

THE COUNTY COLLEGE OF MORRIS' AWARD-WINNING STUDENT NEWSPAPER

YOUNGTOWN EDITION

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"Love Is In The Air at CCM": Current club activity

NICOLETTE ROMANO
Staff Writer

Valentine's Day is more than just a day on the calendar; it's a meaningful opportunity to express love that often goes unspoken. CCM has been feeling especially well-loved thanks to the numerous clubs that contributed to the school's Welcome Back Bash, an event organized by the Student Activity Planning Board (SAPB). Looking ahead to February 14th, SAPB decided to spread even more love by creating a three-way collaborative event. The ABG Business Society, Writing Club, and Student Activity Planning Board joined forces to host "Love Is In The Air At CCM." Love exists all around us—even in the smallest everyday gestures—and members of this community wanted to showcase that through booths run by various clubs. Simultaneously, across campus, numerous clubs were actively seeking new members, officers, and volunteers to help grow and support their organizations.

The Student Activity Planning Board is a club focused on creating student engagement through various events and activities. These events range from Punk Rock



PHOTO BY AMY TAVAREZ

From left to right: Nicolette Romano, Nathanielle Quiambao, Sebastian Perez Brid, Evette Colon

Nights to Performative Male Contests. No matter your interests—and no matter how unconventional

an idea might seem compared to the club's typical gatherings—all suggestions are welcome. With

the season in mind, "Love Is In The Air At CCM" was designed to bring people together and en-

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courage connection. Whether celebrating platonic or romantic relationships, everyone was welcome. This event focused on collaborating with others to create a warm, welcoming environment on campus. At the SAPB booth, a gratitude wall was set up to inspire love and positivity just in time for the holiday. Not only did this offer comfort to passing students, but it also encouraged them to share kind words with their peers. The event demonstrated that showing love to strangers matters—at the end of the day, it can brighten someone's mood. CCM takes pride in making students feel heard, seen, and cared for in their everyday lives. Taking a moment to spread joy can always lift someone's spirits, which is exactly what SAPB aimed to do with this event. Seeing students eagerly participate—whether by interacting with the various booths or simply grabbing the chocolate provided—helped energize the SCC lobby. Regardless of relationship type, this space offered everyone an opportunity to express genuine appreciation and make others feel valued.

In collaboration with SAPB, the ABG Business Society offered everlasting roses for purchase. Although their Wooden Rose Sale had begun two days earlier, the event was extended for one more day to make “Love Is In The Air At CCM” even more special. While

writing sweet messages on gratitude boards, students could stop by and purchase an unforgettable gift just in time for the 14th. Working closely with SAPB, President Sebastian Perez Brid and his team turned the event into a three-day experience to maximize engagement. On Tuesday, February 10th, the Wooden Rose sale ran alongside the Student Government Association's Bagel and Coffee Event. With opportunities to provide feedback about the overall student experience and share opinions about campus happenings, both clubs saw high student participation. SGA was also eager to share exciting news: President Wesley Iser informed attendees of their upcoming design competition. Students can currently compete to create a new SGA logo that may become the face of the reopening LRC Cafe—a space the team is working diligently to refurbish for everyone. After visiting the SGA table, students could swing by the Business Society's booth. Offering a variety of wooden roses in different flower assortments, the ABG team mixed and matched colors and sizes to create unique bouquets tailored to each customer's preferences. While the event was successful on the first day, it ran even more smoothly on the second and third. On the third day, the sale was featured at “Love Is In The Air At CCM,” giving attendees a final chance to purchase wooden roses if they'd missed the previous

two days. Overall, the club earned strong profits from the three-day sale while students and staff obtained gifts that would last a lifetime.

While two clubs were proudly holding down the fort during the Valentine's Day event, a third club made it even more special by offering small prompts that showcased what they're all about. The Writing Club is more than just a place to let your creative side run wild—it's a space where you can express yourself in almost any way. One of the best ways to help people bond while getting in touch with their emotions is through poetry. Whether inspired by a small prompt on paper or an original idea straight from your imagination, all poems were welcome, giving students a glimpse into what the Writing Club has to offer. When people think of Valentine's Day writing for a friend or significant other, poems are often a heartfelt gesture that comes straight from the heart. Students at “Love Is In The Air At CCM” had the opportunity to bounce ideas off one another and create something special for their loved ones. Feedback came not only from club members but also from passersby who shared an interest in the art of writing.

Numerous events take place across campus, with some of the most special occurring during the holiday season. This event, organized and pitched by the Student Activity Planning Board, was an

impressive success. Not only was gratitude shared throughout the campus halls, but genuine warmth was visible as students enjoyed themselves. What made it even more special was the connection created between the clubs. Although each is unique, everyone ultimately shares the same goal: creating a space where people feel valued while coming together for a common cause. The clubs featured at the event—SAPB, ABG Business Society, and Writing Club—are just a few of the many clubs at CCM. No matter your hobbies, goals, or interests, there's surely a club on campus for you. If you're unsure where to start but want to get involved, check out these clubs' Instagram accounts to learn when meetings take place and stay notified about upcoming events. If you were unable to attend the event or help at any of the booths, there will be many opportunities throughout the year. Regardless of your interests, start the spring semester right and carry this Valentine's Day spirit into everything you do—especially when it involves checking out some of these extraordinary clubs!

Check out the following Instagram accounts for more!

Student Activity Planning Board: [sapbccm](#)

ABG Business Society: [abg.ccm](#)

Writers Club: [writers_club_of_ccm](#)

• POETRY •

The Labor of Love

By Dharti Patel

The laborer is working, pruning the field, his labor of love abounding within.

To thaw the land hardened by time, so give ear; as children with meekness and humility.

It's not about your differences, insecurities, fears or divisions, but his redemption of every kindred, tongue, people and nation.

Remember what he did for you in the cross, and keep his commandment as you daily overcome.

Because he made you his people, kings and priests, to labor with him and win souls on earth.

He grafted you in the olive tree, as an heir to inherit eternity.

Till the number appointed is filled, he will graft back the natural branches.

The laborer is working pruning the field, your heart he fills with wisdom and understanding.

A vision he gave in revelation, for you to perceive, one day there will no division be.

So together in spirit he invites you to see, so look at the fields and discern with humility.

The needs of others, their longing for him, so labor with his love, with fruits of his spirit.

Knowing your labor in him is not in vain, because he promised victory we will claim.

Sow the seed of peace and one day you will reap the fruit of righteousness, and souls for eternity.

And one day together as a family we will sing, his praises because he changed us from within.

Power's skyline: Who governs when the view is narrow

SUMEYYE OZTEK

News Editor

If time were flexible, perhaps governance would feel closer. Instead, it often appears distant, suspended somewhere above daily life—like a skyline admired from afar but never entered. We recognize its outline and know it exists, yet its decisions rarely seem shaped by those who live beneath it. This persistent distance underscores a central argument: governance in its current form remains fundamentally disconnected from the everyday realities of those it claims to represent. Consider the challenges many students faced accessing emergency relief funds during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic. Decisions made in Washington about eligibility and distribution often resulted in delays and confusion on campuses, leaving students uncertain and unsupported at the very moment they needed help most. In moments like these, governance can feel far removed from the pressures of everyday life, highlighting how policy sometimes fails to meet people where they are.

This concentration becomes even more striking when examined in light of economic reality. A majority of members of Congress are millionaires—a figure that stands in sharp contrast to the financial circumstances of most American households. Educational background further deepens this divide. While only about 11 percent of American families send their children to private schools, approximately 38 percent of members of Congress have done so. These disparities raise serious questions about how lived experience shapes policymaking, particularly in areas such as taxation, public education funding, and student debt.

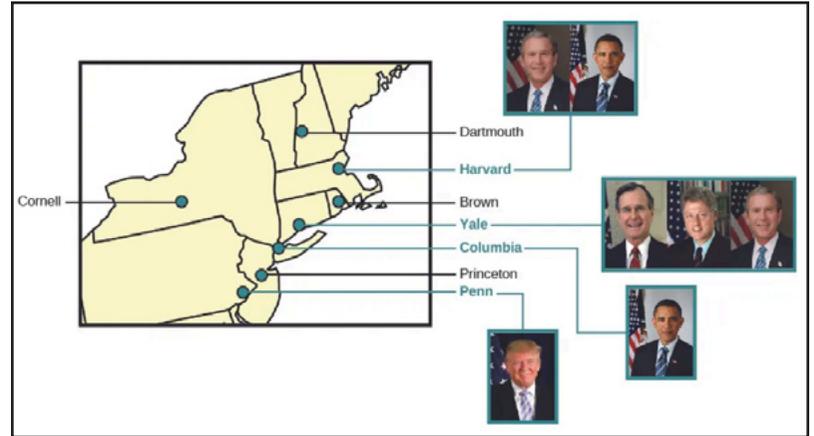
The effects of this concentration reach beyond who holds power. Congress, despite its sweeping authority, often disappears from public consciousness, lacking the visibility of the presidency. When

a few hold most power and attention centers on elites, genuine representation fades, replaced by management that further distances itself from daily life.

Political sociologist C. Wright Mills warned of this dynamic decades ago in *The Power Elite*. He argued that government tends to be dominated by individuals drawn from economic, political, and military elites. According to Mills, wealth and elite education open doors to power, allowing a relatively small group to shape national policy while remaining insulated from the conditions faced by ordinary citizens. Contemporary data appears to affirm his theory. A disproportionately high number of presidents and members of Congress have attended prestigious universities, reinforcing leadership pipelines that favor continuity over diversity of experience.

Utilitarian logic often defends this structure by emphasizing outcomes. If decisions produce stability, growth, or efficiency, the process is justified. Proponents might argue that such results benefit the population, regardless of who makes the decisions. Supporters of elite-led governance also point to historical examples where concentrated expertise and experience facilitated bold, effective responses—such as the swift economic actions taken during major financial crises or the decisive leadership that guided large public projects and reforms. In these cases, elite leadership is credited with delivering solutions that might not have been possible through slower, broader consensus. However, efficiency does not guarantee fairness. Outcomes measured from above rarely capture the cost paid below. A system can function smoothly while still overlooking entire populations whose struggles never reach the rooms where policy is shaped.

Elitism in governance is not always loud. More often, it is subtle. It appears in who is invited to the table, whose education is



treated as legitimate, and whose lived experience is considered anecdotal rather than instructive. When leadership pipelines remain narrow, perspective narrows with them, even as authority expands.

The irony is that opportunity is often described as universal yet distributed selectively. Community college students are told to wait their turn, to transfer, to prove themselves again and again. Yet the skills required to navigate instability, responsibility, and per-

sistence are precisely those most valuable in leadership. These are classrooms without walls, teaching lessons no textbook can replicate.

If democracy is meant to be representative, then its skyline should reflect the landscape beneath it. Until power broadens its foundation, governance will continue to feel distant, inefficient, and incomplete—visible yet unreachable, present yet unrecognizing of the lives it governs.

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All students are welcome to contribute articles to The Youngtown Edition either in person or via e-mail. However, students cannot receive a byline if they belong to the organization on which they are reporting. The deadline for articles is the Wednesday prior to a production.

The silence of convenience: Hollywood, Iran, and the selective nature of moral courage

ELISE MILLS

Staff Writer

In 1940, Charlie Chaplin released *The Great Dictator*, a devastating satire of Adolf Hitler that remains cinema's most audacious political statement. What distinguishes this achievement is not merely its artistic merit but that Chaplin financed the entire production himself. No major studio would touch it—not for lack of commercial viability, but because Hollywood had determined that Nazi appeasement served the bottom line. The story of Hollywood's accommodation with fascism represents institutional moral failure on a spectacular scale. Throughout the 1930s, as Hitler consolidated power and Nazi Germany descended into systematic barbarism, Hollywood studios maintained profitable relationships with the Third Reich. German consul Georg Gysling exercised de facto veto power over Hollywood content from his Los Angeles office. Studios submitted screenplays for approval with bureaucratic compliance. Films that might offend Nazi sensibilities were shelved or revised. Jewish characters were systematically excised. When Warner Bros. produced *Confessions of a Nazi Spy* in 1939, it stood as a solitary anomaly.

Louis B. Mayer, Jack Warner, and their predominantly Jewish executive colleagues occupied an impossible position. Having fled antisemitic persecution in Europe to build entertainment empires in America, they remained acutely aware of their precarious status in an era of virulent American antisemitism. Father Coughlin's broadcasts reached millions; the German American Bund held rallies in Madison Square Garden. These studio heads understood they could be targeted, scapegoated, and destroyed. Their power felt contingent, their decisions born from genuine terror. This context does not excuse their choices but illuminates them. They were afraid—and in the 1930s context of American antisemitism, that



fear was not unreasonable.

Charlie Chaplin possessed no such constraints. Though Nazi propaganda persistently claimed otherwise, he wasn't Jewish, making his courage arguably more remarkable. He simply saw evil and chose to ridicule it. When no studio would finance *The Great Dictator*, Chaplin invested two million dollars of his own fortune. He risked everything to make a film condemning Hitler while Hollywood's power structure refused to. The film succeeded commercially, but Chaplin paid dearly. The FBI opened a file on him. Isolationist organizations attacked him. Years later, during the Red Scare, he was

effectively exiled from America. Speaking truth to power carries consequences. Chaplin accepted them. What renders Chaplin's example devastating for Hollywood is that it proved moral action was possible. All those protestations about powerlessness, about having no choice—he exposed them as self-serving rationalization. One man with a camera and a conscience revealed their collective cowardice.

Fast-forward to 2022. Iran erupted in its largest protests since the Islamic Republic's founding. The immediate trigger was Mahsa Amini's death—a young woman arrested by morality police for

allegedly wearing her hijab improperly. But the movement transcended that tragedy, becoming a fundamental challenge to theocratic legitimacy led predominantly by women and youth. The protesters demonstrated extraordinary courage. They faced live ammunition, mass arrests, torture, and execution. The regime killed over 500 people, including children. They executed protesters after show trials, sometimes publicly. Young women removed hijabs knowing they risked years in prison. Students chanted anti-government slogans, understanding they might disappear into Evin Prison. The protests never ceased

entirely. They would quiet under brutal repression, then resurface.

Now, in January 2026, Iranians have returned to the streets. The regime's economic incompetence combined with its crushing of basic freedoms has pushed people past their breaking point again. Social media shows crowds in Tehran, Isfahan, and Shiraz chanting "Woman, Life, Freedom" and "Death to the Dictator." But this iteration is substantially worse. The death toll from these 2026 protests is staggering. Independent human rights organizations have verified at least 6,000 deaths. Leaked hospital records suggest a more horrific reality: potentially over 30,000 deaths, most concentrated in January's first two weeks. Hospital workers report 150 bodies arriving at a facility in a single night. Security forces shoot protesters from rooftops and finish off the wounded in streets and medical facilities. Consider that figure—over 30,000 potential deaths. For context, the Tiananmen Square massacre killed an estimated 2,000 to 3,000 people, a crackdown that became synonymous with brutal authoritarianism and is referenced perpetually in discussions of state violence. Yet here we observe a massacre potentially ten times that magnitude occurring in real time.

The response from Western cultural institutions? Deafening silence.

The protesters explicitly requested global solidarity, both in 2022 and now in 2026. They documented their courage and suffering through social media. They asked for simple gestures: attention, publicity, pressure on their government. They received virtually nothing. Hollywood, which has devoted recent years to proclaiming its commitment to social justice, women's rights, and solidarity with the oppressed, has said essentially nothing. No impassioned awards ceremony speeches. No celebrities changing social media avatars to green, the Iranian protest movement's color. No benefit concerts. No open letters. Occasional individuals speak up, but no collective mobilization exists, no urgency, no flood of support.

Why this silence? Why did Iranian protests—led by women literally facing execution for de-

manding basic freedoms—generate minimal solidarity?

Several explanations present themselves. None reflects well on the institutions in question.

First: narrative incompatibility. Iranian protesters don't slot neatly into ideological frameworks dominating universities and Hollywood. The protesters are explicitly pro-Western in many respects—waving American flags, appealing to American ideals of freedom. They challenge an anti-Western, anti-American ideology. This generates cognitive dissonance for activists whose worldview centers on Western imperialism as the primary global evil.

Supporting Iranian protesters would require acknowledging that people suffering under non-Western authoritarian regimes might perceive America and Western values as aspirational rather than oppressive. It would complicate the narrative, introduce nuance, and suggest that perhaps the world isn't a simple binary of Western oppressors and non-Western victims. It is far easier to maintain silence.

Second: ideological convenience. Activism permits certain activists to position themselves comfortably within their preferred frameworks of colonizer and colonized, privileged and marginalized, oppressor and victim—a lens with all the nuance of a sledgehammer. Iranian protesters don't fit this framework comfortably. They're too pro-Western, too eager for American-style freedoms, too critical of a regime that positions itself as anti-imperialist.

The hypocrisy is transparent.

The parallel to 1930s Hollywood isn't perfect, but it's instructive. Then, as now, cultural institutions demonstrated that moral commitments were selective, shaped more by commercial and ideological considerations than consistent principles. But there's a crucial difference that makes today's silence even more damning.

The 1930s studio executives operated under genuine threat. They were Jews in an antisemitic society, watching a genocidal regime rise in Europe, aware that speaking out could make them targets. Their fear, while it led to moral compromise, was rooted in real vulnerability. Today's Hollywood celebrities, university administra-

tors, and activist organizations face no such threats. Speaking out against authoritarian regimes that murder women would cost them nothing—indeed, it would likely enhance their reputations. The Iranian regime cannot threaten their careers, safety, or families. They are safe, comfortable, and powerful in ways those 1930s executives could only imagine.

Yet they remain silent. At least the 1930s studio executives were afraid of something real. What exactly is the contemporary activist class afraid of? Ideological discomfort? Social media backlash from their peer group? Having to acknowledge complexity in their worldview?

Back then, the excuse was business—they couldn't afford to lose the German market. Today's excuse is complexity—the Iranian situation is complicated, and who are we to impose Western values? Both rationalizations amount to the same thing: refusal to take a stand when standing would be inconvenient.

Think about what this looks like to Iranian protesters—those still alive to observe it. Young women risking their lives for freedom watch American college students—safe, comfortable—mobilize by the thousands for various causes but completely ignore Iran. They see Hollywood celebrities speak passionately about various international issues while maintaining silence about Iranians being executed for demanding basic freedoms. The conclusion they're drawing isn't complex: Western activists' principles are performative rather than genuine; their moral outrage is tribal rather than universal.

Chaplin's film concluded with a speech delivered by the Jewish barber mistaken for the dictator. Chaplin broke character and addressed the audience directly: "I'm sorry, but I don't want to be an emperor. That's not my business. I don't want to rule or conquer anyone. We think too much and feel too little. More than machinery, we need humanity. More than cleverness, we need kindness and gentleness." It was sentimental, perhaps even naïve. It was also brave—a clear statement of values when clarity was dangerous, when nuance was the preferred refuge of cowards.

The Iranian protesters are requesting something similar: simply to be seen, to be supported, to have their courage acknowledged by people who claim to care about human rights and women's freedom. The silence they received in 2022 wasn't merely disappointing; it was betrayal. The silence they're receiving now, in February 2026, as they risk everything while potentially tens of thousands lie dead, is even more damning.

We comfort ourselves with the notion that we would have been different in the 1930s, that we would have stood with victims, spoken out against evil. We watch The Great Dictator and admire Chaplin's courage from history's safe distance.

But when the moment comes to demonstrate that courage ourselves—when people are dying in streets for freedom, when women are being hanged for removing their hijabs—we discover excuses for silence. We find that the causes we support are carefully selected, that our moral outrage is conditional, that our bravery extends only as far as is comfortable. Authentic moral courage means standing up when it costs something. It means supporting the oppressed even when they don't fit your preferred narrative, even when they wave American flags and appeal to Western values. It means confronting evil even when it's ideologically inconvenient.

Charlie Chaplin showed us what that looks like: one man willing to risk everything to mock evil. The Iranian protesters have shown us what authentic bravery means: young people walking into gunfire, women removing hijabs knowing they might be hanged, students chanting slogans understanding exactly what happens to dissidents.

The technology changes. The specific circumstances vary. But the essential choice remains identical: Will you speak, or will you stay silent?

History is watching. And history maintains a rather long memory for those who fail its test—though it also maintains a certain dark sense of humor about people who believe themselves morally superior to previous generations while replicating their exact failures with only superficial variations.

The boys are back in town: Godzilla and Kong join forces in 'Monarch' Season 2

ANDREW KIM
Sports Editor

If there is one universal truth in the world of blockbuster entertainment, it's this: humans are really, really good at making bad decisions. We push buttons we shouldn't push. We open doors that have "DO NOT OPEN" written on them in red paint. And, in the case of the MonsterVerse, we casually tear holes in the fabric of reality and then act surprised when a building-sized nightmare crawls out to say hello.

Apple TV+ just dropped the trailer for the second season of *Monarch: Legacy of Monsters*, and folks, it looks like we've officially moved past the "discovery" phase and straight into the "panic and pray" phase.

The new season, which hits our screens on February 27, isn't just raising the stakes; it's stomping on them. The headline? Our favorite radioactive lizard and the King of Skull Island are teaming up. Again. Because apparently, the only way to stop a monster is with more monsters.

Let's dive into the carnage, the emotional baggage, and the "living cataclysm" that is about to ruin everyone's day.

The Genie Is Out of the Bottle (And It's Angry)

The trailer opens with a heavy dose of regret, which is basically the fuel that powers the Randa family tree at this point. Anna Sawai's Cate Randa is looking introspective, reflecting on the absolute chaos unleashed at the end of season one.

"I pressed the button," she admits, sounding exactly like someone who realizes their insurance premiums are about to skyrocket. "I let the genie out of the bottle."

Here's the thing about genies in the MonsterVerse: they aren't blue, they don't sing, and they definitely don't grant wishes. Unless your wish is to have your entire city leveled by a creature that defies the laws of physics.

This season seems to be piv-



oting hard from the mystery of *Monarch's* origins to the immediate, terrifying consequences of meddling with Titans. Season one was a slow burn, a character-driven drama that happened to feature monsters.

Season two? It looks like the gloves are off. The rift is open, the world knows the truth, and the Titans are no longer just myths: they are the new landlords, and the rent is overdue.

Enter Titan X: A Living Cataclysm

You know the situation is dire when Godzilla, a creature who generally views humanity with the same indifference I view an ant-hill, needs backup.

The trailer introduces a new threat that Apple is calling "Titan X." It sounds like an energy drink, but it's described as a "living cataclysm." That is some heavy marketing speak for "we made something scarier than the other guys." We catch glimpses of this beast rising from the sea, intent on destroying everything in its path.

It's a classic sequel escalation

tactic. You have Godzilla, who is basically a walking nuclear reactor. You have Kong, who has the upper body strength of a Greek god and the heart of a golden retriever. How do you challenge them? You create something so fundamentally wrong, so aggressively violent, that the two alphas have to look at each other, shrug, and say, "Guess we're working together today."

We don't know much about Titan X's design yet, but if it requires the combined might of the two biggest heavyweights in cinematic

history, expect lasers, lightning, or some kind of gravity-defying power that will look fantastic on an OLED screen.

The Ultimate Tag Team: Kong and Godzilla

Let's be honest with ourselves. We watch these shows for the human drama, sure. We care about the Randa lineage and the secrets of Monarch. But deep down, in the lizard brain part of our consciousness, we just want to see the monkey and the lizard punch things.

The reveal that Lee Shaw (played by the evergreen Kurt Russell) explicitly calls for the cavalry is a fist-pumping moment. "We need Kong. And Godzilla," he says. It's the kind of line that would be cheesy in almost any other context, but here? It works. It's the "Avengers Assemble" of the kaiju world.

This team-up dynamic is interesting because these two are not friends. They are reluctant co-workers at best. They are the buddy cop duo where both cops are 300-foot-tall destructive forces of nature who don't speak the same language.

The friction between them is just as entertaining as the fights they have with the bad guys. Seeing them share screen time in a serialized TV budget format is a massive flex by Apple. It signals that Monarch isn't just a side project; it's a central pillar of the lore.

The Russell Factor: Anchoring the Madness

Amidst all the CGI roaring and crumbling skyscrapers, we have the human element that actually makes this show watchable. The decision to cast Kurt Russell and his real-life son Wyatt Russell as the same character, Lee Shaw, across two different timelines remains one of the smartest casting choices in recent television history.

Kurt Russell brings that weary, "I've seen too much" gravi-



tas that grounds the absurdity of the plot. When he asks, "What's next?", you feel the exhaustion of a man who has spent decades chasing ghosts, only to catch them and realize they bite.

Wyatt Russell, anchoring the past timeline, gives us the context of how we got here. The prequel element, watching the early days of Monarch stumble in the dark, adds a layer of tragedy to the modern-day timeline. We watch the mistakes being made in real time in the past, knowing full well they lead to the catastrophe in the future. It's dramatic irony at its finest.

The supporting cast, including Kiersey Clemons and Ren Watabe, returns to flesh out the human stakes. Because if we don't care about the people getting stepped on, the stepping loses its impact.

Expanding the MonsterVerse Ecosystem

This trailer also serves as a reminder that Legendary and Apple are playing the long game. This isn't just a TV show; it's part of a sprawling multimedia ecosystem. We've got the Godzilla x Kong: Supernova movie slated for 2027, and Apple has already confirmed

spinoffs and a prequel series focused solely on young Lee Shaw.

It's ambitious. Usually, cinematic universes trip over their own shoelaces by trying to do too much, too fast. But the MonsterVerse has managed to find a weirdly comfortable groove. They've realized that different media can tell different stories. The movies are big, loud, popcorn spectacles. The show allows for slower pacing, corporate espionage, and family trauma.

By announcing a prequel series for Wyatt Russell's character, Apple is doubling down on the characters, not just the monsters. It's a risky bet, assuming audiences care as much about the humans as the Titans. But if anyone can pull off charming the audience, it's a Russell.

Why We Can't Look Away

There is something cathartic about the monster genre. In a world full of complex, nuanced geopolitical problems that make your head hurt, a Titan battle is simple. There is a Big Bad Thing. It wants to destroy us. Here come the Big Good Things (relatively speaking) to punch it in the face.

Monarch: Legacy of Monsters

taps into that primal awe. It captures the scale of these creatures from the ground level. The movies often pull the camera back to show the wrestling match; the show puts the camera on the street corner, looking up as a foot descends. It reminds us of our fragility. It reminds us that we are small.

And maybe that's why we love it. It's humbling. Plus, watching a giant ape throw a giant lizard at a giant... whatever Titan X is... is just objectively cool.

Prepare for Impact

So, mark your calendars. February 27. Apple TV+.

We've got a "living cataclysm." We've got a remorseful Anna Sawai. We've got Kurt Russell looking cool in a jacket. And we've got the tag team champions of the world ready to defend their title.

Will there be consequences? Absolutely. Will cities be destroyed? You bet. Will I be seated with a large bowl of popcorn, ready to cheer for the destruction? Without a doubt.

The genie is out of the bottle, folks. And it looks like it's going to take a lot more than a wish to put it back.

Check out the Youngtown Edition
Instagram @ youngtownccm



The 2026 NFL offseason guide: Super Bowl aftermath, coaching carousel, and the quest for a quarterback

ANDREW KIM

Sports Editor

The confetti has barely been swept off the turf at Levi's Stadium, and the Seattle Seahawks are your Super Bowl LX champions. For the second time in franchise history, the Lombardi Trophy is heading to the Pacific Northwest, courtesy of a suffocating "Dark Side" defense and a masterclass performance from MVP Kenneth Walker III.

But let's be honest about the rest of the team's fan bases.

If you're a fan of the other 31 teams, you stopped caring about the Seahawks' coronation about five minutes after the clock hit triple zeroes. You care about your mess. You

care about why your coach got fired, why your quarterback can't throw a spiral, and why your salary cap manager deserves prison time.

The 2026 NFL offseason is officially here, and it promises to be absolutely unhinged. We have legendary coaches changing zip codes, the Raiders sitting on the iron throne of the draft, and salary cap situations that would make a forensic accountant weep.

The Champion's Dilemma: Paying the Price of Victory

Winning a Super Bowl is the ultimate high, but the hangover is financial. The Seattle Seahawks are currently floating on cloud nine, but GM John Schneider has a headache

waiting for him.

You don't beat Drake Maye and the Patriots 29-13 without a stellar roster, and now that roster wants to get paid. Being in the top 10 in cap space while winning a Super Bowl does help the chances for a potential repeat next season. Having said that, it will be a challenge to do so with a new offensive play caller in 2026 while having key free agents to bring back, including stars like Walker.

However, the priority besides the Super Bowl MVP? Rashid Shaheed.

They rented him at the deadline, he balled out, and now he needs a long-term home. But the real story on defense is Boye Mafe. Two sacks

in 2025 isn't exactly "pay the man" production, but in a league desperate for edge rushers, someone is going to overpay him. The Seahawks have to decide if that someone is them.

Meanwhile, the New England Patriots are licking their wounds. Losing the Super Bowl stings, but let's look at the bright side: Drake Maye is the real deal. He's an MVP runner-up.

The problem? You have to pay the guys who protect him and the guys who get the ball back for him. Cornerback Christian Gonzalez is looking for an extension that might require ownership to sell a yacht. If they don't lock him up now, the price only goes up.

The Coaching Carousel: Musical Chairs from Hell

If you thought the player movement was going to be crazy, look at the sidelines. This coaching cycle has been a fever dream.

Let's start with the Pittsburgh Steelers. Mike Tomlin finally stepped down. After 19 years of never having a losing season, the standard is no longer the standard. So, who do they hire to replace an icon?

Mike McCarthy. Yes, that Mike McCarthy. The Pittsburgh native is coming home, and I can already hear the collective groan of Yinzers on talk radio. It's a safe hire, but is it an inspiring one? We'll find out.

Then there are the New York Giants. Brian Daboll is out, and who walks through the door? John Harbaugh. After being unceremoniously dumped by the Ravens (we'll get to that), Harbaugh lands in the Big Apple. Honestly? It's a great fit. Harbaugh has the ego and the resume to handle the New York media. He's tough, he's a winner, and he might actually make the Giants watchable again.

Speaking of the Baltimore Ravens, they fired the most successful coach in their history to hire... Jesse Minter? The Chargers' DC gets the keys to the castle. It's a bold move. It's a "we believe our roster is perfect and just needs a new voice" move. Usually, those end in disaster or a Super Bowl. There is no middle ground.

And we can't ignore the Atlanta Falcons. After firing Raheem Morris, they brought in Kevin Stefanski. Look, Stefanski had a rough end in Cleveland, but the man can coach an offense. If he can fix the Michael Penix Jr. situation (more on that later), Atlanta might finally stop being the place where hope goes to die.

The Quarterback Market: Desperation Stinks

The Las Vegas Raiders are on the clock. They have the No. 1 overall pick, and if they draft anything other than a quarterback, the fanbase should legally be allowed to riot. The Geno Smith experiment is over. It's time for a hard reset.

Whether it's via the draft or a trade, Vegas needs a face of the franchise. That is likely Indiana's Heisman and Natty winner Fernando Mendoza, to pair with former Seattle Seahawks offensive coordi-



nator Klint Kubiak, who inks a five-year deal with Vegas.

Then we have the New York Jets at No. 2. Oh, the Jets. Justin Fields is likely gone. Tyrod Taylor is a free agent. They are staring into the abyss of another rebuild. The rumor mill is churning about a trade for Kyler Murray. Does Kyler want to play in New York? Probably not. Does New York want Kyler? They're desperate enough to say yes. It's a marriage of convenience that feels destined for a messy divorce, which makes it perfect for the Jets.

Down in Miami, the Dolphins have imploded. Mike McDaniels is gone, Tua Tagovailoa was benched, and they are over the cap. Hiring Jeff Hafley as head coach signals a defensive shift, but they have to figure out the QB spot. Do they cut Tua and eat the dead money? Do they trade for a bridge guy? It's a mess in South Beach, and the vibes are decidedly bad.

And let's pour one out for the Indianapolis Colts. Daniel Jones tore his Achilles. Again. They want to bring him back, but relying on a QB with a torn Achilles is like driving a car with a check engine light on: you know it's going to break down, you just don't know when.

The Blockbuster Trades that Sent Shockwaves in 2025

We have to talk about the Green Bay Packers. They don't have a first-



round pick. Why? Because they reportedly sent a package to Dallas for Micah Parsons.

Read that again. The Packers, the team that historically treats free agency like it's allergic to spending money, went all-in for the best defensive player on the planet.

Pairing Parsons with Rashan Gary is unfair. It's borderline illegal. At least, when they were healthy. Once Parsons went down with his season-ending injury, it really took a toll on the defense despite them making it to the playoffs (to then lose to the Chicago Bears in insane fashion) and then melting down

once again when it mattered.

For the Dallas Cowboys, trading Parsons signals a terrifying reality: they are rebuilding. Jerry Jones is finally admitting the current core isn't winning a ring. It's a hard pill to swallow, but getting picks No. 12 and No. 20 helps wash it down.

Having Quinnen Williams, a young All-Pro defensive tackle from the New York Jets, helps as well. They acquired him by giving up a first in the 2027 NFL Draft, signaling a potential "All-In" type season heading into 2026.

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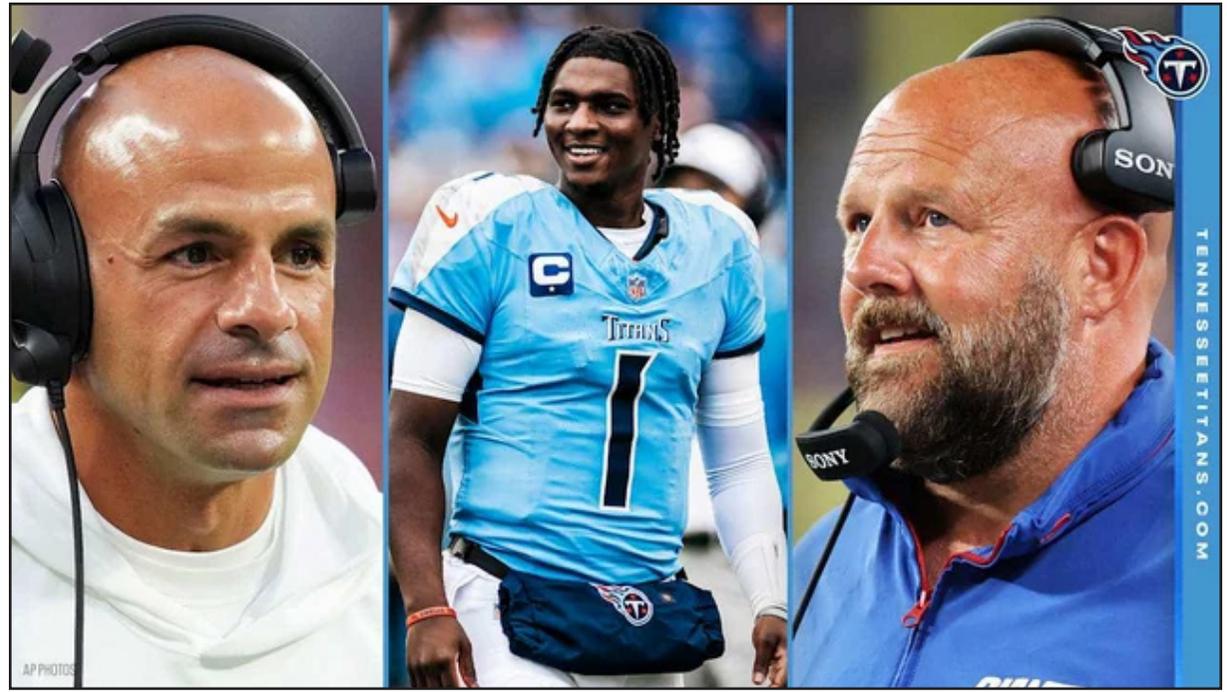
The Draft Needs: Building Around Young QBs

The Tennessee Titans are sitting at No. 4, and they need to help Cam Ward. The kid has talent, but he needs a go-to guy. Calvin Ridley is likely a cap casualty. The Titans need to draft a WR who can win one-on-one when the game is on the line. If they don't, they're setting Ward up to fail.

The Cleveland Browns have two first-rounders (thanks to a trade with Jacksonville involving the No. 2 pick... wait, did the Jags trade up for Travis Hunter? Yes, they did). Cleveland needs to figure out the QB position, but if they stick with Deshaun Watson (why?), they need tackles. You can't pay a QB \$230 million and let him get hit every play.

Free Agency: The Cap Casualties

The salary cap is a myth until it isn't. The New Orleans Saints are perpetually in "cap hell," sitting at minus-\$26.5 million. The bill has finally come due. Cam Jordan might retire. Demario Davis is aging out. It feels like the end of an



era in the Bayou.

The Minnesota Vikings are in a similar boat, at minus-\$58 million in cap space. They have to cut T.J. Hockenson. It sounds crazy to cut a talented tight end, but he hasn't been healthy, and they need the cash. It's a ruthless business.

And keep an eye on Tyreek Hill. The Dolphins are broke. Hill

is expensive and coming off a knee injury. A release post-June 1 saves them \$36 million. Imagine Tyreek Hill on the open market. The chaos would be beautiful.

Final Thoughts: Hope Springs Eternal (Except for the Jets)

This offseason is going to be defined by bold swings. Teams

like the Packers and Seahawks are pushing chips to the center of the table. Teams like the Raiders and Patriots are trying to build the next great dynasty through the draft. And teams like the Jets and Cowboys are just trying to figure out who they are.

Buckle up. The games are over, but the drama is just getting started.



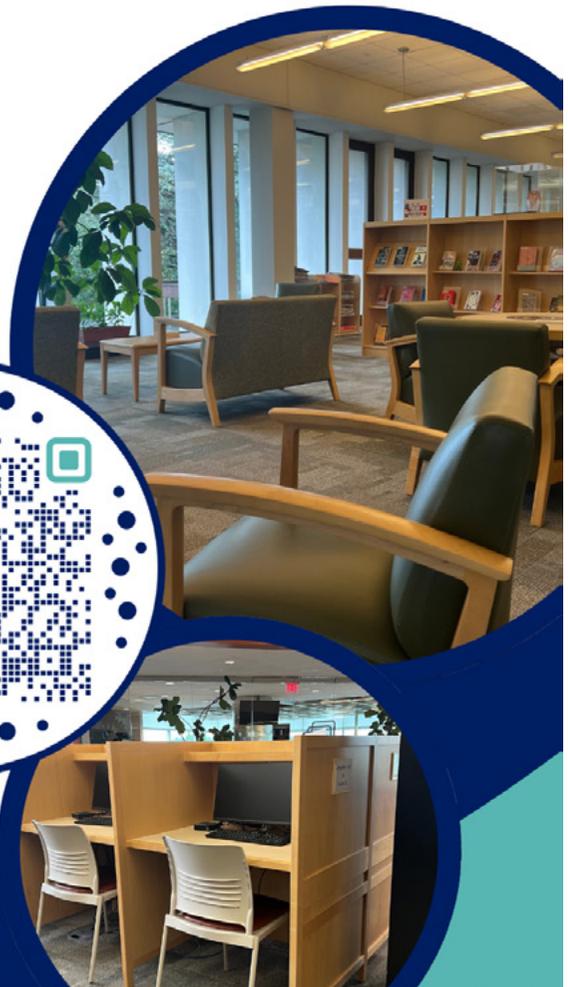
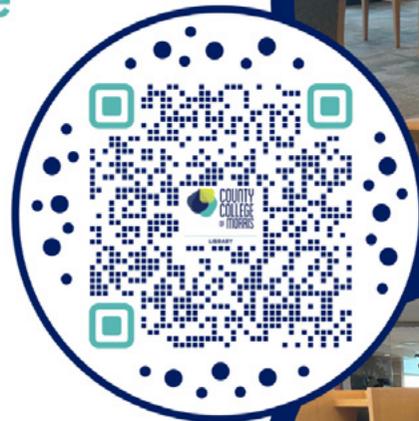
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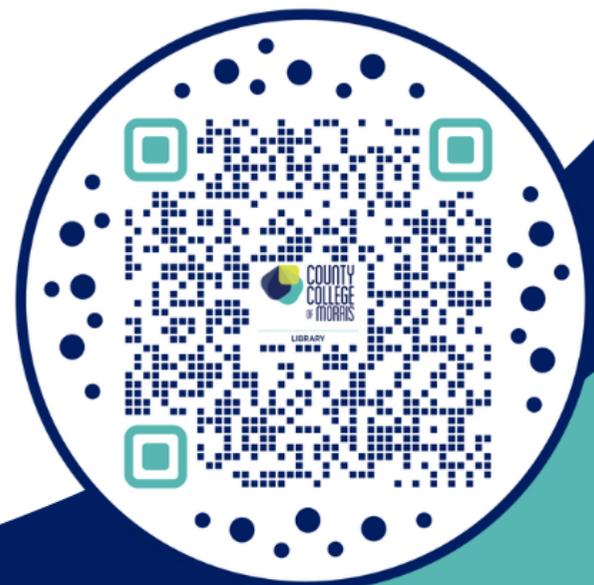
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