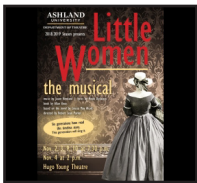




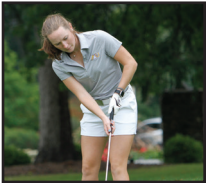
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Representative Bob Gibbs and former navy pilot Ken Harbaugh debated a series of questions aimed at their campaign for the seventh congressional seat on Oct. 29. After some time without confirmation of a debate, it was to be assumed that one would not be taking place before the election, but an email emerged from Gibbs finalizing both of the candidates agreement. The event was sponsored by the Ashbrook Center and run by the political clubs on campus: College Republicans, College Democrats and Young Americans for Liberty. Myers C. Convocation Center filled up quickly and upon entry the supporters divided to the sides, while students from the political clubs sat in the middle. Harbaugh took a personal approach to the questions asked, but also ended his responses with accusations about several unclear policies that Gibbs supported in

his past terms. Harbaugh's own views circle around the health of his young daughter and her time in the hospital. The Affordable Care Act (ACA) was one of the large focuses in his campaign. A popular topic that Gibbs touched on was the threat of opioids and how the epidemic is the worst it has ever been. One of his main focuses is on recovery centers and getting help to those struggling with addiction— much like Harbaugh's own views. Another topic of discussion was on the working family. Harbaugh used an example from a conversation he had with a man who had to pick up a third shift to provide for his family- which pushed his initiative for making wages keep up with inflation. "The fact is, wages have not kept up with inflation. It is harder than ever for working families to get by. There is something humiliating about having to look your children in the eye and having to admit

that you are not going to be able to leave them what your parents left you- and that is where we are as a country" said Harbaugh. Gibbs responded to this topic by showing the progress that he has made with the GDP (gross domestic product) growth. He said that more people are working and putting money aside for the future, not the other way around. "The reason we do the tax bill is because we have to grow this economy, and we're seeing that growth. We had less than 2 percent GDP growth and President Obama said that was a new norm," said Gibbs. "We got the GDP growing at three and half percent or higher this year... We see more people working, paying FICA, social security and medicare, so those are all good things." Brian Le, president of the College Democrats, said that it is important to know what the candidates stand for to be able to make a well-informed decision when it comes to voting.

"In order to self-govern yourself, which is part of the motto of the Ashbrook Center, you must be able to see the candidates, understand what their positions are and understand where they're coming from. It's important to know who your representatives and congress is, both on an official level and on a personal level" Le said. Young Americans for Liberty's president Jacob Nestle spoke about the political atmosphere on campus and how unlike many other schools, students have the desire to learn more. "It was a great opportunity that we all had to come out and see the Congressman for the district as well as his challenger, and really be able to hear their message," said Nestle. "I think Ashland University is a very politically active campus, especially considering that Young Americans for Liberty is a non-partisan group that has a huge number of people come to our events." Although the room was full,

many of the attendees happened to have already chosen which candidate to vote for. There were not many undecided voters in attendance as president of College Republicans' Jason Berardo points out. "I was sort of disappointed because I had hoped more moderates would show up, maybe some more undecided people. But, at the end of the day, I'm thankful we broadcasted it and we got it out on the internet. Hopefully the undecided voters in this district will be able to make a decision based off the debate today" Berardo said. Elections hold importance in how the state will be represented in the future, and both candidates urged the people in attendance to vote, no matter what their political views lean toward. The general election, which took place on Nov. 6, declared Bob Gibbs the winner of the seat with 58.9 percent of the votes (150,317 total), meanwhile, 41.1 of the votes went to Harbaugh (105,105).

AUWQUA: AU's water testing group

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In a practical application of science, an interdisciplinary group on campus is working to maintain a long-term water quality monitoring project at the Ashland University Black Fork Wetlands Preserve. AUWQUA, pronounced like aqua, is AU's Water Testing Group. They monitor water quality over time and any changes that may occur as a result of agriculture, industry or other types of development in the community. The data collected can also be used to inform the authorities on land use for best practices in order to maintain or improve water quality. "Right now we're at a phase where we are just building a baseline. No one has really been paying that much attention to the water quality in Black Fork, and so we go out once a month," Professor Jenna Dolhi, Professor of Biology and AUWQUA Project Director said.

"If there was some sort of abnormality, we would watch that pretty closely, and water quality is going to be changing month to month." The group collects water samples from the Black Fork of the Mohican River and the Black Fork Wetlands once a month to measure water temperature, pH, dissolved oxygen, salinity and conductivity on site. "The goal is basically to see different variations in the water as the seasons change and as the months goes on. Since we are in a pretty agricultural area where there are going to be a lot of run off in the field and some of that flushes into the water," Alexis Lough, a forensic science major and water sampler/analysis in the project said. "The water system ultimately runs out into other bodies of water, so it is going to affect organisms that are in the water and downstream into other bodies of water." Water is taken from the Black Fork River for the fracking process which may cause less water in the

system. "I don't know that it would be enough to drastically alter the water quality there, but if there is less water in the system then we could be seeing more concentration of nutrients, like agriculture nutrients (nitrates and phosphorus) or just concentration of sediment and ions, so those things will impact the organisms that live there," Dolhi said. The project started collecting samples in July of 2017 among 13 different sites along the river. "I do think at this point we have a solid baseline of water quality data, we have a picture now of what the water quality is like in the Black Fork and that's going to make us better positioned to then say 'what kind of impact could this oil and gas industry coming in to the area have on water quality?'"Dolhi said. The group has a diverse number of students from different majors cooperating to a one common goal.

"One of the nice outcomes of the club so far is that the students that have been involved for [about] a year are now really familiar with some of the processes and they are kind of running things on their own," Dolhi said. "It's a really unique experience and really empowering for an undergraduate student to be able to do that. We've had almost 30 students involved in some aspect, whether it be the field sampling, or the lab work or the computer science side. It's been a way for more students to get some research experience and scientific discovery experience rather than myself and two or three of my other faculty doing independent research projects." Juliann Dodd is a freshman student studying Toxicology and Biology. She learned about the project from her professor and joined the group in during her first month of school. "I love nature and I love this type of stuff, so I really enjoy being able to go out into the wild and be

with professors that can tell me a little bit more about it," Dodd said. "Usually I am in the classroom and reading about it, but in this aspect, she is there with me and can give more information." The project is open to all students to join and be part of the team to monitor the water quality around the area. Students do not have to be a science major as long as they have interest and a passion for science. Working in the project can count as volunteering independently or as part of coursework. "It is really nice that Ashland University offers the opportunity that a freshman can get into that type of research, because I know at a lot of other places you have to be older and be taught how to use the instruments, but I am right there working with upperclassmen, and I think it is cool," Dodd said. For more information about the project and to view reports and data collected, visit: <https://www.auwqua.com>

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