About two dozen Aspen homes experienced unlawful entry during winter break

Thomas Robertson

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*Consult your professor
By KAMRYN KOCH
The Breeze

Due to a noticeable drop in the number of history and humanities majors, JMU professors have begun to think about ways to attract students to these programs. Since 2012, JMU has experienced a 40 percent decrease in the number of history majors according to its enrollment report, with only 196 majors for the 2018 fall semester, and the College of Arts and Letters has experienced a nine percent decrease overall.

The American Historical Association released a study on Nov. 26 that revealed the number of undergraduate majors in history and the humanities dropped significantly between 2011 and 2017. According to this report, the economic collapse of 2008 prompted a change in numbers for most majors. However, history has experienced the most drastic decrease — degrees are down 30 percent since 2011.

According to JMU history professor Mary Gayne, with the rising cost of tuition, many students want to make sure they’re getting the most out of how much they pay for college, so they tend to choose majors in science, technology, engineering, math, nursing and health fields. JMU professors believe students question whether a history or humanities major offers high-paying, meaningful and stable jobs for their futures.

“That’s a part of it,” Gayne said. “The sense that those four years of college need to have a practical outcome, and that the humanities was more about developing an aesthetic appreciation, and that perhaps that can be frivolous given the cost of education.”

According to Gayne, it’s argued by some universities that with the absence of humanities courses comes the lack of an ethical base for students. Being a liberal arts school, JMU looks to its general education program for this base, with students required to take history and humanities courses to meet Gen-Ed course requirements.

Because of the decline, JMU history and humanities professors have begun to implement more innovative teaching styles to bring students into these programs. These styles include an initiative on digital humanities, which brings a technological aspect into the area of interest, as well as an integrative course project that focuses on collaborating with general education.

JMU has invested $16 million into the renovations of Wilson Hall, which will become the center of the history department beginning fall 2019. With these renovations will come new technology and more opportunities to engage in research and analysis for students. The building is predicted by the department to increase the number of history majors because of its attractiveness to current or potential students.

At JMU, political science was experiencing the same decline as history; however, the department came out of it much faster. Part of this is due to the better balance of diversity within the department, according to Gayne. Political science has a better ratio of men and women when it comes to faculty, and the diversity of students is similar to that of the university, which makes more people feel more welcome within the department.

“If we look at political science and compare the faculty and its balance of diversity and the student balance, we can see that there appears to be a relationship,” Gayne said. “Students being able to see a version of themselves, of history in action being practiced by somebody like them — in many ways this is the concern that’s next on our agenda.”

When it comes to history majors, Gayne says about 80 percent of those studying at JMU are white, which is about six percent higher than the university’s percentage of white students, according to JMU’s demographics report. This lack of diversity may be playing an additional role in the history major’s decline, because minorities aren’t able to see others like them succeeding within the major.
JMU hopes to increase number of history degrees by discussing with students the skills the program offers

Showing the value of a history degree has been a challenge for JMU and universities nationwide. Michael Galgano, a former history department head at JMU, worked with an AHA project called “Tuning” from 2012-14 in an attempt to address the national decline. For this project, faculty from across the country met in Washington, D.C., to discuss issues at their respective universities.

The program emphasized that a student going into any class has a right to know what skills that course will provide them with and how it’ll benefit them. Showing students what they can achieve by obtaining a history major may be another, much easier way to draw students in.

“I think that the history departments, our own included, have not done a good job explaining to students what the value of the degree is and what career opportunities exist for history majors,” Galgano said. “Where history has its greatest value in the information age is not in teaching facts and information. What history can give you is how to find the best information, how to evaluate and assess that information and also how to communicate it through writing, orally or through other forms.”

JMU’s history department has already begun talking to students about the skills a major could offer, according to history professor Evan Friss. He chaired the recently completed Academic Program Review of the major, which each academic unit at the university has to undergo every eight years for an extensive evaluation. The review looked over the department’s strengths and weaknesses, and among other things, the decrease in majors was addressed.

“It involves both an internal study that the department looks at and then bringing in external consultants from across the country to assess and review the program,” Friss said. “Obviously, thinking about how to increase the number of students in history is a part of that process.”

Implementing strategies to attract more students to the program became one of the chief goals of the department’s future. Professors are talking to students, especially those in general education classes where they may be searching for majors, about the skills that a history major could provide.

“JMU’s mission is to help students have productive and meaningful lives,” Friss said. “I think it’s pretty difficult to have a productive, civic, intellectually stimulated and culturally rich life without having an appreciation for American and world history and other cultures and people.”

CONTACT Kamryn Koch at kochkr@dukes.jmu.edu. For more coverage of JMU and Harrisonburg news, follow the news desk on Twitter @BreezeNewsJMU.
Turning tragedy into change, ‘For Alison’

Father of murdered journalist and JMU alumna to publish book telling her story and advocating for gun control

By Connor Murphy

Since the death of JMU alumna and television journalist Alison Parker, her father, Andy Parker, has written a memoir in her honor that’s scheduled to release March 5. The book, “For Alison,” discusses her murder while exploring the idea of stricter gun control laws in the U.S. Parker dedicates the book to everyone who has lost someone due to gun violence and become a member of “the club no one wants to join.”

Parker’s longtime friend and best-selling author Beth Macy encouraged him to write the book shortly after Alison’s passing. He originally dismissed the idea, feeling as though there was nothing more to say, but as time went by, he felt compelled to tell Alison’s story. Parker began writing the book in May 2016, 10 months after Alison was killed, and finished approximately two years later. He hoped to tell Alison’s story and describe his own journey as an advocate for gun control.

Parker acknowledges that speaking about his daughter’s murder is something he never gets used to and says that it can be “mentally, physically and emotionally draining.” Speaking about his daughter is difficult, but his passion for the cause and desire to tell his daughter’s story outweighs these emotions.

“I wanted to include stories about Alison that people didn’t know,” Parker said. “Stories that were told to me after she was killed that really touched me. It’s a part memoir, part current affairs, but it’s also a call to action. The message is there: we as a country can’t stand idly by and watch this slaughter continue to happen.”

Lori Haas, Virginia State Director of the Coalition to Stop Gun Violence, a nonprofit organization run out of Washington, D.C., works with Parker to push legislators to enact stricter gun laws.

“Andy and I became friends after Alison was shot,” Haas said. “Chris, Alison’s boyfriend at the time’s father, reached out to me and connected Parker and I. We go to rallies together, talk strategy together and talk politics together.”

In addition to writing “For Alison,” Parker has been a prominent figure in the media, advocating for gun safety and telling Alison’s story through major news networks such as CNN, NBC and ABC.

“It’s something I feel like I have to do,” Parker said. “It keeps me going. It gives me a purpose, and I have to do it for the people that don’t have a voice. It’s imperative that I do it whenever I have the chance. Whenever I’m offered a platform, I have to speak out.”

Parker collaborated on his book with friend and journalist Ben Williams. He helped Parker with the outline of the book and eventually edited it. Parker gave Williams co-author credit, while Williams described himself as “halfway between being a co-writer and a copy editor.”

The two worked in conjunction on and off throughout the majority of the writing process.

“The analogy I would use is that it’s sort of like being a jeweler;’ Williams said. “Somebody digs up a raw ruby and you take it to a jeweler to have it cut and polished, but everything that’s in that finished ruby was there originally.”

Prior to the collaboration, Williams had known Parker’s wife, Barbara, for roughly a decade. Williams and Parker later met while Williams was working as a reporter for the Martinsville Bulletin in Southern Virginia in 2015. The two developed a friendship while conducting an interview about weekend power generation at Philpott Dam in Bassett, Virginia.

“Parker and Williams spoke at a grand announcement at the Philpott Dam on Aug. 25, 2015, less than 24 hours before Alison was killed. As Williams and Parker had a pre-existing relationship, Williams was often chosen to interview Parker regarding Alison’s passing.”

“I was the logical choice to interview him in the wake of Alison’s death,” Williams said. “I couldn’t even tell you how many stories I did with Parker over the subsequent weeks, months and even years.”

Both Parker and Williams hope the book will paint a clearer picture of the emotions attached to being affected by a violent attack while subsequently encouraging the public to take a stand against gun violence.

“I can’t tell you how many times people come up to you and they know what happened and they say, ‘I can’t imagine, you hear it over and over,’ Parker said. “In this book, I am going to take what you can’t imagine and make it imaginable for you.”

Contact Connor Murphy at murph2cj@dukes.jmu.edu. For more coverage of JMU and Harrisonburg news, follow the news desk on Twitter @BreezeNewsJMU.
Trump addresses nation about building border wall

At 9 p.m. Tuesday, the President addressed the country hoping to gain support and funding for the U.S.-Mexico border wall. In his address, he claimed the proposed $5.7-billion wall is needed to solve a security and humanitarian “crisis” In response, Democrats accused Trump of using fear tactics to potentially gain more supporters.

U.S. and China tariff battle

The U.S. and China ended their three-day discussion about tariffs Wednesday, but no results were announced. Since Dec. 1, the U.S. has attempted to negotiate with China about how Beijing allegedly steals and pressures companies to turn over technology to the government. Chinese officials have suggested that Beijing may change its industrial plans without abandoning what they believe will lead them to prosperity. Economists, however, believe that the established 90-day window is too short for the two largest global economies to come to an agreement.

Man pleads guilty to coercing minor to send explicit photos

According to court documents, a Virginia man will face at least 15 years in prison after convincing an 8-year-old girl to send him sexually explicit photos and videos. Leedente Darrell Brown, 31, pleaded guilty Monday to producing child pornography. His sentencing will take place in April.

Virginia jail overlooks inmate’s mental health

The Riverside Regional Jail in Prince George County failed to monitor an inmate who committed suicide, and the facility was deemed unequipped to handle the aftermath. According to The Richmond Times-Dispatch, the state Board of Corrections report found that a jail officer also faked observation records for an inmate who killed himself. Karen Craig, the jail interim superintendent, told officials Tuesday that the facility has increased staff and begun new oversight procedures since the death.

Virginia kicks off 2019 legislative session

The General Assembly met at noon Wednesday and Gov. Ralph Northam (D) delivered a speech in the evening. The session is scheduled to last 45 days and focus on the state tax policy.

HPD receives V-STOP grant

The Harrisonburg Police Department announced Wednesday that it was awarded the Virginia STOP/Violence Against Women’s Act grant once again. The department received the grant for the first time in 2016. The V-STOP grant is a federally funded program that must be reapplied for every three years. The grant funds 75 percent of a full-time detective position at HPD. The position is focused on domestic violence against women.

City council adopts resolution to support Equal Rights Amendment

The General Assembly met at noon Wednesday and Gov. Ralph Northam (D) delivered the State of the Commonwealth Address, which focused on the accomplishments of the past year while challenging senators to achieve more in the new year. The session is scheduled to last 45 days and focus on the state tax policy.

Visitor services to expand in Harrisonburg

The Harrisonburg Tourism and Visitor Services opened an additional visitor center in partnership with the Valley Mall on East Market Street. The visitor center is a self-service facility with a touch screen and features like an interactive map, branded kiosks and complementary travel information.
Aspen Heights says ‘no signs of forced entry’ in break-ins; students point to damaged windows, doors

By THOMAS ROBERTSON
The Breeze

The Rockingham County Sheriff’s Office is investigating a spree of break-ins that occurred at Aspen Heights Harrisonburg over winter break. As of Wednesday, approximately 24 break-ins were reported across the student housing complex with a wide variety of items stolen.

According to the sheriff’s department, the number of reported break-ins nearly doubled over the weekend as students returned for the start of classes, and it’s likely to increase as they settle in. While Rockingham County Sheriff Bryan Hutcherson said the doors on most houses were locked, unlocked windows appeared to be a common theme among houses that were robbed.

“Residents’ safety and peace of mind are our top priority and we are working to ensure anyone affected receives a prompt resolution,” Aspen said in a statement. “We remind residents that crime can happen anywhere and that they are the first step in preventing crime. Locking doors and windows to their homes, as well as vehicles, is a key crime prevention measure. At this time, Rockingham Sheriff’s Department has told us that there were no signs of forced entry into any home.’

However, many students in a GroupMe chat with about 300 Aspen residents reported kicked-down doors and broken windows at their home. Members of the same GroupMe reported that the Aspen gates were left open for hours at a time over break — including when the main office was closed for the holidays.

No injuries were reported as a result of the break-ins, and police are pursuing a few leads in relation to the cases. In most instances, RCSO said damage to the exterior of the homes was minimal because the suspects gained entry through an unlocked window. RCSO patrols student housing complexes over break, but because of the lack of damage, the break-ins weren’t apparent when patrol cars drove through the area.

The Aspen Heights Harrisonburg office declined to comment, and the housing complex’s corporate office said it didn’t want to disclose details regarding plans for additional security to the general public because the investigation is ongoing. However, Aspen did send another email to its residents following the break-ins.

 Residents are reporting kicked-down doors and damage to windows and screens at their houses.

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Our residents mean the world to us and we sincerely apologize to anyone who has experienced an invasion of their privacy due to a break-in,” Aspen said in the statement released to residents.

Senior psychology major and Aspen resident Jay Chai stayed at his house for most of the break. When he heard about the break-ins from his neighbors and the Aspen GroupMe, he began checking houses for people who were away on break and worried about the possibility of a break-in.

“People are freaking out and I was just staying in Aspen,” Chai said. “I was just doing people a favor.”

After checking 13 houses, he noticed three of them were broken into and two had broken window screens, allowing for entry through a potentially unlocked window. According to Chai, the third house’s door appeared to have been kicked down.

Aspen notified the roommate of senior management major Ally Sammarco on Dec. 29 that it looked like their window screens had been removed and there were signs of a break-in. Sammarco had a Pandora bracelet, speaker, mini projector and Washington Nationals jersey stolen from her room.

“We definitely had our doors locked,” Sammarco said. “Aspen is telling us that we had one window that was unlocked, but we really don’t know why it would’ve been unlocked and we don’t really know how they got in because none of the screens were ripped or anything. The screens looked like they’d been tampered with but we don’t really know which window they came in or anything, so there’s been no details really provided.”

Sammarco and her roommate said Aspen told them RCSO is going to test a blood sample found on their window in an effort to find out who broke into the house. Because reports have come in at separate times over break, Hutcheson said it isn’t clear if all the break-ins occurred at once or by the same people.

Aspen Heights also reminded residents of the option they have to place a work order to set up a security system that sounds an alarm when there’s movement on the first floor. The system can be set up to notify local police. Both Aspen and the sheriff’s department encouraged students to do everything in their power to secure their homes, especially during breaks.

“The first step is to secure the actual building itself,” Hutcheson said. “Make sure you have all doors and windows locked. If there are valuables that you’re able to take with you, then of course we would encourage that, but certainly, just to make sure, double-check, triple-check that the doors, windows and everything are secure … Also we would remind them to do that for their vehicles.”

Hutcheson urged anyone who noticed suspicious activity leading up to the break-ins, has any knowledge of the robberies or hasn’t yet reported a break-in to call RCSO.

CONTACT Thomas Robertson at breezenews@gmail.com. For more coverage of JMU and Harrisonburg news, follow the news desk on Twitter @BreezeNewsJMU.
Rethinking resolutions

New Year’s goals lead to unhealthy mentalities and shouldn’t always be made

SHANNA KELLY

By now, a million articles have been written on New Year’s resolutions and how they’re unhealthy. Everything should be in moderation and goals should be set for over time. But when trying to think of my own resolution for this year, I noticed a new unhealthy aspect that I hadn’t noticed in the past.

New Year’s resolutions are a trend. Many people choose one simply because it’s the norm, not because they are positive changes people have been wanting to make. Therefore, resolutions require people to pick something out about themselves or their lives that they don’t like.

This isn’t the way to go about life, and it’s harmful to mental health — especially today when mental health diagnoses are becoming more common. It’s impossible to ignore how dangerous resolutions can be for one’s mental state.

It’s human nature to look in the mirror or at one’s life and to not like everything seen, but that doesn’t mean we should add to these thoughts. Every negative thought is just a setback. It’d be better for people to look at their lives, accept where they are and look into 2019 positively, knowing that changes will come in their own time.

A common resolution is to go to the gym more and be healthier. What I’ve seen from personal experience and from those around me is that this doesn’t usually lead people to healthier habits. There’s nothing healthy about overexerting and starving oneself simply because it’s the new year and that’s what everyone does.

As someone who goes to the gym on a regular basis, I’ve always gotten annoyed with how crowded UREC gets in the month of January. But what annoys me more than the crowd is the fact that most of them, come February, will have given up and won’t be there anymore.

For the first month of the year, they walk around the gym with their new year’s goals. But when the time to purchase new textbooks comes around, they don’t have one at the top of their head. They simply believe that if someone doesn’t have a resolution that’ll lead them to be healthy mentally and physically or if they don’t have one at the top of their head at all, they should consider not making one.

New Year’s resolutions are a trend. Many people choose one simply because it’s the norm, not because they are positive changes people have been wanting to make. Therefore, resolutions require people to pick something out about themselves or their lives that they don’t like.

This isn’t the way to go about life, and it’s harmful to mental health — especially today when mental health diagnoses are becoming more common. It’s impossible to ignore how dangerous resolutions can be for one’s mental state.

Shanna Kelly
OPINION

Victoria’s Secret Fashion show should be discontinued, as it promotes unrealistic body standards for women

RYANN SHEEHY

The Victoria’s Secret Fashion show, that aired Dec. 2, was an annual reminder to women all over the world that they’ll never live up to the unrealistic beauty standards set in place by females whose entire job is to look perfect. Since 2001 — when the show first aired on national television — girls of all ages have tuned in to see their favorite artists perform alongside the angelic figures of Gigi and Bella Hadid, Kendall Jenner and Karlie Kloss.

Young girls sit through an hour of model after model strutting down the runway in bras bedazzled with Swarovski crystals. Meanwhile, the viewers wallow in self-pity, consuming copious amounts of junk food and wine. Although this has become somewhat of a tradition for girlfriends, it may be time for this exclusive event to be discontinued.

This year, the show aired on ABC and garnered its lowest ratings ever with only 3.3 million viewers, as opposed to 5 million in 2017 and 6.7 million in 2016. The sharp decline could be attributed to a more socially conscious generation that refuses to give in to Victoria’s Secret’s capitalistic brainwashing.

Many other brands are hopping on size-inclusive branding that shows clothing, lingerie, underwear and swimsuits on models of all shapes and sizes. As a result, consumers are responding positively. Brands like Aerie are promoting body positivity and finding ways to show that every body type is beautiful in spite of flaws, skin color or size.

Ed Razek, the CEO for Victoria’s Secret’s parent company L Brands, tried to address this issue in an interview with Vogue. “We invented the plus-size model show in what was our sister division, Lane Bryant,” Razek said. “Lane Bryant still sells plus-size lingerie, but it sells a specific range, just like every specialty retailer in the world sells a range of clothing. As do we. We market to who we sell to, and we don’t market to the whole world.”

Razek makes a valid argument about marketing, but the company is sending a truly horrifying message, since its models are perceived as the ideal body type. It’s perpetuating the idea that there’s only one type of beauty and only women who look like the Angels can shop at their stores.

What really sank the brand, however, was what Razek said about inclusion of transgender models in future shows. “Shouldn’t you have transsexuals in the show?” Razek said. “No, I don’t think we should. Well, why not? Because the show is a fantasy. It’s a 42-minute entertainment special. That’s what it is.”

It’s 2018 and there are still people in positions of power who completely exclude the LGBT community from this idea of a picture-perfect “fantasy.” At this point, brands shouldn’t be continually spreading the idea that there’s one prescribed vision that’s better than the rest.

Even Mary Katrantzou, a British designer for this year’s show, believes in the lies they’ve spread about female empowerment. Katrantzou said “everything that Victoria’s Secret creates is about a woman feeling confident and empowered — and also having fun with what she is wearing.”

What isn’t so clear is that the “woman” she’s talking about refers only to those who fall within the ideal stereotype of a heterosexual, cis-gender VS Angel. Of course those women feel confident and empowered when they’re constantly validated be societal images of beauty and perfection that look just like them.

Halsey was one of the musical guests honored to be a part of this year’s show, but when Razek’s comments were released, she immediately took to Instagram to express her disappointment in the brand’s lack of inclusion and support of the plus-size and trans communities. As someone who’s bisexual and a part of the LGBT community, Halsey wrote, “We stand in solidarity. And complete and total acceptance is the only ‘fantasy’ that I support.”

Victoria’s Secret will undoubtedly lose a mass of customers and fans due to these comments, which makes the airing of next year’s fashion show practically doomed. With even lower ratings, it doesn’t make sense for Victoria’s Secret to continue to broadcast a show that represents an incredibly small population of women in the world. Until Victoria’s Secret makes drastic changes to its marketing and branding, the ultimate demise of the brand is imminent.

Ryann Sheehy is a sophomore theatre and media arts and design double major. Contact Ryann at sheehyr1@dukes.jmu.edu.
On average, 600 movies are made a year. Of these movies, the majority feature straight, white people — the same kinds of people who often don’t think about the race or background of the characters in the content they consume.

The fact of the matter is that straight, white people find themselves represented in almost every aspect of media they come across. Representation in media isn’t something that ventures across their minds often, if at all. But for other people — those of different races, sexualities or genders — the need for representation is a lot more prevalent, to the point where everyone sits up and takes notice when something involving good representation arises.

Examples of this include the movies “Black Panther,” “Love Simon” and “Crazy Rich Asians.” Each of these movies received good reviews and did well in the box office, and that’s because people who aren’t straight and white flock toward whatever scraps of representation they can get.

Besides being satisfying for those the movies represent, media such as this is important for the overly represented to consume as well. It’s undeniable that there are a disproportionate amount of white people in movies and TV shows. About 60 percent of people in the U.S. are white, but very few movies can claim that at least 40 percent of their cast is made of people of color.

Non-white people are cast in roles that reinforce common racist depictions — examples being black people as thugs, Hispanic people as gardeners and so forth. Needless to say, this isn’t the kind of representation these groups are looking for. To make matters worse, it’s also exceedingly rare to find media with people of color as the main character rather than as the straight, white male character’s sidekick.
Respectful representation in media is important for minorities and needs to be improved

Finding media representing LGBT people is no easy feat either. Often times these stories are written or directed by someone with no connection to the LGBT community — not to mention the fact that the majority of movies that depict queer love stories and experiences are created solely to be tearjerkers. They tend to follow the common trope appropriately titled “Bury Your Gays,” when at the end of the film, the LGBT character not only fails to achieve a happy ending, but often winds up dead. Examples of this phenomena include “American Horror Story,” “Voltron: Legendary Defender,” “The Walking Dead,” “Orange is The New Black,” and many more. This problem is so prevalent that the website “doesthedogdie” has created a sub-page titled, “Does an LGBT person die.”

While there certainly are queer people who experience tragedies like those depicted on screen, these experiences aren’t characteristic of most LGBT individuals, and these representations aren’t very inspiring for LGBT youths who could grow up thinking they’re going to face terrors such as these. This is why “Love Simon” is a great example of a representative movie. Not only is it the cheesy kind of romance so many LGBT people desire, but it also has a happy ending and even an interracial romance.

Besides representation being important so that minorities can see themselves on screen and relate to people who look, act or think like them, it also gives minorities a better chance to get the roles they deserve. This is why it’s a problem when roles originally made for a minority — perhaps a person of color originally from a book — are given to white people. It takes away desperately needed representation, and most of the time no one but those minorities even notice.

Media needs to be examined critically. This way, media with more diverse casts will receive the proper attention and funding they deserve, meanwhile media with a majority of straight, white characters will realize they need to improve if they want to continue to be successful.

Jillian Carey is a freshman media arts and design major. Contact Jillian at careyjc@dukes.jmu.edu.

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Behind the scenes of a livestock sale in the state’s largest cattle county

Shenandoah Valley Livestock Sales sells animals like goats, sheep and hogs, but 90 percent of its profits are made off cattle.

By ABBY CHURCH
The Breeze

Inside the Shenandoah Valley Livestock Sales building, it sounds like a second-rate choral group warming up — not bad, given all its members are cattle.

The wooden catwalks above the pens are worn from years of use. Everything is covered by a thin layer of dirt and it smells of farm: a mixture of hay and manure.

It’s a sale day. Moos of all magnitudes and the occasional bleat vibrate through the air, leaving little space to think.

The sale has been around since 1935 and auctions cattle, hogs, sheep and goats to the highest bidder every Wednesday and Saturday. Rockingham County is the state’s largest cattle county and according to a report from the United States Department of Agriculture, it’s estimated there are 100,000 cattle and calves in the county alone.

“It’s a combination of beef and dairy and we’re the only county in the state that has a large amount of dairy cattle,” owner and manager Michael Ritchie said. “And, of course, we have a population of old-order Mennonites and that’s what a lot of them do, they have dairy farms.”

Last year, the auction sold 66,000 animals with about 90 percent being cattle. This year, the number is expected to increase to around 70,000.

“Say a 400-pound black Angus steer calf — he’ll bring, say, $1.50 to a $1.60 per pound and so, pretty much, if he brings $1.50, [then] $600 for the animal,” Ritchie said. “The market, it fluctuates some from week to week or depending on who’s buying.”

Animals are offloaded into the building at 6 a.m. when their owners begin dropping them off. They meander down catwalks to be sorted and are grouped by size before being penned using a chart, which indicates where the animal should go based on its weight, grade and sex. This process takes until 2 p.m. Ritchie has already been here since 4:30 in the morning.

It takes about 30 people to put on a sale, with Saturday being the biggest; most work part time.

Down a set of steep wooden stairs from the catwalks, Ritchie stands in the midst of organized, mooing chaos beside a red-and-white scalehouse and giant scale while wearing a dark blue hoodie and Wrangler jeans.

Cattle quickly enter the grated mud and manure-coated scale, which looks more like a small pen. Ritchie stands to the side, calling out each animal’s weight, sex and assigned pen number from the chart to a microphone perched on the edge of the fence.

The process needs to be quick. Several hundred cattle need to be weighed before the sale begins.

Sometimes cattle enter the scale in singles, other times in sets of two. It’s 10:24 a.m. now, and so far, 600 or 700 cattle have gone through the process — black cattle with tufts of fur on their heads, beige cattle, black-and-white cattle wearing white tags as earrings, chestnut-colored cattle, bulls, steers and heifers. The auction will sell about 15 breeds.

In the scalehouse, weighmasters Heather Strickler and Jackie Cleaver work by a black-and-silver Fairbanks-Morse beam scale in yellow long-sleeved shirts and vests.

Their side on the right of the house is digital, but the analog beam scale remains. The market, it fluctuates some from week to week or depending on who’s buying.

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“Friends” has been on Netflix since 2015. However, recent reports of Netflix taking it off in January 2019 have driven people into a frenzy. Due to the backlash received, Netflix decided to pay $100 million to keep the show, but only for one more year. For those who want to reminisce but don’t have time to rewatch all 10 seasons, here are my top-10 favorite episodes.

10. Season 3, Episode 16
“The One Where They All Turn 30”

After Ross and Rachel get into a fight, Ross sleeps with another girl and spends the episode trying to hide it from Rachel. Once she finds out, Ross must deal with the repercussions and end of their relationship. This episode is the jumpstart to the rest of the series’ famous trope, “We were on a break!”

9. Season 7, Episode 14
“The One Where Everyone Finds Out”

While trying to get Rachel to stop being upset about her 30th birthday, the group begins reminiscing on all their 30th birthdays in a series of flashbacks. Phoebe realizes her actual age and Joey helps her feel accomplished. Rachel’s iconic list of her plans to get married and have children before 35 is relatable as she claims she should’ve had to meet the guy by now.

8. Season 5, Episode 8
“The One With All the Thanksgivings”

The group spends Thanksgiving retelling their past worst Thanksgivings in a series of flashbacks. Joey getting his head stuck in a turkey is a classic, but the most dramatic story was Monica accidentally cutting Chandler’s toe off during their first encounter. Her guilt leads to her wearing the turkey head and Chandler revealing that he loves her at the end of the episode.

7. Season 5, Episodes 23-24
“The One in Vegas”

In this two-part episode, the group goes to Las Vegas for Chandler and Monica’s anniversary and to visit Joey, who’s supposedly doing a film shoot. They quickly realize the shoot was canceled long before they got there. Chandler and Monica get into a fight about Richard, Monica’s ex, and after making up, they decide to get married. Ross and Rachel beat them to it, having married each other after spending a night drinking in the hotel.

6. Season 5, Episode 14
“The One Where Everyone Finds Out”

The beginning of season five is notorious for establishing Monica and Chandler’s secret romance. When Rachel and Phoebe find out the two are dating, they go to hilarious lengths to get them to admit it. Meanwhile, Ross tries to snag Naked Man’s apartment when it goes up for rent and eventually finds out accidentally seeing Monica and Chandler through Naked Man’s window.

5. Season 6, Episodes 15-16
“The One That Could’ve Been”

This two-part episode focuses on the theme “what-if” when Rachel finds out that Barry and Mindy are getting a divorce and wonders what would’ve happened if she never left him at the altar. In the alternate universe, Ross is still married to Carol, Monica is fat and dating a guy named Roger, Joey is famous and still on Days of Our Lives, Chandler is a struggling comic writer and Phoebe works as a stock broker. The storyline follows the lives of these alternate characters and how their paths cross in different ways.

4. Season 6 Episodes 24-25
“The One With the Proposal”

In this two-part season finale, Rachel, Joey and Phoebe go to a silent auction, where Joey accidentally buys a boat. Ross struggles in his relationship with Elizabeth and eventually breaks up with her while Chandler plans to propose to Monica. His proposal goes awry when Richard gets in the way and tries winning Monica back. When Monica goes missing to see Richard, the friends are in a panic to find her and Chandler thinks he’s ruined his chances. Then he finds her back at the apartment proposing to him instead.

3. Season 4, Episodes 23-24
“The One with Ross’s Wedding”

This episode takes place in London at Ross and Emily’s wedding. Naturally, chaos ensues. Monica and Chandler both have rough nights during the rehearsal and end up drinking and waking up in bed together the next day. Phoebe and Rachel stay home in New York until Rachel realizes she still loves Ross and goes to London to stop the wedding. Despite changing her mind, the wedding still takes a twist when Ross accidentally says Rachel’s name instead of Emily’s during the vows.

2. Season 7, Episodes 23-24
“The One With Monica and Chandler’s Wedding”

As a huge fan of Monica and Chandler’s relationship, this two-part season finale is definitely one of my favorites. The episode focuses on their wedding, one that comes with many complications. Chandler gets cold feet right before the ceremony, and Phoebe and Ross must help him through it. Meanwhile, Joey is supposed to be the officiant but is held up due to shooting a scene in a movie. Adding to the chaos, an unknown pregnancy test is discovered, which is presumed to be Monica’s until the end when it’s revealed to be Rachel’s.

1. Season 10, Episodes 17-18
“The Last One”

The last episode is the culmination of the series and concludes each character’s storyline. Monica and Chandler finally find a house and are in the process of moving when Emily, their surrogate, goes into labor and it’s revealed that she had twins. Meanwhile, Rachel gets a job offer in Paris and Ross must decide whether or not to accept his feelings for her. After going back-and-forth, he finally chases her to the airport and confesses his love, but she gets on the plane anyway. A show’s worth of Ross and Rachel is finally settled when he gets home and she appears, revealing that she “got off the plane.”

CONTACT Brittany Bell at bellbl@dukes.jmu.edu.

Thursday, January 10, 2019

The Breeze
Attardi has performed at venues like Club Lavo in New York City and Echostage in Washington, D.C., which is the district's largest indoor concert venue. He’s collaborated with artists such as Two Friends and Lost Kings and performed at festivals with Steve Aoki and deadmau5.

"There are a lot of people who are great at DJing, but who can’t self-promote," Paul Somers, owner and operator of The Golden Pony, said. "That was one of the things that set him apart. He would see to it that the show turnout would be beyond substantial."

Today, Attardi has honed in on perfecting a niche of electronic music, known as "tropical house" — a combination of reggae fusion and deep house. It overlaps sounds of steel drums, marimba and guitar with an electronic pulse, creating a more relaxed form of house music.

"Music is one of those small moments that bring people together, that becomes a bigger moment," Attardi said. While Attardi is now an auditor at KPMG, DJing remains his passion. After a long day at work, he’ll escape into his laboratory of drum machines and synths, conjuring up new songs and mixes. The hope is to eventually make this his livelihood, uplifting people with “dope” new music full time.

"I use it as a way to express my personality," Attardi said. "I can’t talk to you, but I’ll play good music that’ll make you happy."
They can tell which animals they need to keep their eyes on. The worst injury Ritchie’s seen is a broken leg. “I can look at their eyes and see whether they’re gonna come after you or not,” Ritchie said. “Their demeanor just changes and they just get a look... You can’t be too scared of them. You have to take some risks.”

The auction ring is bowl-like with rickety wooden chairs around it. Conversation drowns out the animal calls while workers spray down the sawdust-covered floor with a hose so it doesn’t kick up into the animals’ eyes.

When a woman pulls the rope on a giant, red dusty bell, the auction begins. First out are the goats. Animals are directed around the ring by workers with sticks. Once they’re shown, the animals exit through a door at the right and head back to their pen. All the while, bids are called.

Grant Rhodes is today’s jabbering auctioneer. “The main thing you’re saying is the number,” Rhodes said. “What you’re asking for. And then in between, instead of saying ‘21, 21, 21, 21, ‘ you gotta have a little filler.” His is “dollar now.” “21 dollar now one, 21 dollar now two, dollar now three,” he said, demonstrating his talking routine.

Bidding is done by visual code. Some use a slight pistol-firing gesture, flicking their hand to the sky. Some raise a hand, others raise white pamphlets and some do the world’s smallest nod. Others still seemingly just need to make eye contact. It can be hard to keep score.

The selling is monotonous, but some animals entertain. A rambunctious goat with curved horns prances around the arena, its shaggy black and white coat almost scraping the ground.

The sheep follow the goats, then the hogs. Then it’s the cattle. Ritchie, Rhodes and Strickler take the raised, red and white wooden stand. A second ding of the bell signals the start.

A group of massive brown and white cattle draws audible attention as it circles the arena. As quickly as they enter, the animals exit. Rhodes leans into his microphone. “That’s all that pen, lock ’em up.”

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Freshly hired and just starting to grasp the route from his hotel to Bridgeforth Stadium, Curt Cignetti walked up to the podium in the club suite to address both the media and JMU Nation on Dec. 17 for the first time as the new head football coach.

“You want me to play it safe today or let it rip? ’Sup Charlie? I haven’t heard from you this morning,” Cignetti asked.

“Day’s young,” Charlie King, senior vice president of administration and finance at JMU and one of the administrators who hired Cignetti, quipped back.

The quick exchange between employer and employee allowed those who made their way to the stadium to catch a glimpse of the personality Cignetti carries. It was also made evident during his first few minutes at the podium that Cignetti is eager to bring a JMU team that fell short of preseason expectations back to the top of the FCS.

While often boasted as the best job in the FCS by those connected to the program, JMU has room to improve in Cignetti’s eyes. To the Pennsylvania native, JMU is the best FCS job east of the Mississippi and among the top two or three in the nation.

“Words can’t express how excited and grateful I am to have this opportunity to lead this program,” Cignetti said. "I heard Jeff [Bourne] say it was the best in America and I think that’s why I’m standing here. I have to make it the best in America because, right now, it’s not the best in America based on our four losses last year.”

Cignetti led the Elon Phoenix to back-to-back FCS playoff appearances and amassed a record of 14-9 during his time at the school.

‘I’m just ready to go’

Cignetti brings a lifetime of football experience to hungry JMU program
With their home base now in Harrisonburg, Curt's daughters are excited to see what their dad can do at the school the family has tagged "the Alabama of the FCS." While they’ve yet to experience a season supporting the purple and gold, there are still memories they hold from watching JMU play Elon.

"Do you want to know what I knew about JMU?" Natalie jokingly asked Dudley. "I knew about the streamers they threw at us when we were at Elon."

It hasn’t just been Curt’s dad who has left a major impact on his life and coaching career. Prior to becoming a head coach himself, Curt worked with football legends Nick Saban at Alabama and Johnny Majors at Pittsburgh.

During his time at FBS-powerhouse Alabama, Curt recruited players who went on to have successful NFL careers like Julio Jones, Mark Ingram and Don'ta Hightower. While recruiting big names to an Alabama team that hadn’t seen a SEC title since 1999 prior to Saban’s arrival, Curt was learning what it took to build a football program from one of the game’s best coaches.

"I learned how to run a program and compartmentalize and how important recruiting is," Curt said. "I learned what to look for in people, and how to develop a football team, and how to manage a football game, and how to make decisions, when to make decisions, what decisions are important and what decisions are not important."

After just one season with Saban, Curt felt he was ready to move on and lead a program himself. However, he remained with the team for three more years. Following those few extra seasons, Curt took what he learned from Saban and went to IUP.

"Alabama had a great name and Coach Saban — who I learned a lot from — had some experience," Curt said. "But he became Nick Saban and they became Alabama again when they got the right guy and the right place together."

The lessons from Saban and his father have helped Curt turn the programs he led into winning ones. In his eight years as a head coach, Curt has amassed a career record of 67-26 and earned five playoff berths.

"At the end of the day, people will remember how many games I won, how many championships we won," Curt said. "That’s what will live on the internet, that’s what will be in black and white ...

But the people you meet, the relationships that you develop, they’re going to remember. ‘Who was Curt Cignetti? What did he stand for? What were his ideals and values?’ and it’s important to me to be the best person that I can be."

After being bounced from the playoffs in the second round, the JMU faithful are ready for the 2019 season to get underway. With just under seven months until the Dukes kick off against Curt’s alma mater West Virginia, his expectations are high.

"There’s only one James Madison — there’s only one,” Curt said. “There’s tremendous resources here and I think with the right plan, vision and blueprint, the sky is the limit.

As his formal introduction came to a close and he got ready to answer questions from the media, Curt closed his formal greeting much to the way he started it.

"I’m just ready to go,” Curt said. “So, did I play it safe or let it all hang out?"

CONTACT Catie Harper at breezesports@gmail.com. For more football coverage, follow the sports desk on Twitter @TheBreezeSports.
Stout defenses historically lead to Super Bowls

By JORDAN SIMAL
The Breeze

Defense wins championships. Those three words have stood true in football since the league's creation and continue to. Even in the present age of high-powered offenses, a solid defense is the key to winning it all.

One NFL game earlier this season caught the eyes of the nation. On a Monday night at the famed L.A. Coliseum, the Kansas City Chiefs and Los Angeles Rams lit up the scoreboard, combining for 105 points in the Rams' 54-51 shootout win. For a game that some are debating as the "greatest ever played," it featured something many fans forget amid all the aerial touchdowns from Jared Goff and Patrick Mahomes — there were three defensive scores.

Rams linebacker Samson Ebukam had both a fumble return for a touchdown and pick-six, while Kansas City defensive end Allen Bailey returned a loose ball to the end zone. There were also an additional four turnovers that led the game to its conclusion.

Undoubtedly, the high-flying offensive battle between two of the NFL's youngest quarterbacks was impressive and entertaining to watch, but the two defenses were pivotal in the game's final score and are often lost in the conversation.

This year's best proof of defensive superiority has been the Chicago Bears. It's a franchise that's had less than five wins in each of its last four seasons, but with key defensive additions like former Oakland Raider Khalil Mack and rookie Roquan Smith, it went 12-4 with the league's top-ranked defense. During 2018, the Bears recorded 51 sacks, 18 fumbles — six from Mack — and 29 interceptions on the year, with five brought back for touchdowns.

The Chicago Bears had the NFL's best scoring defense in 2018.

As the NFL has evolved to what it is today, time has only reassured the importance of defense. The 2000 Baltimore Ravens defense, led by Hall of Fame linebacker Ray Lewis, shut down the New York Giants in Super Bowl XXXV, intercepting and sacking quarterback Kerry Collins four times each. The Seattle Seahawks and their "Legion of Boom" had 28 interceptions in 2013 and destroyed Peyton Manning and the Denver Broncos in Super Bowl XLVIII. Two years later, Von Miller and the Broncos had 14 interceptions, 22 fumbles and 52 sacks on their way to winning Super Bowl 50.

The importance of a strong defense can't be stressed enough. In the modern era of the NFL, it seems half of the league has an offense that can compete for the playoffs, but only a handful of teams hold a defense that can shut down their opponents. Today's audience may favor high-scoring and five-touchdown games from young quarterbacks, but the NFL's defenses are the key to whether or not high-flying offenses get their shot at the Lombardi Trophy.

Defense in football shouldn't be treated any less entertaining than an offense and is still the most crucial part in building a winning program.

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The NFL’s elite have high-scoring offenses

By GRAYSON HEFLIN
The Breeze

The 2018 NFL season was a massive year for offensive success producing winning teams. With a steady increase of offensive complexity and the league’s turn to aid offensive production, the future of the NFL is clearly offensively driven.

Of the 12 teams to make the playoffs this season, 10 of them had top-13 offenses in terms of points per game. Furthermore, the top four seeds in the playoffs — the Kansas City Chiefs, Los Angeles Rams, New Orleans Saints and New England Patriots — had the top four scoring offenses in the league, averaging 31.75 points per game.

Even of the eight teams remaining in the playoffs, six of them rank in the top six of scoring offenses. Having a balanced attack of a strong offense and defense is certainly important, but it’s crucial to point out that the No. 1 and No. 2 scoring defenses in the 2018 regular season — the Chicago Bears and Baltimore Ravens — lost their opening-round matchups of the postseason and the No. 3 and No. 4 scoring defenses — the Tennessee Titans and Jacksonville Jaguars — combined for a 14-21 record and both missed the playoffs.

While the NFL had an offensive explosion this season — as three teams scored over 500 points for the first time ever — the league has been growing more and more offense-oriented since the NFL merger in 1970. In the debut year of the NFL, teams averaged 4.6 yards per play. That number has steadily grown since, making its way up to 5.2 last year and 5.58 in 2018.

The coaching carousel is also a clear indication that the NFL is moving forward with an emphasis on finding offensive fruition. A number of the top considerations for this year’s coach of the year — the Bears’ Matt Nagy, the Indianapolis Colts’ Frank Reich and the Saints’ Sean Payton — are offensive playcallers. Over the last two seasons and this current offseason, there have been 15 head-coaching hires, and 10 of them come from offensive backgrounds.

The immediate turnaround of teams’ success behind smart offensive coaches like Sean McDermott with the Rams or Nagy with the Bears has prompted the majority of the league to find a replica of young, creative coaches with offensive backgrounds. On Monday, the Green Bay Packers hired former Titans offensive coordinator Matt LaFleur, despite him having just two years with play-calling experience. The Arizona Cardinals brought in former Texas Tech head coach Kliff Kingsbury, who has just two years of NFL experience, after firing their defensive-minded coach Steve Wilks following just one season.

Even the league itself has caught wind of this offensive growth and made several rule changes that benefit NFL offenses. Defensive pass-interference calls were given out at an alarming rate this year, and the ruling of a catch has been modified to where receivers have a lower risk of fumbling the ball or dropping a pass. Pass-rushers can also no longer aggressively bring quarterbacks to the ground on sacks, and the overall safety of the quarterback has been prioritized because of the position’s importance to successful teams.

The argument can still be made that a top offense and defense are necessary to be an elite team in today’s NFL, but winning programs in 2018 were more likely to have a top offense rather than a top defense. Given the rise in offensive production on the field, rapid growth of teams hiring offensive-minded head coaches and rule changes helping protect offensive personnel, the future of the league is one fully centered around offense.

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ACROSS
1 Fall sign       6 Medic
2 Friends 9-Across’s “Pronto!”
3 Keep clear of 14 Sorts cousin
4 Leaving on a 15 “Righto!”
5 Jet 16 “Warhol”
6 Refuge for very 18 “How do I love you?”
7 Far from klutzy 19 “Big boss”
8 High-tech eye 20 “Mean Girls”
9 Summer sign? 22 Unburdened (of)
10 Parkway feature 23 Deceptive move
11 Tippi of “The 24 Coder’s conditional
12 Mattel product 25 Navy builder
13 Spring sign 26 They may be
14 Mauna __ 27 “Pinball Wizard”
15 Enjoy, as benefits 28 They may be
16 *Big boss 29 Uses Google
17 “Nick of Time” 30 Apple’s virtual
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19 *2005 Emma 32 Rip to pieces
20 Unburdened (of) 33 Really annoyed,
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National champs

The Breeze reflects on the biggest win for JMU football in 12 years.

By MATT WEYRICH
The Breeze

FRISCO, Texas — Toyota Stadium is a 1,199-mile drive from JMU football’s home field at Bridgeforth Stadium. The gametime temperature was in the low 20s and the university’s students would have their first day of second semester classes in less than 48 hours. None of that stopped the JMU faithful from filling the stands to watch the Dukes beat Youngstown State University 28-14 and win their second national championship in program history.

Junior quarterback Bryan Schor threw for 112 yards and a pair of touchdowns while senior running back Khalid Abdullah added 101 rushing yards and two scores of his own. The Dukes appeared in their first Football Championship Subdivision title game since winning it all in 2004. Youngstown State entered the game boasting one of the stingiest defensive fronts in the nation, but JMU was able to get ahead early and never look back.

Both of Schor’s touchdown passes came on back-to-back drives in the first quarter. Redshirt senior linebacker Justin Wellons blocked the Penguins’ punt on their first possession of the game, setting up a quick two-play drive that ended with junior tight end Jonathan Kloosterman making a leaping end zone grab. Schor hit senior wide receiver Rashard Davis on an 18-yard touchdown pass on their next drive to put the Dukes up by two touchdowns.

“I think that’s what we’ve tried to do all year is get off to a fast start,” head coach Mike Houston said. “And certainly that’s easier said than done ... I think it was a culmination of all three phases working together and really clicking there early in the ballgame that got us two quick scores.”

Abdullah wrapped up one of the most prolific seasons by a running back in JMU history with a strong performance in the final game of his college career. He finished the contest with 1,809 yards on the year, setting a new school record for most rushing yards in a single season. Abdullah was named the FCS Championship Most Outstanding Player for his impact in the game.

“We just wanted to go out on the right note and we knew we had the team to do it,” Abdullah said. “So to go out here and get that accomplished, it’s something that we’ll remember forever.”

Defensively, the Dukes put together one of their most spectacular performances of the year. JMU racked up five sacks — the most they’ve had in any game this season — and held the run-heavy Penguins to just 21 rushing yards. The team forced two turnovers, including an interception that bounced off the foot of junior wide receiver Damoun Patterson and into the hands of sophomore cornerback Curtis Oliver.

“Defensively, the Dukes put together one of their most spectacular performances of the year. JMU racked up five sacks — the most they’ve had in any game this season — and held the run-heavy Penguins to just 21 rushing yards. The team forced two turnovers, including an interception that bounced off the foot of junior wide receiver Damoun Patterson and into the hands of sophomore cornerback Curtis Oliver.”

Redshirt senior linebacker and defensive captain Gage Steele finished the game with six tackles, including two sacks. The Penguins only managed to find their way into the red zone twice, as the Dukes’ relentless and physical play forced them into facing 18 third downs. Youngstown State was able to score its second touchdown with 10 seconds left, but by then the game was already out of reach.

“This is going to be a moment that we talk about for the rest of our lives,” Steele said. “It’s a very special feeling to have a team that you’ve been through a lot with ... We just came together as a group of guys and decided we all had one goal and we achieved that today.”

JMU fans provided for a rowdy atmosphere. They were loud when their team’s defense was on the field, and cheered — with streamers and all — every time JMU scored. The Dukes have come a long way. Back-to-back early blowout exits, a head coaching change and one of the toughest conferences in the FCS stood in JMU’s way of reaching Frisco. But against all odds, the Dukes are national champions.

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Behind the scenes of MadiZONE

BY VICTORIA GIAMBOI
contributing writer

A white piece of paper is held up in the air, reflecting the sun. The cameraman zooms in on the paper, setting the "white balance," which renders colors accurately.

Only this time, it didn’t work. Although it’s an unusually hot October day, the cameramen must disregard the sweaty conditions and focus on getting the perfect shots of James Madison University’s homecoming game. It takes hands-on experience to film football games.

Chris Strunk, a media arts and design major, and cameraman for the Video Board Production team, maneuvers his way through the student section to get the proper white balance for his wireless camera. His brow furrows after trying multiple times to capture the right balance. He reaches for his headset to discuss it with his boss.

"How's the balance?" he repeats several times.

Finally, after three times, the colors are correct.

"It's controlled chaos," said Doug Schmelter, a senior media arts and design major who’s employed by MadiZONE to shoot the games. "It's the nature of a live event. There isn’t any time to stop if something goes wrong and you’re doing everything on the fly."

Camera operators have a constant stream of instructions filling their headset. John Hodges, technical director for MadiZONE, tells the operators what shots to get.

"Camera four, I’m coming to you. Camera four is up. Camera four, you’re clean."

Four hours prior to kickoff, the camera crew arrives at the field. Their day consists of meetings, an hour of setup, a lunch break and then filming of pregame warm-ups.

Strunk attaches the transmitter to the top of the camera, which sends the signal to the receiver by the press box. He then makes sure the receiver is capturing the signal.

Then they must time sync all the cameras. This puts them on the same clock so that when the video is edited it can be pieced together easily.

The camera operators film the players stretching and help conduct interviews.

There are six cameras MadiZONE has strategically placed to get the best shot.

The "Game" camera is up high to show the entire play. The "High Tight" camera is still high up but gets a closeup look on the action to show the replay.

The "Slash" camera’s purpose is not to shoot toward the end zone, but rather to get a more head-on shot of the players coming toward the end zone. The "Low End Zone" camera is at ground level.

The hand-held camera focuses on the sideline to get shots of the huddles, the coaches talking and a down-the-line view of the ball.

Finally, the "Robotic" camera is on the scoreboard. This is used for following plays or taking "beauty shots" of the scenery. Shots of the sun setting over the Shenandoah Valley are the perfect backdrop to show graphics and player statistics on the board.

Anticipating the action is a key element. "Instinctively, you should know what is going to happen," Hodges said.

"There's a formula to filming these games. The cameramen and crew must know that on third down the crowd is going to go crazy, which suggests a crowd shot. On a field goal attempt it’s important to get the players’ or coaches’ reaction to it."

"We just try our best at showing the game for the people who are not there," Hodges said. "From showing the people in the stands, the sunset and the rain puddles on the ground ... just so those people can enjoy a professional experience like us."

Things can go wrong. During Strunk’s second game his headset stopped working. Thus he didn’t know when his camera was on. He had to have his partner place his hand on his shoulder to let him know when he was on the board. When his shot was over, his partner would remove his hand.

Schmelter finds that getting the play is the hardest part. It’s easy to get tricked by fake plays.

As control room chief, Hodges has a different type of challenge.

"I know that when I sit down I am not moving from the seat," Hodges said. "It’s game on from there."

While fans see the bone-crushing hits and hear the sound of shoulder pads slamming together, not many realize the energy and intensity needed to put together a MadiZONE broadcast. Hodges and the MadiZONE staff work tirelessly to make sure fans get to see every angle of the Dukes. While this year’s regular season has come to a close, the crew will be back at work come early September 2017, when JMU looks to defend its Colonial Athletic Association title.

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What’s next for the Dukes?

Looking toward the future successes and struggles of the FCS national champions

By BENNETT CONLIN
The Breeze

As junior quarterback Bryan Schor knelt down to run out the final seconds of JMU’s national championship victory, fans flooded the field to celebrate the program’s first national title since 2004 and its second in school history. With the national championship coming in head coach Mike Houston’s first season, JMU fans should feel optimistic they won’t have to wait another 12 years for a championship.

The Dukes (14-1, 8-0 Colonial Athletic Association), who defeated Youngstown State University 28-14 in the Football Championship Subdivision national championship, return 12 of the 22 championship game starters next season.

Schor, the CAA Offensive Player of the Year, headlines the returning starters. Schor finished the season with 39 total touchdowns, including 29 passing touchdowns. He also threw for 3,002 yards on the season and amassed 3,571 total yards.

The gunslinger is excited to relax after the championship and eventually begin preparing for next year.

“We’ll celebrate and we’ll enjoy this moment,” Schor said. “At the right time we’ll put it in a cabinet, we’ll put it away, we’ll take the national championship shirts and put them somewhere and we’ll get to work and try to be here next year.”

see FUTURE, page 7

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Winning a national championship builds a standard of excellence the program hopes to reach year after year. While JMU may have more outside pressure on the team next season, it knows the most pressure will come from within the program.

“You’ve created expectations,” Houston said. “But you know what? We had those expectations anyway. We had the expectation that we wanted to win the CAA championship, and I think anybody that follows the CAA knows the champion of that conference every year has a chance to win the national championship.”

On the defensive side of the ball, the Dukes return key standouts like redshirt junior safety Raven Greene and redshirt junior defensive end Andrew Ankrah. Greene led the Dukes with six interceptions on the season, while Ankrah racked up 3.5 sacks and 44 total tackles. Much like Schor, Ankrah is looking forward to taking some time off to recharge.

“We don’t have another opponent until next year,” Ankrah said. “We’re going to enjoy this for a while.”

Once the Dukes shift their focus to next season, they’ll more than likely be one of the favorites to win the 2017-18 national championship. Joining Schor on offense will be redshirt junior running back Cardon Johnson, Georgia Tech transfer and junior running back Marcus Marshall and junior tight end Jonathan Kloosterman, among others.

Kloosterman scored touchdowns in every postseason game this season, including the opening touchdown in the national championship on a 17-yard strike from Schor. The running game should be lethal as Johnson, Marshall and sophomore running back Trai Sharp all eclipsed 600 rushing yards this season and Schor was close behind with 569.

The Dukes will have a plethora of offensive talent on the roster. Defensively, Ankrah and Greene are joined by redshirt juniors Simeyon Robinson and Jordan Brown. Robinson, a defensive tackle, finished the year with four sacks and 7.5 tackles for a loss of yards. Brown, a safety, finished the season with 92 tackles and two interceptions.

With Houston, a conference’s Coach of the Year in five of the last six seasons, at the helm, JMU football fans are in good hands. All in all, JMU has the talent returning on both sides of the ball to contend for another championship.

**FUTURE**  
JMU football looks to the future after FCS Championship win: Schor, Johnson, Sharp and Kloosterman will return for the Dukes in 2017-18

**CONTACT** Bennett Conlin at breezesports@gmail.com
PLAYER OF THE YEAR

He won the starting spot, was named CAA’s offensive player of the year, then became a national champion. Bryan Schor had an unforgettable season.

By MATT WEYRICH
The Breeze

Rewind back to October 24, 2015. The Dukes are 7-0 and gearing up for a showdown with conference rival the University of Richmond. ESPN’s College GameDay crew’s in town and Bridgeforth Stadium’s filled to the brim with a sold-out crowd. Sophomore quarterback Bryan Schor takes it all in, but has prepared to do so from the bench.

Redshirt senior signal caller Vad Lee is at the center of the Football Championship Subdivision spotlight. Lee has been a dominant force both on the ground and in the air since transferring to JMU from Georgia Tech University prior to the 2014 season. The last thing anyone expects heading into the game would be to see Schor playing any meaningful minutes.

In the fourth quarter of that fateful contest, however, the worst nightmare of the JMU faithful happens right before their eyes. Lee goes down with a foot injury, forcing head coach Everett Withers to thrust Schor right into the thick of crunch time. The underclassman quarterback fills in admirably, throwing for 73 yards and a touchdown, but it isn’t enough as the Dukes fall 59-49.

Fast forward to 2017. Schor is the Colonial Athletic Association Offensive Player of the Year. He leads the FCS with a 73.1 completion percentage while averaging 214.4 passing yards and 2.1 touchdowns per game. Schor commands an offense that ranks among the best in the nation and just won a national championship. A lot can change in a little over 14 months.

see SCHOR, page 10
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SCHOR | ‘The guys really took me in and they made me comfortable’

Bryan Schor makes a play in the Dukes’ game against the University of New Hampshire on Dec. 3. The team beat UNH 55-22, solidifying its rise to the national championship, which was on Jan. 7.

Schor finished the 2015 season with 847 yards, seven touchdowns and an interception. He showed promise, but there was a clear disparity between his performance and Lee’s. Amid a coaching change and transfer redshirt junior quarterback Connor Mitch joining the program from the University of South Carolina, his future in Harrisonburg was uncertain.

Head coach Mike Houston hosted a competition during training camp for the starting job. It came down to the final week, but Houston announced Schor as the Week 1 starter just days before the season opener. Schor credits his teammates for supporting him throughout the process.

“The guys really took me in and they made me comfortable,” Schor said. “They put the faith in me that I could be a really good quarterback, and having that belief in me has really kind of made me step my game up a little bit and do the extra things that I needed to do to help us improve.”

Schor took over the starting job and never looked back. Seemingly out of nowhere, he emerged as a dual-threat quarterback. Schor led the Dukes to a 14-1 record and helped them win their second national championship in school history.

The Dukes are national champions, and they wouldn’t have gotten close if it weren’t for Schor’s spectacular play. He’s got one more season left in a JMU uniform, putting no limits on what he will accomplish next.

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The Dukes celebrate their 2016 championship win in Frisco, Texas, on Saturday. The 14 seniors on the team, 11 of whom were starters, are proud to have capped off their collegiate careers with an FCS victory.

**Highlights of the senior Dukes’ final season, player by player**

**By MATT WEYRICH**
*The Breeze*

JMU football’s senior class has been through it all. It’s seen three head coaching changes, a pair of early playoff exits and a divided locker room. It would’ve made sense for many of them to transfer along the way, but instead they stuck together. Now they’ve earned the ultimate prize: going out as national champions.

Fourteen players who took the field in Frisco, Texas, did so for the final time of their college careers. Eleven of them started the national championship game, including five on offense, four on defense and two specialists. While each of them played a different role on the field, they all leave behind a legacy as leaders of one of the best teams in university history.

**Khalid Abdullah, Running back** — Abdullah graduates from JMU as one of the most prolific running backs the school has ever seen. Starting in all 15 games this year, he set numerous program single-season records including rushing yards (1,809), rushing touchdowns (22), total touchdowns (25) and points scored (150). Abdullah was named a STATS FCS Second Team All-American and awarded American Sports Network FCS Player of the Year.

**Brandon Ravenel, Wide receiver** — Ravenel was the team leader in receptions and receiving yards each of the past two years. He finished this season with 45 catches for 720 yards and five touchdowns. Ravenel was named a First Team All-CAA Wide Receiver and returned 14 kickoffs for 339 yards and a touchdown.

**Taylor Reynolds, Cornerback** — Reynolds was the team’s top cornerback this season, recording 55 tackles and two interceptions. He was selected to the STATS FCS Third Team All-American as well as First Team All-CAA for the second straight year. Reynolds was a starter in all four of his seasons of eligibility.

**Domo Taylor, Wide receiver** — Taylor played in all 15 games this season, making eight starts. He reeled in 36 catches for 594 yards and three touchdowns. Taylor caught the longest pass of the year for the Dukes, converting a career-high 70-yard touchdown against Elon University on Nov. 19.

**Justin Wellons, Linebacker** — Wellons played outside linebacker, appearing in all 15 games including five starts. He recorded 25 tackles on the season and recovered his first career fumble against Morehead State University on Sept. 3. Wellons blocked a punt on Youngstown State University’s first drive of the game, setting up an easy touchdown for JMU to get its offense rolling.

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PORTraits of A SEASON

JMU’s amazing run, through The Breeze’s lens

TOP Senior Khalid Abdullah celebrates after scoring a touchdown in the Dukes’ first game of the season against Morehead State. TOP RIGHT The Dukes celebrate after their 56-21 win against Central Connecticut State.

BOTTOM Abdullah tucks the ball away and makes his way through the Tar Heels defense on Sep. 17 at Chapel Hill, North Carolina, where the Dukes lost their only game of the season to the Tar Heels 56-28.
Redshirt sophomore corner Jimmy Moreland tackles a Delaware player during JMU's Family Weekend game at Bridgeforth Stadium on Oct. 1 where the Dukes overcame the Delaware Blue Hens winning 43 to 20.

Redshirt junior Cardon Johnson runs the ball into the end zone during JMU's game against William & Mary.

TOP Junior linebacker David Ezeagwu runs onto the field before JMU's contest with University of New Hampshire.

BOTTOM Freshman defensive lineman John Daka fights toward the quarterback in JMU's win over the URI Rams.
JMU’s offensive line celebrates a touchdown while the crowd throws streamers. BOTTOM LEFT Redshirt junior Jordan Brown lifts the championship trophy with teammates Taylor Reynolds, Gunnar Kane and others.
Senior running back Khalid Abdullah stretches to score a touchdown for No. 5 JMU against No. 13 Youngstown State University at the national championship game in Frisco, Texas, on January 7.
Senior Khalid Abdullah celebrates in the endzone with some of his fellow teammates after scoring a touchdown in the fourth quarter in the Dukes’ game against University of Richmond on Nov. 5 where the Dukes won 47-43.

LEFT Reshirt junior defensive lineman Andrew Ankrah explodes off the ball in JMU’s victory over Villanova. MIDDLE Head coach Mike Houston voices his displeasure with the officiating during JMU’s 20-7 victory over Villanova. RIGHT Redshirt junior wide receiver Terrence Alls runs with the ball through Villanova’s defense at Villanova Stadium on November 12.

Photos by Connor Boudard and Loren Probish / The Breeze

Sophomore running back Trai Sharp dives into the end zone to score a touchdown for the Dukes during their game against Elon. The Dukes would end up with a 63-14 victory over the Phoenix on Nov. 19 at Bridgeforth Stadium.
TOP LEFT Senior wide receiver Domo Taylor runs with the ball during the quarterfinal game in the Fargo Dome. BOTTOM LEFT Senior wide receiver Rashard Davis goes up for a catch in JMU's 65-7 dismantling of Sam Houston State University. TOP RIGHT Junior wide receiver John Miller hauls in a touchdown pass from Schor on third-and-10 to put the Dukes up 27-17 over North Dakota State University. MIDDLE RIGHT Sophomore linebacker Dimitri Holloway celebrates with teammates following JMU's win in the semifinals. BOTTOM RIGHT Junior quarterback Bryan Schor delivers a throw in JMU's semifinal game against North Dakota State University.
Sports editor Bennett Conlin ranks the 2016 Dukes as the best team in JMU history

By BENNETT CONLIN
The Breeze

The 2016-17 JMU football team is the only team in program history to record 14 victories in a season. It’s only the second time the Dukes (14-1, 8-0 Colonial Athletic Association) have won a national championship. With the historic season now finished, one has to wonder whether this Dukes team is the best to ever don the purple and gold.

“They went undefeated in CAA play,” head coach Mike Houston said following the 28-14 victory over Youngstown State University in the championship game. “They beat North Dakota State at North Dakota State and won a national championship on its resume, it’s tough to name it the best football team JMU has seen.”

While Houston is confident in his team, the Dukes saw some stiff competition from prior seasons.

We’ll start our journey through JMU football history with the 1975 team. In the program’s fourth year in existence, the Dukes went 9-0-1 and won their final nine contests. Due to the absence of MadizONE and social media at this time, not many people are familiar with the 1975 team, but the group put together the only undefeated season in school history.

In the 1976 season, the Dukes scored an astounding 700 total points and 46.7 points per game. In the 1975 season, the Dukes scored a measly 12.5 points per game and won just one game by double digits. For fans of a high-powered offense and flashy touchdowns, the 1975 season wasn’t for you.

While the 2016 team lit up scoreboards, the team cared more about winning a championship than achieving individual accolades. Senior running back Khalid Abdullah broke single-season JMU records with over 1,800 yards and 22 rushing touchdowns. Despite the impressive records, Abdullah wasn’t overly excited about them after the championship game.

“You know, that’s cool,” Abdullah said. “But at the end of the day it’s definitely about the team. Outside of statistics, it’s more so about hoisting that big trophy.”

Statistics might not mean everything, but having an eye-popping offense is always nice for fans.

In the 2004 season, the Dukes and head coach Mickey Matthews had dynamic playmakers, but once again they were on the defensive side of the ball. JMU finished this season 13-2 and ended the season with a national title behind a defense that allowed just 16.7 points per game.

Even more impressive than the defense was the team’s road to the national championship. All four postseason victories came away from home, including a 48-34 semifinal win over the College of William & Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia. The Dukes capped their historic season with a 31-21 victory over the University of Montana in the national title game.

Fast forward to 2008 and the Dukes have a significantly more explosive offense. They average over 34 points per game behind quarterback Rodney Landers, who scored an impressive 37 total touchdowns. He also records more than 3,000 total yards on the season as JMU earns the No. 1 seed in the playoffs.

Despite the impressive regular season, the year came to a close in disappointing fashion when the Dukes lost to Montana 35-27 in the semifinals at Bridgeforth Stadium.

The 2008 team will go down as one of the best teams in school history, but with no national championship on its resume, it’s tough to name it the best football team JMU has seen.

Now, back to today’s team. The 2016 Dukes came into the season following a 2015 team that scored 44.3 points per game behind quarterback Vad Lee, who won the CAA Offensive Player of the Year. Lee and the Dukes had ESPN’s College GameDay come to town in mid-October for a battle with the University of Richmond, but they fell short and Lee was injured.

Schor took over for Lee, but the season was derailed when their redshirt senior leader went down and the Dukes, who started the season 7-0, had their chances of being the best team in program history evaporate before their eyes.

After backing up Lee and stepping in for the final four games of the 2015 year, Schor was ready to take over. He stepped in seamlessly and matched Lee by winning the CAA Offensive Player of the Year award this season. The Dukes’ 46.7 points per game this year tops last season’s mark and gives JMU one of the best offenses in program history.

In the national championship postgame press conference, a reporter asked Schor about being the best quarterback in the country. Schor responded by complimenting the best offense in JMU history.

“I’m lucky to have the arsenal that we have at JMU,” Schor said. “To call me the best, I don’t know if that’s accurate, but I think we have the best team. I’m lucky to have those guys because they make me look good each week.”

With a program-record 14 victories, a national championship and the most explosive offense to ever come through Harrisonburg, it’s hard to argue that there’s a better team in JMU football history.

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How to win

Head coach Mike Houston off to a great start

By MATT WEYRICH
The Breeze

If there’s one thing that JMU head coach Mike Houston knows just as well as football, it’s how to win. Since taking over his first collegiate football program in 2011, Houston has guided all but one of his teams to at least a share of its conference title. Now, the 45-year-old mastermind behind the Dukes’ success this season has achieved his biggest victory yet: a national championship.

Houston wasn’t always set on being a football coach. He received a bachelor’s degree in biology from Mars Hill University in 1994, making him the first member of his family to graduate college. Although he played tight end for the Lions and is an enshrined member of the Franklin High School Athletic Hall of Fame for his standout play as a high school athlete, he originally planned on pursuing a career in the medical field.

However, Houston’s career took an unexpected turn when his applications for the medical schools at Eastern Carolina University and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill were denied.

“I took a job teaching physics and chemistry in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, coaching football and basketball. Did it for one year and knew that’s what I wanted to do,” Houston told the Daily News-Record. “I never looked back, and it’s been the best decision I’ve ever made.”

Shortly after he graduated college, Houston was hired by Forbush High School in East Bend, North Carolina, to be the team’s defensive coordinator. He stayed with the Falcons for two seasons before taking the same position at T.C. Roberson High School in Asheville, North Carolina. Houston remained in charge of the defense for five years until he was promoted to head coach ahead of the 2001 campaign.

Houston went on to lead the Rams to a 42-18 record across five seasons, highlighted by his 2004 squad that went undefeated en route to capturing its first conference championship in school history. He finally broke onto the NCAA scene in 2006 when Brevard College hired him as associate head coach and defensive coordinator.

The following year, Houston took up the defensive coordinator position at Lenoir-Rhyne University, a Division II program in the South Atlantic Conference. He spent four years in charge of the defense before taking over the Division II level, Football Championship Subdivision schools came running. Houston settled on The Citadel, The Military College of South Carolina as his next destination. He took over for the Bulldogs in 2014, guiding the team to a 5-7 record. The following year, however, The Citadel went 9-4 and finished the regular season with a share of the Southern Conference title. It was the first time in school history that a head coach had won the conference within his first two years with the team.

While Houston was busy down in Charleston, the Dukes were fighting for a conference championship of their own. JMU finished the regular season in a three-way tie for the Colonial Athletic Association title with a 9-2 record. Head coach Everett Withers led the Dukes to their second playoff berth in as many years, but each time they were bounced in their first postseason game.
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Withers left the program in favor of the Football Bowl Subdivision’s Texas State University during the offseason, leaving JMU in a bind to find a new head coach that could keep the team playing at a high level. In mid-January of 2016, the athletics department decided to bring on Houston for his track record of making teams have fast comebacks.

“Mike has been a fast riser in the coaching ranks with success turning programs around at the Division II and FCS levels,” director of athletics Jeff Bourne said in the team’s press release. “His pedigree for winning and ability to lead young men make him the perfect fit to build upon the foundation already in place at JMU.”

Upon being hired, Houston told Bourne that he expected it to take three years before they would be competing for a national championship. Instead, JMU raced to a 10-1 regular season record. The Dukes never won a home game by less than seven points and their only loss came at the hands of UNC of the FBS. They’ve outscored their three playoff opponents by a combined 101 points.

There is expected speculation that Houston could be following in Withers’ footsteps in departing for an FBS school, but the head coach’s five-year contract offers bonuses for staying with the team and mandates hefty buyouts if he decides to leave early. Regardless of what his future holds, however, Houston has already given the program the success it was looking for when it hired him in the first place.

JMU beat the five-time defending national champions in North Dakota State University. It blew out Sam Houston State University, the highest scoring offense in the FCS, and avenged conference rival University of Richmond for last year’s loss in a 47-43 thriller. None of those wins, however, even compare to the victory JMU captured in Frisco, Texas.

Nearly a year to the day that Withers decided to leave Harrisonburg, Dukes won their first national championship since 2004 and second in school history, beating Youngstown State University 28-14.

No matter where Houston has gone, success has followed. On Saturday, he proved to the rest of college football that he brought his winning ways with him to Harrisonburg.

CONTACT Matt Weyrich at breezesports@gmail.com.
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Football fans bring a slice of JMU to Frisco

By BENNETT CONLIN
The Breeze

For die-hard Dukes fans living in the state of Texas, getting to see JMU play in person was nearly impossible with the Dukes playing the majority of their games within four hours of Harrisonburg. This year, thanks to a historic season, fans in the Dallas-Fort Worth area got to watch their team play in the biggest game of the season.

The Dukes took on Youngstown State University in Frisco, Texas, on Saturday. The game, which kicked off at noon, gave fans a chance to watch the Dukes locally for the first time since September 2015, when JMU upset Southern Methodist University in Dallas.

"Man ... it kicks it into a high gear," Bryan Roberts, the president of the JMU alumni chapter in Dallas, said. "We sold 350 tickets through the JMU ticket office, so it's pretty much on par with the SMU game ... we're excited to have JMU football in Texas."

With this being one of the few times fans in the area could watch the Dukes, the alumni chapter went all out in preparation for the game. On Wednesday, it hosted a welcoming party when the football team arrived in Dallas. Throughout the weekend, three local sports bars teamed up with Roberts to bring a little slice of JMU to Frisco.

The British Lion, the Green Gator and Nirvana all included a JMU flair for their weekend customers.

"They've been really helpful to us and really welcomed us," Roberts said. "We're looking for some great fun and a memorable JMU experience. They'll be adorned in all the JMU purple and gold that they'll allow us to hang in their restaurant."

The Green Gator and its director of fun, Jay Crawford, embraced the JMU theme head on. The sports bar served four JMU drinks over the weekend in addition to a JMU dining favorite "Buffalo Mash" served as an appetizer. The drinks were named "Lock the damn gates," "Houston's punch," "Penguin Crush" and "Cold, dark and perfect."

The Green Gator's mixologist, Sarah Hetmer, created the drinks after Roberts came up with the names. Crawford was excited about the drink combinations as he loved the excitement from JMU fans that stopped by the restaurant. He expected a ton of people in attendance early Saturday morning.

"We should do phenomenally well," Crawford said. "I think a lot of people knew the weather ... so we'll be packed at eight o'clock."

Roberts said working with restaurants like the Green Gator was easy because the location had experience teaming up with North Dakota State University in the past. Crawford said the Bison faithful were easy to work with since they're some of the best fans in all of college football.

"Every year it got bigger and bigger," Crawford said. "They're phenomenal fans and I hear some great reputation about y'all."

With JMU knocking off Youngstown State to earn a national championship, the JMU alumni chapter in Dallas did its part to help paint Frisco purple for a weekend.

CONTACT Bennett Conlin at breezesports@gmail.com.
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