



For Students

October 29, 2025



Orchestra Conjures Up Spooky Fun at Annual Halloween Concert

When Kevin McMahon came to Purdue University Fort Wayne as an assistant professor of music and conductor of the University and Community Orchestra, he brought something fun with him. While he was a student at the University of Michigan, McMahon participated in a Halloween concert where orchestra members wore costumes and played appropriately themed music. That kind of experience was something he introduced to the PFW campus in 2023.

"My hope was that Halloween would be so fun that we would have more people in attendance, and it would just up the whole energy for everybody," McMahon said.

Fans and players now look forward to the annual Halloween-season concert—some in the 70-member orchestra put in months of planning to develop distinctive looks. Adding to the ambiance, this year's event actually takes place on Halloween, this Friday at 7:30 p.m. in Auer Performance Hall. **Tickets cost** between \$6.50 and \$9.50, but are free for PFW students.

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Building Doors Will Now Be Locked during Overnight Hours

To enhance safety and security, nearly all entrances to campus buildings will be locked daily starting at 9 p.m. and unlocked at 7 a.m. This overnight practice will begin Saturday (Nov. 1).

One exception will be an entrance to the 24-hour lab at Neff Hall. In addition, two main entrances to Walb Student Union—south of Java Spot and west of parking garage P2—will also remain unlocked during the fall and spring semesters. Those entering Walb using these access points may also reach the skybridge, and Helmke Library while it is open. Specific library hours can be viewed by **clicking here**.



Jon Pickett, John Murphy, Nadia Tovar, Jacob Goldberg, Chase Ratcliff, and Bennet Ripplinger dressed last year as their instructor, John LaMaster (center).

LaMaster's Students Showed Impeccable Style for Halloween 2024

Whenever John LaMaster teaches a class on Halloween, the senior instructor in Purdue University Fort Wayne's Department of Mathematical Sciences tells his students he'll award extra credit if they wear a costume. Most do, and often so does their teacher. One year, LaMaster, B.A. '86, MS '91, dressed as Obi-Wan Kenobi and spouted Star Wars references as he was challenged to an after-class lightsaber battle by student Kadyr Mueller, who dressed as Anakin Skywalker.

Last year, six students took the option a bit further. Scrambling over two days to visit various thrift shops and collect just the right items, they were uniquely dressed for their 9 a.m. class. Their choices drew grins and understanding nods of encouragement from classmates.

A few minutes later as his students were taking a quiz, LaMaster walked up to Bennet Ripplinger's desk, noting his sweater and glasses, and said, "I'm sorry Bennet, but I don't get your costume."

With a smile, Ripplinger replied, "I'm you," and the reality hit LaMaster, who looked around to also see Jon Pickett, John Murphy, Chase Ratcliff, Nadia Tovar, and Jacob Goldberg wearing similar outfits.

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Roll up a Sleeve for Dr. Acula's Spooktacula Blood Drive

The second Dr. Acula's Spooktacula Blood Drive to benefit the American Red Cross will be held Thursday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the clubhouse at Student Housing on the Waterfield Campus. Donors will receive a \$10 Amazon e-gift card and a goodie bag.

Students can also qualify for the gift card with an alternate donation of four pounds of nonperishable items to the FRIENDS of the University Pantry as part of the U Can Crush Hunger campaign. Those not wishing to wait in line **can register** for a specific time.



Chili Fest Expected to Heat up Tastebuds on Tuesday

The ninth annual Chancellor's Chili Fest will be held Tuesday from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the International Ballroom at Walb Student Union. Chancellor Ron Elsenbaumer has hosted the event since coming to Purdue University Fort Wayne in 2017, inviting students, faculty, and staff to enjoy chili, cornbread, and bluegrass music.

Fresh Ideas will be preparing approximately 30 gallons each of three submitted recipes—"Athletics Chili," "The Best Vegetarian Chili in the World," and "Hot Dam Chili."

"Typically, large batches of chili need to simmer 4 to 6 hours for proper heat distribution and for the flavors to marry," said Todd McCrory, director of dining services for Fresh Ideas Food at Purdue Fort Wayne. "Production of these is definitely a three-day event for our cooks prepping the proteins and veggies, building and simmering, and then serving."

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Anthropology Club Hosting CoLA Olympics This Afternoon

PFW's Anthropology Club is hosting a College of Liberal Arts Olympics today from 3 to 5 p.m. on the Science Mall. The CoLA departments of anthropology and sociology, history, political science, English, and criminal justice, along with members of the Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program, will be competing on teams of five people, including four students and one faculty member per group.

The competitions will be tug-of-war, a tricycle relay, and an egg run. Participants will come together at the end of the festivities for a medal ceremony and pizza.

"The event is aiming to not only generate interest in the club, but also bring together the CoLA community through a fun and engaging experience," said Bree Felger, president of the Anthropology Club.

Registration for Spring Classes Underway

Early registration for Purdue Fort Wayne's spring 2026 classes started Monday, marking an important milestone for students as they progress toward their degrees. This process provides an excellent opportunity to secure preferred classes and schedules well in advance of the upcoming term.

For the next three Mondays, early registration opens at 8 a.m. for these groups:

- Nov. 3: Juniors, honors students, student-athletes, and students with disabilities
- Nov. 10: Sophomores
- Nov. 17: Freshmen and others

Students are strongly encouraged to connect with their advisor to ask questions and make sure everything is still on track.

Eventful

There's always plenty to do at Purdue Fort Wayne. To find your favorites—or discover new activities—check the full [events calendar](#) often to see what's happening on campus.

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SAB Halloween Bingo

Get ready for the Student Activity Board's Spooktacular Halloween Bingo

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Today., 7–9 p.m.

—a night of frightful fun and chances to win! See you there...

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Fri., 9 a.m.–4 p.m.

SAB Trick or Treat Scavenger Hunt

Ready for a hauntingly good time? Start your hunt at the Student Life office (WU 210) and follow the clues for lots of candy and a sweet surprise at the end! Happy haunting...

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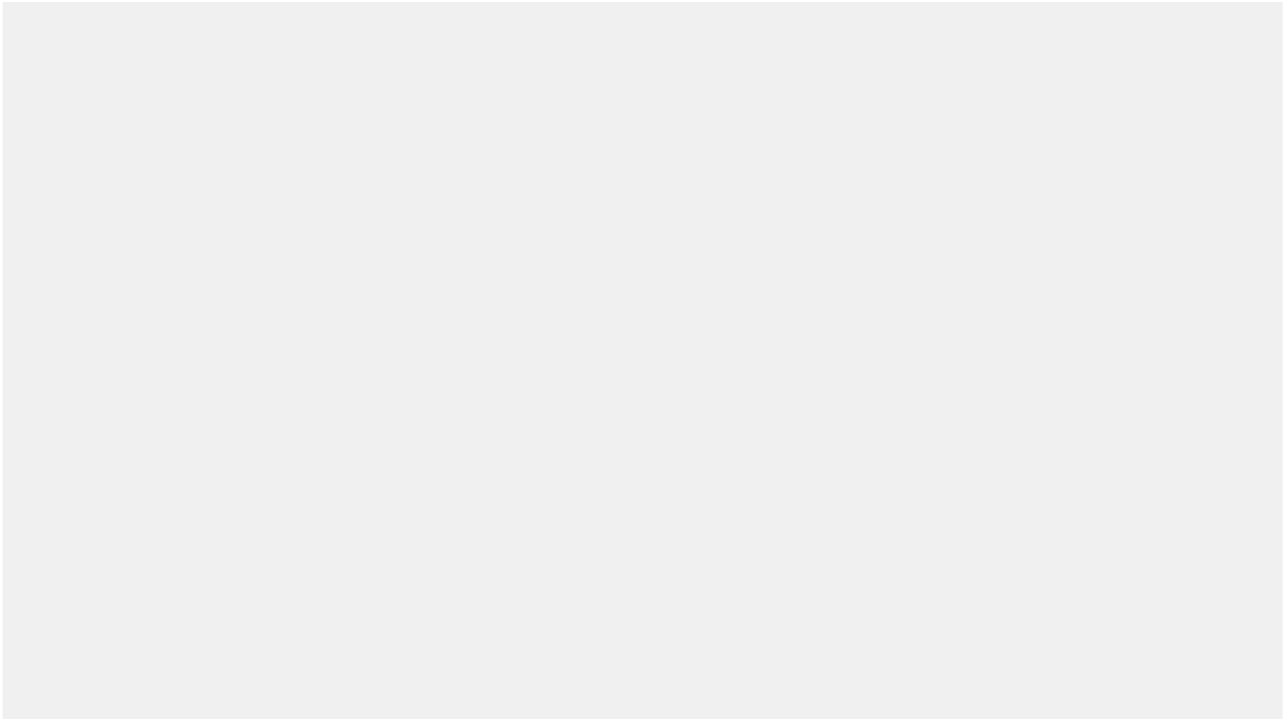
Fri., 7–10 p.m.

SAB Monster Mash

Join us for the big Halloween bash! There will be music, food, and refreshments. And don't forget to cast your vote in the pumpkin contest. Student orgs can win cash for the best one, See you on the dance floor...

Mastodon Moments

Seen and noted around campus. Monitor our university social feeds for more great moments of Mastodon life.





Head Men's Golf Coach Billy King (far left) joins Chancellor Ron Elsenbaumer (far right) to recognize men's golf student-athletes Landon Smith and AJ Agnew for their heroic **rescue of a man from a vehicle** that had been driven into a pond on Oct. 22. The golfers and their brave actions were highlighted during the men's basketball **exhibition game against Ball State** on Monday.

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