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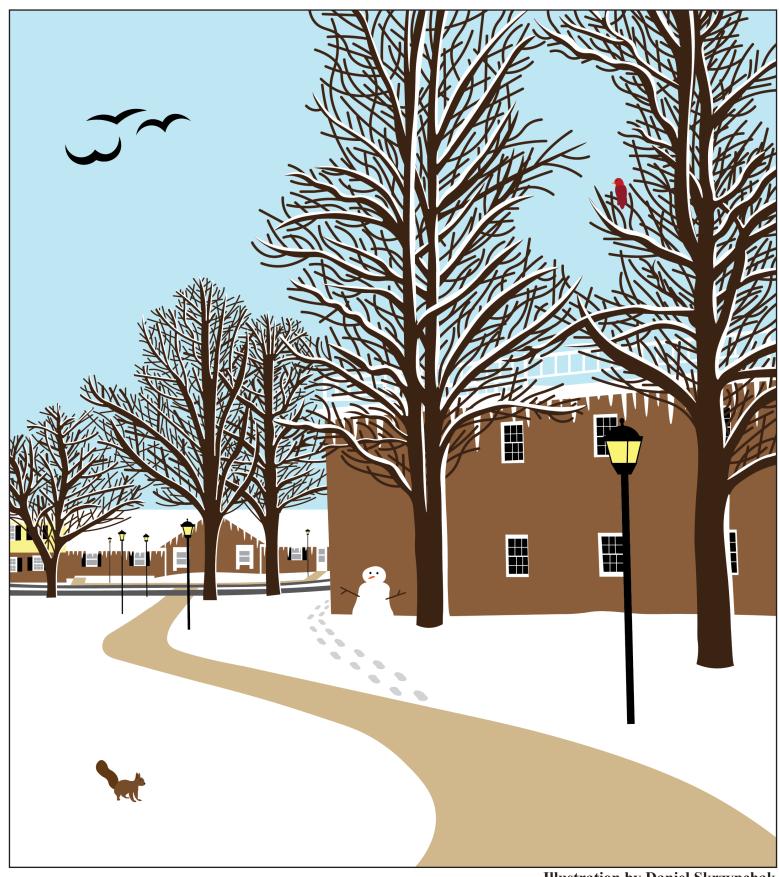


Illustration by Daniel Skrzypchak

### Lil Sibs Weekend Brings 118 Youngsters To MVNU Campus

#### **By Allison Prouty**

The MVNU campus was jumping with 118 potential future MVNU students on Jan. 14 and 15, all younger siblings of current MVNU students.

For this year's Lil Sibs Weekend event, Cheryl Sharpes, Associate Director of Admissions Visits & Events, said that this was the highest attendance of Lil Sibs Weekend in the past eight years. During Little Sibs Weekend, MVNU welcomes the younger siblings of MVNU students to campus for a weekend of fun.

This year, students ate dinner in the cafeteria with their sibling on Friday night followed by dodgeball in Ariel Arena. On Saturday morning, the siblings enjoyed a pancake breakfast and later ate pizza for

lunch before heading back to Ariel Arena to watch the men's basketball game against Indiana Wesleyan University.

The siblings also had some fun trying for a chance to win some MVNU merch at halftime. Every sibling went home with an MVNU T-shirt and rally towel.

Sharpes said that the admissions department hopes that the Lil Sibs "enjoy a weekend with their MVNU sibling and see what an amazing campus community we have."

### Donnelly Leading Art Department Venture to Italy

#### By Anna Dudgeon

Do you truly appreciate fine art? How does a trip to Italy sound? If this sounds exciting to you, then the opportunity you've waited for might be just around the corner.

Professor of art John Donnelly came to MVNU in 1989, bringing with him his rich life experiences. Each individual person has a lens through which they view the world, and Donnelly's has greatly enhanced the university. Growing up in an Italian Catholic family in Pennsylvania, Donnelly's godmother ensured he went to an art-specialized school, since the Catholic high school near them didn't have a well-developed art program.

"When I was in kindergarten," Donnelly recalled, "I knew I wanted to be a painter."

Donnelly kept that strong

resolution through high school and college, eventually attending Indiana University where he graduated with his master's degree in painting and drawing. His college experiences presented him with new opportunities, and he found himself studying art for a semester in Italy.

"I fell in love," Donnelly said. "Art is everywhere ... right at your fingertips." Donnelly added how he thought it'd be a once-in-alifetime trip. Currently, he believes he's been there [Italy] about 23 times. Many of those trips have been with the art department at MVNU.

Donnelly started teaching at MVNU in 1989. He recalled seeing various departments going on trips.

"I said to the department chair, 'Well why don't we do a trip to Italy?" Donnelly said. "And he said, 'If you

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### **MVNU Marks Virtual MLK Day Observance**

#### By Colin Berg

The annual Martin Luther King Jr. celebration breakfast is an event that's hosted by Mount Vernon Nazarene University and Kenyon College. This year's ceremony celebrated 19 years of uniting our community in the celebration of one of our greatest statesmen and agents of change, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

The theme for the event was built on a quote from the powerful words of poet Amanda Gorman which says, "In this year of yearning, we are learning." Due to the uncertainty of the COVID-19 Omicron variant, the planning committee decided to have a virtual event on Jan. 17.

Chosen to be the guest

speaker at the event was Dr. Angelle M. Jones, adjunct professor at Mount Vernon Nazarene University and founder of Global Life Coaching and Consult-



Illustration by Daniel Skrzypchak

ing, where she serves as a church consultant on race relations in the church.

Dr. Jones grew up in Cleveland, OH, and holds a bachelor of arts degree in African American studies from the University of Cincinnati

She also has a master's degree in theological studies from Columbia Theological Seminary in Atlanta, GA, and earned a doctorate in ministry on the life of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and his philosophy of The Beloved Community from United Theological Seminary in Dayton, OH. It was a day to celebrate Martin Luther King Jr., one of America's greatest heroes who changed our country for the better of humankind.

### Art Department Trip to Italy

(Continued from page 2) organize it."

In 1995, the MVNU art department took their first trip to Italy. Ever since, MVNU has gone every other year, with the exception of the pandemic. The next trip is coming up in spring 2023 and includes Greece, as well. Both professor Donnelly and professor Jeanne Serrão are in charge of organizing the trip and are willing to answer any questions. Contact Donnelly for more information.



### **Severns Joins City Council With Great Start**

#### By Jacob Glaze

Back at the Nov. 2, 2021, elections, Mel Severns, MVNU registrar and associate professor of education, was elected to a position on the Mount Vernon City Council. He never originally planned to run for council; but after receiving a text from a friend asking if he had ever thought about doing so, it gave him the idea.

"I had no interest in pursuing an elected public office," Severns explained. Before running for office, Severns asked Dr. Spaulding and Dr. Cochran (his immediate supervisor) if he would be permitted to run for this public office, knowing there would be times that city work may intersect with MVNU. Both were very supportive of this prospect and encouraged him to pursue it. Severns then agreed to run for an at-large seat after receiving support from the Republican Central Committee of Knox County as well.

As Severns explained, an at-large member is required to win votes from the entire city, unlike wards that only need to win the most votes in their section of town. There are three at-large members and four wards that are elected. He further explained that after meeting with them on a Thursday evening, they voted to allow him to run on the ballot shortly after he left the room and officially agreed

to it by noon the next day.

As part of the process, paperwork needs to be filed with the Knox County Board of Elections in order to get a name on the ballot for an election. After Severns filed all the required paperwork with Ohio Ethics Commission and was cleared, he was able to proceed. "I was fortunate to receive donations for my campaign from four primary resources in our community," Severns explained. "Donations have to come from private donors, not businesses." Campaign signs for yards were then ordered for those who supported Severns.

After winning, Severns will now be in this position for two years, until 2023 when the next elections are held. Severns explained that he has told many that he didn't run into the council seat with a set agenda, a "sword and shield," as he put it. His goals are simply to be a part of the team of council members to help Mount Vernon "move forward to a bright and safe future for the residents who live, work and play here."

Severns has already begun his work as a council member. Just recently, he met with Mount Vernon Mayor Matt Starr and another council member (Mike Hillier) to discuss traffic issues where people are cutting through and speeding to avoid a busy intersection. Residents in the area are looking for assistance to re-

duce the issue. But there are even bigger tasks for city council to handle; to build a new courtroom building as well as a new police station. Severns explained that the building that houses both is in poor condition, believing a new building or buildings is a better idea than attempting to make major repairs to the current one. He expressed that he would feel very satisfied with helping make this happen as a council member. "Of course, this will take millions of dollars to accomplish, so that is something the public, both city and county residents, will have to consider," Severns detailed.

Severns went on to say that this wasn't the only issue to resolve. As he put it, "The work does not end." He discussed needing to prepare for growth in Knox County. There are new businesses coming into surrounding counties, including Knox County, that will demand more housing and improved streets and highways. He went into full detail on what's needed to help it all go smoothly; "Growth costs a lot of money, and takes thoughtful planning. Mount Vernon desperately needs housing in the form of apartments and single-dwelling homes," said Severns. "When the land becomes available at the limits of the city, we try to annex it into the city for new housing and business development. It is complicated, but takes the passing



**Mel Severns** 

of zoning, utility, and other laws to make it all happen."

Severns explained that there are multiple meetings that occur regularly twice a month as well as others when needed. He vocalized his full awareness of balancing his work with council with his primary work responsibilities at MVNU.

"So far, I have not had to consider an issue that would involve a conflict of interest with MVNU, but it will surely happen along the way," said Severns. In those cases, I will have to abstain from voting for legal reasons." Severns expressed his concern for both the city of Mount Vernon and where MVNU is in that equation; "I care about the people who work here and pay city taxes, so I always want the best for them in addition to all city residents," he said. "I have to remember that I was voted in by the residents of the city of Mount Vernon, so I need to represent them well. MVNU is certainly part of that equation."

# **Competition Cheer Team Wins Home Invite**

#### By MacKenzie Holder

The MVNU competitive cheer team made history on Feb. 5 during their only home competition of the year. They hosted Bethel University and Point Park University in a tri-competition where they all competed two separate times. With all the challenges that the 2021 season brought to the competition team, they were determined to make this season even better than before. They have been practicing hard every day to be the best that they can be in an attempt to improve their score each time they compete.

The team started their season on Jan. 15 at the Concordia invite where

they received their third-highest score in program history. Freshman Taylor Tyler stated, "This was a great competition to start with. I had never competed before until coming to MVNU, but I was proud of the routine we put on the floor and was excited to get back in the gym and improve before we competed again."

After starting the season about three weeks ago, the team has had one thing on their mind since the beginning of the season. If asked what was going to happen on Feb. 5, every single cheerleader on the competition team knew they would be competing at home in front of all of their friends and family, and they wanted

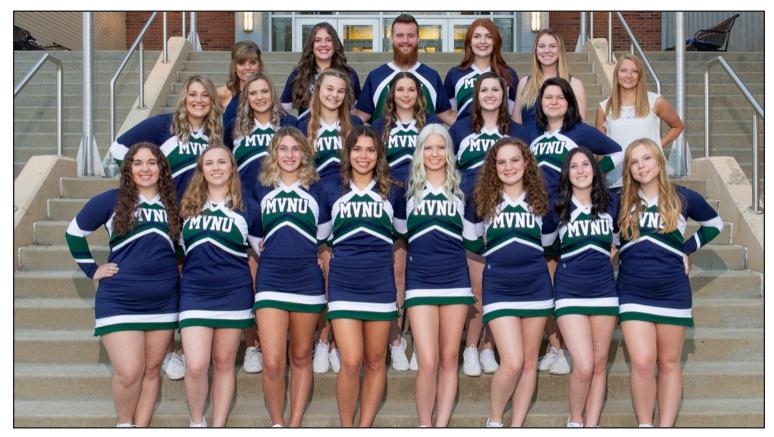
to look good. Sophomore Taylor Maibach said, "We upgraded our routine for our home competition because we wanted to put the best possible routine on the floor."

After spending all week practicing for countless hours, the blood, sweat, and tears were all worth it when the MVNU competition team was announced as the winner of the second competition. Yells and shrieks filled the air when they announced Bethel University as second place. At that moment, MVNU knew they had just made history. It was something the program has been working towards for three years, and they had finally achieved it in front of the people that

mean the most to them.

In a recap of the competition coach Melissa
Nowicki stated, "I am so proud of this team and their first-place performance tonight! They deserved the win! We fought hard to hit a new pyramid and basket this week. Tonight's win was about execution and showmanship. Every athlete worked hard to hit their skills, and you could see that they had a lot of fun doing it."

The competition cheer team has competed in a total of four competitions so far and is looking forward to the rest of the season. They will continue their season on Friday, Feb. 12 where they will be heading to Indiana Wesleyan University.



The MVNU competitive cheer team made history on Feb. 5 by posting their first-ever first place win.

### **MVNU Men's Lacrosse Season Outlook**

#### **By Henry Shobert**

MVNU's men's lacrosse team opened their season at home Feb. 9 against the University of Heidelberg. The Cougars are coming off a promising campaign in which they finished 6-5 and managed to defeat rival Taylor University on the Trojans' senior day. As the team has competed for a couple of years now, players have grown and are more ready now than ever to take the field

Head coach Ryan Farr is excited to get the season going. Farr exclaimed, "Expectations for this season are high, and there is a definite buzz amongst our team." Farr continued, expressing his enthusiasm for some of the teams' leading players. He explained, "Our defense is anchored by great goalie play in Jr. Josh

Hageman. We return our entire starting defense from last season including junior all-conference defensive midfielder Micah Rex and sophomore all-conference defenseman Kaelin Tran." Along with these returners, Farr said the defense will be bolstered by newcomer sophomore Luke Modesto.

Farr also expressed his optimism for the other side of the ball. He said, "Offensively, we return a pair of all-conference players in sophomore Johnny Grumney and Sr. Ian Ranck as well as a majority of our starting offensive unit and a talented freshman class." Farr concluded by encouraging the community to come out and support the team. He said, "Overall, I'd just like to encourage everyone to come out and check out a game this season. Lacrosse is the fastest game on

two feet and a lot of fun to watch for both the dedicated fan and the student just coming to check it out."

Senior and captain Ian Ranck also expressed his optimism regarding the Cougars' upcoming season. He acknowledged the importance of it, saying, "This is going to be a very big season for MVNU lacrosse. We brought in a lot of talent this fall, and everyone is itching to get on the field and compete as a team."

Ranck discussed the work the team has been putting in since the fall. He said, "There has been a lot of build up through fall-ball," and explained that the team is ready to see how the hard work will pay off. Ranck is coming off a solid season in which he scored eight goals and tallied 15 assists.

Andrew Ehrenberg, another senior, discussed his

feelings about the upcoming season. The defenseman picked up the sport a few years ago when it initially came to MVNU. He said, "It's a little bittersweet. I enjoyed getting to play lacrosse and am thankful to everyone who helped me along the way." He continued, "I feel good about this upcoming season and am hopeful for a winning record." The senior concluded by reflecting on the past few years and what he has seen from the team. He said, "It was fun to see the growth of a program from a club sport to now a varsity team, and getting better each year has been fun to see."

The lacrosse season began for the Cougars at home on Feb. 9 against the University of Heidelberg. The Cougars believe in themselves and are prepared for a strong and competitive season.



## Men's Basketball: Eyes On Their Priorities

#### By Mike Basko

The MVNU men's basketball team is back and focused on the potential they know they can reach. Even though the Cougars have started the season with a winning record, coach Jared Ronai prefers not to set expectations for his team. He said, "Our only expectation as a program year in and year out is that we are going to keep our priorities in line, live out our core values and become the best that we are capable of becoming. The why of

our program is to pursue Christ while in the pursuit of championships. We are a process-driven program and focused on our team-



Men's Basketball Coach Jared Ronai

mates and getting better each and every day." Ronai has taken this priority-focused mentality to the court and inspired the team to strive for their potential.

After the legendary Jevon Knox graduated last year, the team has new leadership on and off the court. Ronai said of the group, "We have the second-youngest team in the Crossroads League and one of the youngest in the country. We have real leaders emerging on and off the floor, and I love who they are becoming as a group."

One of those leaders, Junior Eric McLaughlin, said, "We're going to work as hard as we can so we can fill the gap that Jevon left." He continued, "I didn't know what [the season] would look like as far as wins and losses, but I knew we were really close relationally; and with that alone, I had a high expectation of the accountability we were going to have because I knew we were going to work."

At the beginning of the season, the team struggled to find their footing, but (Continued on Page 8)

## MVNU Embarks On First-Ever Swim Program

#### By Kelsi Brake

MVNU recently added a new campus sport to its mix. A swim team has surfaced, and many are anxious to see where it goes. The team is coached by Brad Snow and Laura Duncan.

Ryan Farr, head coach of the men's lacrosse team, was a big part of starting the team alongside head coach Brad Snow. The idea of a swim team is not a new interest among MVNU students.

"The concept of a student swim team has been around a while; we've had a number of students over the years ask about the possibility of starting a student-led club,"

said coach Farr. Coach Snow added, "For a long time, I have been talking to people about my vision of MVNU starting a swim team and how I wanted to be their first coach. Word got back to me that MVNU was starting a team, and I approached Ryan Farr about allowing me the opportunity to assist with the program." Coach Snow is very excited to see where the team goes in the following years.

Snow is not new to being a part of a swim team. He was a part of the Mount Vernon YMCA swim team starting at the age of 9, and he continued 'til he graduated. He then went on to swim for Fairmont

State University in West Virginia for all four years. He was the head coach of the Mt. Gilead High School swim team for 13 years and continues to swim himself. In 2015, he went to the national championship and made the podium in his six events, with a third-place finish in the 50-yard freestyle.

The team consists of 17 students this year and is looking to grow from there in the coming years. Coach Farr said, "The great thing about the way we are launching swim at MVNU is that it can be a great opportunity for everyone. If you are an elite swimmer who wants to challenge yourself at the highest level,

MVNU's swim program offers the opportunity to compete for conference and national championships. If you are a recreational swimmer who would just love to be a part of the team and compete at practice or just with your own times, there's also a place for you as well." The swim team is a place for swimmers in any place in their career.

The MVNU swim team has come together with the Mount Vernon YMCA to facilitate practices. The YMCA lets the swim team come after hours three days a week together.

The swim team will be attending the CSOSU Spring Invitational Meet on Feb. 26.

### Get To Know Casey Cougar

#### By Dylan Elliott

Ever wonder who Casey Cougar is? Well, you're in luck. Casey Cougar is obviously the mascot that attends MVNU men's and sometimes women's basketball games. You might see him around the arena giving high fives, taking photos with people, or even signing autographs for the kids.

When Casey was asked about whether this is a volunteered or paid position, his response was, "volunteer." When asked why he does this job, "It's really fun," he said. It's just cool to go around and see different people." And in looking at how he got the job, "[I got the job] because nobody else showed up for tryout day," he said.



Casey Cougar file photo

Casey also shared some of the benefits are about being the mascot. "You get to hang out with all the cheerleaders," he said. "It's interesting, because you get to sit next to some people

that you might know, but they don't know you; so I feel like I see people walk through the halls, and I know them, but they don't know me."

When asked what it is like

being in the costume, "The best word that I can describe it is hot, very hot!" he said. And what about seeing and breathing. "On breathing, he simply said that he can "breathe fine." And on seeing, "I can see through the mesh nose, so my field of vision is very, very small," he added.

When asked about his favorite part about being Casey, "I like getting to go around and hang out with people," he said. They might not know who I am, but I know who they are. It's just good to see them smile whenever I sit with [the fans]."

Finally, Casey wanted to give a shoutout to Barry, who works in the caf. In Casey's own words, he said, "Casey loves Barry."

## Men's Cougar Basketball Team Prepping for Postseason Run

they have found their stride as they have played more games. McLaughlin added, "After we got beat by Huntington [on Dec. 4], I think that game was a turnaround. We weren't afraid to hold each other accountable. That game really catalyzed a lot of growth in

(Continued from Page 7)

Sophomore Carter Pline stated, "We've grown closer on and off the court and really found our stride. I

our season, not just in the

wins and losses, but also in

the feeling of our team."

think we have a really good opportunity to make some noise in the conference and



Eric McLaughlin

hopefully in the postseason." He also added, "I'm really looking forward to where we can grow as a team. I think from the start of the season, all the guys would say we've come a long way; and if we keep on that same path of growth every day, we're excited to see where that could lead us."

With their eyes focused on growing as a team and continuing to help each other improve, the Cougars will continue to play with focus and determination that could lead them on a positive path to the postseason.



**Carter Pline**