

NORTHWESTERN NEWS

Crowning moment

Emily Smith wins Miss Northwestern title during pageant
PAGE 6

Photo by Colby Dalton

PRSRT. STD.
Permit # 5
Alva, OK 73717
Address Service Requested

Visit us online at northwesternnews.rangerpulse.com Follow us on:

HELP WANTED: STRUGGLES OF HIRING IN RURAL OKLAHOMA: PART 1

Small schools face teacher shortage

Rural universities also struggling to hire professors

By CADE KENNEDY
Sports Editor

As the third and fourth grade students at Freedom Public School walk into the classroom, they're greeted by a familiar face, but she's technically their new teacher.

These students continue to rotate from classroom to classroom as they watch teachers, librarians and other staff pass the title of third and fourth grade teacher back-and-forth.

Because of a teacher shortage impacting Oklahoma, scenes like this are becoming more frequent across the state. It isn't just happening in public schools, but across college campuses as well.

This shortage isn't a new problem in Oklahoma. Teachers have been fleeing the state or retiring early for the past decade. In July, the Oklahoma State Department of Education issued 1,473 emergency teaching certifications, an all-time high for a single month,



according to the agency. Despite the record high, those certifications only made up 41% of the 3,593 emergency certifications issued this summer.

Despite the certifications, the Oklahoma State School Boards Association's annual back-to-school survey found 1,019 teaching jobs remain open in 328

school districts that serve 77% of Oklahoma's student population. In the nine years the survey has been conducted, those 1,019 jobs set the record for the most openings in a year.

"Education leaders are incredibly grateful for the work legislators have accomplished in recent years in an attempt to ease

the shortage and strengthen the teacher pipeline," OSSBA Executive Director Shawn Hime said. "But the survey and other data paint a pretty clear picture: The work is far from done."

One of the main reasons behind the shortage is money. Oklahoma is ranked 34th out of all 50 states in teacher pay, with the av-

HELP WANTED

A Northwestern News series about the challenges of filling professional jobs in rural Oklahoma.

Coming Up:
 — Nov. 10: Small-town newspapers carry on with few reporters
 — Nov. 17: Hospitals struggle to recruit physicians, nurses

Photo and graphic by Jordan Green
Students in the Freedom Public School esports class play video games as Principal Michelle Shelite watches in this Sept. 9 photo. Shelite is filling in as the computer teacher because the school has faced hiring challenges.

erage Oklahoma teacher earning \$54,762 for the 2020-2021 school year, according to the National Education Association. This figure puts Oklahoma teachers slightly above the regional average of \$54,622 but below the national average of \$65,293.

See **SHORTAGE**, Page 2

SHORTAGE: Applications dwindle at rural school systems

Continued from Page 1

Oklahoma ranks 45th when it comes to per-pupil spending, as the NEA reported that only \$10,553 is spent per student in Oklahoma. The national average is \$14,360.

“It’s shocking to see these numbers in print, but they really help inform us of why we have a teacher shortage and why our schools have a hard time finding bus drivers, custodians and other support staff,” said Katherine Bishop, president of the Oklahoma Education Association, the largest teacher’s union in the state.

While the shortage has persisted, several attempts to fix it have come and gone. One of the more memorable attempts occurred in April 2018, when teachers went on strike statewide to protest low wages, among other issues. The strike ended after 10 days, when the state Legislature voted to give teachers a \$6,100 raise.

Another raise could soon be in store for the teachers of Oklahoma. The Oklahoma State Board of Education passed a \$5,000 pay raise proposal Sept. 22 to raise the minimum starting salary for teachers to \$40,000 and average teacher pay to \$59,000 annually.

If the raise can make its way through the Legislature, the only state in the region with a higher salary would be New Mexico. Teachers there will earn \$64,000 because of a \$10,000 salary increase.

REACHING THE CLASSROOM

Despite the potential solutions, the effects the shortage has had on students and teachers is still being felt across the state.

One of the schools dealing with the shortage is Freedom, a school in western Woods County in northwest Oklahoma. The district is small enough that the graduating class rarely numbers above five. Inside the school, rooms for the robotics team and esports team are present, but there is no third and fourth grade teacher.

Freedom, like many other schools in Oklahoma, had trouble finding teachers during the summer. Unlike other schools, Freedom did not get a single applicant for the position.

“We were all stunned,” Freedom principal Michelle Shelite said. “We kept asking each other, because we had put it out that they could contact three different people, and none of us were getting anything. So, we came together and said, ‘We aren’t getting anything. What are we going to do?’ So, we started brainstorming, and I got teachers that were certified in other areas to jump down and take care of those classes.”

Teachers at Freedom have bundled students in various grades together for the past decade, but with the teacher shortage continuing, other district employees are having to pitch in to teach. Despite the constant movement from teacher to teacher, Shelite said the staff has handled the transition well.

“They have done an awesome

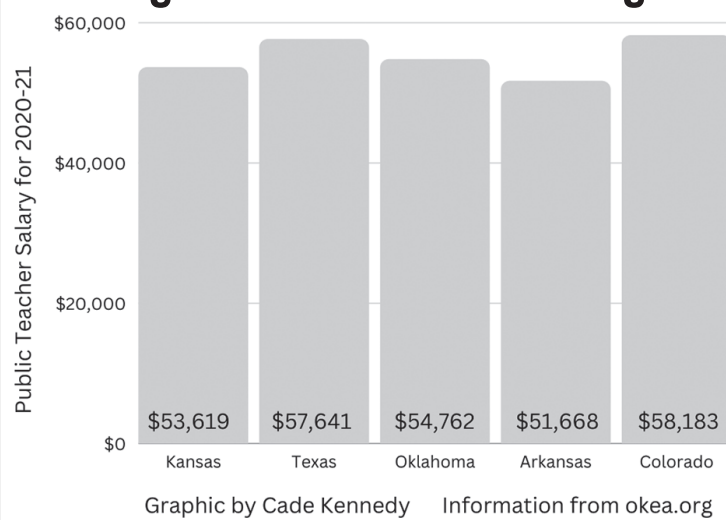


ABOVE: Freedom Public School teacher Cindy Wilson poses for a portrait on the school playground on Sept. 9. Wilson is teaching multiple grade levels at the school, which is struggling to recruit and hire teachers.

LEFT: Freedom Public School is shown Sept. 9

Photos by Jordan Green

Average teacher salaries in region



job,” she said. “I am very proud of my staff. I could not be doing what I’m doing this year without them. Everybody looks at it and goes, ‘Well, you only have two or three students,’ but they still have to do all the same work doing two or three grade levels within the same classroom, which makes it even harder.”

One of the teachers at Freedom dealing with this adjustment is the first and second grade teacher, Cindy Wilson, who has taught for more than 30 years. After all those years, she said she never thought she would be teaching

three grades at once.

“You always have so many levels in what children are capable of doing, whether it be socially and academically in just one class, and here we have three, but we always seem to make it work,” Wilson said.

Freedom isn’t the only school in Woods County facing the situation. Alva Public Schools, the largest district in the area, has had difficulty hiring teachers as well. In his five years at Alva, Superintendent Tim Argo said he has seen some changes in the number of applications.

“Initially, there was always a large applicant pool of teachers, and we have seen over the course of the last couple of years that pool has shrunk,” Argo said. “It was probably especially felt the hardest this year. As with hiring teachers this year, we really struggled. We were able to fill most of our positions, but we had two that we were unable to fill, so we had to cut some classes.”



Argo

While cutting classes is the short-term solution for Alva, Argo said the district has a plan to try to prevent this situation from happening again.

The school district is working with Northwestern Oklahoma State University to create a so-called “grow-your-own” program that identifies school support staff and high school students interested in teaching.

Once educators identify potential future educators, they can work to get them in college to study education and return to teach in their hometown.

“We want to capture those students and encourage them to

get into education so that we can have a foot in the door earlier with applicants,” Argo said.

While local schools hope the program will help both Northwestern and school districts, the 17 student teachers at Northwestern this semester hope they can find the job that’s right for them.

“Right now, there’s a lot of excitement about the job possibilities they have,” said Dr. Jennifer Oswald, chair of Northwestern’s Division of Education. “Whenever I graduated, you would have 15 applicants for one job. You had to stand out, and to them [now], they’re having 15 job offers, so it’s exciting for them to get to go into schools and have interviews and basically choose the one that fits for them.”

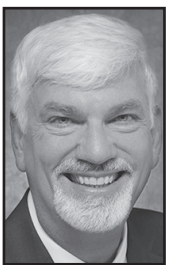
UNIVERSITIES FACE HIRING STRUGGLES

While Northwestern tries to help local communities with the teacher shortage, the university is dealing with its own shortage of professors.

“The shortage varies by department, as some departments are producing higher numbers of graduates from graduate school,” said Dr. James Bell, vice president for academic affairs.

Northwestern is not the only university struggling to find help. A recent poll from the Chronicle of Higher Education found that 64% of universities had more difficulty hiring educators this summer than they did during the rest of 2022.

“Northwest Oklahoma is a fantastic place to live, but not everybody knows that,” Bell said. “When people apply, they have some preconceived notions about what it would be like to live in a rural area. ... We know that it’s great. They don’t know that yet.”



Bell

NEWS

BOO! Alva is ready for Halloween

By GAVIN MENDOZA
News Editor

Carving pumpkins, walking in corn mazes and getting candy are all popular activities for Halloween, and all of those can be found in Alva.

The Alva Pumpkin Patch, the First United Methodist Church and Bradt's Menagerie are some of the places providing activities to get students into the Halloween spirit.

The Alva Pumpkin Patch has been around since 2003 and is owned by the Corr family. Paul and Dev Corr first started the patch at a church in downtown Alva. The patch is a fundraiser for the Navajo Indian reservation in Farmington, New Mexico.

The patch is open every day from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. It has been a popular venue, with hundreds of people attending the patch yearly. Admission is free. Attendees can walk through a maze and play

yard games. Pumpkins cost between \$1 and \$35.

"The patch is all about playing with children and kids having fun," Paul Corr said. "We have added a few more games this year that everyone can play and have fun participating in."

The First United Methodist Church is sponsoring a trunk-or-treat event Oct. 30 from 4:30 to 6 p.m. on College Avenue between Center and Maple streets.

"We had a big turnout [last year]," the Rev. Katie Hill said. "We had a lot of people who came and brought their cars and participated by giving out candy. We also had a lot of families who brought their kids through."

The church will work with members of the Cedar Grove Wesleyan, First Baptist, First Christian and Lutheran churches to host the event.

"We want to give kids and families a safe place to be able to trick-or-treat, and it also gives them opportunities to bring to-

gether and connect the community," Hill said.

Bradt's Menagerie opened its annual and widely attended hay maze Oct. 22. The Menagerie is owned by Jared and Jode Bradt and includes a petting zoo as well as the maze. The Menagerie is located on the north side of Oklahoma Boulevard, U.S. Highway 64, roughly 3.5 miles west of town.

The maze, said to be the largest in the state, will feature a "scare maze" theme Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 8 to 11 p.m.

The regular maze will be open through Thanksgiving weekend. Admission is \$10 per person. The Bradts are Northwestern alumni, and their son Braylon is a Northwestern senior.

The maze's annual Northwestern night will be Wednesday. The first 100 students with their ID will get in for free.

"It is good to see continued generations come from the school we attended and see their support," Jode Bradt said.

What's up?

THURSDAY

NWOSU Esports is planning to host the Oklahoma Scholastic Esports regional qualifier for Super Smash Brothers Ultimate. It is open to middle and high schoolers that are part of OKSE. The qualifier will be in the Shockley Hall Esports arena on the first floor from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Congressman Frank Lucas will hold a town hall meeting in the Student Center Ranger Room from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. The meeting is open to the public.

There will be a banned book reading in the Alabaster Room in Vinson Hall from 7 to 9 p.m. The reading will include Kahoot games and is open to everyone.

MONDAY

The Powderpuff football game will occur Monday at 7 p.m. at Ranger field. The seniors and freshmen will take on the juniors and sophomores in a red and black showdown. Immediately afterward, the student versus faculty flag football game will occur.

TUESDAY

SGA will be giving away tacos to the first 400 Ranger fans in attendance at the NWOSU volleyball game against SWOSU. The game is located in Percefull Fieldhouse and starts at 6:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY

The Bradt's Menagerie will host NWOSU night from 8 to 11 p.m. The first 100 students with their student ID will get into the hay maze for free. The Menagerie is located off College Boulevard 3.5 miles west of Alva.

NOV. 3

The Miss Cinderella Talent Show and Pageant will occur, with the talent night starting at 7:30 p.m. and the pageant starting at 8 p.m. The events will take place in the Herod Hall Auditorium and admission is \$10.

The Fall Ball will occur in the small gym of the Health and Sports Science building from 9 p.m. to midnight. Tickets are \$5 for one and \$8 for two.

Giving thanks

Northwestern athletes write "thank you" cards and emails at the Thank-a-Thon event in the Student Center Ranger Room Monday. The Northwestern Foundation and Alumni Association hosts the annual event to recognize donors to the university.

Photo by Jordan Green



Alva High School Electric Gold Show Choir is selling pumpkin rolls!

Be a part of this tradition to help raise money for their annual trip and other choral items throughout the year!

\$15 each, comes with or without nuts

The pumpkin rolls will be made by the show choir and delivered on Nov. 13.

Contact any show choir member, or send an email to ndsutter@alvaschools.net to order.

HOLDER DRUG
Hallmark 513 Barnes Alva, Ok 73717 (R)
580.327.3332 1.800.458.5349 Fax: 327.1848

Vaccines available without appointments at Holder Drug

FLU SHOTS
(high & low dose available)
COVID Bivalent Boosters
DPT
Shingles

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.

Fall 2022 Staff

Editor-in-Chief
Jordan Green

News Editor
Gavin Mendoza

Editorial Editor
J.D. Eddy

Sports Editor
Cade Kennedy

Features Editor
Caitlin Hofen

Photographer
Colby Dalton

Advertising Manager
Derrick Galindo

Circulation Manager
Colby Dalton

Online Manager
Connor Gray

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 Review-Courier

The opinions and comments contained in the Northwestern News are those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the policies 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 Amendments 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, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, genetic information, physical or mental disability, or status as a veteran in any of its policies, practices, 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 Caleb Mosburg, Director of Student Affairs, Northwestern Oklahoma State University, 709 Oklahoma Boulevard, Alva, OK 73717, (580) 327-8415.

This publication, printed by Northwestern 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. Letters via e-mail are acceptable as long as they follow the rules stated above and can be sent to nwnews@nwosu.edu. Please limit submissions 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.

OPINION



Photos provided

ABOVE: Luke Maier and J.D. Eddy. The author of this article believes that finding your own self-worth is the key to finding happiness. BELOW: The Project Transformation team and students in summer 2022. The author believes finding things to do that you love will increase your self-worth.

You're worth it — I promise

By J.D. EDDY
Editorial Editor

Being there for other people in your life is important, but taking care of yourself has merit as well.

I talk a lot about mental health, its importance and ways to keep yourself mentally healthy. Nevertheless, two things I don't talk about are investing in yourself and being your own No. 1 person. This is not altruism. It's more like self-worth and finding it.

If you're like me, you love to be around people and are outgoing when you want to be. However, at the same time, there are things about people that you are tired of.

You might be in your later years of college realizing the party life is over; you may be tired of trying to pursue a relationship; or you might be worn out from being around people (including your friends) 24/7.

There are things that can break someone down, and one of them is thinking we need others to validate our existence. We become so reliant on others to boost our self-confidence or worth that we lose sight of what we want as individuals. What I am trying to say is that you need to invest in yourself.

Find things that make you feel more like you. It could be anything that you enjoy doing. A few things that I enjoy are: working out, playing Xbox, fishing, shopping for new clothes or just going for a drive. Something I did



recently was I started my own photography business.

At first, I didn't believe it would be anything. Neither did some people, but I still did it. Sure, for a while, I rarely went out and did anything. Instead of spending my summer at the lake, I took pictures and worked in a school system.

Now I am back at school, and my photography business is seeing success. I'm writing for the paper again. Heck, I even work as a vet technician. The point is to bet on yourself; you are capable of so much more than you think you can do. Find the activities that suit you, and show yourself that you can do things you didn't think you could.

Now, the timeline is not the same for everyone. You could have experienced these emotions and know who you are right now. Now I know I am speaking from

the male perspective because that is the only one I have.

I'm not 6'2, I'm not going to the NFL like I wanted to when I was a kid, I'm not a millionaire yet and I didn't play Division 1 football. That's OK. I have found other things that I love to do, and that's all anyone needs. You don't need to conform to other people's standards or your parents' standards. What should matter to you is the most important aspect of this article.

I talked earlier about relationships. This is for men and women. Before you are able to commit yourself to someone physically, spiritually and mentally, you have to know your value, and your partner should be able to see it as well.

Both of you need to see if it is not going to work because of insecurity or any other reasons. Then it is best to wait until both

or one of you are ready for commitment.

I mentioned how knowing your self-worth can mean the party is over. I get it. I'm in college, too, and there are parties to go to. But at some point, I realized I did not need to go out all the time. It just isn't what I enjoy doing.

Find something that makes you happy. If you enjoy partying, keep going out. Don't do these things to fill a void in your life. With the way that I am talking right now, it seems like this is instantaneous. It's not. This process takes time. It took me 23 years to figure out my own values, not letting others influence how I see myself.

"Before you are able to commit yourself to someone physically, spiritually and mentally, you have to know your value."
— J.D. Eddy

If you feel this way and agree, go out and start your metaphysical journey of accepting yourself. Also, you can write a letter to Northwestern News and share some of your personal experiences down this path. It would be really appreciated and help to boost the point of finding yourself being beneficial.

OPINION

Red ink shows mistakes — and love

JORDAN GREEN SAYS



JORDAN GREEN

Red letters mean something different to everyone. In the financial world, being “in the red” is not pleasant. In the Bible, red letters denote that they’re the very words Jesus spoke. And in the world of writing and journalism, red letters mean only one thing: You’ve screwed up.

In my years of newspapering, no one marked up my mistakes in red ink more than Patti Carmack. She did the same with the work of many other journalists. But she wasn’t being a picky critic. Rather, she was showing us where we had room to improve — and she wanted to help us get better because she loved us.

Patti, a longtime editor at The Ponca City News, died Sunday after a battle with cancer. But although she’s gone, the lessons she taught journalists like me won’t be forgotten. They’re still written in red in our minds.

Patti retired years before I got into the news business, and we never worked together formally. But no matter the publication I was writing for, she was the best volunteer editor I could have ever asked for.

We first met in 2019 during a lunch gathering for which I am eternally grateful. My friend Sharon Rowen who, like Patti, was of News renown, arranged the meeting. The two worked together for years, and Sharon recalls being frightened by Patti when they first met.

Sharon thought of Patti’s eyes like those of an owl ready to swoop down and devour a defenseless field mouse, though Patti’s prey consisted of subject-verb

agreement errors, misspellings and verb tense changes.

Patti was certainly a no-nonsense woman, a classy lady and an ardent editor. No grammatical error, misplaced punctuation or meaningless word would be spared from the vigorous swipe of her red pen or being marked in red text in a Word document. It’s funny how much she used the color red in her work considering that she was an Oklahoma State University orange Cowgirl. I guess irony gets us all somehow.

Once Patti and Sharon worked together for a while, the two became like family. Later, I was fortunate enough to become the third note in the chord. The whole “owl” bit stuck around, too, and became a great inside joke that the three of us shared at Patti’s expense. Fittingly enough, Patti actually loved owls. Her Facebook cover photo shows one. Patti, like all good editors and owls, was wise. We’re better off for having gained some of her wisdom.

Patti became a mentor and “adopted” grandmother to me. I called on her many a time to edit my biggest, most important stories, even on tight deadlines for daily and weekly newspapers.

She was faithful and dutiful to fix every error that met her eye. She delivered loving corrections — and a few sarcastic remarks, too, which I loved. Just a few months ago, she emailed me one day and said: “Nice story on race track. Needed some edits. Is there not an editor for stuff at [the publication]?”

I still laugh about that. Patti probably grimaced as she read some of the goof-ups I’ve made through the years, but she soldiered on and gave me constructive feedback.

She pushed me to bolster my reporting, too. If I didn’t have enough sources, she told me. In a

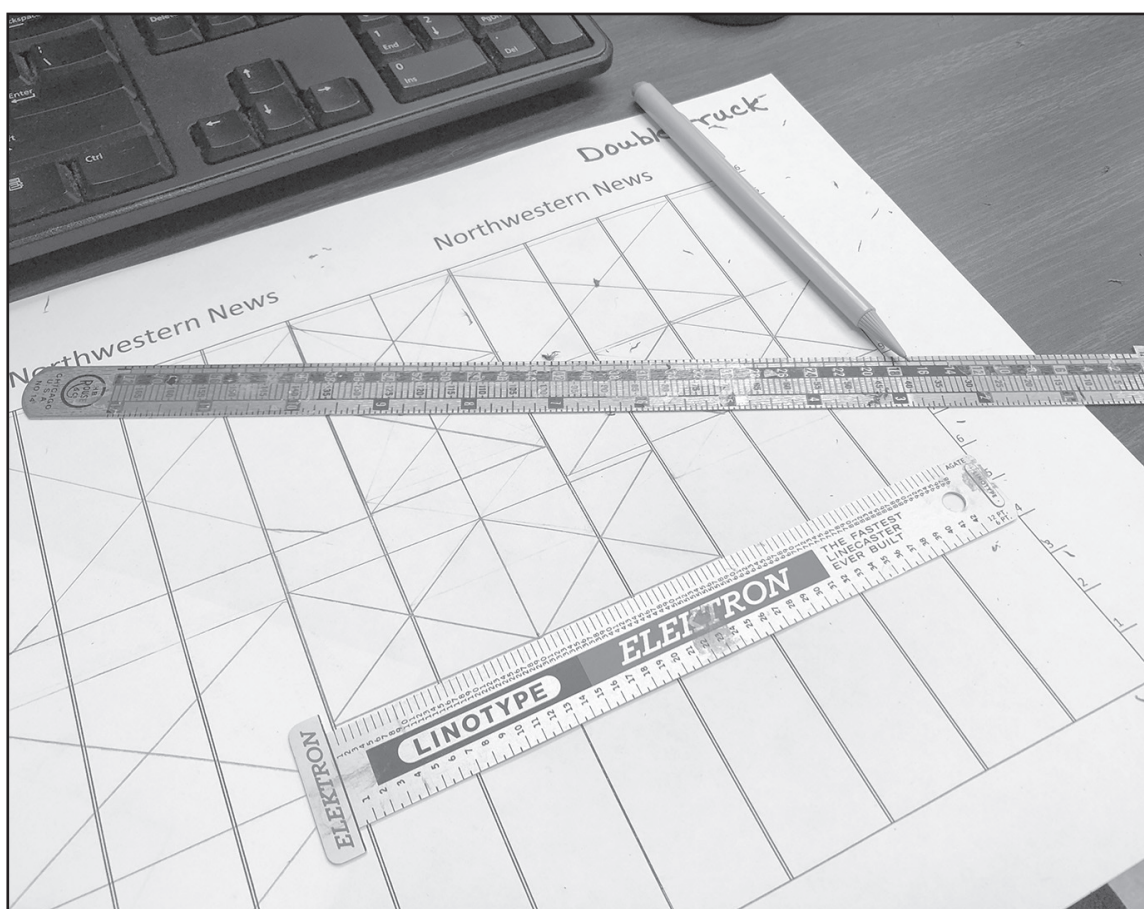


Photo by Jordan Green

The author uses vintage newspaper pica poles to design the doubletruck in this edition of the Northwestern News on Monday. The tools belonged to Patti Carmack, a longtime newspaper editor and mentor to the author.

world of hot-takes, news flashes and sound-bites, getting enough verification is sometimes sacrificed in favor of speed. But to Patti, accuracy was rightfully king.

As the best journalists always are, Patti was a great storyteller, a trove of random information and a walking dictionary. More than all of these, she was someone I dearly love and someone who read just about everything I wrote, whether I asked her to edit it or not. When she said she liked a story, she meant it.

She wasn’t a cheerleader who doled out unwarranted, insincere compliments. She gave out well-deserved praise, and getting her approbation was like winning an award.

Two of the most meaningful “trophies” I ever got came from her, too. I went to visit her one day in 2020, and she gave me her pica poles, sharp metal rulers that were essential to newspaper work before computers came around. Patti used the pica poles during her time at the News to lay out thousands upon thousands of newspaper pages, trim stories and maybe even intimidate reporters. When she gave me her well-worn pica poles, I was stunned. In the world of journalism, being given an editor’s pica poles is like being handed the family Bible, grandpa’s favorite gold watch or even a lock of someone’s hair. It’s a sign of arrival and approval. I was humbled. I’ll use them for the rest of my life.

Patti never failed to say “I love you,” and although we didn’t get to talk during her hospital stay, I know she left this world loving me, and she knew that I love her.

But perhaps the greatest form of love she ever showed me were all those markings in red that she put on my stories. She had such tremendous passion for journalism that she wanted my work to serve readers as best it could — and she wanted to keep me from looking stupid in print. She corrected and taught me because she cared for me.

That’s what a good teacher does, and that’s what love is. Whenever I see Patti’s red letters, I’ll forever see her love bleeding through the ink.

Thanks, Patti.

Why Hofmeister is the right choice for governor

By **JAKE ERVIN**
Student Reporter

The governor’s race in Oklahoma is neck-and-neck, even though it should not be close.

The most recent polling averages show the current incumbent, Kevin Stitt, is only one percentage point ahead of his opponent, Joy Hofmeister.

It is strange for Stitt, a Republican, to have such a slim margin over Hofmeister, a Democrat. The state of Oklahoma has not had a majority vote for a Democratic nominee in a presidential election since Lyndon B. Johnson in 1964. The state has not elected a Democratic governor since 2006.

Stitt blames his evaporating lead in the polls to the slew of television advertisements that are attacking his character, his policies and his alleged corruption. He thinks the ads are funded by the states’ Native American tribes. Many of these adver-

tisements have been funded through political action committees that aren’t required to disclose their donors and how much they donate.

“It’s the big casino bosses,” Stitt said to The Oklahoman. “It’s the big tribes.”

However, this is not the whole story. Stitt can continue to whine about the tribes like he has his entire term as governor, but a few campaign ads did not turn a deeply red state against a Republican incumbent. The Oklahoma governor’s race is a microcosm of the issue plaguing the Republican Party across the country.

While plenty of voters agree with principles of the Republican Party’s platform, particularly in southern states, the candidates themselves are the issue. Whether it’s the repeated scandals plaguing Herschel Walker’s campaign in the Georgia senate race or Stitt’s alleged backroom dealings, the Republican Party is increasingly asking voters to look past the failings of the weak candidates they offer and vote red anyway.

Stitt is not facing the threat of being a one-term governor because thousands of Oklahomans suddenly decided that they are now Democrats. He has become deeply unpopular within his own party because of his ineffectiveness as governor and the corruption allegations surrounding him.

The Republican Party has made the mistake of thinking Oklahomans were stupid and wouldn’t notice Stitt scratching the back of his political donors.

A glaring example of this occurred when Stitt chose not to terminate a contract with Epic Charter Schools, even after discovering the private school company had misused millions of taxpayer dollars. Not so coincidentally, many individuals associated with the company had donated more than 10,000 dollars to his campaign for governor.

Stitt’s record on schools in general is one of the major issues of this election. He seems to be determined to cut funding to Oklahoma public schools in favor of

vouchers for private schools despite less than 20 of Oklahoma’s 77 counties having at least one private school.

This assault on public education is why Hofmeister, the Oklahoma state superintendent of public instruction since 2015, is the ideal candidate to run against such a flawed politician of the state’s majority party. She has repeatedly expressed her commitment to increase funding for public education instead of vouchers, which her official campaign website describes as a “rural school killer.”

Ultimately, this election is not about a Democrat versus a Republican, but a referendum on the Republican Party’s belief that their voters will show blind loyalty to terrible candidates. While other states like Georgia and Pennsylvania may make this mistake, it is important that Oklahomans show their values matter more than identity politics when casting ballots on Nov. 8.

Ervin’s personal political views do not reflect those of the Northwestern News.



COMPETING FOR THE CROWN

Miss Northwestern candidates vie in university's annual pageant for women

Photos by Colby Dalton

1

Fifteen Northwestern women competed in the annual Miss Northwestern pageant Sunday in the Herod Hall Auditorium. Winners are eligible for scholarships depending on placement. The pageant determines which Northwestern woman will compete at the Miss Oklahoma pageant next year. Junior vocal music education major Emily Smith won the crown for 2023.

1. Miss Northwestern candidate Keeli Truelove and her Miss Northwestern Star, Brooklyn Trout, use their hands to make the shape of a heart during the Miss Northwestern pageant Sunday.

2. Madison McMahan performs a jazz dance during the talent portion of the pageant.

3. KD McCleary smiles with her Miss Northwestern Star, Whitlee Gaskill.

4. Elisabeth Ridgway performs a jazz dance.

ON THE FRONT PAGE: Miss Northwestern 2022 Carli Seabolt crowns 2023 Miss Northwestern Emily Smith during Sunday's pageant.



2



3



4



5



6



7



8

5: Jadyn Budig sings "Homeward Bound" by Marta Keen Thompson.

6: Halea Locke smiles after she completes her speed painting of the Ranger symbol.

7: Cora Beth Taylor and her Miss Northwestern Star, Brea Moffatt, smile at the crowd.

8: Chloe Lehr performs a jazz dance.



9



10



11

9: M'Cheila Rader sings "Don't Rain on My Parade" by Barbra Streisand.

10: Mikayla Webb smiles for the crowd.

11: Rebecca Wagner speaks about her social impact initiative, "Helmet Safety on a Motorcycle."



12



13



14



15

12: Miss Northwestern Emily Smith sings "Think of Me" by Andrew Lloyd Webber.

13: Jordan Pierce speaks to the judges.

14: Kaitlyn Vincent speaks to the judges.

15: Ella Gibson smiles after speaking.

FEATURE



Photos provided

More than 150 guests, alumni, students and donors attended the Northwestern Foundation & Alumni Association's annual Donor Dinner. The guest speaker for the evening was Sandi Patty.

Sandy Patti speaks at annual dinner

By **CAITLIN HOFEN**
Features Editor

The Northwestern Foundation & Alumni Association hosted its annual Donor Dinner Thursday evening. The private dinner was attended by administration, guests and individuals who donated to Northwestern in some capacity within the past 18 months. More than 150 people attended and listened to student and guest speakers.

Allen "Skeeter" Bird, the foundation CEO, opened the evening with remarks about the benefits of lifelong learning. He said that, while he was a student at Northwestern in the '80s, a professor challenged him and his classmates to form their own opinions rather than adopting those of their parents. Bird spoke to this personal growth as an opportunity that continues to be offered to students at Northwestern today.

"When you, as a donor, make an investment in the students, you help create a life of learning and growth for which we will never see the full impact," Bird said.

The Northwestern Scholar Ambassadors sat among the crowd of guests and donors, visiting and listening to stories from alums and long-time supporters of Northwestern. The dinner was prepared by Chartwells Catering and served by the 2022 President's Leadership Class.

The student speaker was Greysan Ioerger-Henson, a freshman nursing major. Ioerger-Henson spoke about his journey to attend Northwestern and the impact scholarships have had on his ability to afford college. He thanked the donors for their contribution

in helping him pay for his education and recognized the pride he has in being a Ranger.

"It truly felt great to be able to thank the donors who made it possible for me to be here," Ioerger-Henson said. "When I was asked to speak and I realized who I would be speaking to and the number of people, I was ecstatic."

The guest speaker of the evening was Sandi Patty, the most awarded female vocalist in contemporary Christian music history. She has won five Grammy awards, four Billboard Music Awards, three platinum records and five gold records.

Patty opened her address by describing her family and how higher education impacted their lives. An alumna of Anderson University in Anderson, Indiana, Patty emphasized the importance of donating to higher education and the effect it has on students who need financial support.

Patty then told the story of finding her calling in music. She

described herself as a quiet child who was scared to speak out loud.

"One day, the principal came over intercom and asked all the teachers if they knew of any student who could sing the National Anthem for the next PTA meeting," Patty said during her speech. "My hand shot into the air, because somehow singing felt so much easier for me than speaking. I could tell you what I thought in a song."

She spoke about how she overcame adversity in the entertainment industry, the impact of positive thoughts and the need for kindness in the world. She closed by singing "How We Love."

"The atmosphere of celebration and gratitude experienced at our annual Donor Dinner is always energizing," Bird said. "We were blessed with both a wonderful student speaker and a phenomenal guest speaker. Bringing our students together with our donors for multiple conversations made for a perfect evening."



Freshman Greysan Ioerger-Henson was the student speaker for the event. He thanked the donors for their contribution to his education.

Thinking of moving?

Think Hi-Lo Apartments, LLC
636 Linden St.

- 1- and 2-bedroom apartments available
- Within walking distance of campus
- School semester leases
- Laundromat on site
- No smoking and no pets allowed

Call 580-748-0157

Cookie's Bowl and Cafe

GLow BOWL
Starts @ 7 pm

\$10 OFF 1 hour w/ Student ID

Bowling:

Friday: 5:30 pm - 11:30 pm

Saturday 2:00 pm - 11:00 pm

Sunday: 5:30 pm - 9:00 pm

Monday: 5:30 pm - 9:00 pm

Tuesday: League



Cafe: Friday - Tuesday

Follow Us on Facebook:
Cookie's Bowl Inc.

5:30 pm - 9:00pm

Schedule a Session:
(580) 327-0461

ENTERTAINMENT

History of Halloween traditions

By **CAITLIN HOFEN**
Features Editor

Monday is Halloween, marked by bright costumes, scary movies, and candy galore.

However, the origin of Halloween dates to ancient times and the Celtic festival of Samhain.

Samhain (pronounced "SAH-win") celebrated the end of harvest and ushered in the "darker half of the year," according to history.com.

The people who celebrated Samhain believed the barrier between the physical and spiritual world broke from Oct. 31 to Nov. 1, allowing ghosts and monsters to walk among the living.

The origins of many modern Halloween traditions tie back to the festival of Samhain.

COSTUMES

While princesses, ninjas and superheroes haunt the streets today on Halloween night, the tradition of dressing up started for protection.

Since the Celts believed the barrier between worlds could be broken, they prepared offerings for the fairies, or Sidhs.

This helped prevent the fairies from wreaking havoc. It was also expected that ancestors could cross over, too.

The Celts would dress as animals or monsters to scare the fairies and discourage them from



Photo by Caitlin Hofen

The author decorated her porch for trick-or-treaters last Halloween.

taking their loved ones back to the other world, history.com said.

Celtic mythology describes monsters like the Lady Gwyn, a headless woman dressed in white

who is accompanied by a black pig. She chased people who wandered around at night.

Another monster associated with Samhain is a shape-shifting

creature called a Pukah, who receives harvest offerings from the field.

JACK-O'-LANTERNS

In the Middle Ages, the Celts in Ireland began the practice of carving jack-o'-lanterns.

Large turnips and potatoes served as the original canvases, according to history.com.

The practice started from an Irish myth about a man nicknamed "Stingy Jack."

The story goes that Stingy Jack invited the Devil to have a drink with him, but he didn't want to pay.

He convinced the Devil to turn into a coin Jack could use to pay their bill.

Once the Devil changed forms, Jack slipped the coin into his pocket next to a silver cross, preventing the Devil from changing back.

The story continues, describing ways Jack would free the Devil and coerce it into not bothering him again for a number of years.

It also agreed to not claim Jack's soul once he died.

When Jack finally died, the story says God would not allow such a person into heaven and the Devil was still upset about being tricked, so it didn't banish him to hell.

Instead, the Devil sent Jack off into the night with a burning coal to light the path.

Jack put the coal into a carved-out turnip and has been roaming the Earth since.

The ghostly figure of Jack became known as "Jack of the Lantern," then shortened to "Jack O'Lantern."

People started making their own versions of jack-o'-lanterns to ward off the spirit of Stingy Jack.

When immigrants brought the tradition to America, the pumpkin was found to make the perfect jack-o'-lantern.

TRICK-OR-TREATING

Every Halloween, children run door to door, ringing doorbells and calling out "trick or treat."

The origin of this tradition started in the 9th century, when Christianity started to spread and combine with pagan practices.

The Catholic Church named Nov. 2 as All Souls' Day, a time to honor and pray for the dead.

Poor people would visit the rich and offer their prayers for the dead family of the rich person in exchange for a dessert called a soul cake.

In Scotland and Ireland, young people took part in a tradition called guising, dressing up in costume and accepting gifts from many households, said history.com. Instead of offering to pray for the dead, they would sing a song, recite a poem, tell a joke or perform another sort of "trick" before collecting their treat.

Halloween movies on streaming platforms

Netflix

- Texas Chainsaw Massacre
- Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark
- The Huanting of Bly Manor
- The Munsters
- There's Someone Inside Your House
- Fear Street Part 1
- The Conjuring 2
- The Babysitter
- Hubie Halloween
- Sinister 2
- The Forest
- Eerie

Hulu

- Hellraiser
- Prey
- Rocky Horror Picture Show
- The Sixth Sense
- The Blaire Witch Project
- Scary Movie 5
- The Night Before Halloween
- Carved
- Little Monsters
- Annabelle Creation
- Predator
- Ghostbusters
- Zomboat

Disney Plus

- Hocus Pocus 2
- Monster House
- The Nightmare Before Christmas
- Under Wraps
- The Haunted Mansion
- Frankenweenie
- Spooky Buddies
- Z-O-M-B-I-E-S
- Halloweentown
- Twitches
- Mom's Got a Date with the Vampire
- The Ghosts of Buxley Hall

Dad Joke of the Week:

Why did the vampire read the Northwestern News?

He heard it had great circulation.

ALVA VISION CLINIC

Large selection of Oakley, Ray Ban, Wylie X Silhouette ... Contacts w/multifocal and astigmatism Pre- and post-OP Lasix



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

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

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

AFTER HOURS CALL
(580)-829-2026

"Complex contacts RX are our specialty"

Dr. Troy L. Smith
504 College Ave

SPORTS

FOOTBALL



Photos by J.D. Eddy

The Northwestern defensive line clashes with the Southern Nazarene offensive line during the Rangers' game Saturday against the Crimson Storm of Southern Nazarene. The Rangers lost to the Crimson Storm, 27-21, at SNU Football Stadium in Bethany. The loss moves Northwestern's record to 1-7, which puts the Rangers at last place in the Great American Conference.

Crimson Storm defeats Rangers



Wide receiver Torrence Stevens stands on the sideline during Northwestern's game against the Crimson Storm of Southern Nazarene. The Rangers lost to the Crimson Storm, 27-21, Saturday in Bethany.

By CADE KENNEDY
Sports Editor

The Northwestern football team lost to the Southern Nazarene Crimson Storm Saturday, 27-21, at the SNU Football Stadium in Bethany.

The game began as the Rangers kicked off to the Crimson Storm. Once the Crimson Storm got the ball, the Crimson Storm kept it on the ground. The Rangers stopped the Crimson Storm and forced a punt.

The Rangers had less success on their first drive, as they ran three plays before kicking the ball back to the Crimson Storm.

Both teams traded touchdowns on their next drives, which created a 7-7 deadlock at the end of the first quarter.

The Crimson Storm had the ball to start the second quarter and once again marched down the field. The 13-play, eight-minute drive came to a stop, as Brian Holiday recovered a fumble to give the Rangers the ball back.

The Rangers responded, but the ensuing drive took a toll on their depth. Using a combination of running backs and quarterback Dakota Michaels, the Rangers travelled 90 yards in five minutes. The drive ended with running back Jacob Reed plowing into the endzone for his first touchdown

of the season.

With that touchdown, the Rangers had a 14-7 lead at half-time, and Reed became Northwestern's only running back.

In the third quarter, the Rangers and Crimson Storm exchanged touchdowns, but Jarrell Farr broke off a 34-yard touchdown run to tie the game at 21-21 at the end of the third quarter.

In the closing seconds of the quarter, injuries struck the Rangers again, as Michaels went down. When the fourth quarter began, Ethan Everson was the quarterback for Northwestern.

The Crimson Storm gashed the Rangers early in the quarter, as Gage Porter raced into the endzone from 21 yards out to put Southern Nazarene back on top, 27-21.

With only 10 minutes left, the Rangers fought for first downs and kept driving. With one minute left, the Rangers were five yards from the endzone facing a fourth down.

As Everson looked around, he found Torrence Stevens open and let the ball fly. The ball sailed through the air but hit the ground. Southern Nazarene took over on downs and won, 27-21.

The next game for the Rangers is on Saturday, when they travel to Searcy, Arkansas, to take on Harding at 3 p.m. at First Security Stadium.

SPORTS

VOLLEYBALL

Conference tourney berth one win away



Head coach Jon Bingesser talks to the Lady Ranger volleyball team during Northwestern's game against the Tigers of Ouachita Baptist Oct. 14 at Percefull Fieldhouse. The Lady Rangers lost to the Tigers, 3-0.

By CADE KENNEDY
Sports Editor

With only three games remaining in the regular season, the Northwestern volleyball team only needs one win to make the Great American Conference tournament.

The Lady Rangers inched closer towards the tournament on Saturday, playing Southeastern Oklahoma State University and Southwestern College of Kansas at Percefull Fieldhouse.

The first match of the day was against Southeastern, an opponent the Lady Rangers already played earlier in the season. Northwestern won the first game in Durant, 3-0.

This match went similar to the first meeting between the two. The Lady Rangers won the first set 25-19 and never looked back. The Lady Rangers swept the Savage Storm, 3-0.

Later that day, Northwestern played the Moundbuilders of Southwestern College for the final game of the three-game triad. The Lady Rangers got off to a blazing start by winning the first set, 25-15. The second set went the same way, as the Lady

Rangers once again won, 25-15. The third set was the most competitive of the game, as the Lady Rangers won by only six points, 25-19, to get another 3-0 victory.

On Tuesday, Northwestern travelled to Bethany to play the Crimson Storm of Southern Nazarene in a game with major implications. Both teams had a 7-5 conference record coming into the game, meaning that whoever won the game also clinched a spot in the GAC tournament.

The Crimson Storm won the first set of the match with an onslaught of points that the Lady Rangers did not stop. In the second set, the Lady Rangers let a 24-21 lead slip away as the Crimson Storm rallied to win the set, 26-24. Momentum carried Southern Nazarene in the third set, as the Crimson Storm won all three sets to clinch at conference tournament spot.

The Lady Rangers start the final stretch of games Friday when they take on Oklahoma Baptist at 6 p.m. at Percefull Fieldhouse. The final home game of the season will be Tuesday, as the Lady Rangers battle Southwestern at 7 p.m. before travelling to Ada to play East Central at 6 p.m. on Nov. 4.

SOCCER

Four straight ties keep GAC playoff hopes alive

By CONNOR GRAY
Senior Reporter

The Lady Rangers are coming off a stretch of games where they tied four times, two of which were against the top teams in the conference.

Northwestern is sitting in fourth place in the Great American Conference standings and needs one point to clinch a playoff for the GAC tournament.

The Lady Rangers played Southwestern and Ouachita Baptist, which are the top two teams in the conference, and played on the road against Harding.

These were good games to tie, but the game against East Central was not, head coach Alex Piekarski said.

"Southwestern and Ouachita are on top of the conference," Piekarski said. "But the East Central game, I believe we deserved to win that. It's weird how ties bring out certain emotions. There can be good ties and bad ties."

Northwestern has been dealing with injuries late in the season. Eight players are out with four of them being forwards, which has affected their scoring ability as a team.

Southwestern, which beat the

Lady Rangers in Weatherford 2-0, had an opportunity for a season sweep, but Northwestern didn't plan on that happening.

The Lady Rangers and Lady Bulldogs had 14 and 13 shots, respectively, with multiple shots on goal opportunities, which each goalie stopped.

Ranger Rachel Brown made multiple saves in the second half to keep the game at zero for the Lady Rangers and the final in regulation being 0-0.

The next game was a tie, as the Lady Rangers played East Central in Alva. The last time the Lady Rangers faced the Tigers, the Lady Rangers won 4-2 after being down 2-0 in Ada.

The Lady Rangers got 20 shots, but only five on goal, while East Central had 12 with eight on goal.

Neither team mustered points, with both sides playing solid defense with the game ending 0-0.

For the next two games, the Lady Rangers traveled to Arkansas to play Harding and Ouachita Baptist.

The first game of the road trip was against Harding, and both teams tied the last time they played. The Lady Rangers went down 1-0 after the half and then 2-0 at the 80:34 mark in the game.

The Lady Rangers had fewer than 10 minutes to score, and then the comeback began.

They proceeded to score two goals within seven minutes right before the end of regulation. Lady Ranger Abby Nunez scored a goal at the 82:46 mark, and Lady Ranger Gisselle Holguin scored at 89:27. The final was a 2-2 tie.

Two days later, the Lady Rangers played a defensive game against Ouachita Baptist. The Tigers played aggressively but only managed three shots on goal out of 15 shots. The Lady Rangers' offense had only eight shots, but five of those were on goal.

The Northwestern defense made sure Ouachita Baptist did not get a goal, and the game ended in a 0-0 tie.

After these games, the Lady Rangers have 14 points in the GAC standings.

Southwestern leads the GAC with 20 points, while Ouachita Baptist has 19 and Oklahoma Baptist has 18.

If the Lady Rangers win one more game, they will make the GAC tournament on Nov. 3.

The Lady Rangers' final two games are against Oklahoma Baptist in Thursday in Alva at 6 p.m. and Southern Nazarene in Bethany at 5 p.m.



Jazlyn Norwood kicks the ball during Northwestern's game against East Central Oct. 15 at the Alva Recreation Complex. The final score was 0-0.

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

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

GOING DOWN TO SPOOKY TOWN

Alva prepares for Halloween

Alva residents are showing off their spooky, scary skeletons and more for Halloween. Here's a look at some decorated homes around town.

RIGHT: Spiders crawl on the wall of the home at 711 Sunset Dr.

FAR RIGHT: A scarecrow "gourds" tombs at 1020 Fourth St.

BOTTOM RIGHT: The spooky choo-choo train is leaving the station at 1230 Maple St.

BELOW: "Punny" tombstones mark the yard at 1630 Spruce St.



Photos by Colby Dalton

