

SPECIAL REPORT: SCHOLARSHIPS

\$9 MILLION

In two decades, that's about how much money the Alva Incentive Tax has raised to fund scholarships for NWOSU students

By JORDAN GREEN, *Editor-in-Chief*
and DAVID THORNTON, *Photographer*

In 20 years, a 1% sales tax in Alva has collected almost \$9 million in scholarships for Northwestern students.

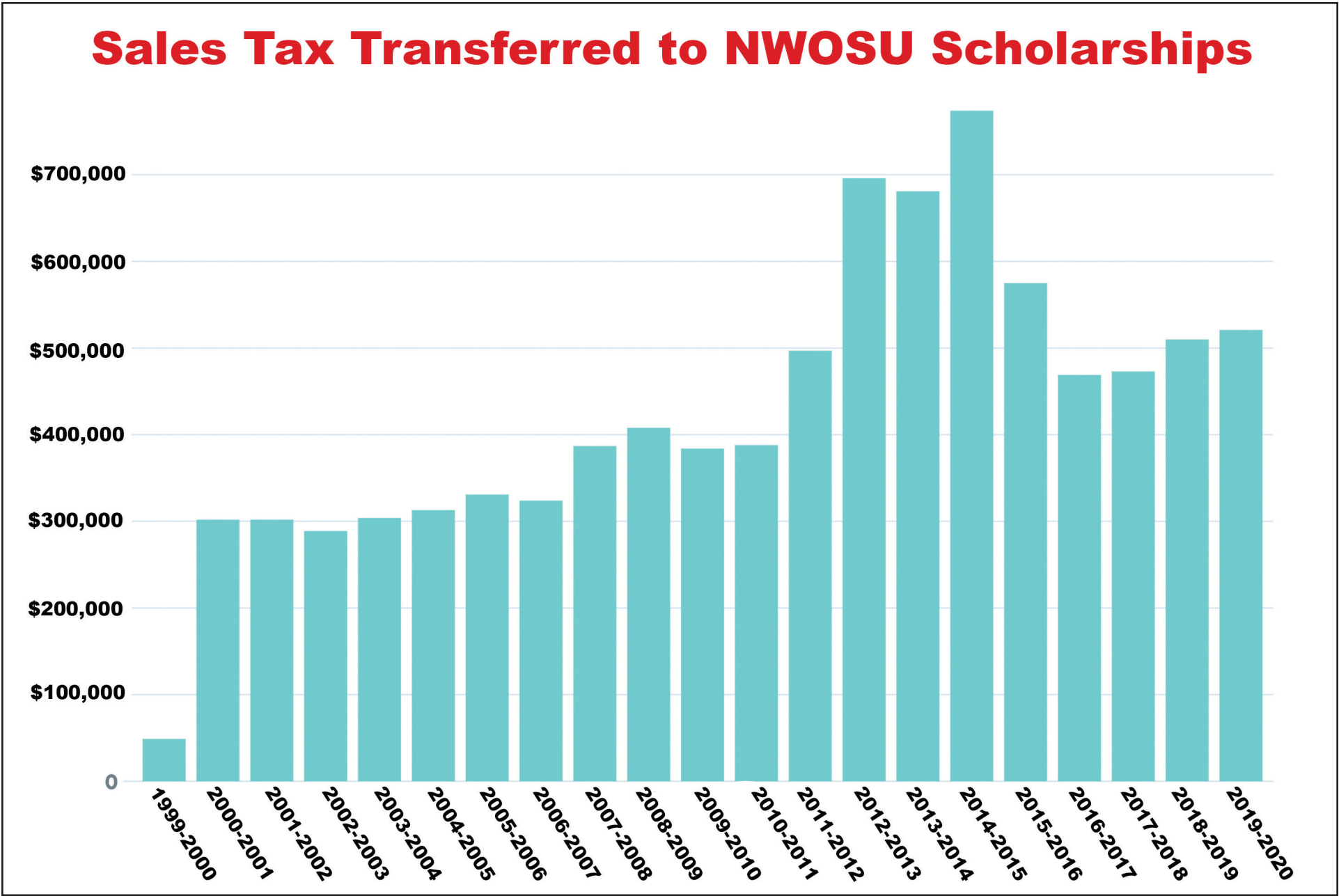
That tax is called the Alva Incentive Tax. And you might be one of the countless Northwestern students who has received money from it.

See TAX, Page 2



Prospective Rangers attend the university's Ranger Preview event in November 2019. Ranger Preview scholarships are awarded to students who attend the event and enroll at Northwestern. Those scholarships are some of the ones funded by the Alva Incentive Tax.

Photo provided



Graphic by Devyn Lansden

This graphic shows how much revenue from the Alva Incentive Tax has been used for scholarships at Northwestern each year. The tax has brought in a total of \$8,989,068.29 since 1999.

News

TAX: Revenue funds participation scholarships and helps NWOSU recruit prospective students

Continued from Page 1

Amid fear of losing the university, Alva voters in 1999 passed a sales tax aiming to develop the economy of this rural north-west Oklahoma town. Half of the funds collected from the tax would be used to build a new public recreation center in Alva, and the other half would be used to fund scholarships for new Northwestern students.

“It’s worked very well,” said Northwestern President Janet Cunningham, who advocated for the tax.

In the years since it was passed, hundreds of students each year have received scholarships funded by tax collections, encouraging students to attend the regional university and spurring economic growth in a rural area that otherwise relies on cyclical, boom-and-bust industries.

“The university being here is a huge driver for the city,” Cunningham said. “Not only the students – they do a lot – but the faculty and the staff, and even the more non-dollar benefits of having an educated component to your community that fill your public schools with their kids and fill your churches, community groups and so on.”

WHAT IS THE TAX?

The Alva Incentive Tax is a 1% sales tax that began in 1999. Sales taxes are applied to almost anything a person purchases within the city limits, with some exceptions.

The City of Alva collects money from this tax when people purchase goods at local stores, food at restaurants, fuel at gas stations and just about any other item sold within the city limits.

“[The tax] gives us an extra resource to be competitive, especially for a university in a rural setting, to help sell the assets that we have here.”
— Dr. David Pecha

Alva’s overall sales tax rate is 9.25%, according to the Oklahoma Tax Commission. That total is comprised of the city’s 4.25% sales tax – which includes the 1% for scholarships and economic development – as well as the county’s 0.5% tax and the state’s 4.5% rate.

According to data obtained from the City of Alva, the university received \$8,989,068.29 from the tax from June 1999 – when the tax went into effect – to the end of fiscal year 2019-2020.

Revenue from the tax is deposited into the city’s Economic Development Fund each month, City Manager Angelica Brady said. That money is invested in certificates of deposit, which earn interest. The interest is also available for scholarships, and the city doesn’t charge the university a fee to manage the fund.

“[CDs] are pretty stable, and we do our CDs through our local banks,” Brady said. “They usually work with us quite well to do that. It makes it more accessible.”

To get money out of the fund, the Northwestern Foundation and Alumni Associa-



Photo provided

Prospective Rangers attend the university’s Ranger Preview event in November 2019. Ranger Preview scholarships are awarded to students who attend the event and enroll at the university. Those scholarships are some of the ones funded by the Alva Incentive Tax.

tion bills the City of Alva twice each year for the amount of money the university paid out in scholarships during the previous semester. In January and May of each year, foundation officials and university administrators make a presentation before the Alva City Council to discuss how many students received scholarships and what their economic impact on Alva is.

The Council approves the bill, and the amount of money requested – which fluctuates depending on the number of scholarships awarded – is paid to the foundation office. The foundation office then transfers that money to the university, where it is doled out to new Rangers.

“It’s pretty straightforward,” City Manager Angelica Brady said.

WHY WAS IT PASSED?

In the late 1990s, a series of legislative measures at the State Capitol led some community stakeholders to worry that Northwestern might leave Alva.

“In ’96, ’96-’97, the Legislature gave us the higher education function in Woodward and in Enid,” Cunningham said. “Of course, there was already a higher ed center in Enid and a building that had already been built, very nice, so on. I think there was some fear that those were both larger communities, and you know how things kind of get in people’s minds, and sometimes you use it.”

Champions of the tax initiative had two main goals: create a recreation center for the city, called the Alva Recreation Complex, and maintain Northwestern’s standing as one of the most influential pieces of Alva’s economic puzzle. Cunningham said she encouraged the university’s then-president, Dr. Joe Struckle, to market the measure as a way to “maintain the university’s presence in Alva.”

“We really tried hard as a university to sell the model that we have one university, we just happen to have several sites,” she said. “And really, what’s good for Enid is good for Alva, is good for Woodward. But people can’t always see that. We could be too parochial – you look at your own little ‘piece’ of the world, and you look at any encroachment on that as hurting you, rather than looking at the region of the state.”

WHAT DOES IT PAY FOR?

Scholarships from the tax may only be given to first-time Northwestern students, whether they’re incoming freshmen or transfer students. Tax revenue helps pay for scholarships during school visitation days, such as Ranger Preview, where students receive a \$600 scholarship if they enroll at Northwestern. This is used as an incentive to bring students to Northwestern.

Money from the tax also helps fund scholarships for students in athletics, choir, the Student Government Association and other groups at Northwestern.

The university’s Fine Arts department is just one example of an area where students can receive scholarships from the tax. Dr. Karsten Longhurst, Northwestern’s director of choral music, said singers in his choirs receive participation scholarships. For the first year students are at Northwestern, their participation scholarships are funded by the Alva Incentive Tax.

Longhurst has three choir classes. Each is on a different “level,” meaning students qualify for differing amounts of money depending on the classes they’re in. Those classes are the University Singers, Chorale and Concert Choir.

Concert Choir students can receive \$500 per year, Chorale students can receive \$1,000 and Singers can receive \$2,000.

Every choir student who is in the uni-

versity’s four-year music program is promised one international tour along with “mini-tours” around Oklahoma. Support from the Alva Incentive Tax makes these trips possible, Longhurst said.

“The tax is one of the most amazing things the Alva community has agreed to do,” Longhurst said. “In a town of 5,000 people, the university provides entertainment, fitness and economic impact.”

As part of the economic development portion of the tax, the city used money to build the city’s recreation center. As a result, Northwestern was able to start a women’s soccer team and a women’s softball team. Before it was built, those teams would have had nowhere to play. But once the facility was built, they did. They still play there today.

Pecha said the tax helps set Northwestern apart from other universities.

“It has allowed us to recruit students that we might not have ever had a chance to ever recruit,” Pecha said. “It gives us an extra resource to be competitive, especially for a university in a rural setting, to help sell the assets that we have here.”

TAX’S IMPACT ON NORTHWESTERN AND ALVA

Since it was passed, the tax has collected an annual average of about \$430,000 each year for Northwestern students, adding up to almost \$9 million.

Yet the impact of that money is significantly greater, said Skeeter Bird, president of the Northwestern Foundation and Alumni Association.

The tax provides a relatively consistent stream of revenue for students – barring any unforeseen economic downfalls, like when businesses closed because of the coronavirus pandemic.

See SCHOLARSHIPS, Page 3

News

SCHOLARSHIPS: Tax ‘a great thing for our community’

Continued from Page 2

The impact of the tax – even though it has brought in \$9 million – is equal to that of a much larger endowment. The only other way the City of Alva could fund the same amount of scholarships it currently does would be by creating a \$15 million endowment to the university, Bird said.

“If you think about how many students make a decision to come to Alva because of that extra \$500 to \$1,000 that they get from the Alva Incentive, that impacts our community,” Bird said.

So, what is the tax’s economic impact?

Using figures provided by the U.S. Department of Education, Bird has calculated the amount of money the average Northwestern student likely spends in Alva each year.

In the fall semester, when the university had 1,166 students on the Alva campus, each student likely spent around \$3,359 in Alva, according to Bird’s calculations. In total, students spend more than \$3.9 million annually.

In the fall semester, 287 students received scholarships from the Alva Incentive Tax. They likely spent about \$964,000.

“Every student that makes a decision to come here, what they spend at downtown, Walmart, or anything actually comes back,” he said. “If you go full circle and you think about the tax dollars, they spend money to create their own scholarships before they leave at the end of the summer.”

NOT ALL DATA TRACKED

How many students have gotten Alva

Incentive Tax scholarships?

That number can’t be determined.

Northwestern hasn’t consistently tracked the total number of students who have received scholarships from the fund, Pecha said.

Each semester, university officials prepare a detailed list of students who receive scholarships and the number of scholarships they receive. However, some students receive a scholarship for both semesters of their first year here, and some receive it for only one semester if they leave the university.

Those factors make the total numbers hard to decipher, Pecha said.

“Nobody has tracked that data from the beginning,” Pecha said. “I don’t know of a comprehensive way to try to track that data. I kind of wish whoever had started this would have tasked that to somebody so we can keep records. Now that we look back on it after 20 years, it would be so cool to find out how many lives it touched.”

Pecha said the university could track such data in the future.

“It’s easy to pull the data when you’re working with it in that current period of time,” he said. “If you try to go back 15 years and pull something, it’s more challenging.”

PLANNING AHEAD

Sales tax collections vary, and when economic disaster strikes, sales tax collections decline.

That’s why officials keep a year’s supply of money from the fund in reserve. A

certain amount of money remains in the account maintained by the city in the event that Alva’s sales tax base ever collapsed.

Students come to Northwestern at events like Ranger Preview months before they enroll at Northwestern, and they’re promised scholarship money when they visit. But in the time between their campus visit and their first semester, things could change. By keeping money set aside in case of an economic emergency, Northwestern officials could continue to pay scholarships promised to students during events like Ranger Preview. Then, they could readjust their plans for the future, Bird said.

The amount of tax revenue has fluctuated through the years. From fiscal year 2000-2001 – the first full year of sales tax collections – to the 2010-2011 fiscal year, the tax collected about \$388,000 per year.

It reached a high of \$774,955.62 in 2014-2015, during the peak of an oil boom across the Midwest. But as oil prices dropped, so did sales tax collections. In 2019-2020, it collected \$521,749.11.

ONE-OF-A-KIND PROGRAM

Only one other regional university has had a sales tax that funds scholarships: Northwestern’s rival, Southwestern Oklahoma State University.

In 2000, Weatherford residents passed a 1% sales tax renewal that helped fund a scholarship endowment at the university. Scholarships from that fund could only be given to students who have completed an associate’s degree and are pursuing their bachelor’s, master’s and doctoral degrees,

said Sheridan McCaffree, executive director of the Regional University System of Oklahoma.

That’s unlike Northwestern’s program, which directly funds scholarships for first-time students.

Other cities in Oklahoma have passed sales tax increases to build new facilities at universities, but those taxes have a sunset date, meaning they eventually come to an end.

“None of our other universities have a specific sales tax for a scholarship program like Northwestern does,” McCaffree said.

McCaffree said the Alva Incentive Tax scholarship program could be a role model for other universities.

“Northwestern was the first one to do it,” she said. “I remember it was pretty groundbreaking when Alva did it. You know, I just assumed everybody fell in line after that.”

LOOKING TOWARD THE FUTURE

While sales tax collections dived during the pandemic, Brady, the city manager, said the city’s economy is improving. Sales tax collections are rising once again.

That’s a promising sign for scholarships at Northwestern, she said.

“For our city, we’ve done quite well,” Brady said. “Other cities, in less rural areas, they have struggled with losing sales tax. But for us, what we feel like is people are staying here and shopping here. We’re gaining some [revenue] we may have lost.

“I’m very happy with where we’re at. It’s a great thing for our community.”

Foundation office will launch mentor program

By CADE KENNEDY
Student Reporter

A new mentor program at Northwestern is in the works, and the Northwestern Foundation and Alumni Association is ready to start it.

The program will officially be called “Ranger2Ranger” and is set to have a soft launch in May. It is expected to become available to all students next semester. The program will connect alumni to students who are wanting to learn more about their degrees and get a head start on their careers, officials said.

To access the program, students will log into a portal on the foundation’s website. There, they will be matched up with alumni who graduated with the same degree they have. It will be up to the students to send introduction e-mail to the alumni, and the goals of program will be discussed after the email is sent.

Students will benefit from the program because it provides an opportunity for freshmen and sophomores to be encouraged about their degree. It will also help students who change their majors, foundation officials said. Ranger2Ranger will also allow students to have conversations with alumni about their future,

and it will provide job opportunities for Northwestern graduates.

John Allen, the director of the Northwestern Foundation and Alumni Association, said the program will give students the chance to know helpful people.

The idea of Ranger2Ranger came from a conference in Denver, Colorado, that members of the alumni foundation attended. Attendees talked about how to help young alumni stay connected to their universities. They also looked at a mentor program at the University of Kansas as the blueprint for Ranger2Ranger.

“I believe that Ranger2Ranger is important because I have seen mentorship work, as well as listening to stories from other organizations,” Allen said.

According to Allen, Skeeter Bird, the CEO of the foundation, said 30% of students drop out after their first year of college.

“Hopefully this program will lower that number here,” Allen said.

Jeremiah Campbell, president of the Northwestern Alumni Board, said he is excited to see how Ranger2Ranger will turn out.

“I am excited to help the students that are coming up, as I wanted to make sure that we are helping the kids that are unsure about what to do,” he said.

HIRING NOW

- (4) POSITIONS FOR HORTICULTURE SPECIALISTS
*Experience preferred but will train *Pay based on experience*
- (1) POSITION FOR MAINTENANCE
- (1) POSITION FOR JANITORIAL
Must have experience on these two positions, or don't apply
- (1) POSITION FOR AN ASSISTANT/BOOKKEEPER/BABY SITTER
Must have attention to detail, bookkeeping experience, and reliable transportation to run errands
- (1) POSITION FOR COMPLIANCE OFFICER FOR CANNABIS FARM
*Experience required! Must know OMMA regulations and metric system. Training and certification are required, but if no certification, we will put the right person through classes. *Pay based on experience*

CANNABIS FARM

IN WAYNOKA

Text 580-737-0435 or
Email resume to saharacannabis@gmail.com

NORTHWESTERN NEWS

Official Newspaper
Northwestern Oklahoma State
University
709 Oklahoma Blvd.
Alva, OK 73717

Published weekly throughout the school
year except during examination periods
and holidays and distributed to students
and staff.

Spring 2021 Staff

Editor-in-Chief
Jordan Green

Features Editor
Michelle Willson

Editorial Editor
Devyn Lansden

Sports Editor
Dacoda McDowell-
Wahpekeche

Photo Editor
Jara Reeder

Photographer
David Thornton

Advertising Manager
Jayden Dillon

Circulation Manager
Dayra Verduzco Serrano

Online Manager
Bailey Judd

Adviser
Dr. Kaylene Armstrong

News office: Jesse Dunn Annex 232
Telephone: 327-8479; Fax: 327-8127
E-mail: nwnews@nwosu.edu
The News is printed by the Alva Re-
view-Courier

The opinions and comments contained
in the Northwestern News are those of the
writers and do not necessarily reflect the poli-
cies or beliefs of the university administration,
Board of Regents of Oklahoma Colleges or
the editorial staff. The News gladly accepts
submissions but does not promise they will
be used.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION
COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

This institution, in compliance with
Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act
of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amend-
ments of 1972, sections 503 and 504 of the
Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans
with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of
2008, and other applicable federal laws and
regulations, and to the extent required by law,
does not discriminate on the basis of race, col-
or, national origin, sex, age, religion, genetic
information, physical or mental disability, or
status as a veteran in any of its policies, prac-
tices, or procedures. This includes, but is not
limited to, admissions, employment, financial
aid, and educational services.

Inquiries concerning the application
of these programs should be made to Cal-
leb Mosburg, Director of Student Affairs,
Northwestern Oklahoma State University,
709 Oklahoma Boulevard, Alva, OK 73717,
(580) 327-8415.

This publication, printed by Northwes-
tern Oklahoma State University, is issued by
the University as authorized by the Regional
University System of Oklahoma. 1,600 copies
have been prepared and distributed at a cost
to the taxpayers of the State of Oklahoma
of \$368.00.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letters to the editor shall bear the
author's handwritten signature, hometown,
classification, title, etc., address and phone
number for verification and shall be kept
on file. Unsigned letters to the editor will not be
published.

Letters must be turned in by noon on
Monday to the News office in JDA232. Let-
ters via e-mail are acceptable as long as they
follow the rules stated above and can be sent
to nwnews@nwosu.edu. Please limit submis-
sions to no more than 250 words. The editors
reserve the right to condense or edit any letter
for grammar, libel and space limitations. All
letters submitted may not be used.

All letters represent the views of the
author.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Yearly subscriptions to the News are \$20.

Editorial

‘Justice League’ earns an ‘A’

By CONNOR GRAY
Student Reporter

After nearly four years of
hashtags, fan campaigns and non-
stop cries from fans, Warner Me-
dia released “Zack Snyder’s Jus-
tice League” on HBO Max.

“Zack Snyder’s Justice
League” was a culmination of fan
outcry to get his version of the
film that was meant to be released
in 2017, instead of what was giv-
en to fans and audiences, which
put Snyder’s vision for the DC
Extended Universe pretty out the
window.

With AT&T needing new prod-
ucts for HBO MAX, they decided
to green light Snyder’s intended
film. Before the disappointment
of the 2017’s “Justice League”
was released, Snyder, the director
of the first two DCEU films, was
nearing completion; about 90% of
“Justice League” was done when
tragedy struck Zack’s family and
he had to leave the project.

Joss Whedon, who directed
and wrote the first two Avengers
films for Marvel, replaced Zack to
finish the film. Whedon rewrote
different scenes for the film, took
out other scenes from Zack’s ver-
sion and inserted new ones that
overall made it totally different
from the previous films that came
before; Warner Media wanted the

film trimmed to under two hours.
The film ended up being a criti-
cal and financial disaster, with
the mutual conception that it was
bad. Characters like Batman were
totally different, while Flash,
Aquaman and Cyborg were one-
note characters — or in Cyborg’s
case, no character at all.

The villain Stephenwolf
was cheesy and forgetful. #Re-
leasetheSnyderCut was created
by fans and was used to campaign
for Zack’s film. Then they found
out the film in theaters was not his
vision. Now it’s time to review
“Zack Snyder’s Justice League”
and ask the question: Is it actually
good?

From here on out, when both
films are mentioned, Zack’s ver-
sion will be called Justice League,
while the 2017 film will be called
Justice League. The films, while
relatively the same, play out are
radically differently from each
other, including story beats and
characters. About every aspect of
this film is a huge step up from
Justice League or Whedon’s ver-
sion.

A four-hour film is split into
seven parts, and the film retains
the tone of the previous films
he directed in the franchise. The
movie starts out when Superman
dies at the hands of doomsday.
His screams of pain send out a
powerful wave that wakes up the

three mother boxes that were left
on earth by Darkseid. His army
was driven off the planet by the
old gods, the Amazonians, the
Atlantians and the armies of
mankind when Darkseid invaded
5,000 years ago. A few months
after Superman’s death, Batman
and Wonder Woman are looking
for other super-beings to help
them in their fight against possi-
ble future threats to unite. They
meet our other heroes to convince
them to help, though it takes time
for two of them. Despite the rocky
start, our heroes and a revived Su-
perman defeat Steppenwolf and
save the day.

The movie gives viewers a
chance to understand how the
characters act and function, as
this was needed for the previous
version. This gave Cyborg, who
got a lot more screen time and
development, his backstory and
gave him a character arc that was
needed and satisfying.

Flash and Aquaman, while not
as fleshed out, have better moti-
vational character arcs than just
“I’m the funny guy” and “I’m
the rough-and-tough dude,” re-
spectively. The movie uses darker
shades of coloring as to fit in tone
with the previous films, excluding
Justice League.

On the letter grade scale, I
would give “Zack Snyder’s Jus-
tice League” an A.

What a time to be a Ranger

By ETHAN SACKET
Guest Columnist

Whatttt??? That was fast!
Well done, Northwestern! I don’t
know if you all had a blast, but
I sure did. First off, shout out to
my grandmother for starting this
“Ranger train” and getting Sack-
ets to attend college in Alva, and
for asking me where I was going
to study even before I knew what
grade school I was going to. I’m
incredibly grateful for how God
has used my time in Alva to draw
me closer to Him. Thank you to
every single person that brought
me closer to Christ. Most of you
will never know what you spe-
cifically did, but I am incredibly
grateful for each of you. I had one
of the best opportunities to serve
some of the coolest and most car-
ing people I have ever interacted
with these past four years.

Back up four years. On the
morning of the first day of school
as a freshman, I got locked out of
my room as I was getting ready. I
ended up having the opportunity
to wear my suitemate’s clothes
to my first ever college class. I
soon realized that I should never
pretend to be someone else, and
when you walk in another man’s
shoes, you realize just how com-
fortable your own truly are (liter-
ally and metaphorically). **Lesson 1: God didn’t create you with your unique characteristics just**

**for you to try to be someone
else.** Be your most authentic self.
You’ll reap the benefits.

My sophomore year, I was
approached about completing
a marketing internship that in-
volved creating a logo, trade-
marking a slogan and designing
an expo booth. I had minimal ex-
perience with anything like this.
Later that year, I was representing
the company in Las Vegas at the
International Pizza Expo. **Lesson 2: Don’t underestimate where you are and what God can do through you.** Pursue the oppor-
tunities God puts on your heart,
even if it absolutely terrifies you.
Learn as you go and seek guid-
ance from mentors that have ac-
complished what you aim to do.

Earlier this semester, this kid
in khakis somehow (out of over
3,000 applicants) progressed to
the final stage of being a brand
specialist for Oscar Mayer and
driving the Wienermobile across
the US for a year. **Lesson 3: As
you pursue the things on your
heart, it’s not always about
reaching the destination, but
enjoying the journey.** We have to
be present and relish this current
moment. We can’t be so focused
on what’s next that we don’t ap-
preciate what’s right in front of
us. God uses the journeys through
hardships to build our character.

I realize wearing sweaters
from the ‘80s and khakis like
they’re gym shorts isn’t the

“norm,” but you all took me in
with open arms.

Thank you to every student
that brought an idea, suggestion
or concern to me throughout the
years. You were truly taking a
stance to make the campus better
for others. Continue to use your
voice for positive change.

Also, here are some fun facts
I’ve learned: It’s incredibly easy
to go a year without many know-
ing you’re rocking a mustache
(exaggeration on “rocking”).

It’s quite simple to get a cam-
el on campus when you have the
students’ best interests in mind.

The best time to take calculat-
ed risks is when you are young,
and you will never be younger
than what you are today. It’s far
better to be denied than wonder-
ing what could have become if
you went for it.

God woke you up today be-
cause He still has a plan for you.
Don’t let fear keep you from be-
ing all you can be.

I owe this place, the people,
and community so much (not stu-
dent loans, though!). So, if there’s
ever a way I can serve you all, I
am sure you can find someone
that has my number.

Also, I’m still determined to
get that 27 foot hotdog on wheels
to Alva. We’ll just all have to
practice patience together.

— *Ethan Sacket is the former
president of the Northwestern
Student Government Association.*

Editor’s
rant of
the week

By MICHELLE WILLSON
Features Editor

The semester is almost
done. This week, I’m going
to use my rant section as less
of a rant and more as a advice
coming from a “senior.”

To undecided students:
Don’t settle for a major your
first semester. Take this time
to look into the different sub-
jects you might be interested
in and just do gen eds.

When I came in as a fresh-
man, I knew I was interested
in mass communication, but I
wasn’t sure I had done class-
es throughout high school. I
knew that was something I
liked, but I could never tell if
it was something that I want-
ed to continue as a job.

I came to NWOSU ready
to jump into things, and I
wanted to be involved in
school like I was in high
school. I started doing mass
comm classes. I became an
editor of the newspaper. I
really did the full nine yards
I participated in theater, I
joined clubs and I quickly
became a board member.

But where did that get
me? I’m a senior, I don’t par-
ticularly like my major and
I’m not sure what my next
step is. Everyone is saying
to continue with my educa-
tion or just get a job because
I already have the qualifi-
cations, but the thought of
spending the rest of my life
doing something that I just
kind of like feels like a death
sentence. I don’t know what
I want to do, but I am pretty
sure it’s not this.

All of this could have
been avoided if I followed
the normal setup of classes. I
could have still been an ed-
itor of the newspaper to see
if I would like that side of
mass communication with-
out throwing all my cards in
the same pile.

Don’t be afraid to get a
second opinion. Ask around
to upperclassmen and other
teachers and get their advice.
Find the path that best fits
you.

A great thing about North-
western is that the teachers
want you to succeed. They
want you to have a positive
experience while you’re
here, and you can help guide
that decision. If you know
what you want to do, go for
it. If you don’t, explore un-
til you find something you’d
like.

This will officially be my
last rant as an editor of the
Northwestern News. Good
luck with your journey, and
Ride, Rangers, Ride.

Editorial

I might not have scored top marks on every paper. But these two teachers were A-grade.

JORDAN GREEN SAYS



JORDAN GREEN

They're re-tiring? That was the question that crossed my mind when I read the April 14 edition of The Journal-Tribune. Ms. Ruth Ann Lenz and Mrs. Michelle Burnett – two longtime teachers at Blackwell Middle School – announced they're calling it a career after teaching students about geography and math, respectively, for decades. Only seven or eight years ago, I was sitting in their classrooms, soaking up all the knowledge they had to dispense. I sort of thought they'd never retire. But everyone deserves a break. And they've certainly earned theirs. Ms. Lenz and Mrs. Burnett – I'll

never be able to stop calling them that – rarely missed a day of class. I can't recall ever having a substitute teacher in their courses. I'd wager this has something to do with their love of teaching, which they always showed to those of us who were fortunate enough to be their pupils. I remember walking into Ms. Lenz' class as a nervous little 6th grade student. The first part of the classroom I noticed was a sign taped to the front of her lectern. It read: "'Listen' and 'silent' are spelled with the same letters." On first glance, it seemed a bit passive aggressive. Maybe even a little stern. But I wasn't normally one to talk out of turn (though Ms. Lenz might recall differently). Ms. Lenz got students' attention and respect, and we learned more because of that. As the school year went on, I grew to like Ms. Lenz a lot. Behind that gruff veneer – hardened by decades

in the classroom and encounters with hundreds of students – Ms. Lenz had a heart. A big one. For students from every walk of life. She was always ready to teach, and she made sure we were prepared to apply the knowledge we learned in class to the world around us. That's what a good teacher does. She never taught us to "ace" a standardized test. She taught students about the cultures and customs of almost every nation across the globe – and she taught them how to find those nations on a map. Even after I was no longer a student of hers, I sometimes visited her in her classroom. I enjoyed those times. We had fun talking politics, both local and national. Even when we disagreed, I tried to remember what that sign said. When she talked, I listened. There are few people whom I more intently listen to –

and more highly respect – than Ms. Lenz. Mrs. Burnett is like Ms. Lenz in a number of ways. I'll admit I was a little scared going into her class. Doing math? The prospect was frightening. To me, it was a four-letter word, much like the ones Momma told me never to use. Despite my incompetence, Mrs. Burnett worked with me and helped me understand the seemingly impossible combinations of numbers and letters known as algebra. She came into class with a smile every day, and she used a chalk board to write assignments. In an era where electronic screens and dry-erase boards rule the day, I appreciate a teacher who uses methods we might nowadays call "old-fashioned." I use that term with some reservations. Ms. Lenz and Mrs. Burnett will always be young at heart, yet they are classically trained educators. They were there to help us not only complete our coursework,

but also to develop the critical thinking skills we'd need once the 3:35 p.m. bell rang. They prepared us to enter the real world. Granted, in middle school, the "real world" that awaited was high school. But without quality teaching, my peers and I would have never been prepared to begin the next chapters of our lives. I may never have the money to travel the countries Ms. Lenz taught about. I may never again need to determine the median in a set of data. But when I meet people from far, far away, I think I'll be able to relate to them and understand their values. And when I'm raising a family one day, I'll know how to budget money so I can give my children a life just as great as the one my parents have given me. I may not have earned top marks on every assignment in their classes. But in my book, Ms. Lenz and Mrs. Burnett will always be A-grade.

Take back your summer

By **CAITLIN HOFEN**
Student Reporter

There's a certain buzz in the air. We've had a taste of summer, and the snow cones are practically making themselves. There's only one thing standing between us and summer break: finals week. Finals week is a stressful time in college students' lives, filled with all-nighters and copious amounts of caffeine. Knowledge is crammed into brains, and silent prayers and pleas are uttered as tests are taken and grades are posted. Take this last obstacle of finals week and hit it head-on. Check your grades and print out that study guide. Down your coffee, stir your Ramen Noodles and start that essay early so it's off your mind later. Professors want to help students pass their classes and will usually answer any question regarding the material. You've survived the semester this far. Don't give up yet. Finish strong and know that you gave it your all. After this stressful semester, do this for yourself. We've survived a pandemic covered by masks and doused in hand sanitizer. Do your best to pass your finals and move on to summer break. This past quarantined summer felt uneventful to many and heartbreaking to others. Make this next summer one to remember. Go on that road trip. Apply for that internship. Make some memories to carry you through the next school year. Regardless of whether you make the choice to become vaccinated or not, I think we can all agree that caution must be exercised, and good decisions need to be made. But don't let fear stop you from making memories you'll have forever. Whether you're working full-time or still taking some classes this summer, say

"yes" to that barbecue invite or take an evening to play with your dog. You're not going to remember hours spent behind a desk or on your feet mopping floors. The projects and overtime will be there tomorrow, too. What you will remember is coaching your little brother's baseball team to the little league playoffs or the Saturday spent playing "mermaids" with your little cousins.

"Don't let fear stop you stop you from making memories you'll have forever."
— Caitlin Hofen

Go home to your families and take a moment to appreciate the time you can spend with them. You're growing up away from home, and sometimes that can be hard to accept for some families. So, take the chance to sit and talk with your grandma over lunch, or go play catch with your little sister. They miss you more than you realize, and this time during summer is your chance to enjoy life a little more with them. Summer is a time to re-prioritize your life. If you want to sleep for a week after finals, I don't blame you one bit. If a job is calling your name, work your hardest to be comfortable next semester. Just remember, take some time for yourself. Start a new hobby or open a good book. The impact of the pandemic has hit college students particularly hard, so take back the summer that was taken from us. Summer is right around the corner, so make it one worth remembering.

Cancel culture targets conservatives

By **TYLER GREGORY**
Guest Columnist

Censorship has forever held a place in the political arena of world history. Never in the history of The United States has it met the standard it has reached in modern America. The culture being fomented today is one of complete removal and exclusion of private industries or private business owners by a political mob aggrandized by social media. The political weight that these progressive institutions, individuals and companies have today is exemplified by the countless people, objects, books, movies and other institutions that have been "canceled." The ostracism of these apparatuses of free speech is a dark cloud looming over American politics. Cancel culture personally struck Brett Kavanaugh through brutal confirmation hearings and Mike Lindell, MyPillow CEO, following his verbal

support for former President Trump. Both of these men experienced the intense backlash by the mobs of social media, but in different manners. The ramifications are extensive, as there is no objective standard by which this mob cancels. The fluid "line" of what is acceptable and what is not is constantly moving, and this is frightening for young conservatives who want to speak their beliefs in public. This became an issue within the formation of our chapter of the College Republicans. We were recruiting and speaking to our peers. Many wanted to join; however, they were afraid to attach their name to our club. This fear has already been established and will only continue to affect young conservatives in the future. We utilize our position as young Republicans to show others that it is still acceptable to have conservative values in spite of the cancel culture mob. — Gregory is a member of the Northwestern College Republicans Club.

HIRING NOW

- (2) BARTENDERS FOR THE SANDBAR SALOON IN WAYNOKA, OKLAHOMA

2 days per week
(Fridays and Saturdays)

Experience a must!

SANDBAR SALOON

IN WAYNOKA

Text 580-737-0435 or
Email resume to saharacannabis@gmail.com

After cancer diagnosis, Alva woman's life changed

By JARA REEDER
Photo Editor

Deb Jackson remembers the late-night phone call.

“My doctor calls me like at 12:35 p.m., and I see it’s him,” she said. “I say ‘Hey, Doc. What’s up?’ And he was kind of quiet. He goes on and says, ‘Deb, you do have cancer.’”

In May 2012, Deb Jackson got the news that she had breast cancer. She went through radiation five times a week for nine weeks.

She would go to work and then drive to Enid, an hour away, for only 15 minutes of radiation therapy. Then, she would go back to work.

“I was shocked she still came into work every day because you know many people who go through something like that just don’t go back to work,” said Tonya Weinhofer, a past coworker and assistant manager with Jackson at Walmart. “She never missed a day, and even stayed late to cover the missed hours she was gone. I would never have done that, but that showed the type of person Deb is. She’s tough and just a workaholic.”

That November, Jackson had a double mastectomy and reconstruction.

Since then, she has been cancer free.

“I think the hardest part with cancer [is that] you’re telling me I’m not in charge right now,” Jackson said. “I’m not in charge of my life. I didn’t ask for this.”

FATHER’S BATTLE WITH CANCER

Six years after Jackson’s cancer, she watched her father, Dale Duggins, go through the same situation.

Her father first started complaining about his head hurting, but the family brushed off his concerns.

But one day, Duggins fell face-forward and hit his head. He was rushed to the hospital for an x-ray.

Doctors said Duggins had cancer eating away at his skull. And later,



Deb Jackson poses for a photo with her husband, Tim, in this undated image.



Above: Deb Jackson, second from left, poses for a photo with her father, mother and husband during a family Christmas party in this undated photo. At left: Deb Jackson is shown with her family while wearing their Breast Cancer Awareness shirts. Jackson was diagnosed with breast cancer.

they discovered that he had stage four bone cancer.

The doctor said Duggins had three months to live. However, he died after only two weeks.

“A lot of people lose their parents at a young age or parents have to bury their children at a young age,” Jackson said. “But a part you is selfish, and you never want to see your loved ones go.”

Jackson was born in Cushing to Dale and Barbara Duggins. She has one older sister, Donna Littlefield-Inbody.

Jackson said her family moved often while she was growing up because of her father’s job as a coach and educator.

“We first lived in Tulsa, Oklahoma, where my dad was ‘Dean of Boys’ at Tulsa Central, which was a very tough school,” Jackson said.

The last place where Jackson and her family ended up was Cherokee in 1976.

In the last few years of high school, Jackson worked at a store called Alco.

She also worked at the Kountry Kitchen, the restaurant her parents owned. She helped manage and operate it.

BECOMING A RANGER

When high school was over in 1979, she went off to college just a few miles away at Northwestern Oklahoma State University.

“I didn’t really know what I wanted to do at the time, so I was undecided,” she said.

Jackson lived in the South Hall dormitories. A few years ago, when Jackson’s daughter was preparing to attend college, the two took a tour of South Hall. Jackson said she was surprised that nothing had changed since she lived there.

While at Northwestern, Jackson was a cheerleader for the university’s football and basketball teams. She played flag football for an intramural team.



Deb Jackson, left, poses for a photo with her mother and husband in this undated picture.

“My doctor calls me like at 12:35 p.m. I see it’s him. I say, ‘Hey, Doc. What’s up?’ And he was kind of quiet. He goes on and says, ‘Deb, you do have cancer.’ I can still to this day see everything in my dining room just the way it was. It was like slow motion. I was like, ‘What?’ Then I immediately start scrambling, trying to find a piece of paper to write it down — what kind it was, all that stuff.”

— Deb Jackson

“The one thing that I’m thankful for during my time at Northwestern is when I took a speech class, because public speaking has always made me want to throw up,” Jackson said. “But when I’m around people I work with or have retailed with many times, then I’m fine. It’s

just that moment getting up there to get started, but after that, things start going, and ... you start to become relaxed.”

Throughout Jackson’s journey in retail business management, two places were a big part of her career, she said.

For 18 years, she was an assistant manager at Walmart. She was the head manager for six years.

During her time as head manager, Jackson went to several conference and leadership workshops in Oklahoma City, where all of the managers and assistant managers of every Walmart in Oklahoma met.

In early 2017, she left Walmart

to avoid being transferred to another Walmart in another town. She didn’t want to leave her parents, who were ill.

FINDING A NEW CALLING

In the fall of 2017, she started working as the head manager at the Shepherds gas station and diner in Alva.

She helped start the business and still runs the store today.

“If it wasn’t for her [Jackson], I wouldn’t be where I was today,” said Marian Hanna, an assistant manager at Shepherds. “I was a



Deb Jackson, left, poses for a picture during Halloween with some of her coworkers at the local Shepherds station.

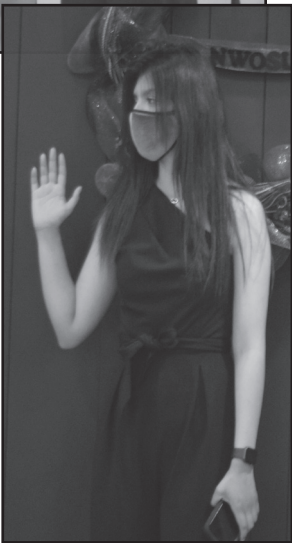
Feature

SGA inducts new members

Student leaders elected in April sworn into office during ceremony Monday



Above: Angel Marshall, Erika Hernandez and Dawson Maxwell take their oaths of office to become members of the Student Government Association. They were sworn in Monday night. Marshall is the organization’s secretary, Hernandez is the organization’s treasurer and Maxwell is the organization’s president.



Right: Yosbelli Lora, vice president, is sworn into office.

Photos by Dacoda McDowell-Wahpekeche

21-year-old manager talks about his goals for his family’s diner

By KAYLEA BROWN
Student Reporter

When the hands on the clock hit four o’clock in the afternoon, Max Parsons starts to turn on equipment, prepare food and anything else that he will need for his shift at 818 Diner.

Parsons is a 21-year-old Alva native and a junior accounting major at Northwestern Oklahoma State University.

Although Parsons’ family owns and runs the diner, he started out in the restaurant as a cook and worked his way up to his current position.

Parsons is a manager and mainly works the night shift, but he also helps with the morning shift as needed.

Parsons said at first he was not too fond of his family’s idea to start a restaurant, but after his family took a picture in front of the building located at 818 Oklahoma Blvd., he became more serious about the idea. Now enjoys his role in it, he said.

When it was time for the Parsons family to decide on a name for the restaurant, they asked their family for ideas.

Parsons did not like the ideas they offered, but the three



Photo provided

The Parsons family, owners of the 818 Diner, are shown in this photo.

numbers painted on the door stood out in his mind. 818 Diner became the name for its simplicity and the appealing symmetrical look it presented.

Parsons’ goal for 818 Diner is to expand the restaurant into neighboring towns and possibly even franchise it one day.

“If you would have asked me

a couple of years ago if I’d be working in a restaurant, let alone running one, I would’ve called you crazy,” Parsons said.

“It’s not something I’ve always wanted to do, that I’ve always thought about. It just kind of fell in my lap. This diner has given me insight on how I’m going to achieve my vision.”

It is really hard to say goodbye

By MICHELLE WILLSON
Features Editor

I’ve never been good at putting into words what I want to say. Northwestern has given me four years of memories I wouldn’t trade for anything, and I can definitely say that I am who I am now because of my experiences at this college.

The person I was when I walked on campus for the first time is definitely not the same person that will be walking off at the end of the semester. It’s so weird to look back and see how much everything has changed because, in the moment, it doesn’t feel like anything is happening.

I’ve been on the boards of clubs, I’ve been a founding member of a club, I’ve had every hair color you can imagine, and I even got some facial piercings. It’s been a wild ride. I’ve made friends and lost some, too. But I can honestly say that this past semester has shown me that everything has been worth it.

I’ve learned more about myself this year than I did the three years prior. The pandemic did mess up a lot of things. It definitely threw my expectations for my junior and senior years out the door, but I’m not even that upset about it. Through quarantines and events being canceled, it’s given me a lot more time to work on myself.

Northwestern has given me so many great opportunities. I’ve gone to Europe, I’ve gone to newspaper conferences. I saw “Hamilton” in theaters. I’ve won awards at newspaper conferences. I’ve performed on-stage and managed multiple on-stage productions. I’ve been an editor of the newspaper for four years and much more.

For a long time, I focused on all the things I couldn’t do here because it’s a small university. But there is so much I’ve gotten to do because of it. So much that I wouldn’t have been able to do if I went to a bigger university.

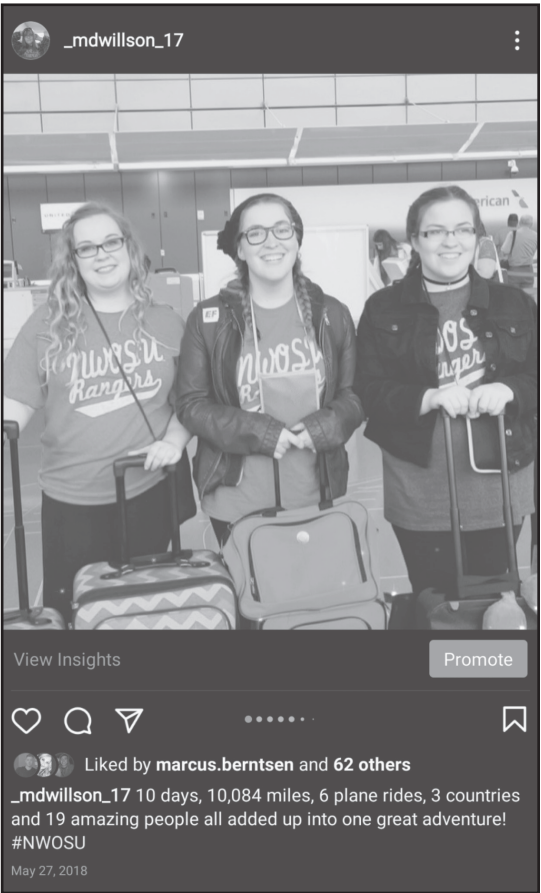
Northwestern will always hold a spot in my heart, and I know that if I am ever in trouble, my Northwestern family is just a call away.



This past semester, I made some amazing COVID-safe memories. My girlfriend and I drove to a random town to play in the park.



I was camp counselor for NWOSU’s “Upward Bound” program. I got to spend a summer planning activities and going on educational trips.



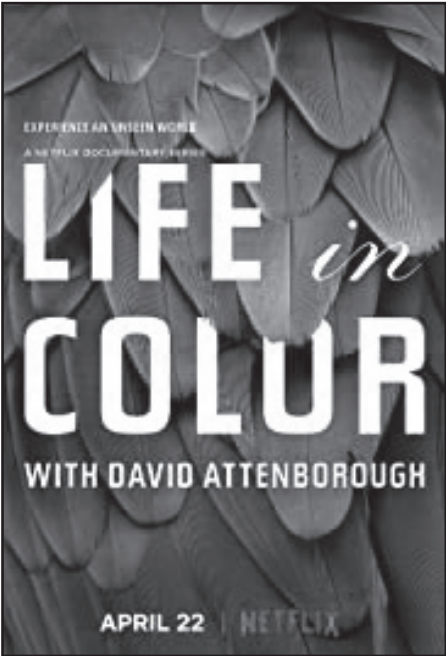
In 2018, I participated in NWOSU’s summer study abroad program with my two sisters. We got to visit London, Dublin and Edinburgh, England.

Entertainment

NETFLIX

Short reviews of new releases

By MICHELLE WILLSON
Features Editor



“Life in Color” 3 out of 5 stars

The movie is really informational, but it did end up staying on for background noise as I cleaned my room. It starts out a little slow and dry, but it is sort of entertaining.

I would recommend this series to anyone who is into nature documentaries. I would also recommend it to anyone who is interested in exotic animals or anyone who just needs a show to listen to and occasionally look up at.

I didn’t hate the layout or sequences of camera shots. I really thought they made the show more eye-catching.



“Shadow and Bone” 4 out of 5 stars

This is a fantasy series that premiered April 23 on Netflix. This is an action-packed series that follows an orphan mapmaker discovering her powers. I would have given this series a 5 out of 5, but it tends to follow overused elements in the storyline. For example, a land plagued by war. The main character is an orphan who didn’t know they were magic and they are the only person who can save them.

I still really liked the movie. It uses these elements in some new ways. I recommend this series to anyone who likes fantasy and magic.

‘Amigo the Devil’ is a perfect mash of alternative culture and folk music

By MICHELLE WILLSON
Features Editor

If you’re into alternative folk music, I have a new band for you to look into. The band is called “Amigo the Devil.”

This folk band has a punk-alt feel to it, and their songs delve into deep topics while still keeping a melodic tune.

I’ve been listening to this band nonstop for the past week, and the more songs I listen to, the more they surprise me.

Amigo the Devil uses his songs to illustrate some hard-hitting stories while using minimal musical instruments in the background, which gives the song a vintage “feel.”

My favorite song as of right now is called “Cocaine and Able.” It focuses on changing into who you truly are and how what you’ve done in the past doesn’t have to dictate who you are in the future.

Other songs that are in my top favorites are “Quiet as a Rat” and “Buried in Another Man’s Grave.” I don’t have specifics on why I’m drawn to these songs in particular, but if you’re only

going to look up a few songs, these are the ones I would stress that you should to listen to.

Many of their songs have burlesque-sounding music. I realize that’s not the technical term for it, but that’s what my brain thinks of every time I hear it.

One thing I really like about Amigo the Devil is that it’s an alternative punk-style band that is not problematic — or has not had any problematic allegations against them.

Which is really hard to find in the punk world.

I give Amigo the Devil 5 out of 5 stars. I know there are still so many more songs that I have to listen to. I’ve really been listening to the same three on repeat.

But the way I see it, I can only go up from here. It’s amazing I have not found a song that I don’t like.

I recommend listening to it if you’re into alt folk music or if you’re interested in the alt-punk scene.

Their songs do touch some touchy subjects, but they do it in a matter that’s not attacking. It’s more like illustrating the problems, and it’s magnificent.

“It’s not easy to say ‘goodbye.’”
— Kenny Rogers

Dacoda and Michelle, we’ll miss you! Thanks for being great friends and journalists. You have forever changed our lives for the better. Until next time,
— 30 —

— Your forever friends at the
Northwestern News

Want to write a review for the entertainment page of the newspaper?

Email Michelle Willson
mdwillson99@rangers.nwosu.edu

Alva's Market

Save MONEY and TIME!
More bargains every day at Alva's Market. Shop Local!

706 Flynn

Incredible Deals!
4-28 thru 5-4

Food Club frosted toasters, 6 ct.	\$0.99	Bar S regular hot dogs	\$1.25 pkg.
Capri Sun drinks, 10 ct.	\$2.50	Small seedless watermelons	\$4.99 each
Gallon Shurfine chocolate drink	\$2.59	Tina's frozen burrito	\$1 each

ALVA VISION CLINIC

Large selection of Oakley, Ray Ban, Wylie X Silhouette ... Contacts
New shipment polarized Pre- and post-OP Lasix


VISION SOURCE

Mastercard, Visa, Discover, American Express and Care Credit accepted

ACCEPTED INSURANCE:
VSP, PVCS, MEDICARE, VISION CARE DIRECT, SOONERCARE, BCBS, EYE MED AND HEALTHCHOICE

MON. & THURS. 8A.M.-5:30P.M.
TUES. & WED: 7:30A.M.-5:30P.M.
CLOSED FROM 12P.M.-1P.M.
CLOSED FRIDAYS
5:15PM APPT TIMES DAILY!
FOR AN APPOINTMENT CALL
(580)-327-2393

AFTER HOURS CALL
(580)-829-2026

“Complex contacts RX are our specialty”
Dr. Troy L. Smith
504 College Ave

Sports

‘Turning that disability into ability’

Dwarf wrestlers say their work is a way to tackle adversity

By DYLAN WHITELY
Student Reporter

EDITOR’S NOTE: Some language in this story may not be suitable for some readers.

Children cheered, college students applauded and people watched from the rooftops of a neighboring building as “Extreme Midget Wrestling” athletes threw down on Tuesday night in Alva.

About two dozen people came out to Iggy’s Green Rush medical marijuana dispensary, 2802 College Blvd., to watch dwarf wrestlers toss each other back-and-forth across the ring.

Audience members may see it as a form of entertainment, but to the wrestlers, it’s a source of empowerment.

“I love it out there,” said Lil Pecker, one of the wrestlers. “It’s one of the best professions out there that a midget can do, and to have brothers that are his size that can deal with the same things that they deal with.”

One of the most enjoyable parts of the job for the wrestlers is seeing their fans – including a few spectators who sat on the roof of a hangar at the Alva Regional Airport across the highway.

“It’s got to be the fans,” wrestler Boom Box said. “Having the kids here, seeing their smiling faces and they come up and say, ‘You’re my hero.’”

Kolby McDonald, a student at Northwestern, attended the show and said he enjoyed the experience.

“My favorite part was seeing midgets getting slammed,” McDonald said. “It was the funniest thing I’ve ever seen in my life, and I’m really happy that I came.”

McDonald said a friend told him the show would be coming to Alva.

Mini Fusion, another wrestler, said he hopes more people find out about the events that way.

“I’m pretty sure next time it’s going to be a word-of-mouth thing,” Mini Fusion said. “We would love to come back anytime.”

The organization performs about 270 shows a year throughout the United States. The organization is based out of Moore in central Oklahoma.

Getting to see new places and meeting new people are some things the wrestlers enjoy.

“I like being able to travel ... from city-to-city and state-to-state seeing new things,” wrestler Lil Tucker said.

“My favorite part is traveling,” Mini Fusion said. “You get to see the world and get to meet a lot of interesting people.”

While traveling, the wrestlers form close bonds with one another, they said.



Photo by Dacoda McDowell-Wahpekeche

Lil Pecker pushes Lumberjack into the corner where the referee stands during the Extreme Midget Wrestling event at Iggy’s Green Rush on April 27.

er, they said.

Lil Pecker, who has been with the organization since it began more than 16 years ago, said he believes he has found his calling.

“[Wrestling] is going to keep on booming if people can figure us out,” Lil Pecker said. “We got people figuring us out. It’s just that we need more of the little people – more midgets, pardon my term. The LPA (Little People Association) doesn’t like it. But you know what, screw it. I’m doing what I’m supposed to be doing, providing for my family.”

While they enjoy the atmosphere, wrestlers say the most meaningful part of wrestling is overcoming adversity.

“You see eye-to-eye on a different level, but this brings it to a broad spectrum that other people can see it as,” Lil Pecker said. “You’re not being disabled. You’re turning that disability into ability.”



Photo by Dacoda McDowell-Wahpekeche

Lil Tucker hits Boom Box with a wet-floor sign during the Extreme Midget Wrestling event on April 27.



Photo by Dacoda McDowell-Wahpekeche

Mini Fusion throws Boom Box on the ring’s floor at the event.

Thinking of Moving??
Think Hi-Lo Apartments, LLC

1 & 2 bedrooms
Within walking distance of campus
School semester leases
Laundromat on site

Sorry, no pets and no smoking in
apartments.

Sports

I'll never forget this chapter of my life

RANGER
REPORT



DACODA
MCDOWELL-
WAHPEKECHE

Northwestern has been the most rewarding experience that I have been a part of in my life.

I am writing this goodbye column because I will be transferring away from Alva and going home to Norman to the University of Oklahoma.

I have been a part of many rewarding opportunities like President's Leadership Class, cross-country, NWTV-7, the Northwestern News, the Native American Student Association and the Student Government Association.

In those opportunities, I have been able to grow more as a person and serve the students of Northwestern.

The Native American Student Association was formed by Angel Marshall along with Savannah and Bryan Francis.

I was fortunate that I was able to help the process of creating a community of Native Americans at Northwestern.

I am super thankful to have been given that opportunity to make a change in the first semester of my college career.

At that same time, I was a part of Northwestern's President's

Leadership Class. In that class is where I met the Northwestern News' editor-in-chief, Jordan Green. I met many people in that class that have shaped my life for the better by showing me new perspectives on things in life.

I came to Northwestern after signing a letter of intent to run cross-country. I ran under the direction of coaches Craig Binkley and Jill Lancaster.

Cross-country was a rewarding experience because I grew close to people from backgrounds that I did not know much about. I felt as if I was wanted and could be a positive piece in their lives.

In the midst of all those opportunities, I got to join the Student Government Association. In the first meeting of August 2019, I was unsure about what I was signing up for.

I told myself that I would give it a try and see where it goes with Student Government Association. Fortunately, it has worked out in my favor that I was able to be more involved than I originally planned.

I found the Student Government Association to be more interesting right before the coronavirus pandemic started. Olivia Yandel, a co-adviser for the organization, asked if anyone wanted to participate in the Oklahoma Student Government Association's spring congress meeting in early March.

Spring congress was a great time. I was able to learn more about resolutions and how they can impact Northwestern's campus.

I wrote a resolution during spring congress that was revised and presented during the fall congress session of 2020.

Opportunities like that and others pushed me to run for secretary of the Student Government Association. I won the 2020 election by four votes, giving me the opportunity to serve people whenever school would resume in-person classes.

The pandemic was tough because we were not able to be around many people.

I was really looking forward to the next school year at Northwestern because we would be slowly moving toward a return to normalcy.

When we came back, I was super involved with the Student Government Association and was starting to enjoy being a part of the newspaper.

I served as the circulation manager while I was enrolled in the news reporting class taught by Dr. Kaylene Armstrong. I was offered the position as the sports editor because the previous editor was moving on.

Doing anything sports-related with media is what I have dreamed about for many years, so I acted upon the offer.

At the beginning of this semester, I told myself I would work hard to report on the important things going on in the athletic side of Northwestern.

It has truly been an honor to serve as the sports editor of the newspaper because I believe Northwestern provides a great opportunity for high school student athletes to continue their athletic careers while obtaining a quality education.

I reported on football's canceled spring season and the unveiling of the team's 2021 fall season.

I was also able to assign stories to reporters who told the stories of athletes on campus.

In my opinion, it has been a successful semester of being the News' sports editor, and I could not have thought of a more meaningful way to better myself professionally.

I am transferring away from Northwestern, but that does not mean that I do not respect or appreciate what has been given to me over the last two school years.

To Ethan Sacket: Thank you for molding me into the man I am today. I came to Northwestern not seeing my full potential, but with your guidance, I have changed for the better and love to serve people whenever possible.

To Olivia Yandel: Thank you for showing me how to become a better leader by trusting me and

listening to me. Your continued trust in me over the past year has helped me become more confident in what I can do.

To Jordan Green: Thank you so much for helping me with my journalistic abilities. I would not be in the position I am in today without your weekly – sometimes daily – lessons in journalism.

To all the students of Northwestern: Thank you so much for providing a reason for me to grow as a person. You all come from different backgrounds, and I have loved getting to know most of you personally. There are many opportunities on campus to spark a change that could have a direct or indirect impact on your future and the future of the students of Northwestern. So, don't be scared to reach out and try to enact change.

To the faculty and staff of Northwestern: Thank you so much for being an inspiration to the students of Northwestern. I could not count how many times I have heard students say they wish there were more people like you in the world because of how kind you are to students, or because you listened to them to talk about whatever they needed to get off their chests.

This won't be the last time I say this because I am proud of my time here and the experiences I was able to be a part of, but here it is: Ride, Rangers, Ride.

Baseball pushes for playoffs

By JACOB COMP

Student Reporter

The Northwestern Oklahoma State University Ranger baseball team has been on the path of making history.

Each game puts them one step closer to becoming the first Ranger baseball team to make the Great American Conference postseason tournament since their first season in the NCAA's Division II.

The Ranger baseball team ended a five-game winning streak after losing to Arkansas Tech University in the final game of a three-game series that finished on Monday. The team sits in fourth place in the Great American Conference baseball standings after their performance against Arkansas Tech last week.

Daschal Johnson, a senior on the baseball team, said the team is giving its best effort in an important time of the year.

"We are playing our best baseball at the most crucial part of the season, which we need to make the playoff push," Johnson said.

Northwestern has six players with a batting average over .300. Blake Hoffman, Daschal Johnson, Marques Paige, Pres-

ton Lonadier, Yugo Hamakawa and Grant French make the list of Northwestern's statistically better batters.

French was named the co-offensive player of the week in the Great American Conference on April 20. He was joined by an Arkansas-Monticello player as the co-offensive player of the week.

French got on base 11 out of 12 at-bats in games against Harding University and East Central University. Over the span of a week, he had three homeruns. He is close to having a .400 batting average, with 19 hits on 48 at-bats.

In the team's homerun statistic, Paige leads the team with 14 homeruns with Daschal Johnson

following Paige with eight.

Kaleb Honea leads the pitchers with the lowest earned runs average on the team with a 1.65 ERA. Scott Creedon follows Honea with a 3.06 ERA. Creedon has pitched the most innings on the team at 61.2 innings pitched.

Northwestern players have been fueled by doubt from other programs and want to prove them wrong, Johnson said.

"Northwestern baseball has been doubted for so long by other programs, and we are using that as fuel to prove that we can play with the best of them," Johnson said. "This team never lays down, and we fight to the last out. I love my team, and this will be the year."

Alva State Bank
& Trust Company

Older than Oklahoma

Alva Main Office

518 College Ave.
Alva, Ok 73717
580-327-3300

Burlington Branch

PO Box 80
Burlington, Ok 73722
580-431-3300

Enid-Chisholm Branch

801 W. Broadway
Enid, Ok 73701
580-234-4201

Bank of Freedom Branch

1085 Main St.
Freedom, Ok 73842
580-621-3276

First State Bank of Kiowa Branch

546 Main St.
Kiowa, Ks 67070
620-825-4147

ASB

IN ALVA SINCE 1901

MEMBER FDIC

Member Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation 1-800-259-2582

CORRECTION:

In the April 22 edition of the News, Deja Lacy's name was left out of the story about the track and field competition. She was a member of the 4x100-meter relay team.

HOLDER DRUG

Hallmark 513 Barnes Alva, Ok 73717

580.327.3332 1.800.458.5349 Fax: 327.1848

BE INCOGNITO!

Come check out our new
camo Swig coolers!

WE WON!

News named division’s Best Overall Newspaper in 2020 by Oklahoma College Media Association

FROM STAFF REPORTS

Northwestern News

The Northwestern News was named the Best Overall Newspaper in its division in the 2020 Oklahoma Collegiate Media Association competition.

“I am incredibly proud of our team,” Editor-in-Chief Jordan Green said. “Our editors and reporters are some of the best collegiate journalists in the state. They’re some of the most hard-working students at Northwestern, and more importantly, they’re some of my best friends.”

The News won 14 first-place awards in the competition, meaning the News won the top slot in every category it entered content in.

The paper also won nine second-place awards and four third-place awards. In three categories, the News won the top three slots, adding up to a total of 27 awards.

That’s the highest number of awards the News has won in recent history, staff members believe.

Each year, the OCMA hosts the competition to recognize the work of collegiate newspapers across the state from the previous year. Newspaper staff members enter their best stories, pictures and graphic design work in numerous categories, hoping to win the Best Overall Newspaper Award. The Diamond Division is comprised of regional universities like Northwestern.

Here are the awards the News won:

CARTOONS:

First Place – Michelle Willson
Second Place – Michelle Willson

FEATURE WRITING:

First Place – Jordan Green
Second Place – Sean Doherty

REVIEWS:

First Place – Michelle Willson
Second Place – Michelle Willson
Third Place – Michelle Willson

SPORTS REPORTING:

First Place – Sean Doherty
Second Place – Dacoda McDowell-Wahpekeche

GENERAL NEWS WRITING:

First Place – Jordan Green
Second Place – Jordan Green
Third Place – Sean Doherty

COLUMN WRITING:

First Place – Jordan Green
Second Place – McKayla Holson
Third Place – McKayla Holson

REPORTING PORTFOLIO:

First Place – Jordan Green
Second Place – Sean Doherty

ENTERPRISE/INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING – INDIVIDUAL:

First Place – Nick Dill

ENTERPRISE/INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING – TEAM

First Place – David Thornton, Ovell Patterson, Jara Reeder, Ethan Everson, Kaylea Brown, Dacoda McDowell-Wahpekeche, Trinity St. Andrews, Destiny Gardner

FEATURE PHOTOGRAPHY:

First Place – Jordan Green
Third Place – Jordan Green

NEWS PHOTOGRAPHY:

First Place – Jordan Green
Second Place – Sean Doherty

SPORTS PHOTOGRAPHY:

First Place – Jordan Green
Second Place – Sean Doherty

FRONT PAGE DESIGN:

Winner – Northwestern News

INTERIOR PAGE DESIGN:

Winner – Northwestern News

Green praised the work of the newspaper’s section editors — Michelle Willson, Devyn Lansden and Dacoda McDowell-Wahpekeche — as well as the paper’s reporters, photographers and additional staff members.

“There aren’t many times in life when we are surrounded by talented, dedicated, hard-working, caring, compassionate, considerate people — but at the Northwestern News, I am,” Green said. “This team is comprised of some of the best people I’ve ever met. They love Northwestern, and more importantly, they love serving their

peers and providing them with the information they need to succeed.”

Reporters and editors who earned awards will receive certificates commemorating their accomplishments.

“I’m so proud of these students,” said Dr. Kaylene Armstrong, adviser to the Northwestern News. “Everything that goes into making a paper every week – from writing and editing to photography, layout and design – takes so much more time than most people realize.”

Green said the newspaper will continue to improve and serve students in the fall.

“This newspaper is my baby, and this team delivers a beautiful one each week,” he said. “I’m just one small part of an awesome group.”

NWOSU graduation planned for May 8

The spring graduation ceremony will take place May 8 at 10:30 a.m. on Ranger Field.

Restrictions for COVID-19 protocol will be minimal during this outside ceremony. Guests are encouraged to wear face coverings, and some other safety guidelines will be in place.

There is no limit on the number of attendees who can come to the ceremony, officials said.

The graduation ceremony will also be livestreamed on the university’s YouTube channel.

“I think students are thankful to move toward a more ‘normal’ ceremony,” said Kelsey Martin, Northwestern’s director of marketing and university relations.

