.

## "A Christmas Story"

Allen Theatre  
Tickets: Starting at \$20

This holiday classic is about nine-year-old Ralphie Parker and his

desperate attempts to get a Red Ryder BB gun no one will get for him because he could "shoot his eye out."

As he tries to persuade the adults in his life to buy him what he wants, he must also deal with bullies, his father's leg lamp and learning to control his rampant swearing or face the consequences.

"A Christmas Story" is running now until Dec. 23.

## "A Christmas Carol"

Ohio Theatre  
Tickets: Starting at \$28

Based on Charles Dickens's classic novella, this play follows Ebenezer Scrooge, a miserly old man who must learn the meaning of Christmas the hard way.

After living the majority of his life being cruel to his family and other

people around him, he is visited by three ghosts and faced with the decision to become a kinder man or embrace the consequences of his harsh life.

"A Christmas Carol" runs now until Dec. 23.

## "A Very Last Call Christmas"

Kennedy's Theatre  
Tickets: Starting at \$15

The Last Call Cleveland comedy group — named "Best Performing Arts Group" by Scene and multiple other Cleveland papers — will be returning to PlayhouseSquare with a holiday special this December.

Last Call Cleveland is a mix of live and taped sketches, audience interaction and songs. For this performance, they have prepared themed sketches, videos and music

to celebrate the holidays with their audience.

"A Very Last Call Christmas" will run from Thursday, Dec. 11 to Dec. 19.

## "Elf"

Connor Palace  
Tickets: Starting at \$10

Running from Dec. 29 until Jan. 3, "Elf" is about Buddy, an orphan boy who accidentally crawls into Santa's bag and is taken to the North Pole.

He grows up raised as an elf, and when he's told he's actually human, decides to venture to the human world to find his birth father.

What follows is a series of shenanigans as Buddy tries to fit in a world he knows virtually nothing about.



# Senior project inspires student collab

By Morgan Elswick

A senior performance project showcases student creative work and serves as a culmination of their undergraduate career.

Rachel Murar, a senior Theatre and Special Education double major, wrote and cast a 35-minute, one-act play in collaboration with two other seniors — Shawn Davis and Brandi Barginton.

"Promise Me This" was performed Nov. 24 and Friday, Dec. 4 in the Middough Building Black Box.

According to Murar, "Promise Me This" is actually a revised and seriously edited version of one of her previously written plays enhanced with ideas she learned in a recent playwriting course.

The one-act play follows Daniel (Davis), Rose (Barginton), Kari (Katie Huskey) and Shane (Cody Kilpatrick Steele) and their complex interactions and history with each other. Murar

described her writing process as generally organic.

"I like to start with a base, but once I have performers to actually fill the roles, I make a lot of live edits," Murar said. "We also did story sharing during our rehearsals, some of which [was] directly pulled into the show."

Writing a play is much different than actually attempting to perform one. The actors played a large part in setting up and making their characters who they eventually became in "Promise Me This."

"The real fun [began] once we dropped scripts, and the performers began to feel more comfortable living in their characters' skins," she said. "This is when they felt the freedom to add ad-lib and non-verbal vocalizations."

Murar believes the play can have several meanings.

"I feel at the very heart of the



Photo by Emily Dotson

From left to right: Katie Huskey, Shawn Davis, Brandi Barginton and Cody Kilpatrick Steele

play the piece speaks about how we communicate with each other and how that can affect every relationship we have in life," she said.

In the future, Murar hopes to continue improving "Promise Me This" and other works.

"I want to keep writing other plays, working with this script and working with this group of actors [who have] inspired me with an influx of ideas," she said. "I'm not sure where all those ideas will lead me, but I hope some good work can be made from it."

## Album Review: 'A Head Full of Dreams'

By Johnny Cook

### Coldplay

"A Head Full of Dreams"  
Parlophone UK

Coldplay has always been a band that is either loved or hated. Not many people have a lukewarm reaction to their music. I absolutely despised "Clocks" and "Speed of Sound" when they were first released but eventually came around to really enjoy some of Coldplay's albums.

Before releasing "Viva La Vida" in 2008, Coldplay was on the precipice of being both enormously commercially successful and critically lauded.

They had been building a sizable fan base for a while, but that album sold incredibly well and took Coldplay into an entirely new stratosphere. Since that album, they've had trouble making any substantial steps forward as a band.

Coldplay's newest album, "A Head Full of Dreams," released Friday, Dec. 4, continues their downward trend after their peak at the end of the last decade.

Coldplay hired Stargate — the production duo who have primarily worked in hip-hop and R&B with artists like Beyonce, Ne-Yo and Rihanna — to



produce the album. Their work on Coldplay's album seems unnecessary for a band with so much clout and song-writing ability.

The album's production plays out like an excursion through the musical trends of the last few years. The cymbal crashes, syncopated guitar rhythm and bass line in "Adventures of a Lifetime" sound exactly like Daft Punk's "Get Lucky."

"Hymn For the Weekend" sounds like unreleased,

early-period Rihanna. The arching strings in "Up & Up" come off as Taylor Swift without the charm. Though I was certain I was listening to Coldplay, "X Marks the Spot" had me thinking my iPod shuffled onto Lorde.

On the positive side, Chris Martin's voice sounds great on "Bird" and "Everglow," and the band conjures up a lot of momentum in "A Head Full of Dreams."

The entire album is outfitted with a glittery sheen that doesn't exist anywhere else in their discography. However, this doesn't rescue the album from sounding less like Coldplay and more like the Billboard top ten.

I can't tell if this album is a cash grab, because Coldplay really does sound earnest and genuine — one of the reasons they have so many fans in the first place. Either way, "A Head Full of Dreams" fails to generate any sense of urgency or agency.





# Best and brightest albums of 2015

## Kendrick Lamar, Future, Jamie xx among top five

By Johnny Cook

2015 was an excellent year for music. There were reunions, comebacks and a whole lot of great rap. The year is not yet over, (there's still time, Kanye!) so this list may be subject to some change, but for right now, here are my top five albums of 2015.

Before moving on, I wanted to give honorable mentions to Bully's "Trying," All Dogs's "Kicking Every Day," Deafheaven's "New Bermuda" and Beach House's "Depression Cherry." These were excellent as well, and you should check them all out if you haven't already.

### 1. "To Pimp a Butterfly" — Kendrick Lamar



"TPAB" ends with dialogue between Tupac and Kendrick — a choice probably considered sacrilegious to some. Can you imagine the uproar if someone like Kanye did this? It speaks to Lamar's humility and sense of purpose that he positions himself as the successor to one of rap's most beloved figures and is embraced for it.

This album is a departure from Lamar's previous work but nonetheless grounded in the same themes and values that permeate his discography.

The unpredictability of his jazz, funk and hip-hop fusion intelligently mirrors the social instability that Lamar condemns. Nothing came out this year that more acutely and accurately paints a picture of the

social landscape.

His songs are already being chanted as anthems for social change. Concerning the album, Lamar told Rolling Stone "It'll be taught in college courses — I truly believe that." It's a bold statement, but he's not wrong.

### 2. "Carrie & Lowell" — Sufjan Stevens



This record is absolutely devastating. Written to cope with the death of Stevens's mother, "Carrie & Lowell" is an exploration of the inevitability of death, the complexity of relationships and tested faith. He's usually known for his whimsical, colorful instrumentation, but in this album, Stevens retreats into a deeply personal space and strips away all flourish and metaphor.

The result is the most deafening whisper Stevens has ever mustered. I may be a little too personally attached to this album — it came out shortly before my grandfather died, and I turned to Stevens's music to try to make sense of it.

That's what makes the album so overwhelming, though. Despite the album being incredibly morose, the darkness reflects the light of human life and resonates a muted love back at the listener.

### 3. "Dirty Sprite 2" — Future

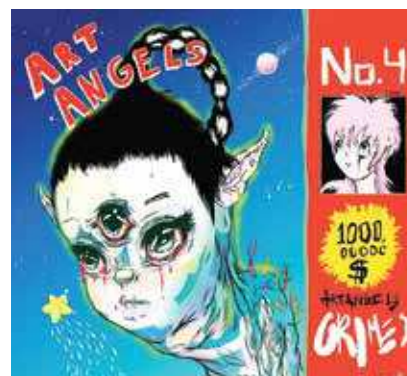
On the totally opposite end of the rap spectrum is Future's wild, hedonistic, blown-out braggadocio. This album is propulsive and carries

the momentum of a cannon. Future's furious machine-gun syllables on top of bombastic production makes this the most complete collection of songs he's released yet.



Despite overall themes of decadence and wealth, the lyrics actually reveal the emptiness behind his façade — lyrics like "I disguise pain when I make it rain" and "I gave up my conscience gotta live with it" show the emptiness that's come along with his success. His album should be played loud, but I get the feeling that Future makes music to drown out the shit around him.

### 4. "Art Angels" — Grimes



The year's best pop album came from an artist who probably wouldn't like to be called a pop star. Grimes's latest release is like a map that navigates all of her eclectic taste. She plays a number of live instruments on her album, and it gives her previously

alien-electronic sound a new, grounded element.

She also thrives as a producer — the drum programming on many of her tracks is exceptional and colors her pop with a very natural feel. The lyrics of the album are a big "F\*ck you" to the male-dominated record industry. Hopefully, Grimes's individuality and independence on "Art Angels" will open up new avenues for pop stars.

### 5. "In Colour" — Jamie xx



"In Colour" is a record that wears everything on its sleeve. The influences are laid bare and the music exudes a true sense of joy in the source material.

Dance music doesn't usually feel this intimate, but Jamie xx does an exceptional job at creating mood and atmosphere. A few tracks feature some of his bandmates with airy, whisper-sung vocals, making his DJ work feel like a natural compliment to the band.

The album gives the feeling that Jamie xx is spinning in a club the size of your apartment. He flexes his muscles as a tastemaker as well, bringing in up-and-comers Popcaan and Young Thug for "I Know There's Gonna Be (Good Times)."

It results in possibly the best song of the year. As both a tribute to his forerunners and an artifact for his predecessors, "In Colour" is a record that indulges in the simple delights of dance.

# 'Victor Frankenstein' ultimately falters

By Roman Macharoni

Like last year's "Dracula Untold," another classic monster movie franchise is being remade in the form of "Victor Frankenstein" — released Nov. 25. However, unlike that disaster, "Victor Frankenstein" shows a lot more promise with its new ideas and creative execution, yet falls short of being the next modern classic.

Instead of focusing on the monster itself, the film is shown from the perspective of Igor (Daniel Radcliffe). Shown first as a circus medic with a crippling deformity, Igor is rescued by our titular doctor, Victor (James McAvoy).

Once he is cleaned up, healed and given Victor's friend's name for protection, Igor is offered a partnership with Victor to aid in his plan of reanimating dead tissue.

With Igor's skilled hands and Victor's unorthodox methods, they find themselves hiding their creations from Baron Barnaby (Daniel Mays),

a religiously charged detective with vengeance clouding his judgment.

As expected, Victor and Igor eventually create the infamous monster, but Victor's motives for doing so are a daunting mystery to Igor — until it's far too late for him to change Victor's mind.

Radcliffe and McAvoy have great chemistry, and their banter makes for some of the best scenes in the movie while cleverly illuminating the complex reasoning behind their actions. McAvoy in particular shines during his drunken rants and insane babbling.

The special effects are great, and they utilize an intriguing "x-ray vision" when examining the internal workings in body parts and people.

Writer Max Landis ("American Ultra") has once again written a very creative but slow-moving story. It definitely feels watered down resulting most likely from heavy edits.



Photo courtesy foxmovies.com

"Victor Frankenstein" shows a lot of promise but ultimately falls short of its potential.

Anyone expecting action and villagers attacking large, undead people with bolts in their necks will leave in disappointment. This story is more about the men behind the monster than the actual monster. The monster does show, but only briefly later on in the film.

Regardless, "Victor Frankenstein" is a solid film with a good cast and well-written dialogue. It's just not

the kind of monster movie audiences are used to. And despite its potential, it's not the movie it could have been either.



# 'Creed' real knockout, future classic



Photo courtesy totalrocky.com

Michael B. Jordan (left) and Sylvester Stallone star in "Creed," released Nov. 26.

By Roman Macharoni

It's rare to see an homage to a beloved franchise able to contend with its predecessor. Released Nov. 26, "Creed" does just that, while managing to find its own identity. It takes the concept of continuing a saga in a refreshing way, and finds a new groove to the classic "Rocky" series.

It's pound for pound the best sports film to come out this year.

Adonis Johnson (Michael B. Jordan) starts out as an unruly orphan taken in by his stepmother, Mary Ann (Phylicia Rashad). Johnson soon learns the legacy his name carries as the illegitimate son of boxer Apollo

Creed, who fans of the "Rocky" series know died in the ring in "Rocky IV."

Knowing the mistakes of his father and the passion he has to fight, Adonis convinces Rocky Balboa (Sylvester Stallone) to train him. Balboa reluctantly agrees, and Johnson — who eventually takes the name of his father — starts his boxing career in spectacular fashion, getting a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to achieve boxing immortality.

Jordan, in a word, is amazing. He really shows his acting chops in this performance, and I wouldn't be surprised if it leads to an Oscar nod. Stallone also delivers some emotional moments as the withered boxer while still being charming as ever.

The fight choreography and cinematography during the matches is outstanding. It puts the audience right in the center, and every blow landed is resoundingly felt. There are some great visuals during its several montages that will stick with you long

after leaving the theatre.

"Creed" makes several references to the "Rocky" series but not so often that it detracts from the story. Writer and director Ryan Coogler ("Fruitvale Station") treats the legacy of the movies with respect and adds great new elements. It's a clearly self-contained story that allows its audience to grow with the characters naturally, instead of thrusting you in like a traditional sequel.

"Creed" successfully recreates the mood of "Rocky" without being overshadowed. In fact, this may perhaps be a future classic. It's an exciting, modern take on the boxing movie, seen through fresh eyes with a breath of new life. It's a real knockout.







# Misconceptions about Planned Parenthood

## Narrative surrounding abortion needs to change

By Arbela Capas

The war on abortion, as well as Planned Parenthood, has been manifesting in many ways in recent news. Whether it's through trap laws, policy changes or deeply unsettling political propaganda, Planned Parenthood has had to shield itself from attacks on all sides.

However, one clinic in Colorado witnessed a more real and intense threat Nov. 27 — a man came in and opened fire in the clinic. The shooting left some wounded and two dead. The event prompted arguments surrounding gun laws, mental health and also abortion stigma.

Almost as scary as the brutal incident itself was some of the reactions from right-wing, anti-choice people and politicians. I don't know what was more shocking — the silence from the Republicans or the

sheer hatred from people on social media. It is exactly this kind of hateful, political rhetoric that has fueled incidences like these. The silence said it all — the stigma towards abortion is still very real, very widespread and now it's becoming dangerous.

There needs to be a few social changes for the "anti-choice narrative" to start diminishing.

First of all, realize the people who are "pro-choice" are not "pro-abortion." It is important to redraw the picture of abortion as not a scary thing done by terrible people, but a necessary option for women to have involving their own body. Additionally, there needs to be an awareness and objective analysis of anti-choice propaganda and how it is influencing people's views.

The recent attempts to defund

Planned Parenthood are all in reaction to completely fabricated videos that have been spread around and overdramatized by social media, the news and even politicians. The many Republican presidential candidates now have a powerful platform to spread the anti-choice agenda through lies and biased views.

All of these factors lead to a very scary misconception of abortion and abortion clinics, which is seen through the general public, as well as politicians.

This issue is becoming harder to ignore when it has become a part of our primary discussions in the media and in politics. It is safe to say the hateful language by many right-wing politicians has contributed to incidents like this. The anti-choice rhetoric is being put prominently in

our news and minds.

The narrative surrounding abortion needs to change — it is starting to manifest itself in the scariest of ways. Along with the other important health services that Planned Parenthood and other clinics provide, abortion needs to be understood as a real need as well.

The misconceived opinions about abortion have reached a whole new level. It has become so stigmatized in our society that a murderous shooting is being seen as valid to some.

*Arbela Capas is a sophomore Sociology and Journalism double major at CSU.*



# Why we should be praying for Paris

## Thoughts and support important regardless of situation

By Abby Burton

A couple of weeks ago, a soulless individual at Youngstown State University decided it would be a good idea to paint things such as "ISIS is coming," "France deserves destruction" and "YSU supports ISIS" on a rock on campus.

Not only does this heartless individual deserve to be expelled, but I think more serious consequences should come to them as well. ISIS is nothing to joke about. With their new hit-list being released, Americans don't need anything else to be afraid of.

Sadly, this is not the only drama brewing around ISIS and their attacks.

Just two weeks ago, an article was published in The Cauldron's opinion section saying praying for Paris is a waste of time. I disagree wholeheartedly with that article.

While I see the point of needing

to pray for all deaths and pay more attention to other areas around the world, that doesn't mean the people of Paris don't need our prayers.

Not everyone is praying for those who died. Some are praying for those who survived. Can you imagine sitting next to your best friend when suddenly they are shot? You survive and they don't. That's something I can't imagine living with.

People aren't ignorant just because they don't know how many people die every day. News covers the major events — it is not anyone's fault but the news industries that people don't hear about deaths in Syria, Lebanon and other places.

Saying you won't pray for Paris is awful. If religious intolerance is what you see as the biggest problem in the world right now, then please don't be religiously intolerant.

Praying doesn't necessarily mean getting down on your knees at the side of your bed, bowing your head and folding your hands. Praying can be as simple as wishing someone is OK or sending positive thoughts to a group of people.

**People aren't ignorant because they don't know how many people die.**

I don't consider myself extremely religious, but every single day I think about the people in the world who have lost someone or live in fear, and I

hope they soon find better situations.

ISIS is not something to make light of. The world deals with terrorism almost every day, but this group is not just any other terrorist group. They kill for no reason, brainwash their followers and claim to be a part of the sacred Muslim religion when in fact, they are nowhere near Muslim.

We should not panic, we should not be afraid. We need to come together and accept that everyone does things differently. People deserve to pray for what they can. Not everyone is able to watch the news 24/7 and research the death tolls of the world.

This is the time that everyone needs someone, and what better feeling than if you could be that person?

*Abby Burton is a junior Journalism & Promotional Communication major at CSU and News editor for The Cauldron.*



# Disadvantages of taking the bus to class

## What's the best way for commuters to get to CSU every day?

By Camerin McDonald

I take the bus from Strongsville to Cleveland — a 30-minute commute by car, but on the bus it takes 45 minutes.

An hour-and-a-half round-trip is pretty long and I am limited to the things I'm able to do on the bus. I cannot pull out my laptop on the bus and most of my work is online. The bus is really frustrating and I'm not sure it is right for me to pursue taking next semester.

Three days a week I am done with class at eleven o'clock, and I don't get home until one o'clock. I have to wait for the bus and then ride the bus — it's such a long process and waste of my time.

If I drove a car, I could get home

before noon. If I lived on campus, I could be back to my dorm in five minutes. It really bothers me that my life has to revolve around the bus's schedule.

I was very privileged to have received an old car when I was 17. I drove to high school and work. Having a car was very convenient for me and I had a lot more freedom. I still have the car for small city driving, but I cannot drive it downtown because it's an old minivan and it's falling apart.

I do not mind the bus itself — I am upset about the waste of time and lack of freedom that comes with it. Though I am not a control-freak, I still like to have some control over when and

where I arrive somewhere.

I also do not think dorming was the choice for me either. I am a homebody — I would have missed my cats and family way too much. I saved a lot of money by commuting, which I thought was smart.

When I heard that the bus was basically free, I was all for it and was very excited I could live at home.

Now I am not too thrilled about the bus. I dread pretty much every ride I am about to go on. I tolerate it because I am able to live at home, and I can't even begin to say how excited I am for winter break — not having to ride the bus.

I did not buy a car because, again, I

was trying to save money.

But, currently, commuting via bus is not satisfying. If I bought a car, the problem would be solved. I would actually have more time to focus on schoolwork.

I love commuting; I just don't love the bus. Even so, the RTA fee for a U-Pass isn't going to come off my student account. But I'm coming to realize that I don't have much of a choice.

*Camerin McDonald is a freshman majoring in Chemical Engineering at CSU.*

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